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From the President's desk...



“We cannot accomplish all that we need to do without working together.”

–**Bill Richardson**

It is with great pleasure that I write this foreword. The Alumnae Association of Stella Maris College has been doing exemplary work – organising placement, training, instituting scholarships – among a host of other activities – for our students for several decades.

The Association has always been an active and vibrant part of the Stella Marian family. The Career Guidance wing of the Association has rendered yeoman service for several generations of students, many of whom occupy high positions in industry and the corporate sector. We are privileged to have such an enthusiastic group of alumnae who take keen interest in the welfare of the students.

Your work is truly inspirational. It comes of loyalty to the institution, a commitment to serve and the zeal to live the motto of Stella Maris – “Truth and Charity”. You are the true Stella Marians. The many programmes you have organized this year to keep the members involved and active under the Kalanjiam banner have been interesting and enjoyable. The Student Support Fund that you have initiated has encouraged many deserving students to continue their studies. The career development and skill enhancement programmes have introduced the students to the world they can expect to encounter after their studies and will prepare them for a fruitful career.

My congratulations to the core group, executive members and the youth wing for all your efforts in keeping the Association active and lively and in spreading your wings to other cities and shores. May the AASMC thrive and prosper with the coming years.

I wish you all God's abundant blessings and the guiding beacon of the Star of the Sea to light your way.

Dr. Sr. Jasintha Quadras, fmm
Principal

August 14, 2014

Round – Up 2013-2014

The Alumnae Association of Stella Maris College (AASMC) was formed in 1994 to forge bonds of fellowship among alumnae, present students and faculty. The Association also aims towards a constructive and creative involvement of the alumnae in the activities of the college.

The Career Guidance Cell (CGC), Kalanjiam, Newsletter and the Student Support Fund are the four wings of the AASMC. The activities of the CGC include placement service, arranging workshops and programmes for life – skills development and communication. The CGC is a very constructive and motivated wing of the AASMC.

Kalanjiam is a forum of the AASMC that organizes regular sessions on a variety of topics ranging from cookery, travel, discussions on books, social service to medicine. This year there were two interesting activities as part of the Kalanjiam initiative. One was an interactive and enjoyable session with Ms. Nirmala Ramaswamy, an author, on her book “Idlis to Ipads”. The other was organized by the Social Work Department as part of their three day seminar. The inauguration of the seminar was part of the Kalanjiam programme. Sheela Srinivasan founder of Dignity Foundation addressed the gathering



on Gerontology and Geriatrics, the problems of aging and needs of the elderly. It was both informative and enlightening.

Stellar News is the official voice of the AASMC and is a regular feature brought out twice a year.

The Student Support Fund is a contribution from the

members to support needy and deserving students from all departments in paying examination fees. This magnanimous gesture exemplifies the continued involvement of the members of the AASMC in the education of the students of the college.



The Annual General Body Meeting (AGBM) and Reunion were held on 14th September 2013. The event saw a good turnout. A number of Stella Maris alumnae gathered in a spirit of fellowship and love for their Alma Mater.

The Christmas Programme in December 2013 saw enthusiastic Alumnae celebrate Christmas in a spirit of sharing and caring. As part of reaching out to the underprivileged in society, some alumnae, students and youth wing co-ordinators visited MITHRA, a home for the physically and mentally challenged people. They spent quality time with them and distributed gifts.



The AASMC is active outside Tamil Nadu as well. Some of our Alumnae participated in get-togethers at Kerala and Bangalore. The spirit of fellowship and love for the Alma Mater is very much active wherever there are Stella Marians. We trust that the AASMC will spread its wings in various other locations as well.

Ms. Sudha Vyas (Editor)

Ms. Cecilia Sundaram (Sub-Editor)

Christmas Programme December 2013

INAUGURATION OF OUR UP – TO –DATE ALUMNAE /CGC ROOM



CHRISTMAS PROGRAMME



Career Guidance Cell

The career guidance cell run by the Alumnae association of the college has completed 10 years. This initiative is the brain child of Sr. Christine and it has grown from strength to strength. It has reinvented itself, infused fresh faces and some of the old faces have moved away. Among those that have moved on are Radha, Shakuntala and Viji. We miss you dearly in our team, but this is amply made up by Judy with her three E's. Energy, Empathy, Execution abilities. Subhashini is the youngest of our team the only one from the B.com stream. Her quiet efficiency comes with tremendous perseverance.

