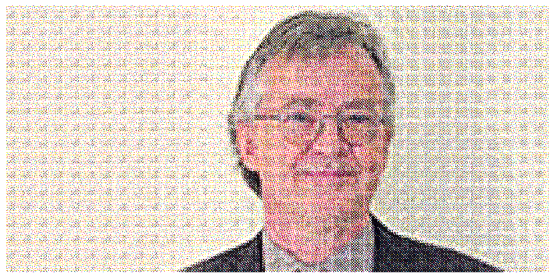


Thursday December 8, 2022

AOD - Northumbria University UK Convocation 2022

*AOD & Northumbria University School of Design
 Celebrates a strong long-term partnership*



Mr. Daniel Bood (Chief Guest)
 Chargé d'Affaires, Canadian High Commission in Colombo

Congratulations to the Academy of Design (AOD) Graduating Class of 2022! This is an exciting and exhilarating time in your lives as you enter the professional world of design. More than ever, design is an integral part of the world we now live in; a conduit for self-expression as well as a means for improving the

condition, affecting our daily lives as never before. The Academy of Design has provided you with a solid foundation as you embark on this next phase of your lives. You are the future generation of leaders who will pave the way for the design industry in Sri Lanka. In this endeavor, I hope you will follow your passions and take Sri Lankan design to previously unscaled global heights, creating a bright future with inclusivity, creativity and in celebration of diversity. I wish you good luck on all your future undertakings!



H. E. Sarah Hulton OBE
 British High Commissioner to Sri Lanka

My sincere congratulations to everyone on your graduation! This is a remarkable moment in every student's academic life and a reflection of your commendable commitment to your studies. As you enter a new chapter in your academic or professional life you can be confident, knowing that you have an excellent

Internationally recognised qualification like this one from Northumbria University that provides a strong basis for further study or as you take your next steps in the employment market. We are proud of the partnership that AOD and Northumbria University have built, which also reflects the many close and dynamic educational links between our two countries.

Today is a day to celebrate years of hard work, dedication, perseverance and creativity with your friends and family. I hope you are also able to take a moment to reflect on what has helped you to reach this point and be inspired anew about what you will achieve in the future.

Once again, congratulations and my best wishes for your future endeavours.



Prof. Jon Reast
 Pro-Vice Chancellor (International), Northumbria University

Graduation is a very special day that marks your outstanding achievements. It is the highlight of a University's academic year, marking the formal celebration of the accomplishments, values and qualities

I would like to offer you sincere congratulations on behalf of the whole University. While your graduation marks the end of a chapter in your lives, it is just the beginning of another journey. You are now entering into a new relationship with Northumbria – as one of our valued family of alumni. I look forward to seeing many of you in the future, returning to share your experiences and create opportunities for future Northumbria graduates, as many of our prestigious alumni have done before you. It has been a pleasure to personally congratulate you on your exceptional personal achievement and to wish you well for your future. Wherever you go in the world and whatever you go on to do, carry your degree from Northumbria University with pride. From today onwards you are a global ambassador for this University and a part of Northumbria's lifelong global family.



Dr. (Hon DCL) Linda Speldewinde
 Founder & Chairperson, AOD

There's enormous power in creativity. But like with all great powers, it comes with great responsibility; particularly now, when Sri Lanka and the world are facing unprecedented challenges, pushing society to re-evaluate

Class of 2022, you're going out to a world that needs solutions; economies that require leveling; societies primed for products and technology that leave less of a footprint; a planet that entered a red zone in terms of climate crisis. Your place as designers in this world is shaped by these challenges. As designers, you are uniquely positioned to help businesses and even whole societies to pivot and adapt; because you're trained to tackle problems at root level by radically rethinking systems while also changing our collective habits and desires fuelling the world's greatest problems. This ability to adopt a more integrated, panoramic view of problems and solutions is the superpower that you offer as professionals. It excites me to see you go out into the world holding this enormous power. Because that makes each of you an agent of change and hope—a force of renewal and a point of revolution. Congratulations, Class of 2022; I look forward to the world you remake.



Prof. Thomass Atkinson
 Director of Academic Affairs, AOD

Congratulations to all graduands from the class 2022 of AOD and Northumbria University UK, on achieving a major milestone in your personal, creative, and professional journey. I encourage all of you to recognize the tremendous significance of your achievements, in

the transition from an AOD and Northumbria University student, to an AOD and Northumbria University graduate, and allow your success to be a source of pride in the present, and confidence for the future.

My message to all of you is the same: Irrespective of what pursuits you undertake, pursue your passion even though the journey may sometimes seem long, and complex.

I have every confidence that all of you will evolve, and shape your knowledge, skills, attitudes, and positive mindsets to match the regional, and global market expectations. I am extremely pleased to congratulate each graduate again for your well-deserved success, accomplishment, and achievement, and wish you all the best in your future endeavours.

On behalf of the entire Academy of Design, we would like to offer our sincerest congratulations to our graduating class of 2022 – a mighty force that's now being unleashed into the world!

