

The LankaCorps Fellowship provides a unique opportunity for young leaders of Sri Lankan heritage to professionally engage in social, cultural, and economic development activities in Sri Lanka. The program aims to foster the involvement and understanding of young members of the expatriate Sri Lankan community who have limited in-depth experience with the country of their heritage. Each year, The Asia Foundation selects an outstanding group of LankaCorps Fellows to live and work for six months in Sri Lanka, granting them the unique chance to “explore their roots while giving back.”

Introducing the 2017 Class of LankaCorps Fellows



Ms. Erin Leonard (U.S.A) graduated from Georgetown University’s School of Foreign Service with a degree in Culture and Politics and a specialization in sustainable development. Ms. Leonard has experience working as an AmeriCorps VISTA volunteer with a national anti-hunger nonprofit in Washington, DC. While at school she completed a senior thesis on the topic of post-conflict development in Sri Lanka, which received honors. She also completed an extensive research project on the topic of food sovereignty in Paraguay while she studied abroad in South America. Ms. Leonard hopes to pursue a career in international development, specifically as it relates to improving the lives of smallholder farmers and creating sustainable and resilient food systems.



Ms. Minuri Gamage (U.S.A) has a Bachelor of Arts in Neuroscience, with minors in Ethnic Studies and Philosophy, and a Certificate in Public Health from the University of Colorado Boulder. Ms. Gamage was actively involved in Undergraduate Research through her positions as a Research Assistant in the Social Neuroscience Lab and the Sleep and Development Lab. Ms. Gamage served as Board Chair of the Center for Student Involvement and was a Student Ambassador for the university. She was a Newborn Hearing Technician at Good Samaritan Hospital and a Neurology and Orthopedics volunteer at the Children’s Hospital of Colorado. Ms. Gamage has previously spent time in Sri Lanka repairing damaged houses after the 2004 Tsunami and working with multiple charities to provide adequate lighting and clean water to remote villages in the country. Ms. Gamage aspires to go to medical school and eventually practice Rural Family Medicine after completing a Master of Public Health degree in Maternal and Child Health through the Colorado School of Public Health at the University of Colorado, Anschutz Medical Campus. Ms. Gamage speaks Sinhala, and her passions include classical piano, dance, and piloting small planes.



Ms. Myra Sivaloganathan (Canada) has recently completed a Master of Arts in Religious Studies at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario. For her master’s degree, she learned Sinhala and completed three months of fieldwork researching nationalism and religious fundamentalism in Sri Lanka. She also has a Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy, Religious Studies, and Anthropology from McGill University. Ms. Sivaloganathan has worked as a Teaching Assistant for Buddhism courses at McMaster University, and as a Research Assistant on the litigation of triple talaq divorce at McGill University. Prior to that, she was an editor for two undergraduate journals and a writer for both English and French newspapers at McGill University. Her career objective is to work for an NGO/think tank on ethnic relations, human rights, and transitional justice.



Mr. Jaliya Fonseka (Canada) recently completed his Master of Architecture degree at the University of Waterloo School Of Architecture in Ontario, Canada. He also has an Honours Bachelor of Architectural Studies from the University of Waterloo. During his master's studies, Mr. Fonseka produced a thesis entitled *Monsoon Notebook: Exploring Home*; a compilation and reflection of his experiences, revisiting his native Sri Lanka. Mr. Fonseka also had the opportunity to be a teaching assistant during his master's studies to both a design studio and an Introduction to Architecture course. Throughout his undergraduate studies, Mr. Fonseka worked at several architecture firms in Canada and spent a four month study term abroad in Rome, Italy. Since graduating, Mr. Fonseka has worked at LGA Architectural Partners in Toronto, Canada, where he was engaged with a range of community based projects. He continues to be involved with teaching at the architecture department of the University of Waterloo and also Ryerson University and OCAD University in Toronto, Canada. Going forward, Mr. Fonseka hopes to expand his perspective and pursuit for humanly meaningful architecture and his undying love of food.



Ms. Shivanti Kariyawasam (U.S.A) has a Master of Science in Gerontology and a Bachelor of Science in Human Development and Aging from the University of Southern California Leonard Davis School of Gerontology in Los Angeles, California. She previously worked as an Assistant Program Director for two intergenerational wisdom sharing and art creation programs called Living Canvases and Zekenim, and as a Teaching Assistant at the University of Southern California. Ms. Kariyawasam has extensive experience in conducting research relating to productive engagement, as well as facilitating activities for older adults and their families. She also is passionate about increasing awareness about aging issues in her community, and serves on the Board of Directors of the California Council on Gerontology and Geriatrics. Ms. Kariyawasam aspires to help individuals maintain healthy and engaged lifestyles during late adulthood as an occupational therapist through the creation of health promoting programs.



Ms. Madusha "Maddhi" Jayagoda (USA) has a Bachelor of Arts in Gender and Sexuality Studies and Media and Cultural Studies from the University of California, Riverside. She served as Music Director at KUCR, a radio station serving the Inland Empire, where she hosted a weekly radio show and curated an array of music, arts, and cultural programming and events. As a research intern for the Women's Resource Center, she conducted extensive research on cross-cultural media patterns as well as racial and gender identities. She has also worked at San Judas Girls Home in Cusco, Peru, where she mentored girls with histories of trauma, and facilitated sexual health and empowerment workshops and programs. Ms. Jayagoda speaks fluent Sinhala and has previously volunteered as an English tutor and teaching assistant in Sri Lanka. Her career objective is to work with a community development or nonprofit organization to advocate for human rights, while focusing on gender justice, media, and sustainable development.