

**Annual Report of the Alumni Association of the University of Peradeniya (AAUP)
For the period March 2019 – March 2020**

The Executive Committee of the Alumni Association of the University of Peradeniya has taken a decision to circulate the Annual Report of the Association among its membership, as it is unable to hold the AGM 2020 under the present circumstances.

At the last AGM held on 25 March 2019, the following office bearers were elected to the Executive Committee for the period March 2019-March 2020

President: Prof. Siril Wijesundara, **General Secretary:** Ms. Hema Gamage, **Treasurer:** Mr. Ravi Mulleriyawa, **Vice Presidents:** Dr. Pradeepa Bandaranayake, Mrs. Lalitha Gunawardena, Prof. S.P. Nissanka, Prof. Anoja Wanigasekera, Dr. Anura Danthanarayana, **Editor:** Prof. Jayanthi Edirisinghe, **Asst. Secretaries:** Dr. DMSB Botota, Mr. Nalin Jayatissa, **Asst. Treasurer** Dr. Damayanthi Manike, **Elected Committee Members:** Dr. V. Sivakumar, Prof. Barana Jayawardena, Prof. Chantha Jayawardena and Dr. Prabath Gunathilaka, **Appointed Committee Members:** Prof. Savitri Kumar, Prof. Shayama Banneheka, Dr. Jagath Gunathilake, Mr. K.A.H. Kalugampitiya, Dr. Hemali Nandalal, Dr. Amalka Pinidiyaarachchi, Prof. Rupika Rajakaruna, Mr. Ashwin Wickramasooriya, Mrs. Chandra Weerawardena, Prof. Chandrika Jayasinghe, Mr. Ananda Dharmaratne, Mr. R.M.P. Rathnayake and Mrs. Sujatha Karunaratne

Executive Committee Meetings Held During 2019/20

Twelve Committee meetings have been held during the period April 2019 to March 2020

Standing Committees and Sub Committees of the Association

The program for the period under review was conducted through seven Standing Committees chaired by Vice Presidents (VP) and elected chair persons. The following Vice Presidents were nominated as Chairpersons of Standing committees, at the 316th Executive Committee meeting held on 08 April 2019.

1. Standing Committee on Student Welfare – Dr. Anoja Wanigasekara (VP)
2. Standing Committee on Finance – Prof. S.P Nissanka (VP)
3. Standing Committee on Public Relations and Alumni Welfare – Dr. Anura Danthanarayana (VP)
4. Standing Committee on University Development – Dr. Pradeepa Bandaranayake (VP)
5. Standing Committee on Continuing Education and Extension Education – Mrs. Lalitha Gunawardena (VP)
6. Standing Committee on Elections and Constitutional Affairs – Prof. Savitri Kumar (elected Chair Person)
7. Standing Committee on Alumni Clubs and Reunions – Eng. Sarath Seneviratne (elected Chair Person and Immediate Past President)

Sub Committees

1. Development of AAUP Website – Dr. Amalka Pinidiyaarachchi
2. Memberships & Membership Drive – Col. Dr. Udula Krishnarathna

Activities

1. Student Welfare

1.1 Studentships

Award of Studentships 2018/19

The AAUP continued to provide studentships to undergraduates from the Studentship Fund maintained by the AAUP through contributions made by local donors as well as Foreign Chapters. Altogether 60 studentships have been awarded to students from the 9 Faculties of the University.

1.2 Memorial Awards and Scholarships

Fifteen Endowed scholarships were awarded at the last Annual General Meeting held on 25 March 2019. These scholarships were awarded for the best performance at examinations held in 2018/19.

1.3 Cash Donations for the Differently-abled students at the Faculty of Arts

The World Disabled Day (WDD) was commemorated on 03 December 2019, at an event held at the Faculty of Arts, Seminar Room, with the participation of differently abled students of the Faculty of Arts, academics and well – wishers. A cash donation was organized by the Colombo Chapter/AAUP, for the occasion. Each of the 25 differently-abled students was given a cash donation of Rs. 3000.00.

2. Finance

2.1 AAUP Sales Outlet at the General Convocation -2018

As in previous years, the AAUP organized a make- shift sales outlet in the Geology- Geography car porch, on the day of the Convocation (04th July 2019), for the sale of AAUP souvenirs. A membership drive was also launched with a registration desk. The outlet was run by the ExCo members. Through the sale of AAUP souvenirs that included T- shirts, umbrellas, mugs and car stickers a considerable sum was collected by the AAUP.

