

Maya Puwath - මායා පුවත්

**Quarterly Newsletter of Mahamaya Girls' College
Alumnae Association of North America (MGCAANA)
Volume 20– Issue 4 - October 2024**



Message from the Editor

Dear valued readers,

As the holiday season approaches, we extend our hopes and well-wishes to all our readers for a joyous time. We are thrilled to present the second issue of the term 2024/2025, and we are excited to share a recap of the events and organizational progress since our last issue.

MGCAANA organized a successful webinar on Woman Entrepreneurship, led by Mayan alumna Gaya Samarasingha. She shared her life journey and offered valuable insights into the experience of being a woman entrepreneur. Additionally, we conducted our first fundraising event for this term, a webinar centered on "Individual and Organizational Public Image," featuring Jackie Fearnow, Chair, Public Image/PR, Rotary International District 7360, Pennsylvania US. This event provided a valuable opportunity to learn how to enhance personal and organizational brand images in the public eye.

The Newsletter Committee would like to thank everyone who contributed art and poetry for the Kandy Esala Perahera themed showcase and acknowledges the dedicated efforts of all participants. Additionally, the newsletter includes details about the annual donation to Xanadu for Young Dreamers organization in California, as well as information pertaining to the undergraduate and graduate scholarship program for 2024/2025.

We look forward to sharing many more exciting events with you this term and appreciate your ongoing engagement and support. Happy reading!

Newsletter committee

In this issue

- Editor's note
- Member-Led Webinar
- Fundraising event – Public Image webinar
- Annual Donation
- Scholarship program 2024/2025
- Art & Poetry Showcase – Kandy Esala Perahera

*Ārogyaparamā lābhā,
Santuṭṭhiparamaṃ dhanam;
Vissāsaparamā ñāti,
Nibbānaṃ paramaṃ sukhaṃ.*

Good health is the most precious gain; and happiness born from realisation of the truth is the greatest wealth. Trust is the greatest relative; Nibbāna the highest happiness.

Dhammapada

Verse 204

Dhp 15 Sukha Vagga

Happiness

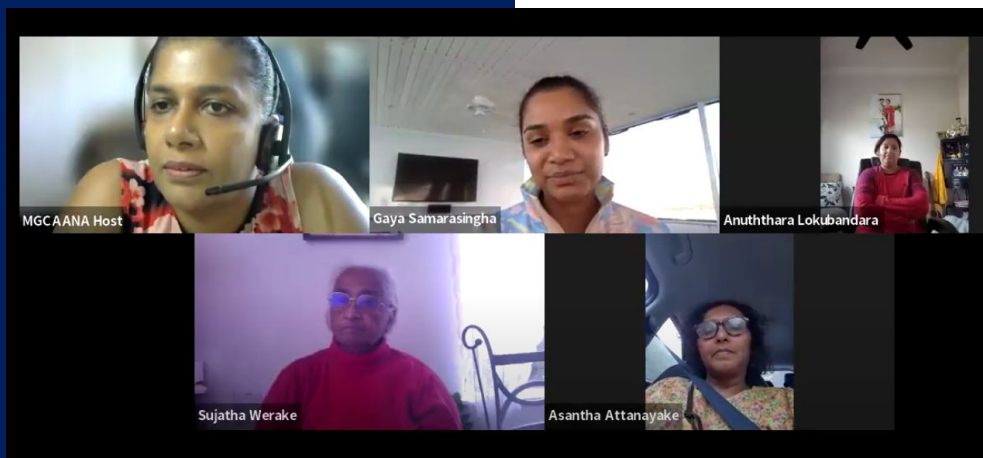
Member-Led Webinars



Gaya Samarasinghe
Founder/CEO of Kalaia

MGCAANA hosted a free webinar session on Women Entrepreneurship showcasing **Gaya Samarasingha**, an esteemed alumna of Mahamaya. Gaya, in addition to being a devoted mother and spouse, is a thriving business owner, holding the role of founder and CEO of Kalaia. The event took place on August 31st, 2024 via Zoom.