As you make it to this significant milestone in your lives, we too look back in the hope that we have indeed fulfilled our promise to you; equipped you with the knowledge and skills you came for, provided unmatched opportunities for your growth, and perhaps more importantly, sparked in you a fire fuelled by the drive to change lives for the better.

We salute your perseverance against the odds of the uncertainty of our times, commend your hard work over

the years, and are excited for the transformative change that is going to come from your hands.

Thank you for enriching our halls with your presence, and we hope that you too, leave these doors with fond memories, great friendships, and a sense of great accomplishment.

Congratulations batch of 2022. You've done us proud, and your journey has only just begun.

- Team AOD

Graduating Class of 2022

BA (Hons)
 Fashion Design & Marketing

Deborah Angeli Ratnarajah
 Dehemi Purnima
 Dulaj Wegapitiya
 Hiruni Prabashi Perera
 Jessica Meurling
 Keshawee Raddella
 Lehara Milesi Edirisinghe
 Menasha Silva
 Rashmi Amanda Paramnathan
 Risini Jinadasa
 Romeshi Ranasinghe
 Sagayaraj Nimmie Bernadette
 Sajani Abinavee Samarakoon
 Thisari Abeytunge
 Vinudi Jayarathne

BA (Hons)
 Fashion & Textile Design

Amanda Munasinghe
 Ana Fathmath
 Ayesha Zikker
 Chamasha Jayalath
 Chathurika Liyanage
 Dinithi Athukorala
 Hiruni Abeyawardena
 Jaishni Karunaratne
 Kavindhi Wanigasinghe
 Kavya Jayasinghe
 Kethmi Ubeyrathna
 Lasandi Withanaarachchi
 Navinie Pathirana
 Nawoda Bandara
 Nicola Perera
 Noyeli Jayasekera
 Oneli Vithanage
 Ramindi Ratnakara
 Rashmi Premadasa
 Reem Ibrahim
 Roshita Fernando
 Ruwandhi Silva

BA (Hons)
 Visual Communication Design

Saeed Ahmed Saraau
 Santhoshi De Alwis
 Sarani Aloka Gamage
 Scherandi Nonis
 Seniru Malawarage
 Senodi Ranatunga
 Sesara Wanninayake
 Shasha Mahanama
 Shavindi Wijesooriya
 Sithma Illangasinghe
 Somil Dilmith
 Tarshiha Atukorale
 Tharaka Dissanayake
 Tharushi Nanayakkara
 Upuli Perera
 Vimashini Dissanayake
 Vinuki De Silva

BA (Hons)
 Interior Design

Adheesha Wickramasuriya
 Andrew Dinushan
 Fathima Ilma Abdul Cader
 Kevin Fernando
 Kevin Leitan
 Lashya Vigneswaran
 Mariyam Luha
 Michelle Ronaly
 Qaanita Razeek
 Ruwani Rajapakse
 Sathira Imaduwwage
 Shane VonGunster
 Shevon Peiris
 Sithmini Vihara Maddumage
 Subhath Sanjula Peiris
 Taahera Mohamed
 Tarina Dharmawardane
 Uthara Kumarasinghe
 Zoha Zahara Hallaldeen

BA (Hons)
 Motion Graphics & Animation Design

Ahsan Anwer
 Anjalie Yatiyawela
 Apoorva Gamage
 Aqeelah Ahmed
 Aqsa Firoze
 Ashmini Perera
 Dilky Senaratne
 Dinethma Warnakulasuriya
 Hajara Zahir
 Haniya Mursheed
 Kavya Mandakini
 Leecia Wickramarachchi
 Lu'ayyu Khaleel
 Madara Prabhashinie
 Manuka Hiyarapitiya
 Methmi Dankoluwwage
 Navotmi Fernando
 Nethmi Gunasekera

Choices Galore with NCUK at APIIT

Don't limit yourself to one university!

NCUK INTERNATIONAL YEAR ONE

The NCUK International Year One is a first-year undergraduate equivalent programme that builds students' knowledge and skills. It prepares and qualifies students for entry to the second year of undergraduate courses offered by NCUK universities.

NCUK guarantees students a place on a programme of study at one of the NCUK universities, provided that the student performs to the level specified by the NCUK Guarantee.

APIIT is now proud to offer the NCUK Year One in both Law and Business. On completion of NCUK International Year One in Law, students can transfer to Aston University, University of Bradford, University of Huddersfield, Leeds Beckett University, University of Sheffield or the Sheffield Hallam University in UK.

For students who complete NCUK International Year One in Business, a range of leading universities in UK and Australia are available for progression.

NCUK INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION YEAR

The NCUK International Foundation Year is a unique qualification that helps students transition from secondary to tertiary education. Established in 1987 in the UK, NCUK is a consortium of leading universities dedicated to giving international students guaranteed access to universities worldwide and helping them succeed when they get there. The systematic process enables students to receive the support needed from registration for the qualification, right until they settle in at university on completion of their programme.