2.2 Bring and Buy Sale

The AAUP organized a Bring and Buy Sale on 05 December 2019 at the WUS WALA in the Student Centre, as a part of the fund raising programs. A variety of items donated by AAUP members and well-wishers were on sale. The Noritake Porcelain Company ran a stall with their products. Plant growers from several organizations too ran Stalls to sell different types of plants. The Bank of Ceylon extended their support by displaying a BOC banner at the sales venue. The Bring and Buy Sale was a great success.

3. Public Relations and Alumni Welfare

3.1 Thursday Forum

(a) Talk on “Re-visiting Peradeniya - A journey through six centuries” held on 29.08.2019

The AAUP Thursday Forum Series was revived after many months with a talk by Prof. Sarath Edirisinghe, a medical Parasitologist with a passion for history. His talk took the audience through a journey spanning six centuries. Prof. Edirisinghe began his talk by addressing the etymology of the name “Peradeniya”.

Thereafter, he moved on to three major events in history; namely, the glorious battle in the vicinity of Peradeniya, the birth of the Royal Botanical Garden and horse racing in Kanda Uda Rata including a description of the Peradeniya race course and details of the races run on the newly laid track.

(b) Talk on “Life during and after Strokes” – ‘My Personal Story’ held on 21.11. 2019

Dr. Channa Rathnatunga, retired Surgeon, Department of Surgery, Faculty of Medicine gave a talk on his personal story about important lessons to fight against Stroke. The talk was followed by a fruitful discussion.

3.2 Excursions

(a) AAUP Trip to the Uva Province

This year’s trip to Haputhale, in the famous Uva basin, was a two day trip.

After starting off from the Faculty of Science on the 29th of August 2019, the very first stop on the way to Haputhale was for breakfast at the AnnaPoorni restaurant, set in a picturesque landscape at the Chinmaya Mission at Thawalanthenna. From there, it was a straight run to the Sirilak View Hotel, Haputhale, on a windy road. The afternoon’s visit was to the tallest waterfall in Sri Lanka - Bambarakande. A fabulous dinner with entertainment was arranged by, Dr. Col. Udula Krishnarathene, President, AAUP Colombo Chapter, at the Diyathalawa Army Base Camp enjoyed very much by all. Early next morning; we headed to Ella, a 30 km stretch from Haputhale, to see the famous Demodara - Nine Arch Bridge, an engineering marvel built during the British time. We left for Peradeniya after an early lunch.

(b) Trip to Mandaram Nuwara

The day trip on 11th December was to Mandaram Nuwara, a location well-known for its natural beauty with breathtaking mountain ranges and cascading waterfalls. The journey to Mandaram Nuwara from Peradeniya was an 18 km run on windy roads. On the way, we passed Garadiya Ella, stopped at the hydro-power plant at Elamulla and proceeded to Ethini Ella and Kolapathana Ella. Lunch was arranged at the Goodwood Hill Resort, after which we headed to Peradeniya.

3.3 “Hanthane Api 2020” - Paduru Party

The Paduru Party held on Saturday 25th January 2020 at the Auditorium of the Department of Animal Science, was quite an enjoyable musicale evening. The activity was organized in collaboration with the Colombo Chapter and many alumni from Colombo and Kandy attended the event. The audience had the opportunity to sing with the orchestra. Several of the former actors and singers of Sarachchandra plays who were in the audience took to the stage, adding nostalgic memories to the evening. The dance item by the undergraduates of the Faculty of Agriculture added glamour to the musical evening.

4. University Development

4.1 Extending the Campus Wi-Fi Network to the University Halls of Residence: Phase I – Akbar Nell Hall Complex

The AAUP has taken a bold step in its attempt to extend the Campus Wi-Fi Network to the University Halls of Residence, thereby provide Internet facilities to students in Halls of Residence. This would bring relief to a large majority of students and would have a cost -cutting effect on their stringent budget. It would also promote online teaching and learning. Phase I of the project was officially launched on 06th February 2020 and would initially provide Internet facility to the Akbar Nell Hall Complex. Donations are sought from well wishers and former occupants of Halls of Residences to complete this project. The project was envisaged and spearheaded by Dr. Pradeepa Bandaranayake, Vice President of the AAUP.

