

Secretary's Report CUFSAA-NA 2018-2019 Term

Executive Summary:

CUFSAA-NA Executive committee was led by Dr. Chandana Goonetilleke during this term.

The second Tamasha held in Cleveland OH, was a tremendous success with over 250 participants.

The following Projects were completed in 2018-2019:

Instrument donations to the Colombo University:

1. Two "MultispeQ" Instruments to the Department of Plant Sciences.
2. A Celestron CPC 1100 GPS 11-inch telescope, a 2-inch Hydrogen alpha solar telescope (Lunt LS50THa 50mm w/B600) plus a CMOS monochrome camera (ZWO ASI 174mm mono) and all necessary accessories to the Department of Physics
3. A Cannon EOS Rebel T6i DSLR camera with 18-55 mm and 85-250 mm lenses kit, together with Canon EOS shoulder bag and a Sandisk 16GB Extreme UHS-1 SDHC memory card to the FOS Media.

Scholarships and Gold Medals

1. Professor Valentine Joseph Gold Medal/Memorial Scholarship. The first gold medal was awarded to Mr. K.H.A.Praveen Niranda, a Mathematics Special degree student.
2. A Student Assistant Account was established to support emergency funding.

Miscellaneous Projects

1. Over 140 text books were sent to the faculty in 2019.
2. The mentoring program has expanded to over 60 mentors across North America and have supported many students.

CUFSAA-NA executive committee acknowledges the support of many alumni who have contributed to these programs and making them a success. Additional details for each of these activities can be found on our website, <https://www.cufsa.com/>

The goal of this report is to outline the activities of the Colombo University Science Faculty Alumni Association – North America (CUFSAA-NA) completed during 2018-2019 and the future vision and aspirations of the association going forward.

The new 25-member Executive Committee was appointed at the second AGM on May 26th, 2018 for the term 2018-2020. Dr. Chandana Goonetilleke, was elected as the President of the Association. The executive committee continued with the tradition of holding monthly Skype meetings typically on the first Monday of each month at 9.00 pm Eastern Time to discuss ongoing and future activities as well as the current budget.

The association's online presence through its website (www.cufsa.org OR www.cufsa.com) and social media account (<https://www.facebook.com/CUFSAA/>) is being used for promoting fundraising activities, informing the membership of the association's achievements and ongoing projects, releasing regular newsletters, as well as to attract new members from all over North America under one umbrella.

At the end of the 2018-2019 year, we are happy to report that we were able to accomplish the following achievements with the support of our membership.

Membership

At the end of September, 2019, we have 471 members. We are encouraging past students, academic staff members and specifically junior alumni of the University of Colombo Science Faculty to join the association by completing the online membership posted on the website, <https://www.cufsaa.com/membership-form/>

Fundraising

Fundraising continues to be a vital component for CUFSA-NA to ensure that we can initiate and support many projects, in line with our mission statement. CUFSA-NA would like to thank all for your continued support in our efforts over the past three years.

Our major fundraising events/projects of the 2018-2019 year involved the following.

Tamasha 2018 – The Dinner Dance and the AGM

The second Tamasha dinner dance held on May 26, 2018 at the LaCentre Conference & Banquet Facility, Westlake, OH was attended by over 250 alumni members and well-wishers. Our sincere thanks to the Chief Guest, Prof. Veranja Karunaratne, Vice Chancellor, Sri Lanka Institute of Nanotechnology (SLINTEC) Academy, all sponsors and advertisers of the Souvenir, all those who provided special and congratulatory messages/articles to the Souvenir, Prof. Thusitha Abeyunga for helping with the media presentation, Dr. Sumedha Jayasena for providing the movie “The Letter” for screening at the brunch, Mr. Lakshman Caldera for photography, Nethrie Iddipily for the cake, Staff and Management of LaCentre Banquet Facility, Araliya Band and singers, Visharada Shalika Aroshini and Desmond Rodrigo, Full Color Printing, FOS Media Unit, members of the local organizing committee and many unnamed well-wishers and donors for making this event a great success.

Raffle Draw at Tamasha 2018

As an additional fundraising activity for the association, we conducted a raffle draw during the Tamasha, 2018 to raise 502.00 dollars. Many thanks to all those who purchased raffle tickets and to the sponsors who provided raffle draw prizes.