ONE ENTRY QUALIFICATION ACCEPTED BY LEADING UNIVERSITIES AND THOUSANDS OF DEGREES!

With a diverse set of subjects, as well as opportunities for qualified students to progress directly to university, NCUK supports thousands of students

each year on their academic journeys. The qualification is recognized by universities throughout the world.

The NCUK International Foundation Year qualification is designed in collaboration with their partner universities and combine high academic standards with language, study, social and cultural skills.

Students who progress to NCUK Universities have a choice to study one of thousands of different degree courses, enabling them to build enriching careers following graduation or upon obtaining further qualifications.

ADVANTAGES OF NCUK STUDY PROGRAMMES

Since 1987, NCUK has helped over 35,000 international students from 100 nationalities gain access to leading universities. The main advantages include 99% visa success rate for NCUK students, 90% of NCUK students getting into their first-choice university, and 80% of NCUK students achieving a first- or second-class degree at university.

AVAILABLE NOW IN SRI LANKA ONLY THROUGH APIIT

Established in 1999, APIIT Sri Lanka is well known for its contribution to the higher education industry in Sri Lanka. APIIT is proud to introduce the NCUK International Foundation Year to students who have completed their O/L examinations and the NCUK International Year One to students who have completed their A/L examinations.

These programmes will equip students with an internationally recognized qualification, which will be the stepping stone to any degree of choice from NCUK's world-renowned partner universities throughout the world.

For more information on NCUK, call APIIT Colombo on 0765 788 788 or APIIT Kandy on 0773 577 877, or email info@apiit.lk. Refer to our website www.apiit.lk for updates on life at APIIT!

CHEWING GUM PROBLEMS AND A BAG FULL OF TEARS

I have a very good friend of mine, who has been my friend since school days. He also got into a series of issues just like me simply due to his arrogance and reluctance to change. His problems began in 1994, and the same problems are still with him even in 2022. All that he has been doing for the last twenty eight (28) years is just chewing his problem at a stretch. I have seen many youngsters who chew gum from morning till night as though it offers them a healthy body and a developed brain. Constant chewing will enforce excessive energy on your temporomandibular joints, muscles and teeth which leads to over stress, imbalance, and misalignment. They do not realise that they are just wasting a powerful resource on chewing gum with sweeteners which are not productive at all. Moreover, it utilises the source - your mouth, which could be utilised to chew and transfer healthy food to your body.

Just as my friend, I also chewed many problems over and over again until one fine day I realised that I am using the fertiliser I acquire, to grow weed in the jungle. Whereas the same fertiliser could be utilised to cultivate valuable crops that could bring forth an immeasurable harvest to my life. Recently, I called this friend of mine whom I dearly love. I asked him why he is chewing the same old chewing gum for years and years and he answered me with an empty smile. It is indeed very sad to see him, who is also the same age as I am, carrying an empty bag in life which is full of tears, agony and misery.

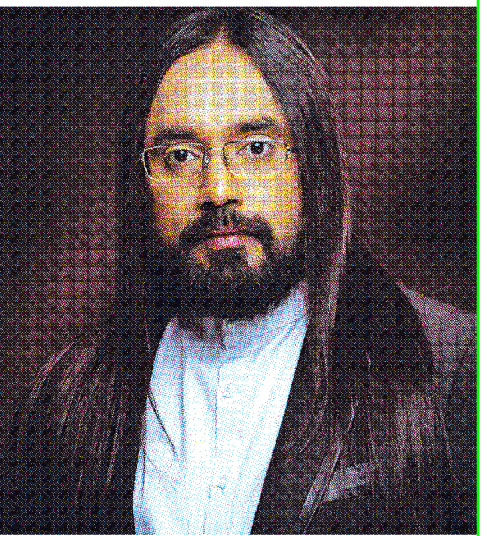
Many people in today's world are also similar to that. All they do is keep chewing their problem instead of using that problematic ground to give birth to a tree that will bloom with beautiful flowers. Every problem you face in your life could be converted to an opportunity. Even though drugs wasted some good years of my life, today, I am protecting and inspiring the youth across the world with my story, giving them the opportunity to bounce back whenever they are knocked down by challenges. Those who have failed their primary education have challenged those failures by reinvesting in their future by excelling well in their latter education. People who have failed in their relationships have learnt through those mistakes to improve themselves so that they could build excellent long lasting relationships.

Dr. Philip Nehri

The Astonishing Comeback

DRUG ADDICT - MENTAL PATIENT TURNED CEO - LIFE COACH

Dr. Philip Nehri, is an esteemed role model renowned across the world for his phenomenal come back in life. He hit rock bottom when he became a wrecked drug addict and a rejected mental patient who was treated at three mental hospitals. From a hopeless beggar in the streets, he became a world class Transformational Life Coach, a top tier high-yielding Business Consultant, a distinguished Corporate Trainer and a remarkable CEO. He was awarded the prestigious prize from the CIM, UK, as the "Best Sri Lankan Student". Further, he was honoured with a doctorate by the United Nations University for Global Peace (UNUGP) in USA, for his inspiring retaliation in life. Philip was also awarded a full scholarship from the government of the United States in Life Coaching. He was the former Head of Marketing in Sri Lanka, India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, for Sri Lanka's market leading cosmetics brand "Nature's Secrets". At present he serves as the CEO for Chandanalepa, the bestselling Ayurvedic Cosmetics Brand in Sri Lanka. Philip has dauntlessly expanded Chandanalepa into eighteen offshore lands across the world.



