MESSAGE FROM THE NEW PRESIDENT 2014:2015 – Dr. BJC PERERA

My dear colleagues,

I consider it to be singular dispensation to have been elected as the President of CoMSAA for 2014-2015 at the recently held Annual General Meeting. In fact, I feel quite honoured and perhaps humbled by this compliment and must admit that such a privilege was not in my wildest dreams when I first came through the hallowed portals of the Colombo Faculty of Medicine, around 50 years ago.

My much celebrated predecessors have set a very high bar, to try and go over, in all the activities of CoMSAA over the last three years. They have certainly taken this institution from strength to strength, over such a short span of time. All these ventures are documented in our website.

I am of course planning to ride on the wave that has been created. It was Henry David Thoreau, the American author, poet and philosopher, who said “You must live in the present, launch yourself on every wave, and find your eternity in each moment”. However, I am also very conscious of what Edward Gibbon, the English historian said, "The winds and the waves are always on the side of the ablest navigators”.

We will continue the excellent work that has been done so far and certainly think also of newer innovative projects for the continuing welfare of our Alma Mater. Our primary objective is to further the interests of this 145 year old magnificent institution which has made us what we are today. We also need to foster camaraderie amongst the alumni. This is of course a secondary objective. However, in that context we have already arranged for the Annual Reunion to be held at Citrus Hotel, Waskaduwa on the evening of the 12th and the whole day of the 13th September 2015. It will also incorporate a short Academic Session as well.

We do hope that more and more of our alumni will join us in our activities for the benefit of that great institution, our very own Colombo Medical School.

With the very best of wishes

Dr. B.J.C.Perera

President, CoMSAA
CoMSAA Newsletter, Vol 3: Issue 5

CoMSAA Council 2014-2015

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Dr. BJC Perera

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Prof. Athula Kaluarachchi

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Dr. Dishni Wijesundere

Co-opted members 
Deshamanya Prof. AH Sheriffdeen (Founder President)
Dr. K Rajendra
Dr. Nanda Amarasekara
Dr. Dennis Aloysius
Dr. Asoka Thenabadu
The Annual General Meeting (AGM) was held on the 07th of October 2014 at 2.30pm at the Sri Lanka Medical Association Auditorium. Thirty nine alumni attended the meeting. The meeting began with the National Anthem and was followed by the welcome address by the out-going President, Vidyajyothi Prof. Lalitha Mendis. The Co-Secretary of CoMSAA Dr. Sameera Gunawardena read out the minutes of the third AGM. The minutes were confirmed by Dr. Nalika Gunawardane and Prof. Jennifer Perera. The annual report was presented by Dr. Sameera Gunawardena highlighting the achievements of CoMSAA during the previous year. The Treasurer, Dr. Nalika Gunawardena presented the financial report for year 2013/2014. She mentioned several financial schemes which were started during the year such as the CoMSAA Student Scholarship Scheme, Stanley Wijesundera Financial Assistance Scheme and the CoMSAA Book and Stethoscope Donation Programme.

Prof. Lalitha Mendis, the out-going President thanked the executive committee for a very enjoyable and fruitful term she had with them. She then introduced the newly elected President Dr. BJC Perera. The election of office bearers for 2014/2015 took place after that. The names of the Council Members are given in page two of this newsletter.

Dr. BJC Perera stated that he was honoured to take up the post of the President. He promised to carry on the projects already started to their successful completion with his new team. He thanked the outgoing President and the past committee for their hard work and dedication. The meeting was followed by a reception.
ACTIVITIES OF CoMSAA: 2011-2014

2011/2012

• Initiation of Medical Student Financial Assistance Scheme and Rs. 200,000 was deposited in a fixed deposit and the interest was used to help needy students.
• Development of the CoMSAA website and promoting the website through a blog site.
• CoMSAA office was established at the Department of Anatomy with the courtesy of the Dean and the Department of Anatomy.
• Initiation of the CoMSAA newsletter and publication of two newsletters online and a hardcopy as an abridged version was posted to members.
• The book titled “The Colombo Medical Faculty, Turbulance, Evolutions and Achievements” was launched at the inauguration of the Scientific Sessions, 2012. The book was written by Prof. AH Sheriffdeen and his Research Assistant Dr. Shalika Nagasinghe.
• Initial steps were taken to establish book donation programme with the Sri Lanka Medical Association of North America (Western Chapter).
• The first CoMSAA Scientific Congress and Reunion was held on the 9th September 2012.

2012/2013

• A membership of nearly 500 with good e support’ for communication and dissemination of information - a website (www.comsaa.org), a blog (comsaa.blogspot.com), a regular e-newsletter and a dedicated email (comsaa@rocketmail.com).
• A donation of books worth Rs 2 million to the faculty library – arranged by Founder President Prof. AH Sheriffdeen and SLMA North America Western chapter (Dr. Lareef Idroos).
• A donation of 5 computers and a network printer to the library following the Golden Jubilee celebration of the Class of 1958-63 (Dr. JB Peiris).
• A donation of Rs 379,290 by the Class of 1968-73 following their reunion (Dr. SJ Senanayake).
• Improvement of facilities for students – TV, billiard table and piano.
• A donation of Rs 500,000 for an achieving needy student scheme donated by a non-medical professional – Ms. Sumi Moonesinghe.
• A contribution of Rs 50,000 each for 2 students to present their research at the international student congress in Netherland.
• A contribution of Rs 25,000 each for 5 students to participate in the Inter-Medical Faculty Physiology Quiz in Malaysia.
• Repair of roof and ceiling in the Ladies hostel at a cost of Rs 175,890.
Donation by Dr. Ranjith Hettiarachchi in memory of late Prof. Stanley Wijeysundera in the pipeline.

