



Dhammapada

"Be quick to do good. If you are slow, the mind, delighting in mischief will catch you. Turn away from mischief. Again and again, turn away. Before sorrow befalls you. Set your heart on doing good. Do it over and over again, and you will be filled with joy."

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*"Do not make light of your failings, saying, "What are they to me?" A jug fills drop by drop. So the fool becomes brimful of folly. Do not belittle your virtues, saying, "They are nothing. A jug fills drop by drop."*



*"When you don't get what you want, you suffer. If you get it, you suffer too since you can't hold on to it forever."*

*Peaceful Warrior, on the fallacy of attachment*

~~~~~

Yesterday is history, tomorrow is a mystery. And today? Today is a gift. That's why we call it the present."

B. Olatunji



Dear Readers,

The hot & sunny days of summer are long behind us heralding in the season of Fall. Even though we are aware of the changing seasons it always takes a while to accept the shorter & rainy days soon after summer.

The MGCAANA is moving ahead & making a difference in it's small way. The Vidya Scholarship Fund has reached its halfway mark & we would like to thank everyone who contributed & hope you will continue to support this cause. We have to reach the end of this long journey we started & we need your generous donations to realize this herculean task. Halfway there & halfway to go.

We welcome the new board of trustees of the Vidya Scholarship Trust Fund. It is a responsibility that many of us are hesitant to take on. And we are glad that there are many who do take on this responsibility with enthusiasm & carry on the work of the society. The volunteer work of all our Mayans in our various committees are indeed commendable. But we are always looking for new members to offer their support to our different committees. The responsibility of offering your services may seem like a burden but it is always a shared burden & therefore does not weigh on one persons shoulders. So please if you think you can make a small sacrifice of your time we need more members to volunteer .

We take this opportunity to thank the out going board of the Vidya Scholarship Trust Fund. They were the members who pioneered this project & made this dream possible. It was a long journey which required effort & dedication. And our heartfelt gratitude & thank you to each & everyone of you. It could not have been easy but you stuck with it & saw the project to fruition.

Our Newsletter committee has welcomed two new members to its fold, Hashini Mohottla and Prabodani Samarakoon. It is good to have new members adding their views & ideas to the creation of the newsletter. The newsletter is the link between members & it has to engage the reader . Hence we need keep improving & changing with the passing years. We hope that with the addition of our new members we would be able to bring you a more diverse & varied newsletter. We would, as always, appreciate your views on the newsletter. Hope we hear from our readers.

Nazrana Caffoor. (Newsletter Editor)

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"Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things that you didn't do than by the ones that you did do. So throw off the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover."

~~Mark Twain~~



MGCAANA ANNOUNCEMENTS & NOTICES



Mahamaya Girls' College Alumnae Association of North America

Undergraduate & Graduate Scholarship Program

- This scholarship is intended to provide cost of books and material for a single semester for Mahamaya Girls' College alumnae pursuing undergraduate or graduate studies in the United States and Canada.
- Each scholarship award may range from \$250.00 to \$300.00, depending on the availability of funds.
- The scholarship will be awarded to (a) student(s) demonstrating outstanding academic achievements, leadership ability, participation in extracurricular activities, and a significant level of financial need.
- Incoming high school students are required to include *copies* of their school transcript(s) – G.C.E. Ordinary Level and Advanced Level Examination Certificates (if applicable).

APPLICATION PERIOD AND DEADLINE:

September 15, 2011 – December 15, 2011

Applications postmarked after the deadline will *not* be accepted.

AWARD NOTIFICATION:

On or before January 15, 2012

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS:

- Please visit our website at <http://www.mahamayaalumna.org> to view and download the scholarship application.
- Be sure to read the 'Directions and Requirements' carefully before completing the application.