The highlight of the past year has been the introduction of certificate programmes by various depts with support and tremendous ground work from the CGC. These are in Banking, Insurance, Personal Finance, and Cartooning, to name a few. Relationship building is the foundation of our work. Bearing this in mind our team has represented the college at all the placement officers meets organised by various companies. Any opportunity at bringing Industry to the college is always effectively executed. Our team members have even run the Wipro Marathon! Keep the flag flying Sharadha and Mathavi this year also. Lunches, under the tree meetings, coffee mornings, Christmas parties wine and cheese lunches are all part of our strategy planning meets. We do have loads of fun, plus it's a lot of hard work too. Thanks ladies for your bit to the present students of our college. Before I sign off, we are open to new ideas on how we can be more effective in helping our students with jobs, internships, training and funding.

Ms. Sarala Vasu, CGC

We are proud of you



The Tamilnadu Chapter of the Kannada Sahitya Parishad on March 9th, 2014 at Dr.Rama Rau Kala Mandap, Karnataka Sangha, Chennai – 17, conferred on Mrs.Thara Mohan, Rao the “Seva Ratna Award” for her social work in the field of education. Dr. H.V.Hande, former Health Minister of Tamilnadu, and others like the President of the Parishad, Mr. K.P.Achar and the Secretary of the Parishad, Dr.Tamilselvi (Head of the Dept. of Tamil, University of Madras) were among others who felicitated the recipient. The award was

in recognition of 45 years of honorary service at various educational institutions like C.S.I. Ewart School, Don Bosco, Egmore, Stella Maris College, DAV Public School (Velachery), the Egmore Sanskrit School and the committee of the city school students Book Fair. A citation, certificate, garland and a turban for the head that did the headwork was their cute, cosy but nevertheless royal way of honouring.

To the query by the compere as to how only 24 hours a day was sufficient for this volume of social work the awardee replied that she was at work with several others on the 25 hour day invention!! Dedicating it to her teachers at Ewart, the faculty at Stella Maris and her noble father, the late legendary surgeon Dr.U.Mohan Rao, this twice gold medallist of the Madras University in her reply said, that social work like virtue is its own reward or better still it is twice blest like the quality of mercy. It blesses him who is at the receiving end with tangible benefits and the one who indulges in it with the greatest satisfaction. In a lighter vein she added that all this praise and applause was anyway happily accepted by any human being because it is true that nothing improves one's hearing like praise. It was heartening that the award was prescribed for service to education (a cause dearest to her heart) by her native state Karnataka at a venue named after her philanthropist paternal grandfather, Dr.U.Rama Rau. What more can I ask she signed-off emotionally.



A Letter from our Alumna

Dear Sister Helen Vincent and Economics Department

It was a pleasure to meet you and the sisters in the convent with my niece during my short visit to India in May. Sister, you look the same both physically and in spirit; vibrant, full of passion for your past (& current) students and staff of Stella Maris.

I am grateful for all the godly values that I learned, which I then imparted to my students both at Stella and abroad. There were several lecturers who taught me and later worked with me in the Dept. of Economics: Dr. Mrs. Chellam, Mrs. Pramilla, Dr. Mrs. Ramani, Dr. Mrs. Geetha, Dr. Mrs. Chandunissa, Dr. Mrs. Raihana and others. Mrs. Lakshmi joined with me once again in the Economics Dept. in October 1984 and we worked together with other beloved lecturers until June / July 1995, when I resigned to go abroad. You, dear Sr. Helen Vincent and others had been a pillar of strength during my early professional life.

I was pleased to hear Mrs. Lakshmi and others help out with the academic affairs of young adults, even today. May they be richly rewarded for their service to young adults inculcating moral values and ethics besides academics.