Donation of 6 computers worth Rs 500,000 for library by SLMANA Western chapter (arranged by Dr. Visveshwara Nadarasa).

A donation of Rs 95,000 by Dr. N Naganathan, Australia.

The 2nd International Congress and Reunion of the CoMSAA was held on 7th-8th September 2013 at Blue Water, Wadduwa.

2013/2014

CoMSAA Student Scholarship Scheme: A monthly disbursement of Rs. 2000 each from CoMSAA funds for needy medical students. A monthly sum of Rs 2000 for a period of one year is given for three students.

The Stanley Wijesundera Trust donated a sum of Rs. 875,000 to sponsor the finances of one needy medical student per year. The funds were placed in a fixed account and it was decided to pay a monthly sum of Rs. 4000 from the interest.

CoMSAA Book and Stethoscope Donation Program was initiated to assist students preparing for clinical rotations who were unable to finance themselves adequately. Dr. Mrs. Sujatha Maligaspe-Lena residing in Canada provided a sum of 5000 Canadian Dollars for this purpose.

Sumi Moonesinghe Award for Best Scholar at the Introductory Basic Sciences Examination: A donation of Rs 500,000 was received by CoMSAA during the previous year to provide a onetime cash award to the student who excelled at the Introductory Basic Sciences examination at the end of the first year.

Sponsoring Airfare for Medical Students for Inter Medical School Physiology Quiz: Five students of the 2011/AL Batch participated in the 12th Inter Medical School Physiology Quiz for the Prof. A Raman Challenge Trophy held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Sponsored the very first Inter-batch Spelling Bee Competition within the Colombo Medical Faculty.

CoMSAA published a book titled “Glimpses of Time” compiling articles from alumni members to depict various important events and reminiscences in the history of the Colombo Medical Faculty.

A donation of US$ 4000 from Dr. George M Jayatilaka, CEO of Accountable Health Care, IPA/Signal Health Solutions, Inc.

A Donation of Rs. 40,435 from the Batch of 1964.
• The Colombo Medical School Alumni Association (CoMSAA) had its 3rd Reunion and Academic Meeting on the 7th of September 2014 at Blue Water, Wadduwa.

JUST WHAT THE DOCTOR ORDERED: LAUGHTER,, THE FINEST MEDICINE

Tony Blair and David Cameron

Tony Blair and David Cameron somehow turned up at the same barber shop.

As they sat there, each being worked on by a different barber, not a word was spoken. The barbers were both afraid to start a conversation, for fear it would turn to politics.

As the barbers finished their shaves, the one who had Blair in his chair reached for the aftershave. Blair stopped him, saying, "No thanks, Cherie will smell that and think I've been in a brothel."

The second barber turned to Cameron and said, "How about you, Mr Cameron?". Cameron replied, "Go ahead; my wife doesn't know what the inside of a brothel smells like".

From one PM to another

The Prime Minister of a neighbouring country sent a gift to Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India, an elaborate box with a note. Modi opened the box and saw that the content was faeces.

He opened the note which said "For you and the proud people of India"

Modi decided to reciprocate, sending the aforesaid PM a very elegant package and a note.

When he opened it, the other PM saw that it contained a tiny computer “chip”. It was rechargeable with solar energy, had an 1800 Terabyte memory and could output a 3D hologram display capable of functioning in any type of cellular phone, tablet or laptop. It was one of the world's most advanced technologies, invented and produced in India.

The accompanying note from Modi stated very courteously........

"A leader can give only what his people can produce"

Mugabe and Mandela

Robert Mugabe said: "I want the people of Africa to treat me the same way as they treated Nelson Mandela"

Morgan Tsavangirai (the Opposition Leader) immediately responded: "What a great idea, let’s start with 27 years in jail!"
“Glimpses of Time”

“Glimpses of Time” a Book of Reminiscences was published by CoMSAA and launched at the 3rd CoMSAA reunion held in September 2014.

“The richness of the history, ethos, contributions and travails of an institution nearly one and half centuries old is captured in this book through the reminiscences of former students and teachers.”

Get your copy of “Glimpses of Time” from the CoMSAA Office, Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo

Price Rs. 1000/=*

Please contact Dr. Sameera Gunawardena on 0714958897

*Postage fee will be charged for overseas orders

“CoMSAA Steth and Book Donation Fund”

CoMSAA has prepared a scheme to purchase and donate stethoscopes and clinical textbooks to second year medical students with financial difficulties. CoMSAA hopes to continue this program on a yearly basis.

The need for such a program has arisen as more and more students find it difficult to cope with the rising prices of books and medical equipment for their training. As a result many resort to used books or stethoscopes which are of poor quality. By providing these items we hope these students will be able to reach their full potential during their medical undergraduate career.

If you would like to contribute to this program please inform the CoMSAA secretariat - Dr. Sameera Gunawardena - 0714958897

To transfer your donations please use the account details below
State the purpose of the donation - “CoMSAA Steth and Book Donation”
Account name: COLOMBO MEDICAL SCHOOL ALUMNI ASSOCIATION
Account number: 72262672 of Bank of Ceylon, Regent Street Branch
Swift code: BCEYKLX, Bank code: 7010; Branch code: 627