PROJECTS and OTHER ACTIVITIES:

Donation of “MultispeQ” Instruments to the Department of Plant Sciences

CUFSA-NA donated two MultispeQ instruments to the Department of Plant Sciences of the University of Colombo. Thanks to CUFSA-NA membership, we were able to purchase one MultispeQ instrument. The CEO and Co-founder of the PhotosynQ, the company that manufactures MultispeQ instrument, Mr. Prabode Weebadde and Professor Cholani Weebadde of the Department of Plant, Soil and Microbial Sciences of the Michigan State University (CUFSA-NA members) also donated another unit at the handover ceremony held at the Deans Office of the University of Colombo on December 21st, 2018. <https://www.cufsaa.com/multispeq/>

Telescope Project to the Department of Physics

At the request from Professor Chandana Jayaratne of the Physics Department CUFSA-NA purchased and donated a Celestron CPC 1100 GPS 11-inch telescope and all necessary accessories based on the technical recommendations provided by the Telescope Project Committee. The telescope and accessories were to carry out necessary astronomical observations by the students of the Faculty of Science for their research projects, and for public outreach events. The Telescope Project Committee was headed by Dr. Nalin Samarasingha. The telescope was officially handed over to the University on August 18, 2018.

The telescope will provide many years of astronomical aspiration for university students and Sri Lankans at large and will be used for many undergraduate research opportunities for final year Physics Special

students. The CUFSAA-NA telescope already played a major roll for the training of Sri Lankan national teams to International Olympiad on Astronomy and Astrophysics (IOAA) and the International Astronomy Olympiad (IAO). Sri Lanka won its first-ever Silver Medal in 2018 after 12 years since started participation in Olympiads in 2007. Among the activities planned in the near future, the CUFSAA-NA telescope is expected to play an integral role during the December 26, 2019 annular solar eclipse visible from northern Sri Lanka. The telescope will be transported to Jaffna to carry out observations as part of a joint research effort involving Sri Lankan and foreign universities and research institutes. Please visit our website (<http://www.cufsa.com/telescope-project/>) for one-year anniversary report on the Telescope project.

In addition, CUFSAA-NA identified that there is a need to monitor solar activity that can be put into effective use in undergraduate research and public outreach.

After much discussion with Prof. Chandana Jayaratne, CUFSAA-NA purchased a 2-inch Hydrogen-alpha solar telescope (Lunt LS50THa 50mm w/B600) plus a CMOS monochrome camera (ZWO ASI 174mm mono) for imaging the sun for \$1,348 from the leftover money in the telescope account and shipped out to the University in September, 2019. This combination is capable of imaging the entire sun and the immediate region around it.

UoC plans to use this for undergraduate student research involving Hydrogen-alpha observations of the sun and during the December 26, 2019 annular solar eclipse.

Camera for FOS Media

This project was spearheaded by Executive Committee member, Dr. Oshadha Ranasingha. A Cannon EOS Rebel T6i DSLR camera with 18-55 mm and 85-250 mm lenses kit, together with Canon EOS shoulder bag and a Sandisk 16GB Extreme UHS-1 SDHC memory card was purchased for \$749.00. The entire unit was shipped to the University of Colombo to be donated for the FOS Media.

Professor Valentine Joseph Gold Medal/Memorial Scholarship and Memorial Lecture Series

Professor Valentine Joseph (27 January 1929 – 15 March 2017) was a prominent mathematician, noted for his excellent contributions to teaching at the University of Colombo. In 1949, he entered the University of Ceylon (Colombo Campus) to study mathematics and graduated with a first class degree and continued teaching for 42 years until his retirement in 1994. In memory of his great service, under the leadership of Prof. Kirthi Premadasa, CUFSAA-NA decided to honor him with the provision of two scholarships (LKR 5,000 each per month) to two final year special degree students in mathematics, taking both academic achievements and economic needs into consideration and a gold medal in his name. The gold medal along with a cash award was established with the donation of \$3,122 to the UoC by CUFSAA-NA. Mr. K.H.A.Praveen Niranda, a Mathematics Special degree student of the Faculty of Science became the first student to receive this gold medal together with a cash prize of Rs.25,000 (sponsored by CUFSAA-NA) at the 2019 convocation. Establishment of the two scholarships is in progress and we hope to award these scholarships in 2020. CUFSAA-NA thanks everyone who have made generous contributions to date to raise \$10,766.62 out of the \$13,000 target for the endowment fund to establish this scholarship.

CUFSAA-NA Student Assistant Account

The Emergency Fund to help UoC Science Faculty Students was initially started in 2016 to help students affected by the unexpected flooding. This effort was strengthened by establishing an official Emergency fund to support Science Faculty students who is in need for help under emergency situations. An amount up to Rs. 25,000 per student can be disbursed from this account as the need arises (without prior consultation with CUFSAA-NA). Financial assistance must be related to student's educational needs either for undergraduate education assistance or for the higher education assistance.

The Faculty has accepted CUFSAA-NA's proposal and we are in the process of establishing a ledger account to initiate this program.