If you are visiting New Zealand (NZ), please feel free to visit us in Wellington. We would love to meet you in person and show you the places around. Please contact me if you come to NZ.

Kind Regards,
Dr. Vasanthi M. Peter

A Celebration of Love



The fourth of April 2014. It was a hot afternoon and the Chennai summer heat had painted the blue sky in the hues of a white heat haze. There was a sense of déjà vu, as a few of us made our way to Lillian block in the sylvan grounds behind our Alma Mater and saw the neat little rectangle of desk-chairs, the pristine blackboard and Sister Helen Vincent's welcoming smile. But a great deal had changed too since we last sat in a similar classroom. For one, we were decades older, I thought, as I gingerly maneuvered my somewhat age-augmented person into the narrow space between the desk leaf and the chair seat, all the while casting envious glances at Sister's lean and lanky frame. A surreptitious glance at my classmates however reassured me that they were in no better 'shape' either! For another, we were not here today to learn, but rather to remember, reminisce and recreate the magic of happier times. Sister Helen Vincent had completed 60 years of her life as a nun and we had gathered to celebrate a nun's story that, as Thara would so eloquently put it, none can match.

Sister was in a reminiscent mood and we listened riveted as she recounted the story of her life - from a small orthodox Telugu Brahmin family to a bride of Christ and a lifetime of devotion and service to humanity, the fervour of her dedication burning as incandescently

today as all those years ago. We had been a part of that journey too - her very first batch of students - forging an enduring bond of affection and respect that we now hastened to display. Everybody had something to contribute. Thara, who had brought the cake, conducted the ceremony with her characteristic energy and unflagging humour. Jaya had picked up the most beautiful bouquet and Rudra honoured Sister with a shawl that epitomized the warmth of our love. Rajakumari had brought a pen-set, an enduring emblem of our learning and Maya had put her legal brains to good use and prepared a whiz of a quiz on Sister. And

then there were Lavi and Sudha from the Mathematics and Literature departments, who we had so readily co-opted into our economics group. Lavi had chosen a beautiful card which we all signed and Sudha, with her literary genius had written a most beautiful poem on Sister. Being less poetically gifted, I chose to read some lines from Khalil Gibran and Elizabeth Barrett Browning that seemed to epitomize Sister's service of love.

And then it was our turn to remember and recount forgotten anecdotes and experiences of our days with Sister - precious memories wrapped in lavender and cocooned in a time-warp, now again seeing the light of day. As we laughed and remembered, we were steeped in a sad-happy languor and once again there was a sense of time standing still, much like coming back to a favourite soap opera after a gap of many months. Much water has flown since those happy carefree days and a few months back we had stared mortality in the face as we bid a tearful farewell to Padmini, one of our batch mates. But the bonds of friendship and affection forged then, had endured the travails of time and stayed intact. But then, that is stuff of which happiness and memories are made.

Viji Shankar
Economics

Thank you Dear Stella Maris



It gives me great pleasure to note that after eighteen years we are electing a totally new band of committee members, for the “Alumnae Association”.

An association does not get established by the work of an individual alone: it requires team effort. Poppy Kannan and Sr. Flavia succeeded in creating an energetic team of Executive Committee members with the loyal Mahalakshmi ably helping in and supporting work related to the AASMC.

As the President of the AASMC, Sr. Annamma, our former Principal was a pillar of strength and support.

Sr. Christine’s contribution was immense. She could make us work plus entertain us on a regular basis. The ‘Career guidance Cell’ was her brainchild. Along with Marie she roped me into “The Bridge Course” to teach the less fortunate new students. I thoroughly enjoyed my stint.

Sr. Helen Vincent was our “Guardian Angel”. She was there for each and every function hosted by us. Her soothing prayers in her crystal clear voice had a spiritual significance.

Thara Mohan Rao became the hot favorite of everyone in the association. She was our first General Secretary and her untiring efforts to make the association stable and steady was note-worthy.