The event detailed Gaya's entrepreneurial journey, illustrating how she successfully established a business through her life experiences. It also offered insights into the unique aspects of being a female entrepreneur. Attendees expressed that they acquired valuable knowledge and perspectives from the webinar.



To learn more about Gaya and Kalaia;

Email: hello@kalaiaproducts.com

Website:
www.kalaiaproducts.com

Instagram:
https://www.instagram.com/kalaia_products/

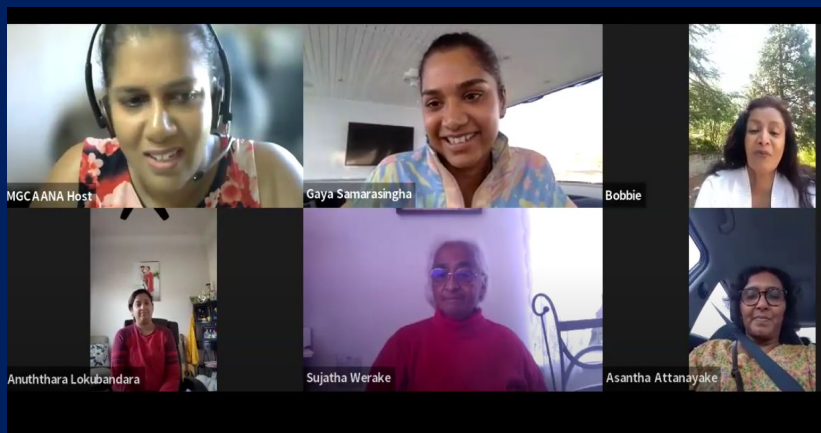
Facebook:
https://www.facebook.com/kalaia_products

Youtube:
https://www.youtube.com/kalaia_products



"I created a skincare regimen using unique natural ingredients from around the world, ingredients that have been used in skincare rituals, Ayurvedic medicine, and daily diets for thousands of years."

- Gaya
www.kalaiaproducts.com



Fundraising Webinar



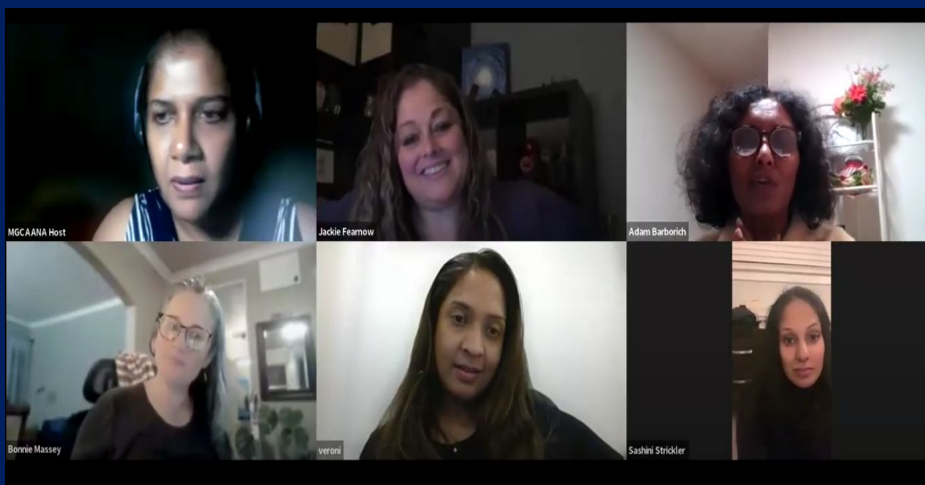
Jackie Fearnow

District Chair,
Public Image/PR,
Rotary International,
District 7360, Pennsylvania

This year, MGCAANA hosted its inaugural fundraising event, a webinar titled "Individual and Organizational Public Image," featuring guest speaker *Jackie Fearnow*. Held on October 18, 2024, via Zoom, the event aimed to support MGCAANA's charitable initiatives.