Mentoring Program

CUFSAA-NA created this program to provide guidance and advice to Sri Lankan graduates who are interested in higher education in United States and Canada as well as students who have recently graduated from United States and Canada and looking for employment opportunities. Many students were supported during 2018-2019 year through our volunteers, nearly 60 mentors across most of the 50 States in the United States and Canada. Other resources provided under this program included a presentation full of useful tips for transitioning from a graduate of University of Colombo to a graduate student in the US, providing tips for Teaching Assistants arriving from Sri Lanka and tips for Sri Lankan Graduate students entering the corporate world.

Take a Book Program

Take a Book Program is another successful project launched by CUFSAA-NA through the generosity of our members. This program has supplied numerous textbooks to the faculty of Science. Under this program, CUFSAA-NA members who are visiting Sri Lanka for vacations take a book with them and hand over to the Dean of the Faculty of Science. We also have shipped out a large consignment of text books regularly donated by CUFSAA-NA members and the latest shipment included over 140 text books covering many scientific fields donated by CUFSAA-NA members in April 2019.

High Performance Computers for Bioinformatics Special Degree Program of the Department of Plant Sciences

CUFSAA-NA Executive Committee has approved the proposal received from Prof. Chandrika Nanayakkara of the Department of Plant Sciences to fund of one High performance computers for the bioinformatics special degree program. A CUFSAA-NA sub-committee under the leadership Prof. Harshica Fernando is in the process of initiating the fund raising efforts for this project to raise \$3000.

Future Vision

Our future vision is to challenge ourselves to further expand these activities and accept new challenges for the benefit of our Alma Mater.

As our association continues to grow, it is important that we expand our membership with new generation of alumni so that they can continue our mission for years to come. So, we kindly ask our younger generation to join CUFSAA-NA and get involved with its activities.

Our sincere thanks to the members of the CUFSAA-NA Executive Committee who worked so hard to set these goals and to our membership for their generous donations to achieve these goals for the benefit of our Alma Mater.

In Memoriam

Our sincere sympathy for the following member who passed away during the 2018-2019 term.
Dr. Asoka Biyagama – CUFSAA-NA Executive Committee Member 2016-2018 (Department of Chemistry, 1986)

Respectfully Submitted,

Dr. Chandrasiri Jayakody and Dr. Randara Pulukkody
Joint Secretaries/CUFSAA-NA

Secretary's Report

Colombo University Faculty of Science Alumni Association – North America (CUFSAA-NA) 2019-2020 Year

Executive Summary:

CUFSAA-NA Executive committee was led by Dr. Chandana Goonetilleke during this term as its President.

The third Tamasha get together planned to be held in Toronto, Canada in Sep, 2020, was postponed to 2021 due to COVID-19 pandemic. An alternate venue is under discussion for 2021.

The following activities were accomplished or are being continued:

Instrument donations to the Science Faculty, University of Colombo

1. A Celestron CPC 1100 GPS 11-inch telescope, a 2-inch Hydrogen alpha solar telescope (Lunt LS50THa 50mm w/B600), CMOS cameras and other necessary accessories to the Department of Physics (\$8,362.80)
2. A Cannon EOS Rebel T6i DSLR camera with 18-55 mm and 85-250 mm lenses kit, together with Canon EOS shoulder bag and a Sandisk 16GB Extreme UHS-1 SDHC memory card to the FOS Media (\$749.00)
3. Remote Learning Project, eighteen (18) laptops were donated to the needy students affected by COVID-19 lockdown difficulties (raised: \$12,902.85, Disbursed in 2020: \$10,456.48*)
4. Ten bright field light microscopes (Olympus CX23) and one dissection microscope (Olympus XZX7) to the Department of Zoology and Environment Sciences (raised: \$ 12,717.28 in the US and LKR. 640,000.00 in Sri Lanka, disbursed in 2020: 10,068.61, committed for 2021: \$1,780.00).
5. Two high performance Computers for Bioinformatics Special Degree Program of the Department of Plant Sciences. (Fund raising completed, Quotations in progress, Raised: \$2516.71, Committed for 2021: \$4,711.00 (Estimated to be in the range of LKR 796,000.00 – 848,000.00)*)