- If you have any questions about the MGCAANA Scholarship Program, please contact the Scholarship Selection Committee at Mahamaya_alumnae@yahoo.com

Thank you very much for your interest in the Mahamaya Girls' College Alumnae Association of North America Undergraduate & Graduate Scholarship Program, and we look forward to reading your completed application.

Dear Members,

It is my pleasure to inform you that the BOD and Executive Committee are striving to give you another exciting year. We would like to invite you to join one of our committees and see how rewarding it can be. We give a little bit of our precious time, learn from each other, gain experience, build lasting friendships, and receive the satisfaction of being a part of a worthy cause and help enrich your resume too.

These are the Committees that need your services:

Membership Drive Committee, Website Committee, Fundraising Committee & the Scholarship Committee.

Please join and be a part of this great organization.

Please respond to mahamaya_alumnae@yahoo.com.

Thank you,
Geetha Eragoda



"Don't go around saying the world owes you a living. The world owes you nothing. It was here first"

~~ Mark Twain ~~

Vidya Scholarship Trust Fund News Update

We passed \$10,000 mark of our goal:

Our goal is to reach \$20,000 as you know. It is with so much joy that we announce that we passed the \$10,000 mark this month with a generous donation of \$1,000 from our President Geetha Eragoda and her daughter Shalini Eragoda, and we are in the second phase of our journey. Please support our cause. Send your donation to our Treasurer, Lakmini Widadanapathirana, 2417, NE 20th Street, Renton, WA 98056. Any amount is welcome. It will be a win-win situation because you will get the tax benefits for your donation if you are in USA. We are a Non-Profit Organization registered with the US Federal Government. So far, half of the donations were received from non-members. Members, Please donate and get your friends to donate to this worthy cause. Even a small amount of monthly checks will help. Thank you in advance!

Thank you to the outgoing Board of Trustees of the Vidya Trust Fund (VSTF):

As you might already know, the Vidya Scholarship Trust Fund is a Trust legally registered in Sri Lanka, thanks to our attorneys, Mahesica Giragama and Harshi Waters. According to the Guidelines set up for the Trust, the distinguished officers who served in the Trust in Sri Lanka from 2009 to 2011 needed to be changed after two years of service. The outgoing Trustees who helped us establish the VSTF and started giving scholarships to economically disadvantaged students at Mahamaya were: Dr. Samanmala Dorabawila (President), Mrs. Uthpala Seneviratne (Vice President), Mrs. Visakha Wickremaratne (Secretary), Mrs. Nilakshi Weragama (Treasurer), Mrs. Indrani Karaluvinne (Assistant Secretary), Ms. Dharshani Nanayakkara and Mrs. Sujatha Werake (Trustees and representatives of MGCAANA). A big thank you to all of you who made our dream come true. Dear Trustees in Sri Lanka, without your support, we would not have achieved what we did. We know that you put a lot of your time and effort into it. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts for all what you did.

Welcome the New Board of Trustees and Officers of the Vidya Scholarship Trust Fund for the Year 2011/12:

President: Mrs. Priyanka Wansekera Ranthnakumara, Vice President: Dr. Himashini Diyabalanage, Secretary: Miss Dharshani Nanayakkara, Treasurer: Mrs. Indrani Karaluvinne, Assistant Secretary: Dr. Samanmala Dorabawila, Trustees: Mrs. Nilakshi Weragama and Mrs. Uthpala Seneviratne.

Welcome aboard all of you! We are certain that we will have a wonderful year. Thank you for accepting our invitations to be part of VSTF. We are looking forward to march with you on this rewarding path.

The new telephone number to the MGCAANA headquarters has changed to 425-738-1223.

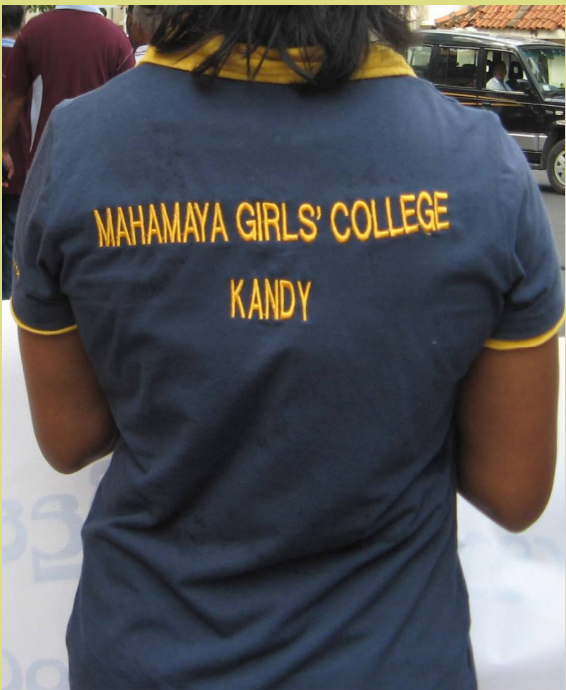
Sujatha Werake and Dharshani Nanayakkara
(CO-Chairs, Endowment Committee)

Dear Members,

To both demonstrate our school spirit and fundraise, we want to give you the opportunity to own your own MGCAANA t-shirt in our school colors. Please send us your ideas and suggestions regarding the design of the t-shirts, which will also include our crest. Please also find attached picture of our Colombo branch t-shirt and feel free to make suggestions about any pattern or color combination of your choice. Once we get all the ideas, we can decide upon the nicest and most cost-effective t-shirt.

Send your suggestions to:
mahamaya_alumnae@yahoo.com.

Thank you.
Geetha Eragoda



“Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the ones we’ve been waiting for. We are the change that we seek.”

