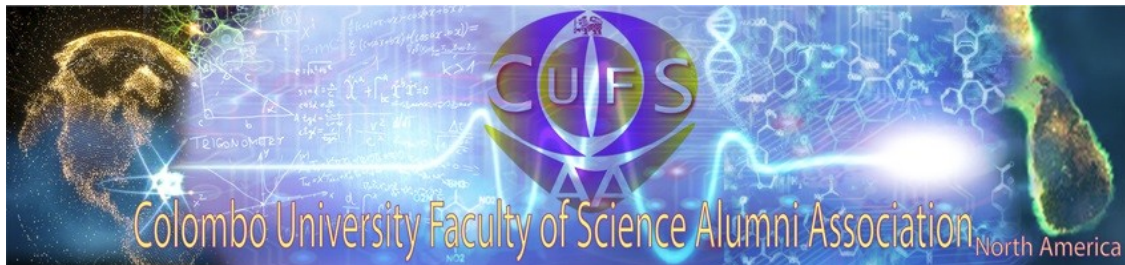


**In this issue: CUFSAA News, Recently completed Activities and Projects** and more ...

[View this email in your browser](#)

**Next issue: CUFSAA News, On-going Activities and Projects** and more ...



## **CUFSAA Newsletter - Vol. 07 - No. 02**

### **October 07, 2022**



## **CUFSAA-NA AGM Notice**

Dear **CUFSAA-NA Member**,

Please see below for the **2022 Annual General Meeting (AGM) Notice** of the Colombo University Faculty of Science Alumni Association - North America (CUFSAA-NA) and AGM agenda.

Visit <http://www.cufsa.com/AGM2022/> for **updated information, links to available reports, and additional details.**

### **Colombo University Faculty of Science Alumni Association - North America**

#### **2022 Annual General Meeting Notice**

**November 07, 2022 at 8PM Eastern via Zoom**

The **Annual General Meeting** of the Colombo University Faculty of Science Alumni Association - North America (CUFSAA-NA) **will be held virtually at 8.00 PM Eastern on Monday November 07, 2022, via Zoom technology.**

Please use the Zoom link below to register in advance for the meeting:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZlsdOCsqT4sGtWxOXxT0h-ii3yyW4dP91ix>

**After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.** Registration is needed for the participation for the meeting, and we hope that you will be able to join this meeting and support your association and its path forward. The AGM will be recorded for future reference.

### **The Tentative Agenda for the Meeting**

1. Call the meeting to Order
2. Approval of the Agenda
3. Approval of the minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on October 30, 2021
4. Welcome remarks and President's Address
5. Annual Report (2021-2022) presented by the Joint secretaries
6. Treasurer's Report (2021-2022)
7. Proposed Amendments to the Constitution
8. Open the floor for discussion/suggestions
9. Any other business
10. Adjournment

Thank you!

*CUFSAA-NA Executive Committee*



## **E-book Subscription Service to Students of University of Colombo**

### ***Science Faculty Needs Your Help***

As you all aware, our motherland is going through an unprecedented economic crisis that has devastated the country and funding to universities have been reduced drastically. Through all these hardships, the Science Faculty of UofC has done an outstanding job in maintaining a steady academic progress by conducting classes using a hybrid system of in-person and online, as applicable.

At present, the new academic year has started, and classes have resumed. While in-person classes have started, remote learning activities have continued due to the current economic situation and the shortage of essential goods and services in the country. The Faculty of Science is doing their best to maintain its remote learning platform to sustain the academic progress of students. However, there is an acute shortage of required textbooks. The University is unable to purchase these textbooks due to the unavailability of funds to the library and the current shortage of dollars in the country.

The Science Faculty library of UofC has developed a plan to implement an e-book subscription service through ELSEVIER to bring the library and information services to the current standards and expand the student access to textbooks through their computer.

The library has already started working with ELSEVIER to implement the e-book service through ELSEVIER's eBook on Science Direct Platform and selected a list of most critical books across all scientific disciplines to support the current degree programs. However, due to the current economic situation the funding to the library has been cut significantly.