The problem that many face is that they always tend to see the problem and not the solution. There is no point in grumbling over the thorns when you could have enjoyed the beauty of the rose. It is high time for many to recalibrate their minds. Many focus on the stain instead of the value of the blanket. If you focus only on the stain, you will not be able to enjoy the key pleasure the blanket offers which is warmth. Crying over the stain without wrapping yourself around the blanket will only leave you in coldness.

The lives of many are cold and barren as they are addicted to chewing their problems just as the wandering youth chew gum constantly and aimlessly. Time is certainly with no argument one of the greatest resources we attain to make ourselves productive and contributive. If it is used to dip yourself in a bath of bitterness, then you will lack the necessary resources to cultivate in your own garden of life. I use my time very wisely and I do not invest even five minutes at places where people just talk about their problems regarding politicians or mischaracterise others' lives.

I have a very limited number of friends, maybe three, because I have found that all the others are just chewing their problems whenever they get together over alcohol. There will come a moment that one would find himself surrounded by depressive thoughts and he ain't got sufficient resources to come back. This is exactly what has happened to my friend, all he obtains is a long chewed problem and a bag full of emptiness at the age of forty five.

Make a strong decision to recalibrate your brain so that you could challenge the challenges and not allow the

challenges to keep you stuck in a pit of sorrow and isolation. The good thing about our brain is that it could be trained and developed. Everything I thought of during my youth were always pleasurable including smoking, drugs and prostitution which are now seen by the same brain as useless, unproductive and corruptive. Therefore, do not be disheartened, your brain could always be recalibrated and reprogrammed towards success.

You only need to make a strong decision and an unwavering commitment to be glued to that decision so that you could convert your brain towards victory. You can train your brain to a stage where the same tele drama you once found juicy will now be considered bitter. The same brain of mine which found pornography juicy twenty five years ago now says it is destructive, stinky and useless. The ingredients are in your own basket, the taste of your curry relies on your decisions.

The moment you make a decision to train your brain towards challenging the problems and moving forward, it will not sit calmly and allow you to do it. Just as a dog that attempts to hold tightly on to the bone which he has been chewing, your brain will tell you that it will not surrender to your decision as it is against the way in which it was behaving over a period of time. The moment you try to become a vegetarian your brain would soon throw a massive fit as vegetables have not been defined by your brain as pleasurable food.

Just as you train your dog, you should carry an unwavering commitment until you tame your brain and then reverse its negative thought patterns. For every situation in life

there will be a programmed thought pattern which is built inside your brain based on how you have responded in the past. Negative thought patterns could be reversed. Many years ago, the West believed that coconut oil was bad for your health but today the very same West is hungrily craving for virgin coconut oil. Did the coconuts genetically transform over time? Certainly No, the minds of the people transformed the belief they had towards coconut.

How was it transformed? Through continuously feeding accurate information and intelligence to your brain which is so powerful and weighs more than the information and intelligence your brain has been fed regarding coconut oil. If you want to revert a homemade remedy of a village woman, it will be easier to do it by getting a doctor to prescribe something over her medication. Our brain through perception has prioritised who is trustworthy and reliable. Therefore, it is not an impossible task to recalibrate the brain.

Some people have chosen to eat bread with a cup of plain tea merely because of their reluctance to go through the process of correction and development. They are blind to the fact that rice and curry or any other healthy meal is at the end of the process that is far better than consuming plain tea and bread for all three meals. Once a decision is taken you must make sure that the decision is continually refueled with passion and motivation, if not it may try hard to go back to its old format.

For comments -
voice: 0774 88 56 56 /
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philipnehri.m@gmail.com

The Federation of Information Technology Industry Sri Lanka (FITIS) announces Microsoft as the Gold Partner for the Young Computer Scientists (YCS) Competition

The apex body of the ICT Industry in Sri Lanka, the Federation of Information Technology Industry Sri Lanka (FITIS), announced that Microsoft Sri Lanka has signed up as a Gold Partner for the Young Computer Scientist (YCS) competition, organized by the FITIS Software Chapter.

The FITIS Software Chapter, formerly known as Sri Lanka Association for the Software Industry (SLASI) has organized the Young Computer Scientist (YCS) competition together with the Ministry of Education and with the support of University of Colombo School of Computing (UCSC), for the 21st consequent time in Sri Lanka.

The competition aims to expose the computing talents of school children at early stages and encourage them to develop their talents and earn recognition for their innovations. This competition is modelled based on the Asia Pacific ICT Alliance (APICTA).