~~~~ Barack Obama ~~~~



# Working women and time management

My mother is my role model. She perfectly managed her time giving us, my sister and I, the best possible childhood experience ever. All her responsibilities on her family were taken care of in a timely manner and she managed to have some time for personal and even for social events as well. But something that I did not share with you is the fact that my mother is a stay-home mom. Both my sister and I value the fact she stays home to this date (I agree, it's unfair to her, but still we enjoy every bit of her company). Today, I am a mother of a three year old son. I love my husband and my child so dearly and want to give them the love and care as much. But, am I willing to make the same sacrifices that my mother made and give-up the career that I love so much? My honest answer to the above question is a "No". Still, I want to give everything to my family and do a justice to my professional life. That's when the idea of time management kicked in. A better time management can do a lot, if not all. With the help of the information that I am about to share, I believe that you would be able to manage and handle at least some of your responsibilities with ease and comfort if you are a working woman.

Managing time is not an easy task to begin with and when it comes to women who are taking care of the responsibilities of household and outdoor work, it becomes even more challenging. In majority of the cases, it gets difficult for working women to handle work, family, household and most of all, their personal and social lives all together. I had been struggling with time management with three equally important parts in my life; family (role as a wife and a mother), teaching (as a professor or an educator) and research (as a physicist!). I have labeled teaching and research as two separate rolls because my career life is not balanced without the other. I struggled almost two years to find best methods to fit everything into my schedule and not do anything unreasonable to my family. Being a part of an Asian family oriented culture, I was always able to give out 100% to my family but not so much when trying to handle the other two parts in my life. There were delays and mishaps, ups and downs in my professional life and some times the work I love so much appeared to be a burden. The overwhelming stress that I was carrying along caused distorting other things and in no time the whole world around me spun harder than I could control. Everything got messed up as I was unable to finish and furnish the tasks what I have started before.

A dear friend brought me the news of time managing. I decided to organize everything; my daily-schedule, weekly schedule and the monthly schedule in an effective manner I trained myself to stick to a plan and finish a job in a given time frame before starting the second. This helped me access useful information and complete my duties in a successful way. No mishaps, or delays and as a result the other tasks that I had to perform apart from my work were left unaffected. Gradually when things started to have a smooth flaw, I was able to categorize my tasks into four parts; Urgent, Very important, Important but not urgent, Not so important or urgent. It was extremely helpful for me to figure out the first to reach out task and that alone changed my restless life to a busy but a peaceful one. Peace of mind is an invaluable thing for a woman like me who is in a very competitive, yet demanding and a male dominated field in academia who has number of deadlines to meet in daily basis. I find time management as the key for any successful person as it turns you into a leader who is able to schedule tasks and accomplish the goals in a timely manner. The modern, technology (computers, cell phones, iPods, iPads etc.) has made it easier and feasible for us to survive with our schedules. We can get help from the technology to plan up the work ahead of time or simply use an old fashioned note book.

Still there are times when I struggle with simultaneous "Urgent" matters that strike me from two sides, family and work. In such occasions I don't hesitate or even think twice but take care of my family first, and thankfully, I have my colleagues to pitch in for me in a very short notice and a very supportive husband who is willing to risk anything for the family. I still don't have everything in order, but I am happier.