Jackie Fearnow is a distinguished expert in media and retail, recognized for her exceptional ability to enhance brand visibility. Her extensive career has seen her excel in companies of various scales nationwide, demonstrating a talent for creating brand awareness and executing successful sales campaigns.

The event presented a valuable opportunity to acquire insights on effective self-presentation in various contexts, including as an individual, entrepreneur, employee within an organization, or as a student. It also enlightened the MGCAANA community on aspects of organizational public image development as well.



The Presenter can be reached at fearnowjackie@gmail.com with any questions or clarifications on the presentation. Members are able to gain access to the presentation recording by contacting MGCAANA through mahamaya_alumnae@yahoo.com

Speaker – Public Image webinar



Jackie Fearnow

District Public Image/PR Chair

District 7360

Rotary International, Pennsylvania, USA

jaclyn_fearnow@comcast.com

Jackie Fearnow is a media and retail powerhouse with a unique flair for making brands shine. With a career that spans companies of all sizes across the nation, she has mastered the art of building brand awareness and crafting campaigns that not only resonate but also drive impressive sales results. From her exciting beginnings as a local sales rep to her current role as a regional sales manager, Jackie's journey has been nothing short of exhilarating.

With a natural talent for technology and branding, Jackie knows how to hit the sweet spot—delivering the right message on the right platform at just the right moment. Her secret sauce? A savvy, data-driven approach that keeps her clients ahead of the curve in the fast-paced media landscape. As a proud three-time President's Club Winner (2019, 2020, 2021), she is as dedicated to her own growth as she is to her clients, boasting an impressive arsenal of certifications including Lean Six Sigma (Master Black Belt), Advanced Google Analytics, Sandler Selling Systems, Google Analytics IQ, Google Ads, and retail/business management.

Coming from a family of dedicated community servants, Jackie finds deep fulfillment in giving back. While she didn't follow in their footsteps into non-profit, military, or law enforcement careers, her heart is committed to service. She currently serves on the boards of The Eastern Panhandle Empowerment Center (Board Secretary), Stars That Shine, and the Martinsburg Sunrise Rotary Club (Club/Board Secretary), where she also holds the role of Public Image Chair for both her club and Rotary International District 7360.

Originally from the bustling Washington DC area, Jackie took a scenic detour to Berryville, VA during her high school years, before making her way back to Northern Virginia and landing in the picturesque DC Metro suburbs of Winchester. In 2011, she planted her roots just outside Martinsburg in Berkeley County, WV, where she shares her home with her boyfriend, Patrick, their spirited Pit Bull, Bruno, and the delightful twin kittens, Mia and Abby—who, let's be honest, run the household!

When she's not busy transforming data into gold, you can find Jackie soaking up the sun at the beach, losing herself in a gripping book, grooving to live music, savoring a fine glass of wine, or enjoying cherished moments with friends and family. Life is too short not to have fun, and Jackie embraces that philosophy every single day!

1. Mahamaya Girls' College Alumnae Association of North America (MGCAANA)

Address: MGCAANA, 2417 NE 20th Street, Renton, WA 98056

Email: Mahamaya_alumnae@yahoo.com

MGCAANA Annual Donation



We are delighted to announce that MGCAANA has made a meaningful donation to **Xanadu for Young Dreamers**, made possible by our community's generous fundraising efforts. We successfully raised USD 100, which will support the organization's noble mission.

A heartfelt thank you goes out to all the donors and participants whose contributions made this donation possible. Your support truly transforms lives and fosters a spirit of compassion and generosity within our community.

We are also deeply grateful to Ms. Ayanthi Fernando for her coordination throughout this process. Thank you all for your continued involvement and support in our initiatives! Together, we are making a positive impact.



Xanadu for Young Dreamers

XFYD is a 501(C3) non-profit organization located in the city of Cerritos, California. It is dedicated to fostering a platform for the exchange of knowledge, inspiration, and the freedom of expression within the community. The organization provides diverse student volunteer opportunities, through which volunteers engage in collaborative community service and event organization, as well as the facilitation of classes.

