

Welcome Speech

Good Afternoon/Evening everybody.

On behalf of the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee of the Mahamaya Girls College Alumnae Association, it is with great pleasure that I welcome all of you to our 12th Annual General Meeting of MGCAANA. Welcome!

I must say a BIG THANK YOU to all of you, who are here today. You have travelled here from all over the continent to participate in this event.

I heartily thank the members of the East Coast who formed a Committee and worked diligently for months to make this conference happen in Maryland.

Mrs. Nelum Dorabawila,

Mrs. Ishani Herath

Mrs. Eloma Hettiarachchi

Mrs. Tamara Jayasundara

Mrs. Sudharma Upamali Ratnayake

Mrs. Inoka Tennekone,

Without you, this event could not have happened as smoothly as it has. Thank you!

My heartfelt gratitude goes to these Mayans who contributed to make this event a successful one today.

- Amila Abeykoon
- Soranji Atthanayake
- Poorni Danthenarayena
- Sriyani Dissanayake
- Nelum Dorabawila
- Vajeera Dorabawila
- Shashikala Galpothawela
- Eloma Hettiarachchi
- Avanthi Hulangamuwe
- Tamara Jayasundera

- Thanuji Naveratne
- Chaturi Nugawela
- Iyanka Ponnamoeruma
- Hemali Rajepakse
- Upamali Ratnayake
- Ishani Sirisena
- Ranjani Siriwardena
- Devika Subesinghe
- Darshani Weerakoon

I will now give you a brief account of what we were able to achieve during 2015-2016.

Vidya Scholarship Trust Fund (VSTF): One of our biggest achievements is the Vidya Scholarship Trust Fund (VSTF). With the help of the VSTF Committee, especially Dr. Himashinie Diyabalange, Ms. Vihara Dharmaratne, Mrs. Indrani Karaluwinne and the rest of the Board of Trustees in Sri Lanka, we were able to award 10 scholarships of Rs: 6,000 per student to economically disadvantaged students at Mahamaya. The trust funds now stand at \$ 15,387.45 with \$4,612.55 needed to reach our goal.

Nanda Pussegoda Leula Memorial Scholarship Fund (NPLMSF): Another achievement of equal proportion is the Nanda Pussegoda Leula Memorial Scholarship Fund. Mrs. Kanthi Leula, gives six full scholarships of Rs: 40,000 per student every year in memory of her mother, our dear alumnae, Mrs. Nanda Pussegoda Leula. The recipients of these scholarships are most academically deserving and economically disadvantaged students at Mahamaya. I am very pleased to announce a significant donation of \$ 2,500.00 towards this fund has been donated by Mrs. Kanthi Leula for the year 2015. We have given six scholarships to the children.

Graduate/Undergraduate (Scholarships to Mahamaya Alumnae studying in the USA and Canada): In our Graduate and undergraduate scholarship program, we were able to increase the scholarship amount from \$ 250 to \$500. Two scholarships were given this year.

Fund raising: we did well in fund raising too. A special word of thanks MUST go to Mrs. Indrani Gunawardena who used her talents to create beautiful greeting cards to raise funds. Thank you for your generous donation of \$1,000! The silent auction that we are having today was her idea to help raise funds for the Vidya Scholarship Trust Fund. Please support this event.

Maya Puwath: Our bi-monthly e-publication, “Maya Puwath” is our way of keeping touch with you throughout the year. Credit for this year’s publication goes to our regular writers Who have provided articles to the e-newsletter and to committee members. Please consider contributing to Maya Puwath, regularly.

Local Charity Donation: We made a donation of \$ 100 to the Tyler’s Hope Foundation, for their research and development on Dystonia.

Challenges: Compared to the achievements, we have a lot more challenges to meet. I will briefly list these challenges in order of priority.

1. Increasing membership. We all must work together to increase MGAANA membership, since this is our main source of funding. On behalf of MGAANA, I urge you to help us in this area in the years to come.
2. Fund raising: This is another area we need improvement. Every dollar counts. We greatly appreciate your ideas, leadership and participation in raising funds for MGCAANA.

Special word of thanks: I thank you Mrs. Sujatha Werake for your constant guidance. You were there for me every step of the way. Mrs. Harshi Waters, When I started I had no idea of the legal issues and by-laws that come with the position. You were there when I needed explanation and answers to questions. When I had the challenge of organizing last year’s AGM in Canada, your advice and help was enormous. Geetha Eragoda, your attention to detail helped us tremendously throughout the year. I thank you and it has been a privilege and an honor to work with such a talented group of women. I thank the Advisory board, Board of Directors, and the Executive Committee members for the monumental support you have given to me. They were an excellent team. I had such tremendous support from previous executive members and truly from so many members of MGCAANA.

My experience: I am again privileged and happy to say that my experience as the President of MAGAANA was very positive. I enjoyed bringing Mayans together and planning events for a worthy cause. I learnt a lot and the credit must go to the Board of Directors and the Membership. Two years has gone by quickly. A great deal has been achieved and of course I have not done it on my own. Together we have accomplished MGCAANA's mission and vision. Collectively we have made this year a huge success.

Last but not least let's thank the Mayans in Maryland who have done an excellent job organizing this event. On behalf of the MGAANA, I want to say I am very proud of you all.

Thank you and have a Good Evening!

Prepared by Sriyani Dissanayake