

PROGRESS REPORT – AGM 2023/24 – 18 May 2024 – Presented by Dilani Alagaratnam, President

“Our Patron, the Dean of the Faculty of Law, Prof. Punchihewa, my fellow Executive committee members and distinguished members.

It is with great pleasure that I present to you the progress report of the Association for the period commencing from the last AGM held on 29 April 2023.

We are pleased to inform you that the Committee has been able to set in motion many interventions for the betterment of the undergraduates during this year too. We have had regular structured monthly meetings (with the exception of one) and ad hoc meetings as required. At our first meeting, we agreed to a work plan until this AGM, and we are pleased to report that we have been successful in implementing this work plan, barring few programmes we could not pursue due to reasons beyond our control.

- (1) We conducted a programme for the freshers intake of 2024 to introduce them to the Association the work it does, including the disbursements from the Education Trust. We were able to get a guest lecturer to provide the students with an insight as to the calling they are venturing into and what is expected of them. It was very well received by approximately 300 students who participated.
- (2) We have, with the assistance of the Faculty, organized a monthly guest lecture series on subjects offered by the Faculty. This series commenced in December 2023. To date we have completed 4 such lectures. The lectures are open to all students of all mediums and the unique feature is that the lecturers of the relevant subject too are present at the lecture to ask and prompt questions to better garner the benefits of such lectures.
- (3) We assisted the Career Guidance Unit in piloting a mentorship programme and we were able to get commitments from practitioners and corporates for 82 placements. The closure report from the Career Guidance Unit shows that this programme was a successful pilot and we intend to support the Unit to continue this programme.
- (4) We upgraded our website and you would note that it is more user friendly. We continue to engage with alumni using social media handles and the website in the hope that they will partner us in this journey.
- (5) We are pleased to inform you that the Association was able to contribute a further 2,300,000/= to the Education Trust during the year. Today the Trust has a sum of approximately 3.6Mn. This amount, no doubt, is woefully inadequate to meet the requirements of our undergraduates. At any given time, the Faculty has approximately 1000 students. In this context disbursement of monies at Rs. 5000/= per month for the duration of the 4 year degree programme has been a challenge. Interest rate reduction, seen during the year, will deeply impact on the monies the Trust have for disbursement. However, we continue to maintain our disbursements regularly and promptly. I thank the trustees for the guidance extended to the committee during the year.
- (6) It is of importance that we have sufficient funds for the Trust to be self-sustaining and we look to the members to support this endeavour.

- (7) Our membership has grown only by 21 new memberships during the period ending 31 March 2024. This again is simply not enough considering the number of alumni we have and I look to all of you present to bring to our fold more alumni.
- (8) The main fund-raising activity and the membership drive was the 75th anniversary celebrations held last year. It was by all counts a successful event with nearly 500 alumni participating in the event. It is from the proceeds of this event, which marginally exceeded 2.5Mn, that we were able to provide the Trust with Rs. 2 Mn, in our continuous quest to strengthen its financial position. We are indeed grateful for the sponsorships we received and the donations received from well-wishers. I wish to record my appreciation to the Sponsors – viz. SriLankan Airlines, Nestle PLC, Unilever PLC, Union Assurance PLC, CIMA, John Keells Properties, Lanka Hospital, Link Natural Products, Siddhalepa, Prime Properties, Distilleries Corporation, and well-wishers, Mr. Haniff, Mrs. Priya Cabraal, Mrs. Tamara Nanayakkara, Mr. Dinal Philipps, PC., Mr. Hewabowela, Mr. Hiran Jayewardene, Mr. Murtaza Usufally and Mr. S. Ratwatte, PC.
- (9) As you would note from the accounts that are presented, our financial standing got significantly better during the year with a contribution of 2.3Mn being made to the trust during the year.

We want to thank Dean, Prof Punchihewa, for always being available for discussions and supporting us, despite his busy schedule. We thank you for your unstinted cooperation and assistance during the year.

We also thank Mr. Illiyas PC who headed the sub-committee for the 75th Anniversary celebrations, ably supported by Mrs. Amila Fernando and Ms. Subanie Ekanayake, Executive committee members. Without their commitment we would not have been able to undertake this complex event and make it a success.

This concludes our report and we will be pleased to answer any questions you may have under AOB of the agenda.

On a personal note, as I step down as President after a 2 year stint, I wish to take this opportunity thank the Exco for 2023 and 2024 for the cooperation extended to me during my tenure and all those members who had faith in me. It is greatly appreciated. The association is in safe hands and I wish my successor the very best to successfully steer the Association to greater heights.

Thank you.”