4.2 Renovation of the Green Room in the Open Air Theatre

On a request made by the Vice Chancellor, the AAUP has taken initiatives to take up this task as a project. An inspection team comprising, Prof Siril Wijesundara, Eng. Sarath Seneviratne, Mr. Nishshanka Diddeniya, Mr. Gamini Dissanayake, Prof. Shyama Banneheka, visited the Open Air Theatre and decided the units to be built. It includes two separate changing rooms, a lobby, a verandah and a roof with a concrete slab for a floral garden. The site plan has been made by the architect Mr. Gamini Dissanayake. Dr. Prasanna Gunatilleke has extended his support to prepare the BOQ. The estimated cost of the project is Rs.12 million for a floor area of 2000 (ft²). This project will commence after the necessary funds are collected.

5. Continuing Education and Extension Education

5.1 Spoken Tamil Classes for staff members and AAUP members

A program to teach spoken Tamil was organized in collaboration with the Sri Lanka Association of Graduate Women Kandy (SLAGWK) which provided three volunteer resource persons, Mrs. P.T Jayatilleke, Mrs. C. Rashid and Mrs. I. Kandasamy, to conduct the program. The classes commenced on 01st July 2019 and were held once a week at the AAUP Office. Face to face instructions as well as handouts helped the participants to improve their spoken ability of the language. The concluding session of the four month spoken Tamil program, was held at the AAUP Office on 23 December 2019.

5.2 “Preparation for IELTS”

A collaborative program with the Career Guidance Unit of the University was organized to prepare junior academics and new graduates for the IELTS Examination. Classes were conducted by Mrs. Lalitha Gunawardena. A group of 30 junior academics and new graduates attended the classes.

5.3 English classes for undergraduates of the Faculty of Arts

On a request made by the Dean, Faculty of Arts, a program to teach English to undergraduates who are very weak in English is to be organized by the AAUP with Mrs. Lalitha Gunawardena as the resource person. A list of names of 110 students has been submitted to the AAUP. The task is to help them to overcome the language barrier. Classes would commence in the second semester after their vacation.

5.4 English Writing Skills for Non- Academic Staff

On a request made by the Vice-Chancellor to Improve the English writing skills of the Non academic staff, a program has been outlined by Mrs. Lalitha Gunawardena. Initially, a group of 20 Administrative staff are to follow classes.

6. Alumni Clubs and Reunions

6.1 Establishment of the Northern Chapter of the AAUP

The AAUP is pleased to announce the inauguration of its Northern Chapter on 08 March 2020. The official ceremony was held at the Faculty of Medicine, University of Jaffna attended by several members of the AAUP headed by the President, Prof. Siril Wijesundara and Eng. Sarath Seneviratne, Presidents of Colombo and Ruhunu Chapters, participated at this historic event. The first Committee of the Northern Chapter was elected at this meeting where about 50 members representing the **University** of Jaffna were present to spearhead the activities and strengthen the formalities. Formation of the Northern Chapter is a long felt initiative of Eng. Sarath Seneviratne, Immediate Past President and Dr. V. Sivakumar of the Faculty of Science, University of Peradeniya. It is also the outcome of a series of discussions held after the initial meeting held at the Killinochchi Campus on 07th January, 2020.

Composition of the Committee

President: Prof. K Sivapalan, **Vice Presidents:** Dr. Vaseekaran, Dr. G. Thirumahal, Dr. K. Sooriyakumar, Dr. S. Chandrika, Prof. K. Vicknaroooban, **General Secretary:** Dr. G. Kumaralogini, **Asst. Secretary:** Dr. M. Muralithas, **Treasurer:** Dr. T. Prabakaran, **Asst. Treasurer:** Dr. T. Pathmathas, **Committee Members:** Dr. M. Kalamathy, Prof. S. Kannathasan, Dr. T. Rajasekaran, Dr. S. Ahilan, Mr. Sivakanthan, Dr. S. Wijeyamohan, Prof. Velauthamurthy, Mrs. T. Thushyanthi and Mr. S. Balathinesh

7. Newsletter of the AAUP

One eNewsletter for the 6 months period from May to August 2019 and one eNewsletter for the entire year, March 2019-2020 have been prepared by the Editor. eNewsletters are emailed to members and uploaded to the AAUP Website.

8. Membership Drive

8.1 AAUP Membership drive at the General Convocation -2018

A membership drive was launched on the day of the General Convocation-2018 held on 04th July 2019. A membership Registration Desk was set up, where application forms were made available to the graduands and their family members who are graduates of the UOP.