Gold Medals and Scholarships

1. Professor Valentine Joseph Gold Medal/Memorial Scholarship
The first gold medal and a cash prize of LKR. 25,000 were awarded at the 2019 convocation (\$3157.77). Additional funds were raised to establish two scholarships, LKR. 5,000/month each, in addition to the gold medal mentioned earlier. (raised: 12,432.67 committed for 2021: \$11,111.00*)
2. CUFSAA-NA Gold Medal for Computational Chemistry
CUFSAA-NA sponsored a gold medal to be awarded to the student with the best performance in the Honors degree in computational chemistry (\$1,675.00)
3. Mrs. Mallika Devi Mahendran Gold Medal & Scholarship
CUFSAA-NA also facilitated a Gold Medal and a scholarship offered by former Chemistry Professor, Prof. Mahendran in memory of his late wife, Mrs. Mallika Devi Mahendran (LKR. 800,000.00)
4. Professor L.M.V. Tillekeratne Gold Medal and Scholarship facilitated by CUFSAA-NA
A group of former students, friends and well-wishers have raised funds to honor Prof. L.M.V. Tillekeratne's service to the Department of Chemistry and the Faculty of Science with a Gold Medal and an Honorary Scholarship in 2021 (Funds raised: \$6,730.80)*.

Other Projects

Proposal for a Digital Forum for Sri Lankan Computational Chemists*

*Ongoing projects

Miscellaneous Projects

1. Over 140 textbooks were sent to the Faculty in 2019.
2. The mentoring program has expanded across North America and has supported many students.

CUFSAA-NA Executive Committee acknowledges the support of many alumni and well-wishers who have contributed to these programs and making them a success. Additional details for each of these activities can be found on our website, <https://www.cufsa.com/>

The goal of this report is to outline the activities of the Colombo University Faculty of Science Alumni Association – North America (CUFSAA-NA) completed during 2019-2020 and the future vision and aspirations of the association going forward.

The new 25-member Executive Committee was appointed at the second AGM on May 26, 2018 for the term 2018-2020. Dr. Chandana Goonetilleke, was elected as the President of the Association. Due to COVID-19 situation, the executive committee approved extension of the current committee for one more year to continue association activities without any disruptions. The executive committee continued with holding monthly Skype/Zoom meetings typically on the first Monday of each month at 9.00 pm Eastern Time to discuss ongoing and future activities as well as the current budget.

The association's online presence through its website (www.cufsa.org OR www.cufsa.com) and social media account (<https://www.facebook.com/CUFSAA/>) is being used for promoting fundraising activities, informing the membership of the association's achievements and ongoing projects, releasing regular newsletters, as well as to attract new members from all over North America under one umbrella.

At the end of the 2019-2020 term, we were able to accomplish the following achievements.

Membership

As of end of December, 2020, we have 526 members. We are encouraging past students, academic staff members, and specifically junior alumni of the University of Colombo Science Faculty to join the association to support our mission by completing the online membership application posted on the website, <https://www.cufsa.com/membership-form/>

Fundraising

Fundraising continues to be a vital component for CUFSAA-NA to ensure that we can initiate and support many projects, in line with our mission statement. CUFSAA-NA would like to thank all for your continued support in our efforts over the past four years.

Our major fundraising events/projects of the 2019-2020 year involved the following.

PROJECTS and OTHER ACTIVITIES:

Telescope Project to the Department of Physics

At the request from Professor Chandana Jayaratne of the Physics Department, CUFSAA-NA purchased and donated a Celestron CPC 1100 GPS 11-inch telescope, a 2-inch Hydrogen alpha solar telescope (Lunt LS50THa 50mm w/B600), CMOS cameras and additional accessories based on the technical recommendations provided by the Telescope Project Committee. The telescope and accessories were to carry out necessary astronomical observations by the students of the Faculty of Science for their research projects, and for public outreach events. The two telescopes already played a major role for training Sri Lankan national teams to International Olympiad on Astronomy and Astrophysics (IOAA) and the International Astronomy Olympiad (IAO). Sri Lanka won its first-ever Silver Medal in 2018 after 12 years since started participation in Olympiads in 2007. The telescopes also played an integral role during the

December 26, 2019 annular solar eclipse visible from northern Sri Lanka. The telescopes capable of imaging the entire Sun and the immediate region around it were transported to Jaffna to carry out observations as part of a joint research effort involving Sri Lankan and foreign universities and research institutes. (<http://www.cufsa.com/telescope-project/>)

Camera for FOS Media

A Canon EOS Rebel T6i DSLR camera with 18-55 mm and 85-250 mm lenses kit, together with Canon EOS shoulder bag and a Sandisk 16GB Extreme UHS-1 SDHC memory card was purchased for \$749.00. The entire unit was donated to the University of Colombo to be used for the FOS Media activities.

Remote Learning Project

This fund was established to support the remote learning project during COVID-19 pandemic. Twelve (12) new HP ProBook 450 G7 Notebooks with i5/i7 and 8GB RAM computers and six (6) refurbished laptop computers were purchased from the funds raised by CUFSAA-NA (raised: \$12,902.85, disbursed in 2020: \$10,456.48) and donated to eighteen students. Computers were donated through Dean/Science, Prof. Ranjith Mahanama and Prof. Upul Sonnadara during the COVID-19 lockdown period. This project helped several students tremendously for their remote learning activities, including assignments and exams during this difficult time.

