



# UMT Spotlight

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF UNITY MISSION TRUST  
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## Our Journey;

- Menik Farm (May-Sept '09)
- Jaffna & Kayts (April '10)
- Kayts (June '10)
- Vidutaltivu & Mannar (Sept '10)
- UC 1 - Colombo (Dec '10)
- UC 2 - Mullaithivu (Jun '11)
- Ray of Hope - Colombo (Oct '11)
- UC 3 - Mannar (Dec '11)
- UC 4 - Tharanikkulam (Jun '12)
- Zoom In 1 (Sept '12)
- UC 5 - Kandy (Oct '12)
- Zoom In 2 - Colombo (Dec '12)
- Zoom In 3 - Mullaithivu (April '13)
- Zoom In 4 - Kilinochchi (April '13)

## Unity Mission Trust

### Ray of Hope 2

Unity Mission Trust presents a colorful fusion of mind, culture and talent as it brings together the amazing talents that the youth of Sri Lanka has to offer. Ray of Hope 2 is the follow up to the inaugural Ray of Hope which was held in December of 2011 in Colombo.

This is an opportunity for our young leaders to showcase their talent. The Unity Mission Trust hopes to present the organization's journey followed by the course of action for the future with the vision to unite, heal and integrate the youth, the future of our Mother Lanka.

### Power ONE Hundred Project

The purpose of this programme is to handpick Young Leaders who have just completed their A/L Examinations and conduct a special programme comprised of career guidance, capacity development & volunteerism. This project is scheduled to coincide with Ray of Hope 2. 100 student leaders who have previously attended Unity Camps and have exhibited leadership qualities and/or interest in integration and unity work, will be invited from across Sri Lanka. They will be developed as the upcoming group of leaders to be entrusted with the special work of UMT.

### The Unity Mission Trust Inaugural Unity & Integration National Awards

*"I am not everybody, but I am somebody. I cannot do everything, but I can do something"*

UMT will launch the Inaugural Unity and Integration Awards at the Ray of Hope event. Winners will be selected from amongst the 3500 Students already in the UMT network. These National level Awards will be bestowed on 23 young Student Leaders from across Sri Lanka based on the following criteria ;

1. Have made exemplary efforts to foster unity & integration amongst their student peers across ethnic, religious & geographic lines & divisions.
2. Have significantly supported & strengthened the work achievement of goals of the Unity Mission Trust.
3. Have contributed to the success of the Unity Mission Trust through Visual & Performing Arts.

### Await Unity Camp 6!

The Unity Mission Trust will be heading up to Kilinochchi for Unity Camp 6 from the 16<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> of October. This programme is open to 500 students between the ages of 16-20. Come & be a part of the Journey of Love! Those interested in participating may apply through their respective schools. Registration forms can be obtained from the UMT office. Approval from authorities will be forwarded to your school upon request. See you there!

### Incoming Trustee

We warmly welcome Mr. Reyaz Mihular the most recent member to join our Board of Trustees. Mr. Reyaz Mihular a leading personality in the Field of Chartered Accountants is the Managing Partner of KPMG &

Associates. He was appointed as partner in 1987 and served in the Middle East as Executive Partner in 2004, overseeing activities in 18 countries.

Despite his busy schedule, Mr. Reyaz graciously met with the UMT editorial team for an exchange of views. He identifies with the objectives of the Trust, given the Nation's current and historical events. The workforce at KPMG is a good example of the universality he subscribes to in that their employees are from all communal and religious backgrounds. This leads to increased diversity in their workplace which in turn produces well - rounded individuals essential for an integrated society...



Incoming Trustee—Reyaz Mihular

Contd on pg 4.

# Sing Along with Rukshan Perera



© Unity Mission Trust  
Kisal Suduwel Kandage Photography  
*Noeline Honter*



© Unity Mission Trust  
Kisal Suduwel Kandage Photography  
*Sarith on guitar*



*Rajitha from Misty*



*The band in action*

Rukshan Perera is a much-loved figure in the music field of Sri Lanka. A member of the famous Super Golden Chimes group, Rukshan has been entertaining Sri Lankan crowds for more than



*Sarith on drums*

three decades with his wonderful music. He is also the music director in the Unity Mission Trust and has been consistently involved with a num-



*Rukshan Perera*

ber of our Projects. At the beginning of this year he organized "Rukshan Perera Live in Concert", a charity concert in aid of the work of Unity Mission Trust. On the 24<sup>th</sup> of July 2013 he conducted "Sing-along" with evergreen hits in Sinhala, English & Tamil. Rukshan Perera and guest artists Noeline Honter, Sarith & Surith and Rajitha (who voluntarily performed to wide appreciation), provided a memorable evening of fellowship & singing to a toe-tapping audience at the Grand Monarch, Thalawatugoda in aid of Unity Mission Trust. The proceeds will be used for the Ray of Hope, Power One Hundred and Unity Camp 6 programmes. Team UMT wishes to extend their gratitude to all those who attended, sponsored and assisted us in making this a very successful event!