FITIS is one of the key economies representing APICTA from Sri Lanka thus YCS provides an opportunity for Sri Lankan school students to represent Sri Lanka at the global level and demonstrate their ICT innovations at Junior and Senior level categories. The winners from each age group category of the competition are nominated for the APICTA (Asia Pacific ICT Alliance) awards that is to be



Standing L - R: Samath Fernando - Treasurer FITIS Software Chapter, Kalanga Ihalagedara - Executive Council Member FITIS Software Chapter, Fairouz Habeeb - President FITIS Software Chapter, Harsha Randeny - Country Manager Microsoft Sri Lanka and Maldives, Thilanka Abeywardena - Chief Marketing and Business Operations Lead Microsoft South East Asia New Markets, Keziah Smith - Marketing Specialist Microsoft South East Asia New Markets, Dinesh C.A. Sattrukalsinghe - Chief Executive Officer FITIS.

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held in Islamabad from 9th to 11th December 2022. This year, 6 projects consisting of a contingent of 7 students in total have secured a merit award in the YCS competition and stand nominated to attend the APICTA competition in 2022.

Further FITIS working in close knit with Microsoft

Sri Lanka, have taken gigantic strides to provide mentoring sessions for the APICTA nominees involving industry professionals, to help align these projects to International Standards of appeal. This would ensure that these projects stand tall and gain international

accolades and recognition at the APICTA competition amongst other projects. Beyond the National pride it would bestow as a result if selected, would also enable a GTM (Go-To-Market) strategy on the lines of its endeavors towards successful commercialization.

Furthermore, Microsoft Sri Lanka would be assisting in creating regional awareness sessions for the 2023 YCS competition thus spreading IT awareness throughout the country and reaching out to talent island wide.

Knowledge Transfer - A driving force behind the economic revival?

In the early 1970s, the United Kingdom experienced a stark economic challenge. The global oil crisis and the miners' strike forced the government to declare a three-day working week. The GDP took a nose-dive, and inflation rose to double digits. In 1976, the government secured a loan of \$3.9 billion (\$18.6 billion in 2022) from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to offset the deteriorating economic conditions and to avoid the collapse of the value of the pound. This period of harsh reality also forced the government to explore innovative ways to achieve sustainable and long-term recovery. Among the many innovative ideas that emerged was the Teaching Company Scheme, now known as the Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (KTP). This was the brainchild of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and Research Councils in the UK. Having realised that there was a serious disconnection between industry and academia, the DTI launched this new scheme, partly funded by the government, to bring these two parties together to achieve higher levels of growth through the transfer of knowledge. This scheme has proved extremely successful and is one of the few government-funded schemes to still operate since its inception over 45 years ago!

So, what is the Knowledge Transfer Partnership programme? It is a three-way collaboration between a business, a skilled graduate (known as a KTP Associate) and a university. The aim is to deliver a strategic, transformational, innovative project in a business. Once the business has identified an area of challenge, the programme engages one or more skilled graduates to lead the project. A university academic is allocated to ensure that the latest concepts and technologies are actively explored to create innovative solutions. The programme not only aims to help businesses to grow, but it also helps to nurture the next generation of industry professionals. As a result, the KTP Associate is given a central role in leading the project and is supported by a carefully crafted development

programme which enables them to acquire new skills. The academic community also vastly benefits from the programme. Real-world case studies for teaching, academic publications, and ideas for new research often emerge from KTP projects.

Having realised the scheme's benefits, the number of KTP projects has steadily increased. All UK universities and research institutes are now actively involved in developing and delivering KTP projects. At present, there are about 800 active projects covering a range of subject disciplines. Back in the 70s, the focus was on reviving the manufacturing sector; now, the KTP scheme welcomes proposals from any business sector that may benefit from transformational projects through knowledge transfer. It is now not only the private sector businesses, not-for-profit organisations are too eligible to participate in the KTP scheme. Currently, there are two types of KTPs, Classic KTPs and Management KTPs. Classic KTPs focus on developing new or better products and services. Management KTPs on the other hand, focus on developing better businesses by enhancing processes and building management capability. A KTP project can last between 12 and 36 months, depending on the challenge and the needs of the business.

The long-term association between the University of Kelaniya and Sheffield Hallam University, UK, has created an opportunity to introduce the KTP model in Sri Lanka. The University of Kelaniya has secured funding from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) to pilot the KTP model. Dr Chamli Pushpakumara, who is Dean of the Faculty of Computing Technology, at the University of Kelaniya and who led the development of the proposal for the ADB, says "this brings a unique opportunity to implement a highly successful scheme from the UK. Our long-term ambition is to make it a national programme, supported by the government and the industry. Like in the UK, we hope that every single university in Sri Lanka will have an opportunity

to be a partner in future". Professor (Emeritus) Terrence Perera, Sheffield Hallam University (UK) who supported the development of the proposal, says "Sheffield Hallam University has a track record of delivering highly successful KTP projects in many industrial sectors including the service sector. We are excited to share our experiences to make this pilot successful".