The AAUP also undertook to make Official announcements throughout the convocation ceremony about the AAUP and its activities through the Media Desk set up for the Convocation ceremony. This was with a view to attract graduates to the AAUP.

8.2 New Members

78 new members enrolled as Life Members of the AAUP

9. Participation of the President and ExCo Members at official events

9.1 Meeting with the Vice-Chancellor & Dean/Faculty of Arts

- a. The ExCo members held a meeting with the Vice-Chancellor on 20th June 2019 to find out how the expertise of the AAUP could help the University community. The Vice-Chancellor stressed

the (i) need to improve English writing skills of the Non-academic staff (ii) refurbishment the green room of the Prof. Ediriweera Sarachchandra Open Air Theatre.

- b. Several senior members of the ExCo met with the Vice Chancellor on 16th December 2019 to discuss matters related to the AAUP office. Among them were the requests for access to a wash room for the AAUP office, and a more spacious office in the upcoming building. Also, to address the notion that AAUP is not given due recognition in the affairs of the university.

The ExCo members held a meeting on 06 June 2019 with the Dean, Faculty of Arts to find out how the AAUP could help the students of the Faculty of Arts. The Dean emphasized the need to improve English language skills of students entering the Faculty of Arts from outstation schools where English teachers are not available.

9. 2 Annual Get - together of the Alumni Association of the Colombo Chapter (AAUPCC)

The Annual Get - together of the Colombo Chapter was held on 05 January 2020 at Birds Park, Rajagiriya. Several ExCo members of the AAUP from Peradeniya including the President participated at this event. It was a glamorous event with music and singing by alumni, followed by lunch and fellowship.

9. 3 AGM of the Alumni Association of the Colombo Chapter (AAUPCC)

The AGM of the Alumni Association of the Colombo Chapter was held on 01, March 2020 at Birds Park, Rajagiriya. It was a well-attended meeting with Prof. Indrakeerthi Siriweera as the Chief Guest. Several ExCo members from Peradeniya also participated in the AGM.

9. 4 FIEFAA Meeting with Mr. Milinda Moragoda

A meeting was organized by the Colombo Chapter of the Peradeniya Engineering Faculty Alumni Association (PEFAA) on 31st January 2020 to meet Mr. Milinda Moragoda, Advisor to the President. The PEFAA Colombo Chapter also invited the President of the AAUP, Prof Siril Wijesundara and Eng. Sarath Seneviratne to attend the meeting. The objective of this meeting was to promote the University of Peradeniya's latest achievement in being ranked with the best 500 Universities globally according to the Times Higher Education World Ranking 2020. Mr. Milinda Moragoda has promised to explain the significance of this achievement to Mr. Lalith Weeratunge and arrange a meeting with him. The AAUP would be able to obtain a meeting with His Excellency the President and invite the President to the University of Peradeniya in recognition of the achievements of the University.

9. 5 Invitation to Address new entrants to the Faculty of Arts

The Dean, Faculty of Arts has invited the AAUP to take part in the orientation program for the new entrants held on 07 February 2020 in the Seminar Room, Faculty of Arts. Vice President, Dr. Pradeepa Bandaranayake, representing the AAUP made a presentation to the new entrants highlighting the contributions made towards the welfare of students and the role of the AAUP in the University. It is the wish of the AAUP that other Faculties too would follow suit.

10. Acknowledgements

The Executive Committee of the AAPU expresses its sincere gratitude to the Patron of the Association, Prof. Upul B Dissanayake, the Vice Chancellor of the University of Peradeniya for his support in all matters related to AAUP activities. The AAUP is grateful to Prof. Parakrama Karunaratne, the Deputy

Vice Chancellor and the Deans of Faculties for their cooperation in conducting student welfare activities of the AAUP.

The Executive Committee acknowledges the foreign Chapters; New South Wales, Western Australia, Victoria, Canberra and Ottawa and the local Chapters; Colombo and Ruhunu for providing financial support to make this year's scholarship and studentship program possible. Their continued partnership in this important endeavor is very much appreciated.

The activities reported in the Annual Report have been achieved through the collaborative effort of the Executive committee and the general membership.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Hema Gamage', with a horizontal line underneath.

Hema Gamage

General Secretary

Alumni Association of the University of Peradeniya (AAUP)