Poppy Kannan my childhood friend and Professor of the Social Work Dept, became the staff co-ordinator and was a good administrator. Every activity was supervised with perfect dexterity.

I can never forget the Christmas parties organized by

Marie Cabral. We simply enjoyed the enthusiastic and prayerful celebrations.

Sr. Colleen took over, when Sr. Christine left for Trichy. I was deeply touched when she came for my daughter’s wedding reception along with other committee members. I still preserve the heart warming Christmas Cards signed by all the faculty members from the Convent.

We, the executive committee members forged bonds of strong friendship – Thara, Poppy, Eugenie, Ambika Jaya, Judy, Bilkhis, Cecilia, Radha, Sudha, Sarala, Padma, Rema, Alamelu, Nirmala and Ambujam.

Academic brilliance alone is not enough. We have life members who are all- rounders and are self-reliant. Our college is like a ‘mini’ oasis in the commercial Cathedral Road. Efforts are on to enroll more members to join the association in order to enjoy the college atmosphere and surroundings. The Alumnae Association has taught me to find something fresh to admire and appreciate in everyone.

Shankari Subbiah

Diamond Trees....

Hour after hour I can sit here and share
Facing these windows so broad and bare –
The changing moods of the winter sky
The people in woollies as they pass by.
The sight that fascinates me the most
Leafless trees standing around like ghosts
Glistening in the ever-dripping rain
Through the clear-glass window pane.
The branches are dotted here and there
With dazzling gems – a sight so rare!
Little diamond drops on the cherry trees
Waving delicately in the rough breeze....
I thank the good Lord for this great gift
When in my life things seemed a bit adrift
This time I set aside to find my feet
Turned out to be the hours most sweet!

by *Patricia Emmanuel-O’Connor*

Greetings to all Stella Marians



I wish to begin this short message by expressing my sincere appreciation & heartfelt THANKS to the out-going officebearers- Ms. Jaya Narasimhan, Ms. Sudha Vyas, Ms. Sharadha, and Ms. Cecilia Sundaram. Their avid involvement in the affairs of AASMC is truly commendable. A very warm welcome to the new officebeares- Ms. Geetha(EC dept.), Ms. Vaidehi Satish(HS dept), Ms. Shivani (HS Dept.) Ms. Victoria (CM dept. and Ms. Adela (CM dept.). Doubtless they will further strengthen the bonds of fellowship between the past and present Stella Marians.

At this juncture I would like to duly acknowledge your generous contribution to the Student Support Fund (SSF) of AASMC. The beneficiaries of this Fund are the undergraduate students of the academic year 2013-14. Deserving students received this financial aid to pay the fees for the Semester Examinations. The next issue of AASMC Newsletter will publish the letters of the beneficiaries who are now placed in banks/companies/BPO centres. May the Star of the sea shine on you all.

I look forward to meeting you on Stella campus on all important occasions.

Dr. Sr. Flavia Mariapragasam,
Vice President of AASMC

Thara's Corner

What a glory He sheds on our way

“To me, every woman is a working one either inside or outside the house”, proclaimed the Chief Guest, Mrs. Mitra Vasisht (the regional passport officer then). This was at the Annual Day Function at her Alma Mater, C.S.I Ewart School. This of course straight away earned her passport to the Hall of Fame that was adorned with the list of good public speakers. I was one of the audience at the function who applauded the loudest and the longest resulting in of course in swollen and red palms for me. I appeased myself that this was infinitely better than a swollen head after all! until this time I was nurturing secret ambitions of following an illustrious career equipped as I was with gold medals at the U.G and P.G levels from Stella Maris, the college par excellence. An untoward mishap in the family then – the premature death of my beloved mother changed the entire scenario for me. My yearning could not be realized. I was wanted on the home front to tend my little sister who was still in school and the skilled, humane and gentleman surgeon, my father.