Sheffield Hallam University has successfully delivered more than 150 KTP projects in a wide range of disciplines. For example, Guilthawk, a Queen's Award-winning software development and tech-led language services company, worked with the academic experts of the university to embed innovative Artificial-Intelligence based solutions which radically transformed their products. At Joseph Rhodes, renowned for supplying high-quality, state-of-the-art metal forming machinery, used the university experts to introduce an innovative approach to Super Plastic Forming and Diffusion Bonding processes. The company claimed that the KTP project with the university played a fundamental role in securing orders worth £14 million from British Aerospace.

To emerge successfully from the current economic challenges, Sri Lanka needs innovative and creative initiatives on many fronts. Bolstering industries to become competitive and agile should be a key strand. It is recognised that there is a need for closer collaborations between universities and businesses. The KTP model, which has transformed thousands of businesses in the UK, is the perfect platform not only for building long-term and sustainable collaborations between academic institutes and businesses but also for nurturing the next generation of industry professionals.

Professor Terrence Perera
Professor of Computer Simulation
Department of Engineering
and Mathematics
Sheffield Hallam University
United Kingdom



THE ACADEMY OF DESIGN CELEBRATES LONG-TERM PARTNERSHIP WITH UNIVERSITY OF THE YEAR 2022 – NORTHUMBRIA UNIVERSITY UK

Pro Vice-Chancellor - Professor Jon Reast tours university, meets with the graduating class of 2022

The Academy of Design (AOD) recently welcomed to its campus Northumbria University's Pro Vice-Chancellor, Professor Jon Reast – the visit exemplifying the long-standing synergistic partnership between the two leading design institutions. This visit also comes in light of Northumbria University, Newcastle being awarded the title of University of the Year 2022 at the prestigious Times Higher Education (THE) Awards.

Widely recognised as the 'Oscars of higher education,' the monumental win recognises exceptional performance, as well as bold, imaginative, and innovative initiatives that have advanced a higher education institution's reputation during the academic year 2020/21.

The Pro Vice-Chancellor toured AOD on Friday 25th November, and met with faculty, students, and members of staff on his visit to the region. During the tour, Prof. Reast was able to witness firsthand the work of final-year graduates across all design departments, who in turn acquainted him with their portfolios of dynamic, inspiring, and socially conscious projects.

A veteran in the UK university sector with over 25 years of experience, Prof. Reast joined Northumbria University as Pro Vice-Chancellor for International in October 2015, having worked for three Triple Crown UK Business Schools previously. On his visit to AOD's campus at the iconic Colombo



From left to right pictured here: Prof. Jon Reast - Pro Vice Chancellor, Northumbria University, Christopher Harris - Global Partnerships Manager, Northumbria University, Ishara Wijemane - Director AOD / Design Corp, Prof. Thomass Atkinson - Director Academic Affairs, AOD

Innovation Tower (CIT), Prof. Reast was able to affirm the design institution's A-grade infrastructure and facilities, and also bestow students with valuable insight on how the conscious implementation of high-caliber design education can play a pivotal role in not just address 21st-century challenges, but also carve out an indispensable niche in the increasingly design-led global future.

As the country's pioneering design educator, AOD has prioritised the fostering of reputable

international partnerships – such as its collaboration with Northumbria University- with the aim to provide each member of its diverse student body with a globally-ranked and well-rounded global design degree from closer to home (with the additional financial advantage of saving on the cost of studying in the UK). However, students are also afforded the option of completing their degrees in Newcastle, UK, following two years of study at the AOD campus in Colombo – making

an international career in design even more within reach.

It can be said that one of the most important aspects of a partnership's endurance is an alliance of ideas and goals. "It is through partnerships like this that both institutions can develop and thrive in a global world and realise their vision," said Prof. Reast on the common goals tying the two trailblazing design universities together. "It is a vision built on creating the kind of designers who can benefit industry, business, and commerce."

"Northumbria's historical roots as a technical university and AOD's entrepreneurial DNA complement one another and have helped us develop a futuristic, business-friendly, and innovation-driven curriculum," he added.

While addressing AOD's graduating batch, Prof. Reast also paid tribute to the global community of 216,000 graduates across over 176 countries from this year alone, and acknowledged the "years of accumulated success in national and international awards and competitions" with "our award-winning graduates working around the world at organisations including Apple, Amnesty International, BBC, Marks & Spencer, Pixar, Oxfam, Tom Ford, Givency, Tommy Hilfiger, Ralph Lauren, Nike, and many more."

What makes this collaboration truly unparalleled however, is that of Northumbria's University's 17 global partner institutions, AOD is the only one offering design-centred curricula, providing students from the region with not just an exemplary international design education, but now, also an opportunity to learn from the faculty and syllabus approved by the 2022 University of the Year.