Microscope Project for the Department of Zoology and Environmental Sciences

As per Prof. Deepthi Wickramasinghe's (Head of the Department of Zoology and Environmental Sciences) appeal for 10 x light microscopes (LKR 175,000 per unit) and one dissecting microscope (LKR 990,000.00) for the benefit of students, CUFSAA-NA reached out to the membership for help. Thanks to the generous donations from the membership and matching funds, CUFSAA-NA was able to raise \$ 12,717.28 in the US and LKR 640,000.00 in Sri Lanka. A direct payment was made to the Delmege Forsyth Company Limited to purchase *ten bright field light microscopes (Olympus CX23)*. *Balance committed for 2021 for the dissection microscope (Olympus XZX7) will be \$1,780.00*

High Performance Computers for Bioinformatics Special Degree Program of the Department of Plant Sciences

CUFSAA-NA Executive Committee has approved the proposal received from Prof. Chandrika Nanayakkara of the Department of Plant Sciences to fund two high performance computers for the bioinformatics special degree program. The fund raising was completed and we are in contact with the Department of Plant Sciences to finalize the quotation process for two (2) high performance computers so that we can move forward with transferring money to the department. Quotation estimates are in the range of LKR 796,000.00 – 848,000.00. (Committed for 2021: \$4,711.00)

Professor Valentine Joseph Gold Medals/Memorial Scholarships and Memorial Lecture Series

Professor Valentine Joseph (27 January 1929 – 15 March 2017) was a prominent mathematician, noted for his excellent contributions to teaching at the University of Colombo. In 1949, he entered the University of Ceylon (Colombo Campus) to study mathematics and graduated with a first class degree and continued teaching for 42 years until his retirement in 1994. CUFSAA-NA decided to honor him with the provision of two scholarships (LKR 5,000 each per month) to two final year special degree students in mathematics, taking both academic achievements and economic needs into consideration and two gold medals in his name. The first gold medal along with a cash award was already established with the donation of \$3157.77 to the UoC by CUFSAA-NA. Mr. K.H.A.Praveen Niranda, a Mathematics Special degree student of the Faculty of Science became the first student to receive this gold medal together with a cash prize of LKR 25,000 at the 2019 convocation. Going forward, it was decided to use the cash component of the first gold medal towards creating the second gold medal. Establishment of the two

scholarships (LKR 5000 each/month) is in progress and we hope to award these scholarships in 2021. CUFSA-NA thanks everyone who have made generous contributions to raise funds to establish these gold medals and scholarships. Funds committed for 2021: \$11,111.00)

CUFSAA-NA Gold Medal for Computational Chemistry

CUFSAA-NA sponsored a gold medal to be awarded to the student with the best performance in the honors degree in computational chemistry. This shall be awarded annually from the academic year 2020/2021 to a student with either a First or Second Class (Upper Division) in the honors degree examination in Computational Chemistry (Amount raised: 1,675.00). During his visit to Sri Lanka, CUFSA-NA founding President Prof. L.M.V. Tillekeratne handed over cash in LKR to the Head of the Chemistry Department, Prof. Ramanee Wijesekera to establish this gold medal. The annual interest of this capital investment would be used for this purpose.

The award shall be named as the 'CUFSAA-NA Gold Medal for Computational Chemistry'.

Mrs. Mallika Devi Mahendran Gold Medal & Scholarship

CUFSAA-NA also facilitated a Gold Medal and a scholarship offered by former Chemistry Professor, Prof. Mahendran in memory of his late wife, Mrs. Mallika Devi Mahendran. During his visit to Sri Lanka, Prof. Mahendran handed over the money (LKR 800,000.00) to the Head of the Chemistry Department to establish this gold medal and scholarship.

Facilitation of Professor L.M.V. Tillekeratne Gold Medal and Honorary Scholarship

A group of former students, friends and well-wishers of Prof. L.M.V. Tillekeratne has raised funds (\$6,730.80) to establish a gold medal for a final year chemistry special student who excels in research and a honorary scholarship for any second year student following BSc degree (based on academic, need base, leadership qualities, and other activities) to recognize Prof. Tillekeratne's service to the department and the Faculty for many decades.

We have sent the proposal to Prof. Upul Sonnadara, Dean/Science and Prof. Nalin de Silva, HoD/ Department of Chemistry and waiting for their feedback and Faculty Board/ Senate approval to follow up in 2021.