I am new to motherhood as well as to my profession, and have a long way ahead. Time management helped me order my life in a better way giving me enough strength to take care of myself, my family, my students, and even my friends and relatives. I still don't have a lot of time for social gatherings, but if necessary I can make time for one or two such events without twisting my monthly schedules. Along the way toward my success in time management, I had to make some sacrifices as well but the good thing is I always managed to come around with alternatives - I gave a pause to travelling abroad for scientific research, instead started advising students who can travel and do the work. I started pedagogical research allocating less time for experimental research and stay at least one week-day home spending that time with my son. As I have learned from my own experience, proper time management allows us to have some spare time to explore our inner lives and even do something enjoyable every once in a while.

Although I didn't mention my father in this article as I wanted to stay in focus on working women, I don't have a better example than my father who illustrated the best time management being a working man. He did his time management with a very clear graceful mind. He succeeded as a school principle, as a wonderful husband and more than anything as a great father who spent more than enough time with us, his children. ***It's been six months after passing away of my dear Appachchi and this article is dedicated to him for the love, guidance and support he rendered to all who were privileged in knowing him and specially for raising me up to be the person who I am today"***

Hashini Mohottala



**Ayanthi Walpita & Kennath Walpita welcomed their baby son Sahela Walpita recently. Ayanthi & her family reside in Los Angeles, USA**

## Birth Announcements

**Inoka Amara-koon & Nuwan Munasinghe from Winnipeg, Canada are the proud parents of baby Seth Munasinghe.**



***To understand your parents' love you must raise children yourself.***

***Chinese proverb***



## Mahamaya Alumna Anagarika Kemanthie Will Soon Become a Samanera Bhikshuni

Historically, the order of nuns is said to have been instituted by the Lord Buddha at Ven. Ananda’s repeated plea and his foster mother Maha Pajapati Gothami became the founder of the Order of Nuns. Emperor Asoka’s daughter, Ven. Sanghamitta with her brother Ven. Mahinda went to Sri Lanka to spread the teachings of the Buddha in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century B.C.,and established the Bhikkhuni Sasana in Sri Lanka. According to historical records, the first Buddhist nun ordained in Sri Lanka was King Devanampiyatissa’s consort, Queen Anula. Kemanthie Gayathri Nandasena was born on May 15<sup>th</sup> 1975 in Colombo during the Vesak eve. She received her pre-primary education at Bishop’s College, Colombo, primary education upto grade 3 at Sirimavo Bandaranaike Girls’ School, Colombo. This was the time Kemanthie started going to homes for the aged with her likeminded father and helping the residents in bathing, cleaning, cutting their nails, and such. Then her parents were transferred to University of Peradeniya. Mr. Nandasena worked as the Bursar and her mother Sudharma (my classmate at Mahamaya in the early 60s) worked as the Senior Assistant Registrar at Peradeniya University. Kemanthie joined Mahamaya at Grade 4 and finished AL in the biological sciences in 1994. Being the only child, she got the full attention of her parents. She participated in numerous activities in school. She became a President’s Girl Scout. After leaving school, she received her B.Sc. from University of Delhi, India with first class honors, Post-Graduate Degree in Botany with a first class honors from Murdoch University, Perth, and her Ph.D. in Microbiology from the same University. She worked as a research scientist and teacher at the Centre of

Rhizobium Studies, Division of Science and engineering and teacher in Biological Sciences at Murdoch University, Western Australia, from 2004-2010.

Kemanthi had a natural inclination towards the spiritual life. She dedicated her life to the cultivation and realization of the Path leading to liberation taught by the Gautama Buddha. She asked for permission from her mother and step father to renounce the lay life to which they gave their blessings. She traveled to Aranya Bodhi, the forest hermitage in Northern California, USA (<http://www.aranyabodhi.org/>) and ordained as an Anagarika. She has surpassed many of us in the spiritual sphere. After the ordination she wrote to her mother and her cousins about the ordination.