After hearing this tragic situation and receiving a request from the Dean, Science Faculty, CUFSAA worked with the ELSEVIER on behalf of the Science Faculty Library and was able to work out a more favorable cost structure for the e-book subscription service. With unanimous support from the Executive Committee, CUFSAA has agreed to pay for the invoice (US \$ 4,376) directly to ELSEVIER so that the UofC students and staff can access this critical e-book collection as soon as possible. At present, ELSEVIER is working with the Science Library to implement the e-book subscription program.

[The list of e-books and their prices are provided for our members to sponsor one or more e-books of their choice.](#) The list includes a total of 29 e-books [consisting of 11 Chemistry books, 5 Mathematics books, 4

Plant science books, 3 Biochemistry books, 2 Physics books, 2 Environmental science books, and 2 Zoology books].

**Again, we kindly ask for your generous support and purchase one or more e-books from the list. You can send the contributions to CUFSAA via the links given below.**

## [Sponsor an ebook](#)

**You can also make a donation DIRECTLY towards the textbook purchase via PAYPAL through the link:**

[https://www.paypal.com/donate/?hosted\\_button\\_id=5JAMTZQUYZP4E](https://www.paypal.com/donate/?hosted_button_id=5JAMTZQUYZP4E)

By fulfilling these E-book subscription service, we can help our students continue their education and achieve a future success for themselves. At a time everyone in the country is struggling to make ends meet and our fellow students are faced with a tremendous challenges and huge uncertainty about their future, the most important thing we can do as past students of UofC is to show our support and give them hope.

[Additional Information: <http://www.cufsa.com/ebooksub/> ]



## **Prof. MLT Kannangara Gold Medal & Scholarships Project**

As described in the previous Newsletter, the proposal to establish two Scholarships to be awarded to economically-disadvantaged Physics Special students each year (a third-year scholarship and the continuation of the third-year scholarship during the fourth year) is a reality now.

A third year Physics Special student selected from six applicants was awarded the first Prof. M. L. T. Kannangara Scholarship in September 2022. Funds for the first six months at a rate equivalent to 35 USD per month was transferred with another installment pending for the current academic year.

The Prof. M L T Kannangara memorial gold medal (to be awarded to the most outstanding Physics Special student at the Convocation) process is moving forward and it was already approved by the faculty board and currently pending formal approval from the University Senate. A lump sum of approximately USD 1000 will be deposited as the endowment for the gold medal, once the approval process is completed.

An email acknowledging the scholarship winner says: *"I have received the LKR 72, 848 scholarship fund on 20th of September 2022. I've been going through many struggles with the current situation in Sri Lanka. I would like to give my sincere gratitude to you as it has been a huge support for me in this current situation and I will make sure to give my best to keep up the good academic work you expected from me."*

All contributions go directly to the scholarship fund and will be used to provide financial assistance to selected physics special students. At present we have raised \$3,559.32 and disbursed: \$210. You can make your contribution either via PayPal by following the link at [www.cufsa.com/mltk/](http://www.cufsa.com/mltk/) or by sending a check via mail to CUFSAA as indicated below.

**Please make your checks payable to:**

Colombo University Faculty of Science Alumni Association (CUFSAA)

Indicate: "Prof MLTK Project" in the comment line.

Please mail to:

*Colombo University Faculty of Science Alumni Association (CUFSAA)**c/o Dr. Lalith Perera**Treasurer - CUFSAA-NA**502 Rock Garden Road**Chapel Hill NC 27516**USA*

## Global Digital Platform at NSF, Sri Lanka

**About the Platform**

There are nearly three million Sri Lankan expatriates and emigrants, including an appreciable number of reputed scientists and professionals holding senior positions in academia, R&D institutions, and industry. They undoubtedly constitute a formidable potential asset of Sri Lanka which has hitherto been almost untapped and untouched for national development. Thus, the National Science Foundation, Sri Lanka (NSF) — the premier national institution mandated to promote S&T in the island is in the process of establishing a digital platform to harness this enormous source for national development. Key sectors, including higher education, S&T, FDI, trade/exports, tourism and industry could benefit therefrom.