At present many student in the community benefit from this organization through free enrichment programs like chess classes and tournaments, Physics/ chemistry/ Biology introduction classes for elementary students, Talent presentations, opportunities to perform to the elderly, Coding and programming classes etc.

Scholarship Program 2024/2025

MGCAANA Undergraduate and Graduate Scholarship Program 2024/2025

Mahamaya Girls' College Alumnae Association of North America (MGCAANA) is proud to offer a scholarship every year to a Mahamaya alumna achieve her dreams of a good education. We are pleased to continue **MGCAANA Undergraduate and Graduate Scholarship Program** to give a hand in supporting the higher education of a selected alumna this year as well.

The **MGCAANA Undergraduate and Graduate Scholarship Program** is aimed to cover cost of books and material for a semester for Mahamaya Girls' College alumna pursuing undergraduate or graduate studies in the United States or Canada. It will be awarded to the candidate who demonstrates outstanding academic achievements, leadership ability, participation in extracurricular activities, and a significant level of financial need.

For 2024-2025, MGCAANA will award **\$300 scholarship to one (1)** candidate together with a free one-year student membership of MGCAANA.

If you think you are the right candidate, please take this opportunity by applying for the scholarship.

Application Deadline: February 29, 2025

The scholarship winner will be notified by March 31, 2025 via email.

Please visit our website at [Welcome to Mahamaya Girls' College Alumnae Association North America](#) to view and download the scholarship application. Be sure to read the 'Instructions and Requirements' carefully before completing the application.

Send the completed scholarship application and all required supporting documentation together in one email to mahamaya_alumnae@yahoo.com. *All application information is for selection purposes only and will be kept strictly confidential.*

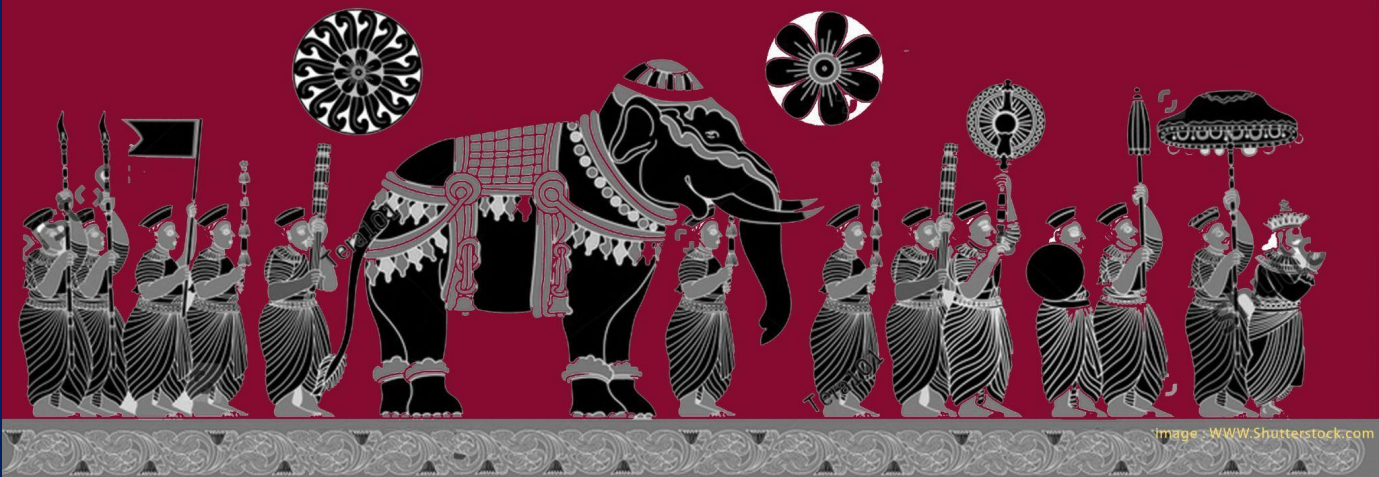
Inquiries about application procedures and the selection process may be directed to the Scholarship Selection Committee at

mahamaya_alumnae@yahoo.com.