I had learnt never to give up, so living as I was, near my school – a stone's throw away I left no stone unturned to get involved in all the school's academic, cultural and alumnae activities. We were already two generations of Ewartians and my sisters and I were school captains and class toppers living in the neighborhood of the school. In modern parlance a fine combo of sweet disposition (ahem! Occasionally one can indulge in blowing one's trumpet I guess!) savouring every activity at school topping it with steaming, boosting levels of energy. The faculty and administrative personnel were only too willing to provide me with voluntary work in all areas, my sincerity recommending me above all I presume.

At that point I was voted as the Honorary Vice-President of the old girls association. I lasted there for a full interesting period of over 35 years – a period anointed by God with fellowship, learning, work,



Beneficiaries of AASMC Student Support Fund 2013



fulfilment, fun and laughter. Grilling, grooming and growing were what I was willingly and happily subject to. I learned to organise meets and re-unions from scratch - (drafting, printing and posting invites - all of the agenda- games, gifts, felicitations, compering and accounting to the last rupee were all envisaged under this broad head.) My house was converted into a make-shift, mobile, temporary post office with glue all over the seats so much so that my family members during that period “stuck on” to what they really said literally but were thankfully not stuck up when they attempted to stand up!

As time rolled by I, an economics graduate, was invited to write critical dramatic reviews and even edit the alumnae section of the school magazine. The nuances of writing were all spontaneously imbibed by me. Little did I know then that this was God’s training for me to function as a columnist of the prestigious daily, The Hindu, later on, for a period of two years from 1999 – 2001 AD. This got me to be introduced to and to rub shoulders with celebrities in all fields, ranging from artistes to professionals, professors and the like (for interviewing, for opinions and for life stories) I was later on to draw on this source very successfully when I got to be on the judges committee of the City School Students’ Book Fair to show them all off as it were. You can see for yourself that all events are inter-connected and lead one to the other if we stay connected to God.

At Don Bosco Egmore (my son’s school) I was requested to teach English, Ethics and Social Studies for class VI – X without a B.Ed. degree! I worked for this stint harder than the boys themselves for I prepared for the classes staying up till midnight – literally burning the midnight oil as it were! My hard work met with a lot of appreciation (that boosted my self confidence). I enjoyed to the hilt in helping to organize the Don Bosco school cultural, year in and year out. Consequently years later at a wedding reception I was introduced to a former student of the school when he pronounced – “Her I know she is the “cultural” aunty of our school. Instantly I quipped- Boy! I would have rejoiced if you had said the “cultured” aunty of Don Bosco amidst laughter around.

At Stella Maris as student leader and alumnae secretary I was groomed for every kind of effort in keeping with, never swerving from the college motto “truth and charity”. The multipurpose auditorium at Don Bosco, Egmore, the Ewart Boys school (a platinum brain child) and the Clare Centre at Stella all bear ample testimony to the back – breaking toil put forth in revenue generation and throw light on the nuances or knack of fund-raising that I was trained in. Preparedness for voluntary work of any sort I imbibed from being a life-time volunteer of the Egmore Sanskrit school and local governing body member of the DAV Public School, Velachery. The variety indulged in

through forty years of my life taught me this important lesson.

Do not then stand idly waiting
For some greater work to do
O improve each passing moment
For these moments may be few
Go, and toil in any vineyard
Do not fear to do or dare
If you want a field of labour
You can find it anywhere.”

– Ellen Gates

I did find my fields of labour through my life and the satisfaction of serving apart. God rewarded me amply with a rich harvest. As the Tamil Nadu Chapter of the Karnataka Sahitya Sammelan at its 2nd Annual National Conference conferred on me a “Seva Ratna” award for service to the cause of education. These beautiful words of J.H.Sammis rightly echoed in my ears.

When we walk with the Lord
In the light of His word
What a glory He sheds on our way...

Thara Mohan Rao

ATTENTION ALUMNAE!!!!!!!!!!!!

We invite you to keep in touch.

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www.stellamariscollege.org

Our E-Mail Id is:
stellaalumnae@gmail.com

Send in your articles, information about your achievements, interesting anecdotes of your college life, etc

You can also contact us at our
AASMC: 044-28113350

*Please attend our Department Get togethers
and Annual General Body Meetings
with your friends/classmates*