CUFSAA-NA Student Assistant Account (The Benevolent Fund)

The Emergency Fund to help UoC Science Faculty Students was initially started in 2016 to help students affected by the unexpected flooding. This effort was strengthened by establishing an official Emergency fund to support Science Faculty students who are in need of help under emergency situations.

An amount up to Rs. 25,000 per student can be disbursed from this account as the need arises (without prior consultation with CUFSA-NA). Financial assistance must be related to student's educational needs either for undergraduate education assistance or for the higher education assistance. This fund was recently renamed as the Benevolent Fund. Current balance is \$1056.55

Mentoring Program

CUFSAA-NA created this program to provide guidance and advice to Sri Lankan graduates who are interested in higher education in United States and Canada as well as students who have recently graduated from United States and Canada and looking for employment opportunities. Many students were supported during 2019-2020 year through our volunteer services. Other resources provided under this program, included presentations by CUFSA members.

These include:

1. Epigenetics in Drug Discovery – Prof. Viranga Tillekeratne, Dec. 20, 2019, UoC

2. From UOC to Wall Street – A glimpse into the Quant Finance industry” – Chryshanie Fernandopulle , Dec 30, 2019, UoC

Take a Book Program

Take a Book Program is another successful project launched by CUFSAA-NA through the generosity of our members. This program has supplied numerous textbooks to the Faculty of Science. Under this program, CUFSAA-NA members who are visiting Sri Lanka for vacations take a book with them and hand over to the Dean of the Faculty of Science. We also have shipped out a large consignment of text books regularly donated by CUFSAA-NA members and the latest shipment included over 140 text books covering many scientific fields donated by CUFSAA-NA members in April 2019.

Future Vision

Our future vision is to expand the activities and accept new challenges for the benefit of our Alma Mater.

To continue the growth of the association and the mission, we encourage all alumni to join CUFSAA-NA and get involved with its activities.

We would like to express our sincere appreciation to the membership for their contributions to achieve our goals to help our Alma Mater.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dr. Chandrasiri Jayakody and Dr. Randara Pulukkody
Joint Secretaries/CUFSAA-NA

Secretary's Report

Colombo University Faculty of Science Alumni Association – North America (CUFSAA-NA) 2020-2021 Year

Executive Summary:

CUFSAA-NA Executive committee was led by Dr. Chandana Goonetilleke during this term as its President.

The third Tamasha get together planned to be held in Toronto, Canada, was cancelled due to COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore it was decided to have the Annual General Meeting virtually this year on October 30, 2021.

The following activities were accomplished or are being continued:

Instrument/Equipment donations

1. Covid Relief Project in collaboration with the Faculty of Science - CUFSAA-NA, as of now, has donated nearly US \$ 150,000 dollars to purchase urgent life-saving medical equipment to hospitals around Sri Lanka. (raised: \$143,294.61, Disbursed: \$146,089.18*)
2. Remote Learning Project, Two (2) more laptops were donated to the needy students affected by Covid-19 lockdown difficulties (raised: \$12,902.85, Disbursed in 2020: \$10,456.48*)
3. Ten bright field light microscopes (Olympus CX23) and one dissection microscope (Olympus XZX7) to the Department of Zoology and Environment Sciences (raised: \$ \$13,317.28 including LKR. 640,000.00 in Sri Lanka, disbursed : \$11,791.81).
4. Two high performance Computers for Bioinformatics Special Degree Program of the Department of Plant Sciences. (Raised: \$2613.51, disbursed: \$4529.07)

Gold Medals and Scholarships

1. Professor Valentine Joseph Gold Medal/Memorial Scholarship
The first gold medal and a cash award of LKR. 25,000 were awarded at the 2019 convocation (\$3157.77). From next year onwards, two gold medals will be awarded with no cash award. Faculty Board approval was received recently to award two memorial scholarships, LKR. 5,000/month each, in addition to the gold medal mentioned earlier. The two scholarships will be awarded starting from 2022 annually. (raised: \$13,032.67, committed for 2021: \$9,052.36*).
2. Professor L.M.V. Tillekeratne Gold Medal and Scholarship facilitated by CUFSAA-NA
A group of former students, friends and well-wishers have raised funds to honor Prof. L.M.V. Tillekeratne's service to the Department of Chemistry and the Faculty of Science with a Gold Medal and an Honorary Scholarship, LKR 5,000/month. This was approved at the August 2021 Faculty Board Meeting. The Gold Medal and the Scholarship will be awarded starting from 2022 academic year. (Funds raised: \$8,030.80)*.