All three-year full-time undergraduate programmes from AOD are affiliated with Northumbria University, UK, including the BA (Hons) Fashion & Textile Design, BA (Hons) Fashion Design & Marketing, BA (Hons) Interior Architecture Design, BA (Hons) Graphics & Visual Communication Design, and the BA

(Hons) Motion Graphics & Animation Design – each degree tuned to the pulse of the fast-evolving state of the global workplace.

"External engagement with real-world issues ensures that Northumbria's curricula are always relevant, our ideas drive change, and our students graduate to become highly successful designers and communicators," said Prof. Reast.

With its ever-increasing portfolio of successful alumni, AOD has demonstrated that partnerships such as this, work; be it in terms of curriculum development, collaborative research, international learning and showcase opportunities, student exchange programme, or even just building cultural awareness. Through forging and maintaining the Northumbria University, UK collaboration too, AOD is proving yet again that the development and career security of its students will always be top priority.

AOD invites all design-inclined O/L and A/L graduates to learn more about AOD and its Northumbria University-accredited undergraduate degrees, and how they too can benefit from a global award-winning education.

For more information please contact AOD on 0775727772, email info@aod.lk or walk in between 9am and 4pm Monday to Friday – Colombo Innovation Tower, No 477, R. A De Mel Mawatha, Colombo www.aod.lk

The Academy of Design (AOD) hosted its annual Graduate Exhibition, titled '360 One' at the Colombo Innovation Tower from the 1st to the 4th December



The opening night was held on Thursday, when AOD's emerging talent showcased their ideas and designs to industry professionals. Ms Lisa Whanstall, Deputy British High Commissioner to Sri Lanka and Chief Guest for the Event, officially inaugurated '360 one', and noted the novel ideas about substantivity, technology and recycling materials that were expressed through the Exhibition. The night culminated with felicitating AOD's top students for excellence.

The event also marks a partnership of over a decade between AOD and



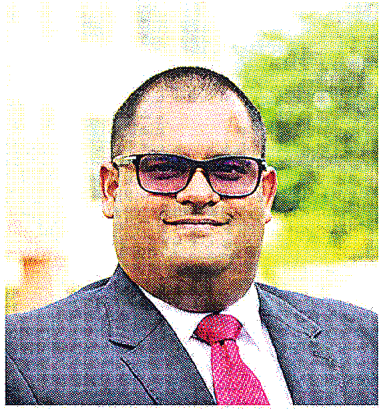
Northumbria University School of Design. More than a hundred AOD graduates showing their work at the event

come from a variety of degrees affiliated with Northumbria University including Fashion and Design, Interior Architecture and Motion Graphics and Animation.

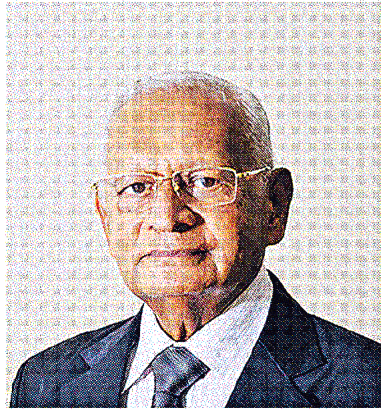
The event also gives the graduates both local and international exposure to their creative work, giving them a headstart in the industry and a chance to explain their ideals and interact with industry professionals. From the 2nd of December onwards, the event was also open to visitors eager to see Sri Lanka's emerging creative talent.

Sadisha Saparamadu





Ramantha Alles



Asoka B. Herath



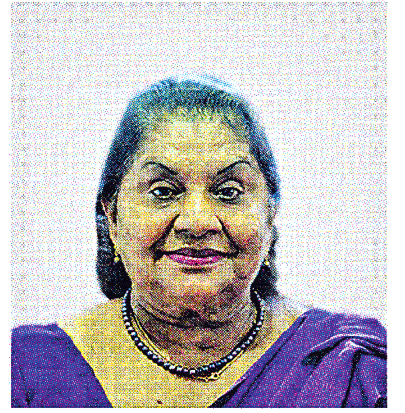
Nirmali Wickremesinghe



Nelum Senadira



Nissanka Marapana



Cheryl Cooray

Springfield College, a fully owned subsidiary of the Gateway Group will open a fully equipped purpose built School in Nugegoda (Kattiya Junction) that will deliver Cambridge and National Curricula in English Medium. The school is situated in a beautifully landscaped property spanning over two acres with plenty of space for play areas which include basketball and netball courts.

Over the years, Springfield Colleges Kandy and Colombo (Borella) that also provide sound infrastructure have been carrying out an excellent teaching and learning programme at a modest fee structure. These two schools will continue to offer the Sri Lankan curriculum only in the English medium. The multi-religious and multi-racial environment fostered by good discipline makes Springfield safe, secure and welcoming to Sri Lankan children to grow as well rounded students who will be successful in later life.