Wishing you the best of luck!

MGCAANA Undergraduate & Graduate Scholarship Selection Committee
2024/2025





කන්ද උඩරට ඇසළ පෙරහැර

2024 ART and POETRY SHOWCASE

Art Submissions



MGCAANA hosted an Art and Poetry Showcase centered around the theme of **Kandy Esala Perahera**.

Artists and poets from all backgrounds and age groups submitted their original work that capture the essence, beauty, and spirit of Esala Perahera.

All participants were issued a digital certificate.

We would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who sent in their work.

Prabashi Isidhara Nawarathne

9 years

Edmonton, Canada



Vihanga Walpita, 9 Years, Los Angeles, California, USA

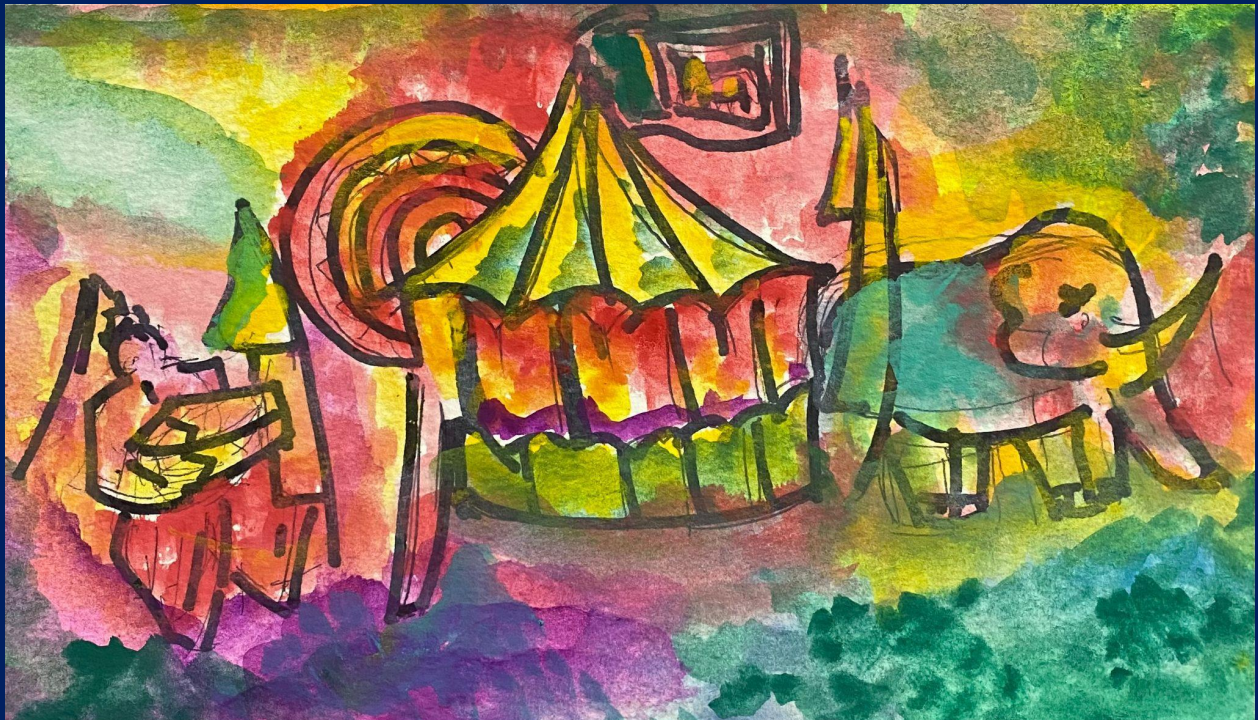


Sahela Walpita

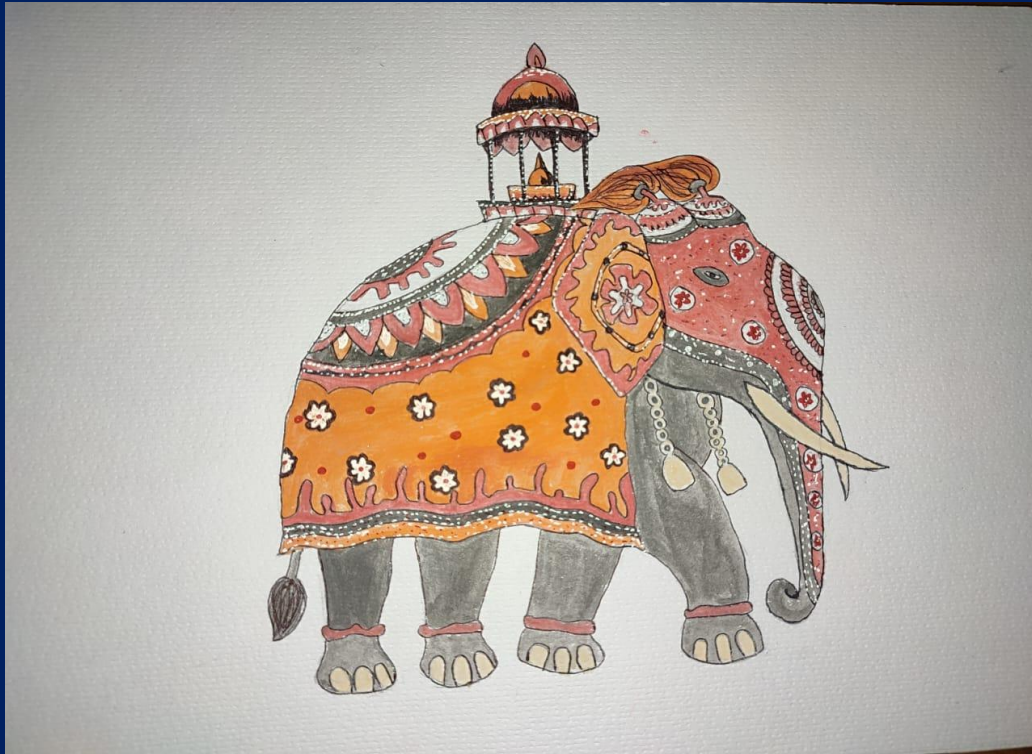
13 Years
Los Angeles,
California,
USA



Lahini Walpita, 9 Years, Los Angeles, California, USA



Pradeepa Jayawardena - Member, Adult Category, Oregon, USA



Bimsara Kulatunga
Adult Category
Non member
Sri Lanka



Senali Dissanayake - Member, Adult Category, Cincinnati, USA

Poetry Submissions

Of Majesty and Piety

Hiranga B. Suraweera

13 years

Trinity College, Kandy

For ten days throughout the city
The glorious Kandy town
Adorning the golden casket
Behind his majestic crown
The tusker parades
Blessing the streets in the night
