

2023 LankaCorps Fellows



Borrsha
Kanapathipillai

Borrsha Kanapathipillai (Canada) has a Bachelor's of Arts degree with a specialization in International Development from the University of Toronto. During her undergraduate studies, she explored different areas of development work including politics, anthropology, geography, media studies and more. She worked at a local organization in Lira, Uganda that focused on improving children's education and community livelihood for areas affected by the conflict in Northern Uganda. She also conducted research on the transition from school to workplace for deaf and hard of hearing youth. She has gone on to work in a number of non-profit and social enterprise organizations that do work on women's rights, urban development, capacity training for non-profits and community inclusion & development. Borrsha strives to be more engaged with the Tamil diaspora and hopes her experience with LankaCorps will deepen her understanding of the Tamil community and culture. She hopes to continue working closely with historically marginalized communities to provide support in improving their quality of life through sustainable structural changes.

Placement Organization: Law and Society Trust



Bramman
Rajkumar

Bramman Rajkumar (U.K) is a policy advisor in the UK's Department for Business and Trade, working to increase access to finance for small and medium enterprises. Bramman studied Molecular and Cellular Biochemistry at the University of Oxford, completing his dissertation on X – chromosome inactivation. Whilst studying, Bramman ran Student Minds' Motivate Me support groups for students experiencing difficulties around food and eating. He later joined the national charity's Student Advisory Committee to feed in on strategic decisions, and inform the charity's programmes, projects and policies. Upon graduating, Bramman entered the Frontline programme, to work and qualify as a social worker in London. Bramman used systemic therapy and motivational interviewing to build relationships with young people, families, and carers.

Placement Organization: Lanka Orix Leasing Company



Isa Ananya
Spoerry

Isa Ananya Spoerry (U.S.A.) grew up on Chicago's North Shore and lived in New York City for seven years. She obtained both her Bachelor's (Social & Cultural Analysis, Global & Urban Education, Peace & Conflict Studies) and Master's (Interdisciplinary Studies) degrees from New York University before working at the Manhattan District Attorney's Office. Halfway through college, a quick visit to Sri Lanka redirected Isa's studies towards the island's North American diaspora communities and resulted in two theses on the subject. This same trip also piqued Isa's interest in returning for an extended stay, having undertaken similar experiences across the globe in Northern Ireland, Ghana, Argentina, and Japan. Isa now divides her time between college consulting and personal writing projects. Of Sinhalese, Dutch Burgher, and Colombo Chetty heritage, she is eager to explore her own family history and immerse herself in Sri Lanka's complex cultural fabric. Isa has aspired to LankaCorps since she was 19 years old and could not be more excited to finally fulfill this long-standing dream.

Placement Organization: The Geoffrey Bawa Trust



Matthew
Hyginus

Matthew (Matt) Hyginus (Canada), is a current PhD student specializing in Organizational Behaviour at the Ivey Business School, University of Western Ontario. His educational journey includes a Bachelor's degree in Science from the University of Toronto and a Master's degree in Business Administration from McMaster University. During his years as a post-secondary student, Matt showcased his leadership skills through various roles in student government, notably serving as President of the Human Biology Students' Union at the University of Toronto. Matt's professional experience spans the healthcare and education sectors. He aspires to conduct qualitative research that bridges these domains, focusing on the workplace experiences of racialized individuals. Looking ahead, Matt's career goals revolve around advancing equity and justice through research and teaching. As an incoming LankaCorps Fellow, he eagerly anticipates delving into his ancestral heritage and gaining fresh perspectives by contributing to a local research NGO. Matt also looks forward to enjoying outdoor activities like jogging and tennis, a pleasant escape from Canadian winters. His passions include playing the guitar, singing, and broadening his horizons through literature and art.

Placement Organization: International Centre for Ethnic Studies



Rhian
Paranavitana

Rhian Paranavitana (Australia) has a Bachelor's Degree in Creative Arts, Film and Television from Deakin University with a focus on Audio Production and Composition. He has been formally trained in film making and has been award nominated for his sound design work; and is highly skilled in technical proficiencies relating to film, sound recording and design. He has experience working with several short film projects in the sound recording department; was nominated for Best Achievement in Sound and Best Picture at Deakin Visionnaire 2018 short film Kingfisher; which was officially selected for Setting Sun Film Festival 2019 as well. He has developed an exhibition of visual media that will debut next year plus he has created an album of music that has been released on Spotify. His is interested in a future in physical therapy whilst pursuing his creativity in music and art on the side.

Placement Organization: SHIFT Intergrated Pvt Ltd



Sadushi
De Silva

Sadushi De Silva (U.S.A., she/they) earned their degree from the University of California, Berkeley with a Bachelor of Arts in Ethnic Studies. During her time in school, Sadushi worked with a number of organizations in the Bay Area including those focused on immigration defense, homelessness advocacy, affordable housing, restorative justice, and prisoners' rights. During Sadushi's final year at U.C. Berkeley, she volunteered as a math and English tutor for the GED program inside San Quentin Prison. In 2018, Sadushi was first introduced to the work of public defense at The Bronx Defenders. As parent advocate intern in their family defense practice, she intimately learned of the complex ways in which several arms of the system co-conspire against communities. The following year they continued working in public defense in Washington, D.C. as an investigative intern with the Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia. Sadushi returned to New York City in 2021 to join the family defense practice of Brooklyn Defender Services. Her most recent role as a criminal defense investigator with The Bronx Defenders reinforced their dedication to public service, equity, and change. Sadushi cares deeply about people, culture, and communities. She aspires to attend law school for public interest in the near future.

Placement Organization: International Centre for Ethnic Studies