“I went to Aranya Bodhi last sunday and Ayya Tathaaloka did a beautiful ordination for me on monday the 9th of August 2010. It was a very private event with just only the 3 bikkunis, 3 samaneries and Jill the lady who donated the land participating. It was in the evening and was a candle light event. Really beautiful. Ayya also read parts of the Samanapala sutta from Diga nikaya for me for inspiration (sutta 2). Ayya Tathaaloka cut off the 1st piece of hair and also ended the last bit of shaving from the crown of my head. All other bikkunis (Ayya Sobana, Ayya Suddhamma) and all the samaneries also did a bit of shaving each. So I felt really special. I was contemplating nibbana the whole time they were doing the shaving and then I offered the hair on a golden tray covered with 8 large wild grape leaves to the Buddha and the next day I discarded it into a giant redwood grove for the animals to use it up for making nests. The following day the whole community came down to Fremont to get a blessing for the most venerable Ajahn Maha Presute and my first meal after becoming an anagarika was a big feast at Wat Buddhanusron consisting over 20 dishes!!!! how ironic isn't it?”



Anagarika Kemanthie in meditation. (Courtesy: Serpentine/Jarrahdale Examiner)

As far as we know, Anagarika Kemanthi would be the first Mayan to be ordained as a Samanera Bhikkhuni. It will take place on Sunday, October 30, 2011 at Dhammasara Buddhist Nuns’ Monastery in Gidgegannup in Perth, Australia, (<http://www.dhammasara.org.au>) where the Sri Lankan trained, Australian nun Ajahn Vayama is Abbess. Famous Australian monk Ajahn Brahm was instrumental in establishing the Dhammasara Monastery. After she joined the monastery in Perth, Kemanthi’s supervisor and his wife went to visit her at the monastery. They were in tears. The supervisor wrote, “Kemanthie, if all the scientists we have had in the CRS were only half as good as you, my life would be a breeze! Thanks for being such a vital part of us, the relationship has been wonderful, and the benefits to the CRS far outweigh the effort we put in. And as I said on Monday, we are always open for your return should you choose that path further on in your life.”

Kemanthi told them that if she comes back even for a short time, it would be like a dirty cloth that was washed with so much struggle to make it clean, can become dirty again and would take a longer time to get it cleaned. Then they understood why she gave up all material things. Kemanthi’s family and my family happened to live in the University housing at Peradeniya University for many years. I know she had good friends in her neighborhood. I heard from them about her. These are some comments her friends made about growing up with her.

From Isuru Seneviratne:

Kemanthi is one of the kindest, curious, smart, loving people I have known. Since she moved to our neighborhood at Meewatura we have been 'kalana mituru,' for almost two decades now. K, my brother, and I were almost inseparable, as we explored our world and expanded our horizons. We planned elaborate "31st Nite" parties, made a superhero comic book, created many a Vesak lantern and watched Back To The Future for the hundredth time. We would watch plays performed at the Sarathchandra Open Air Theater and discuss the stories, costume design, and acting until the cows came home. We were very competitive as well, challenging ourselves on many levels.

Her intellectual curiosity is boundless. To assist her A/L biology course, she acquired a human skull to study anatomy! Combined with her genuine desire to teach others, she was a great resource for her friends. Much later, when she visited Sri Lanka post-tsunami as a Doctor in Genetic Engineering, she was trying to train rhizobiums to clean the contaminated water, or something like that.

Through all the fun and games, she was getting serious about the higher goal of spiritual fulfillment. While she always knew to chant the Buddhist sutras, I think two factors pushed her towards further detachment. The first is her mother's path in life towards meditation and Dhamma, while in Sri Lanka and also in California. The second was her moving the Perth, which she dubbed the "Buddhist Center of the Western World" (yes, she still has that penchant for exaggeration!) Having met Ajahn Brahmavamso Mahathera, a jovial spirit who gives sage advice in a simple and entertaining manner, I am inclined to agree. From K's early involvement in the expansion of the forest monastery at Serpentine by selling her artwork, to her path towards ordination, she was drawn to the clarity and light emitted by his teachings. I have seen her steady transition and having met her in Perth in early 2010, I think she made the decision with conviction. She is still the bubbly personality with infinite curiosity and kindness, but is focusing her efforts on sharpening her mind. I pray she attains peace in her ordained life and spreads good words and deeds!