Yearning for rain for the nation's crops
To end the drought and the farmer's plight

The sacred tooth relic
Of he who preached a way out of suffering
Lord Buddha – the one who saw our torment
And gave rebirth and ending
The artifact which was once of this noble being
Riding atop his shoulders
In all splendour it can bestow
A sight to melt hearts and boulders

Whip-crackers and flag-bearers
Drummers and dancers
Torchbearers and acrobats
Officers bearing lances
Adding their pious prelude
To the long path he walks
While crowds chant and pray as he soars
Stepping onto white tapestries as light as a Hawk

Crossing the Mahaweli river in a raft
Waiting for hours for the long-distance bus
Traveling crouched non-stop for six hours
Parched and hungry with wounds oozing pus
All to see you – you magnificent tusker
And the holy relic you seem to bear with so much devotion
To gather merits, to end my wandering
Set my practice of Dhamma in motion

UPCOMING MGCAANA EVENTS



*Mahamaya Girls' College Alumnae
Association of North America*

TABLE ETIQUETTE

Presented by

Raymond Lee Hallett III



Sunday, November 17th 2024
2:00PM PST
(4:00PM CST; 5:00PM EST)

\$5

*SUGGESTED
DONATION*

Register and Pay Now
(with the google form)

Let's explore
and learn all
about different
purposes of
utensils on the
table!