© Unity Mission Trust  
Kisal Suduwel Kandage Photography  
*Audience singing along*



*Committee hits the dancefloor!*

*The UMT Team is proud of & congratulates our 4 achievers!*

## Achievements & Milestones

**Harindi Suriyaarachchi** - Harindi, a former Group Leader at Unity Camp 5, has been appointed Head Prefect '13 of Hillwood College Kandy, Partner School of UMT



*Harindi - Head Girl Hillwood*



*Ishara just before her departure to Moscow.*

**Ishara Dayananda** - Ishara from Ratnapura is currently at Sri Jayawardenapura University. She was selected to represent Sri Lanka in the 100m Hurdles Women's Final at the World University Games in Russia this July.

### Zonta Young Women in Public Affairs Award

This annual award presented by the Zonta Women's Organization to outstanding Young Women in public service was awarded to 3 Sri Lankan students 18 years of age & below. We are proud that 2 of the 3 winners were Young Leaders of UMT. They were **Shehani Rajendra**, former Head Prefect of Holy Family Convent, Bambalapitiya & **Sasha Pinto-Jayawardena** of C.M.S. Ladies' College, Colombo.



*Shehani at Oratory contest in London May, 2013*



*Sasha with Principal Mrs. Nirmali Wickramasinghe*



# In the Spotlight

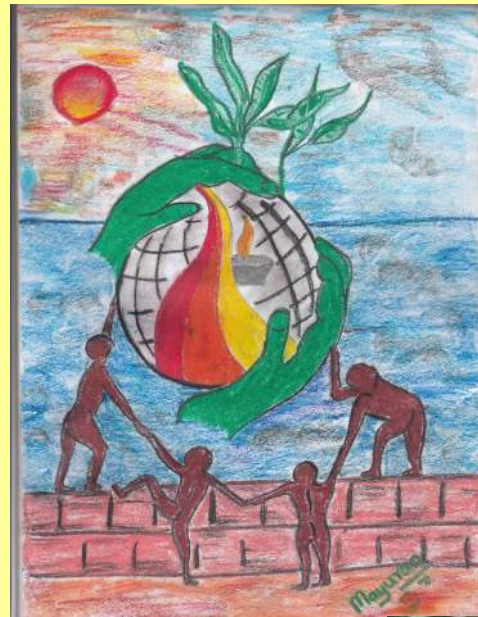
There is a saying that “Today’s Children are Tomorrow’s Leaders”, UMT held a Training Program based on this concept on the 6<sup>th</sup> of April 2013 at Mullivalai. Through this Program we gained a lot of useful information and UMT conducted many wonderful activities including, personal capacity developing workshops and team building activities. We were able to develop relationships with young people from different cultural backgrounds, enabling us to foster unity and reconciliation amongst everyone.

Activities that are being carried out by UMT are appreciated as its quite challenging to be a good child to the society and Nation during this period of time. UMT helps children to become good citizens to the Nation. Also through this program we could identify our talents, which were hidden within us. Also it helped us to make plans for the future. In this program we observed that everyone were involved in various activities irrespective of cultural differences; and it motivated us to feel that we are one and we must live together with peace and harmony.

I felt a change in my life from the day I participated in this training program and through the presentation on “Wheel of Life” I gained a lot of perspective. Now I am trying to organize my life based on the things, which I learnt through this presentation. I hope UMT continues to such activities during upcoming events.

Sincerely,

**A. Kayathiri  
Mullaitivu MV**



“Unity”

**S. Mayurran Raj  
Mannar**



## The Other Side of the Story

I joined UMT in late September of 2012 with just about a month left for Unity Camp 5 which was subsequently held in Kandy. It was the first time that I was volunteering with any organization, and quite frankly, the whole concept was rather alien to me. Yes I have heard things like “everything big starts with something small” and “even a little thing can change the world” and I myself have said it to people without thinking twice; but whether or not I actually believed in it was a different story. Leaving out the formalities let me tell you the simple story of how a single Unity Mission Trust Program made a believer out of a non-believer.

A Unity camp is a 4 day residential workshop based on enhancing leadership and personal capacity skills. This means the participants will pretty much spend all their time together. However, I didn’t think that 4 days was enough to change an individual’s perspective. Pre-conceived notions and stereotypes are somewhat engraved in our minds. Can you change something like that in a matter of days? Apparently you can! Here is what established my belief in this program. On the first day of camp, a couple of youngster from a well established institution kept complaining to me about how they did not want to be there. “This is so lame” they said. At first this confirmed my doubt. How can you change someone who thinks that way?