Already, more than 900 expatriates have registered with the platform having a wider spectrum of expertise viz., data science & analytics, AI, machine learning, robotics, 5G and future wireless systems, IoT, big data, block chain, electronic materials, power electronics, nanotechnology, biotechnology, NextGen sequencing, deep learning, renewable energy, cyber security, smart energy storage systems, environmental engineering, food technology, pharmaceutical manufacturing and many more.

Thus, it is envisaged that NSF could construct an online ecosystem to bring expatriates together so as to:

1. Provide greater opportunities for higher education and capacity building;
2. Enhance academic cooperation and research collaboration;
3. Create a culture of creativity and innovation;
4. Promote joint publications and ranking of Sri Lankan universities; and
5. Facilitate technology transfer

**Opportunities to Industry**

- Partnerships for leveraging R&D
- HR capacity development
- Cross boarder technology transfer
- Exploring market opportunities
- Any other specific needs towards innovation

**Opportunities to Higher Education Sector**

- To tap the potentials of the expatriate Sri Lankan professionals to foster:
- Academic and industry partnerships,
  - Remote supervision,
  - On-line Lectures and Knowledge Transfer
  - Collaborations for win-win benefits

**Some highlights of the activities thus far.....**

- Views of the expatriate Sri Lankan professionals abroad on how to link remotely to develop the S & T and R & D fields:
  - Australia (<https://bit.ly/2kEKgdb>)
  - USA (<https://bit.ly/2z3T09g>) and Canada (<https://bit.ly/2aBqDze>)
  - UK (<https://bit.ly/3qkKdXy>) and Europe (<https://bit.ly/3ozPn0K>)
  - Japan (<https://bit.ly/3ow0tHE>)
- Capacity building and knowledge transfer:
  - Salinity (<https://bit.ly/3aRS97F>)
  - Writing Articles to High Impact Journals (<https://bit.ly/3Fwvcll>)
  - Proposal Writing (<https://bit.ly/323hgT>)
  - Renewable Energy Sector (<https://bit.ly/3ChXxar>)
- Launch of the NSF Global Digital Platform: <https://bit.ly/3M8FoBP>

**Registration Link:** <https://gdp.nsf.gov.lk/>

**Contact Us:** Dr J.G. Shantha Sri, Head/International Affairs Division, National Science Foundation, Sri Lanka  
E mail: [shantha@nsf.gov.lk](mailto:shantha@nsf.gov.lk), Tel: +94 112696771 Ext. 135

The National Science Foundation, Sri Lanka (NSF) (<http://www.nsf.ac.lk/>) has launched a Global Digital Platform (an interactive website/database) to establish a global network of expatriate Sri Lankan professionals, academics and researchers as well as local scientists and professionals having established academic and professional interactions with foreign entities to engage them at a high level— to benefit Sri Lanka.

Attached is an e-flyer giving more information about the NSF GDP. Please click on the image to view additional details from our website. The link to register at the NSF GDP is <https://gdp.nsf.gov.lk>.

NSF would like to cordially invite you to register at their platform and to connect to serve our motherland in the possible initiatives. Should you need any further information in this regard or wish to discuss about any possible collaborations, please feel free to contact NSF,

Sri Lanka.