Gateway Group, the owners of Springfield College, is pleased to see the noteworthy progress of the school during the recent years. Mr. Ramantha Alles, Director of Gateway, is of the view that through Springfield, Gateway has taken yet another important step in fulfilling their vision of catering to all segments of society. Mrs. Nirmali Wickremesinghe, Consultant, Gateway Group, says Springfield College promises to produce disciplined and worthy Citizens, whose value will not only be in home soil, but also when they step out in to the world.

Mrs. Nelum Senadira, who will

SPRINGFIELD COLLEGE NUGEGODA TO OFFER CAMBRIDGE AND NATIONAL CURRICULA



assume duties as the Principal of Springfield College Nugegoda, counts years of experience in educational leadership. Having served the Fulbright Commission as the Student Adviser for EducationUSA, Head of Gateway Graduate School and Principal of a leading Private School in Colombo, Mrs. Senadira will take up duties as the Principal of the new school from the beginning of next year. As an educator who believes in the

provision of a 'rounded education', Mrs. Senadira says 'our ethos is that every child is our concern so we ensure we do our utmost to promote learning and development in a loving, caring and secure homely environment.

The school in Kandy, under the guidance of well experienced educationalist Mr Asoka Herath, Director of Gateway Group, is managed by the Principal Mr. Nissanka Marapana who counts over

30 year of experience in teaching and educational administration. The Principal of the school in Borella is Mrs. Cheryl Cooray, a former Vice Principal of another leading Private School in Colombo who is known to be a caring Administrator. All schools are supported by well experienced and qualified teachers who are committed to achieve the highest possible goals in educating the children.

Maintaining an exceptionally high

standard of the English Language in comparison to what is required by the National curriculum is a priority of the Springfield Colleges. The schools ensure that the course material for English language teaching is that of the United Kingdom's current standards, and that they be delivered by teachers who have been trained to teach such material.

Springfield Colleges are located at Gothami Road, Borella,

Robert Gunawardena Mawatha, Battaramulla, George E De Silva Mawatha, Anniewatta, Kandy and Old Kesbewa Road, Nugegoda. Details of admissions to school can be obtained from the Registrar by calling 076 4977987, 011 2699327 or 011 2198033 (Nugegoda, Borella and Battaramulla), and or 081 2202244 (Kandy). Further information can be obtained by visiting www.springfield.lk or writing to info@springfield.lk

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Good Strategy necessary when seeking Australian Visa, says Immigration Lawyer

Mr Dinesh Iriyagolla Weerakkody, Solicitor and Barrister and Immigration Lawyer working in Australia spoke to the Daily Mirror on the process of obtaining an Australian Visa and requirements for a prospective Visa Applicant.

Mr Weerakkody, who studied at Deakin University and then admitted to the Supreme Court of Victoria, strongly recommends any visa applicant to plan ahead and map a strategy for immigrating to Australia, preferably with guidance from a qualified Immigration Lawyer or registered Visa Agency.

Noting that Australian Immigration Law is complex and may vary for different States, occupations or visa types, he says it is important to consider where the applicant would plan to study and work and whether they fulfill the necessary requirements for the Visa they seek.

While there are many Visa agencies that offer assistance to get an Australian Visa, Mr Weerakkody warned applicants to check if the agencies are qualified and registered, stating that in Australia 70% of Visa Agencies do not renew their registrations while the number of Visa agencies continue to rise. He recommended a qualified Immigration Lawyer, who would have more knowledge about Australian Immigration Law and Policy.

Explaining the process for obtaining a student visa, he says that students will have to write a statement for the Genuine Temporary Entrant Requirement, that will evaluate if the student has a genuine interest to study the intended course and whether they will genuinely stay in Australia temporarily.

He noted that job experience or additional qualifications in the intended stream of study would better a students chances to be considered a Genuine Student, while also helping them receive the Confirmation of Enrollment (CoE) from the University they plan to study in.

He also warned prospective students on selecting the University or Educational Institute they plan on pursuing their studies in, noting that while Australia has world-class Higher Education Institutes, an unrecognized University may adversely affect a student's chances when obtaining a Visa, while providing insecurity in their



future of the course they study in if the Educational institute becomes bankrupt.

When considering Permanent Residency Status, a concern for many prospective Sri Lankan Visa applicants, he says it is important to consider where you study and work, which may give more points towards Permanent Residency. Working or studying in Designated Regional Areas, a specific term in Australian Law, can contribute more points, but he advises to cross-check with the postcodes of the place you live in to ensure it is designated as a regional area.

He also said that all occupations in the Australian Skilled Occupation List have potential for Permanent Residence, however it may depend

on demand for occupation and area of work. He noted that many occupations, not just highly-skilled jobs, have potential to be accepted for Permanent Residence depending on demand.

Finally, Mr Weerakkody advises successful Visa Applicants to research on Australian Criminal Law and Traffic laws, which are often very different to those in Sri Lanka. Being charged with a criminal offence may affect your Visa status and your position in the Educational Institute you study in or Employer you work in. A criminal record would also make it much more difficult to pass the Citizenry Assessment if you seek to become an Australian Citizen, he says.

Sadisha Saparamadu