During the first half of camp these youngsters kept coming up with various complaints that ranged from “these people don’t know how to use a washroom” to “He stinks, I don’t want to be near him”. Now don’t misunderstand; these were youngsters who like me never had this kind of experience. To be mixed amongst 500 unfamiliar faces can be somewhat unsettling, as was confirmed by the expression on most faces after day 1. Naturally I expected them to be moody and test

our patience within the next few days, but then came the “OMG” moments (as this generation likes to call it). The final segment of the program included a music session, and to my utter disbelief, I saw the very same youth who were complaining just two days before, with their arms swung lovingly around their brothers; about whom they made negative comments, dancing away to the beats of “rapata tapata” and “Kolaveri di”. I don’t think I will ever forget that sight, because that was it; that was my moment of belief, the moment I decided that yes a small effort can make a change. This is the beauty of our Unity Camp where people have negative perceptions melted away with the unity, healing and integration that is created.

All those days and nights of hard work we as volunteers put into a camp, all became worthwhile, with the outcome of such testimonies. To put the cherry on top of an already wonderful cake, towards the end of the program, the youngster who referred to the program as “lame” on the first day approached me and said “Akki, I think what you all are doing is wonderful, I’d like to volunteer, how do I do that?” I couldn’t stop smiling. There is no sad, war time story in here. I don’t know if it brought a tear to your eye, but this, right here, this is what Unity Mission Trust is. This is our mission. This country has suffered enough, we have been strangers enough, and it is time that the youth in Colombo, Galle and Kandy danced to Baila with their hands around their friends from Jaffna, Vavuniya and Mullaithivu. To me this is what Unity Mission Trust represents; Hope, for a better future, a better relationship with our countrymen and a better Lanka all together.



**Bhagya Wickramage  
Member of the UMT Executive Committee  
Head of Registrations & Membership**

# Join us. Partner with UMT!

Would you like to know more about the work of UMT?  
Are you interested in joining as a volunteer to help with future UMT activities?  
Contact us for more details!



Unity Team members in Jaffna  
Taken by Sanjay Sai

The Unity Mission Trust truly appreciates the collaboration and encouragement of caring and supportive individuals and 'far thinking' Corporate Houses. Interested in forming a strategic partnership with UMT to strengthen Sri Lanka's future? We invite you to consider the following and communicate to us your corporate preference.

(✓)

- [ ] Sponsor a one day Zoom-In programme at Rs. 125,000/=
- [ ] Sponsor one (or more) student(s) attending Unity Camp 6 at Rs. 5,000/= each
- [ ] Sponsor ONE working group of 25 students (20 groups) who will attend Unity Camp 6 at Rs. 125,000/=
- [ ] Sponsor Education of 1 student in Wannu at Rs. 4500/= per month

| Credit cash/cheque to: Ekamuthu Oray Makkal Unity Mission Trust | Bank: People's Bank | A/C No: 014100180004373 |

## Extracted from the original Sinhala article

The opening words of the UMT song are those that will be etched in my memory for a long time. Unity camp 5 held in Kandy was my first experience of Unity Mission Trust. Appointed as a group leader, I was expected to lead teammates from the North, Colombo and the hill country & the experiences have been unforgettable. I still remember and ponder upon the wonderful way in which we communicated within our group, be it sports, drama, oratory or any other team activity. The barrier of language was easily conquered. It was conquered not with force but with love, paying more attention to body language and using gestures more than words. Those 3 wonderful days at camp have left us with friends from the North and them with friends from the South. Even though we live far apart, we yearn to see the faces of our friends from the North. At Unity Camp there is no difference, no discrimination, it is where we build friendships and learn that language cannot distance us from the fact that above all, we are all sons and daughters of One Mother Lanka.

**Harindi Suriyaarachchi, Hillwood College, Kandy**



Contd from pg 1...

Mr. Reyaz recognizes the need for increased corporate awareness and involvement in the area of promoting inter-communal unity, healing and integration and therefore he is ready to extend his fullest support to those who strive and contribute to achieve this. We thank Mr. Reyaz Mihular for joining us and we look forward to his directions and insights in working towards a more united future for the youth, where mutual acceptance and respect for diversity promotes a stronger and more successful Sri Lanka!

## A Special Thank You!

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our very special donor who sponsors the UMT Newsletter & wishes to remain anonymous. Your support is a tremendous encouragement & motivation not only to the editorial team but to the entire operations Task Force at Unity Mission Trust!!

Our appreciation to you our readers who respond with invaluable feedback, in order that we may continue to improve!

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