Reaching the New Goal **\$50,000** Set for Vidya Scholarship Trust Fund (VSTF)

The Vidya Scholarship Trust Fund (VSTF), set up by MGCAANA, provides financial aid to disadvantaged students at Mahamaya Girls' College. Scholarships from VSTF pay for educational expenses and boarding fees of students attending Mahamaya. "Vidya," a Sanskrit word, means knowledge or wisdom. Our initial goal was to raise \$20,000, which we achieved in 2018; The current goal is \$50,000.

The total amount collected for VSTF reached **\$46,006** as of July 2024. Currently, we are at 92% of the new goal.

To donate online or by cheque, please visit:

<http://mahamayaalumnina.org/vstf.php>

We value your donations - fulfilling our purpose of MGCAANA

The updates are according to Ms. Himashinie Diyabalanage (Co-chair, VSTF) - on behalf of the endowment committee and the VSTF Board of Trustees. *VSTF Announcements:* We are excited to share that in 2024, the VSTF awarded **24 scholarships worth Rs 20,000 each**. These scholarships will support deserving students in pursuing their educational goals. Congratulations to the recipients! And thank you to our sponsors and distinguish donors for making this possible!

https://www.mahamayaalumnina.org/VidyaTrustFund/MGCAANA_Vidya_Scholarship_Trust_Fund_Brochure.pdf

Renewing MGCAANA Membership for the Year 2024/2025

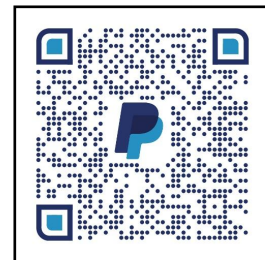
Thank you to members who already renewed their membership for the year 2024. If you have not renewed your membership yet, this is a friendly reminder to renew your membership to support MGCAANA's ongoing activities.

How can you renew your membership?

Online: Use your credit card via PayPal account to pay your membership fee through the MGCAANA membership renewal page.

<https://www.mahamayaalumnina.org/membership.html>

or using the MGCAANA PayPal QR code



By Mail: Please mail a check payable to MGCAANA (Annual membership: \$15 - Students; \$25 - Regular). Address: Treasurer, MGCAANA, 2417 NE 20th, Renton, WA 98056.

Note: If you wish, you can also renew your membership for 3, 5, or 10 years by paying US\$70.00, US\$115.00 and US \$230.00 respectively. Your support helps MGCAANA continue its legacy in helping Mayans and their communities in North America as well as current students at Mahamaya Girls' College, Kandy, Sri Lanka.

Upcoming MGCAANA Activities

- Board meetings
- Next Newsletter (January 2025)
- Webinars - Stay tuned.

Want to know what your Board of Directors (BOD) is up to?

Please read the minutes of the BOD's monthly meetings posted on MGCAANA website:

<http://www.mahamayaalumnina.org/minutes.php>

If you have new ideas, concerns, suggestions etc. to improve MGCAANA and to find out how it operates, please feel free to connect with the BOD through email:

Mahamaya_alumnae@yahoo.com

Newsletter Committee :

Ms. Veroni Nadeesha Jayawardana

Proofread by: Dr. Asantha U. Attanayake Barborich

Dear valued members,

Please send your articles, pictures and artistic creations for the MGCAANA Newsletter to its official email account of MGCAANA, which is mahamaya_alumnae@yahoo.com

Send in any personal success stories, recipes or even old memories that you would like to share with our fellow Mayans. Kids and family members are most welcome to share their artistry with us. The Newsletter committee will retain your original work of art and will publish your work as the availability of space.

Thank you,

The Newsletter Committee.
MGCAANA 2024/2025