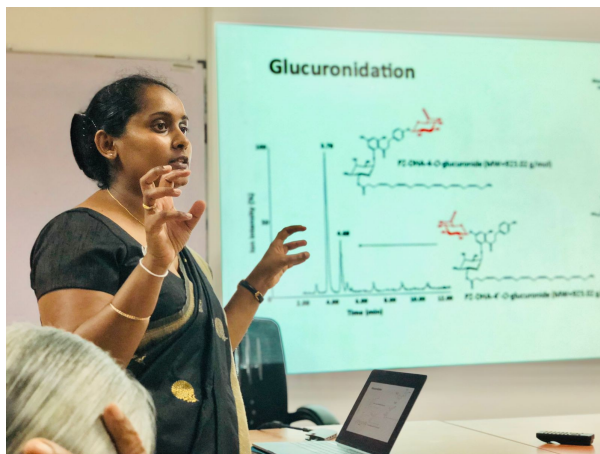


## Alumni News



### Dr. Wasundara Fernando presented two talks at UoC

**Dr. Wasundara Fernando**, Postdoctoral Scholar at the Department of Pathology, Faculty of Medicine, Dalhousie University, Nova Scotia, Canada, presented two talks at the University of Colombo during her visit to Sri Lanka. Her presentations were as follows:



1. Institute of Molecular Biology, Biochemistry and Biotechnology, UoC: Guest lecture series: ***Exploring novel treatment options for triple-negative breast cancer***

2. Department of Chemistry, UoC: An interactive session with students: ***My journey becoming a cancer researcher***

Wasundara Fernando lives in Nova Scotia, Canada. Wasundara graduated with her BSc (Pharmacy) from University of Colombo. She obtained her MSc and PhD in Cancer Biology

from Dalhousie University, Canada. Wasundara's research is focused on understanding the complex behavior of breast cancer stem cells and the role of aldehyde dehydrogenases in the metabolic plasticity of breast cancer stem cells and metastasis. In addition, her most recent research is focused on targeting the metabolic plasticity of breast cancer stem cells to improve the efficacy of immunotherapy. She also works in the field of Natural Product Chemistry to investigate the pharmacological activities of phytochemicals and their derivatives along with investigations on pharmacokinetics of these novel drug candidates.

Dr. Fernando is an Executive Committee Member of CUFSAA-NA.



## How to Become a member of the Colombo University Science Faculty Alumni Association- North America

It is easy! There are no Annual Dues!! Please visit CUFSAA website ([cufsa.com](http://cufsa.com)) and fill out the online membership form. The link to the page is <http://www.cufsa.com/membership-form/>

Alternatively, you can email [info@cufsa.org](mailto:info@cufsa.org) the following details about you.

1. Name
  2. Postal Address
  3. Telephone Numbers
  4. Email Address
  5. Nature of Association with the Faculty of Science of the University of Colombo, Sri Lanka. (Tell if you were a staff member, undergraduate student, graduate student, etc..)
  6. Duration of your association. Please let us know the beginning and ending year of your association.
- Thanks!



## CUFSAA

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**Newsletter Editorial Policy:** CUFSAA welcomes news articles about the University of Colombo Science Faculty alumni for potential inclusion in our newsletter, website or both. The news item must be about alumni and submitted by a member or members of CUFSAA. The editorial committee is especially interested in professional achievements, outstanding contributions, and notable recognition of alumni. The editorial committee reserves the rights to edit the submission as deemed necessary for publication and to make the final decision on the acceptance. Please submit your articles via email to [info@cufsa.org](mailto:info@cufsa.org). Please note that the editorial committee, if needed in consultation with the [CUFSAA executive committee](#), makes the final decision on the acceptance of the article and where it would appear. Please visit, [CUFSAA Newsletter Article Acceptance Policy page](#) on our website for additional information. Thank you!

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**About Us:** Colombo University Faculty of Science Alumni Association – North America (CUFSAA-NA), a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization incorporated in the state of New Jersey, is formed exclusively for social, charitable, and educational purposes to foster, maintain and support a mutually beneficial relationship between the alumni of the Colombo University, Faculty of Science living in North America, The University of Colombo, and the community at large. Your contributions to CUFSAA-NA may be tax deductible. **Join us and support these worthy causes. Send an email to [info@cufsa.org](mailto:info@cufsa.org).**



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CUFSAA Newsletter Committee  
Colombo University Science Faculty Alumni Association  
2740 Timberline Drive  
Cortland, OH 44410

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