*Ongoing projects

CUFSAA-NA Executive Committee acknowledges the support of many alumni and well-wishers who have contributed to these programs and making them a success. Additional details for each of these activities can be found on our website, <https://www.cufsaa.com/>

Detailed Report

The goal of this report is to outline the activities of the Colombo University Faculty of Science Alumni Association – North America (CUFSAA-NA) completed during 2020-2021 and the future vision and aspirations of the association going forward.

The new 25-member Executive Committee was appointed at the second AGM on May 26, 2018 for the term 2018-2020. Dr. Chandana Goonetilleke, was elected as the President of the Association. Due to COVID-19 situation, the executive committee approved extension of the current committee for one more year to continue association activities without any disruptions. The executive committee continued with holding monthly Skype/Zoom meetings typically on the first Monday of each month at 9.00 pm Eastern Time to discuss ongoing and future activities as well as the current budget.

The association's online presence through its website (www.cufsa.org OR www.cufsa.com) and social media account (<https://www.facebook.com/CUFSAA/>) is being used for promoting fundraising activities, informing the membership of the association's achievements and ongoing projects, releasing regular newsletters, as well as to attract new members from all over North America under one umbrella.

At the end of the 2020-2021 term, we were able to accomplish the following achievements.

Membership

As of end of September, 2021, we have 532 members. We are encouraging past students, academic staff members, and specifically junior alumni of the University of Colombo Science Faculty to join the association to support our mission by completing the online membership application posted on the website, <https://www.cufsa.com/membership-form/>

Fundraising

Fundraising continues to be a vital component for CUFSAA-NA to ensure that we can initiate and support many projects, in line with our mission statement. CUFSAA-NA would like to thank all for your continued support in our efforts over the past years.

Our major fundraising events/projects of the 2020-2021 year involved the following.

PROJECTS and OTHER ACTIVITIES:

Covid Relief Project

We at CUFSAA-NA express our profound gratitude for your contributions to stifle the impact of the COVID menace in Sri Lanka. Thanks to your extraordinary generosity, CUFSAA-NA, as of now, has donated nearly US \$ 150,000 dollars to purchase urgent life-saving medical equipment to hospitals around Sri Lanka. These equipment includes Ventilators, Portable ventilators, High flow oxygen machines, Portable ultrasound scanners, Muti para monitors, Aspirators, ECG machines, Pulse oximeters, Laryngoscopes, Bronchoscopes, Cardiac defibrillators, Digital blood pressure machines and Syringe pumps. The hospitals benefited from these equipment included Colombo National Hospital, Lady Ridgeway Hospital, Marara, Dambadeniya, Kantale, Rathnapura, Laggala, Wathupitiwala, Biyagama, Chilaw, Welikanda, Badulla and Karawanella,

You were and still are responsible for saving so many lives and protecting the dreams and aspirations of families both rural and urban. We are also grateful to our alumni, Dr. Asoka Ramanayake for coordinating all these donations from Sri Lanka and to the Faculty of Science for the collaboration

Still there are many requests for urgent medical equipment. We continue to help raise funds to buy some targeted equipment in urgent need

Remote Learning Project

This fund was established to support the remote learning project during COVID-19 pandemic. The project continued throughout 2021. In addition to previously donated Twelve (12) new HP ProBook 450 G7 Notebooks with i5/i7 and 8GB RAM computers and six (6) refurbished laptop computers, two additional new laptop computers were purchased from the funds raised by CUFSAA-NA and donated to two freshman students attached to the Zoology and Environmental Sciences Department. We are currently working on a request for five (5) more computers received from the Faculty of Science.

Microscope Project for the Department of Zoology and Environmental Sciences

CUFSAA was able to successfully complete the microscopes project for the department of Zoology and Environmental Sciences of the Faculty of Science, University of Colombo. This was possible due to the generosity of a number of alumni, who helped to raise the \$15,000 USD (including LKR 640,000.00 in Sri Lanka) required to purchase the microscopes within a couple of weeks. Accordingly, ten (10) bright field light microscopes (Olympus CX23) and one (1) dissection microscope (Olympus SZX7) were directly purchased from Delmege Forsyth Company Limited and handed over to the department of Zoology and Environmental Science on April 20th, 2021 during a simple and moving ceremony graced by the Vice Chancellor of the University, Professor Chandrika Wijeratne, in the presence of the Dean of the Faculty, Professor Upul Sonnadara, Head of the department of Zoology and Environmental Sciences, Professor Deepthi Wicremasinghe, Heads of Departments, members of the academic staff and students. CUFSAA was represented by Dr. Binodh de Silva and Professor Preethi Guneratne's sister, Ms. Aruni Fernando. You can watch the event in the facebook link of FOS Media at <https://www.facebook.com/fosmedia/videos/660874308045432/>. Photographs related to the event are available on the CUFSAA website "cufsa.com".