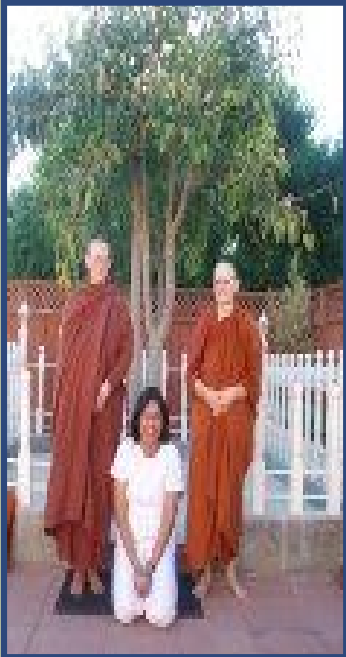
Former Prof. of Sanskrit at University of Peradeniya, Ms. Ratna Handurukande wrote: . The qualities that impressed me most were her kindness, cheerfulness and willingness to help at all times. She showed leadership abilities too. I recall how she organized her young friends and took over Wesak decorations in my garden, or came in a group to help me pack when I was about to leave the neighborhood. I have no doubt that she will continue her service-oriented career as a samaneri and bhikkuni in the future. I wish her great success in her spiritual progress



***No pleasure philosophy, no sensuality, no place nor power, no material success can for a moment give such inner satisfaction as the sense of living for good purposes, for maintenance of integrity, for the preservation of self-approval.***

~ ~ Minot Simons ~ ~





Kmanthi’s mother said:  
“One time when she was waiting for the school van to come she saw Ven. Ampitiye Rahula going on pindapatha on the Galaha Rd. Since it was morning not many houses were opened. Seeing that, she gave her lunch parcel as Dana. Then in the evening she asked her house maid to come and stand with her everyday so if the venerable one comes again she can offer good Dana.”

I have many good things to write about Anagarika Kemanthi. This article may not be enough for that purpose. I will write about her again sometime in the future with the pictures of Samaneri ordination that will take place on 30<sup>th</sup> October, 2011.

May the Noble Triple Gem bless her! With tireless effort, courage and determination, may she attain her aspiration!

Sujatha Werake

Adrift in a Reverie...

Promenading in a barren Fall evening...  
Coldness in the air...  
Penetrates my heart and soul,  
Rumbling of the yellowish withering leaves...  
Haunts me with loneliness...  
Gloominess everywhere...  
  
Reminiscing the stretches of lavish greenery...  
Under the lustrous warm Sun...  
Arrays of lavishing blooms,  
Bluish, crisp pools of waters,  
Plethoric and mellifluous Amba, King Coconut, Mangoose.  
Laughters and cheerful voices of gaiety...  
Echo my ears...  
  
Lost in the reverie of my splendorous Homeland...  
Ponder on a day...  
To run into the arms of my beloved Amma and Appachchi...  
To amuse in the cozy cradle of their Love...

“Dedicated to my dearest parents; Mrs Manel Boghapitiya and Mr. S.M Abeyrathne.”  
By:- Prabodani Samarakoon

Picture source :- <http://www.layoutsparks.com/1/138825/love-night-fall-dark-31000.html>

“You Raise Me Up”

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When I am down and, oh my soul, so weary;  
When troubles come and my heart burdened be;  
Then, I am still and wait here in the silence,  
Until you come and sit awhile with me.  
  
You raise me up, so I can stand on mountains;  
You raise me up, to walk on stormy seas;  
I am strong, when I am on your shoulders;  
You raise me up... To more than I can be.  
  
You raise me up, so I can stand on mountains;  
You raise me up, to walk on stormy seas;  
I am strong, when I am on your shoulders;  
You raise me up... To more than I can be.  
  
There is no life - no life without its hunger;  
Each restless heart beats so imperfectly;  
But when you come and I am filled with wonder,  
Sometimes, I think I glimpse eternity.

You raise me up, so I can stand on mountains;  
You raise me up, to walk on stormy seas;  
I am strong, when I am on your shoulders;  
You raise me up... To more than I can be.

Brendan Graham (lyricist)  
Rolf Løvland (composer)