High Performance Computers for Bioinformatics Special Degree Program of the Department of Plant Sciences

CUFSAA-NA was able to successfully complete the project proposal received from Prof. Chandrika Nanayakkara of the Department of Plant Sciences to fund two high performance computers for the bioinformatics special degree program. The handing over ceremony of the two high performance computers to the plant science department was held on the centenary celebrations' day of the University, January 21, 2021 with the presence of the Dean Faculty of Science Prof. Upul Sonnadara, former Dean Prof. Ranjith Mahanama, Head Department of Plant Sciences Prof. Chandrika Nanayakkara, other members of the Department of Plant Sciences. The Department of Plant Sciences introduced the special degree program in Bioinformatics in 2006 and with the growing demand in bioinformatics worldwide, this program allows a selected group of students in the department an opportunity to learn to integrate biology with computer science through instructions and research. The department was not equipped with more sophisticated and efficient computer infrastructure required to do the necessary training of the undergraduate students. The total project cost was **\$4529.07** and we at CUFSAA would like to express our appreciation to all donors for making this project a reality.

Professor Valentine Joseph Gold Medals/Memorial Scholarships

Professor Valentine Joseph (27 January 1929 – 15 March 2017) was a prominent mathematician, noted for his excellent contributions to teaching at the University of Colombo. In 1949, he entered the University of Ceylon (Colombo Campus) to study mathematics and graduated with a first class degree and continued teaching for 42 years until his retirement in 1994. CUFSAA-NA decided to honor him with the

provision of two scholarships (LKR 5,000 each per month) to two final year special degree students in mathematics/applied mathematics, taking both academic achievements and economic needs into consideration and two gold medals in his name. The first gold medal and a cash award of LKR. 25,000 were awarded at the 2019 convocation (\$3157.77) to Mr. K.H.A.Praveen Niranda, a Mathematics Special degree student of the Faculty of Science. From next year onwards, two gold medals will be awarded with no cash award. The Faculty Board approval was received in August, 2021 to award two scholarships, LKR. 5,000/month each, in addition to the gold medal mentioned earlier. The two scholarships will be awarded starting from 2022 annually. CUFSA-NA thanks everyone who have made generous contributions to raise funds to establish these gold medals and scholarships (raised: 12,432.67)

Facilitation of Professor L.M.V. Tillekeratne Gold Medal and Honorary Scholarship

A group of former students, friends and well-wishers of Prof. L.M.V. Tillekeratne has raised funds (\$6,730.80) to establish a gold medal and a honorary scholarship for any second year student following BSc degree in either bioscience or physical science to recognize Prof. Tillekeratne's service to the department and the Faculty for many decades.

We have been informed by Prof. Nalin de Silva (Head, Chemistry Department) and Prof. Upul Sonnadara (Dean, Science) that the Faculty Board has approved this project at their August, 2021 Meeting. We are waiting for the details of the financial commitment and the management style of both the awards through the Senior Assistant Registrar office. The gold medal and the scholarship will be awarded starting from 2022 annually.

CUFSAA-NA Student Assistant Account (The Benevolent Fund)

The Emergency Fund to help UoC Science Faculty Students was initially started in 2016 to help students affected by the unexpected flooding. This effort was strengthened by establishing an official Emergency fund to support Science Faculty students who are in need of help under emergency situations.

An amount up to Rs. 25,000 per student can be disbursed from this account as the need arises (without prior consultation with CUFSA-NA). Financial assistance must be related to student's educational needs either for undergraduate education assistance or for the higher education assistance. This fund was recently renamed as the Benevolent Fund. Current balance is \$1056.55

Mentoring Program

CUFSAA-NA created this program to provide guidance and advice to Sri Lankan graduates who are interested in higher education in United States and Canada as well as students who have recently graduated from United States and Canada and looking for employment opportunities. Many students were supported during 2020-2021 year through our volunteer services. Other resources provided under this program, included presentations by CUFSA members.

Take a Book Program

Take a Book Program is another successful project launched by CUFSA-NA through the generosity of our members. This program has supplied numerous textbooks to the Faculty of Science. Under this program, CUFSA-NA members who are visiting Sri Lanka for vacations take a book with them and hand over to the Dean of the Faculty of Science.

Future Vision

Our future vision is to expand the activities and accept new challenges for the benefit of our Alma Mater.

To continue the growth of the association and the mission, we encourage all alumni to join CUFSA-NA and get involved with its activities.

We would like to express our sincere appreciation to the membership for their contributions to achieve our goals to help our Alma Mater.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dr. Chandrasiri Jayakody and Dr. Randara Pulukkody
Joint Secretaries/CUFSAA-NA