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## President's Message



I am thrilled at the opportunity of reaching out to you at such an opportune time when you are gathered round your families to share the goodness of the festivities and enjoy the warmth of family gatherings! And, to nourish the good tidings that a New Year always brings, especially the hope that better days are ahead of us and that the challenges of the New Year, whatever they are, will somehow be within our reach!

This year has been eventful. It was marked by the success of the winner of our National Public Speaking Competition during the finals of the International Public Speaking Competition that were held in London. Also, the ESU recently gained the status of a CSR as a result of which funds have already begun to be donated to us. This is especially promising and encouraging. Indeed, we have always ambitioned to expand our activities and reach out to a broader public in our endeavour to 'Creating Global Understanding through English'. We hope and pray and are confident that our status as a CSR will encourage more corporate entities to place the ESU in a prime position in their project to support the community.

The year 2010 therefore is the year of hope that our ambition to implement new activities in our portfolio will be brought to fruition. And, that we will welcome a wider host of members!

My deep gratitude and appreciation of course go to the Members of our Executive Committee, the Administrative staff, our donors and well-wishers for their hard work, unfailing support and loyalty throughout the years and their faith in our mission.

Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year 2010!!



*Sharmilla Bhima, President ESU-Mauritius*

### Our best wishes to all Members and Friends of ESU-Mauritius:

In the New Year,  
 we wish you the best year you've  
 ever had,  
 and that each New Year  
 will be better than the last.  
 May you realize your  
 fondest dreams  
 and take time to  
 recognize and enjoy  
 each and every blessing.  
 Happy New Year,  
 And many more!  
 By Joanna Fuchs

[Http://www.poemsource.com](http://www.poemsource.com)

### ESU-MAURITIUS BRANCH ACCREDITED APPROVED NGO BY THE NATIONAL CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY COMMITTEE (NCSRC) - (Ref N/1208)

ESU-Mauritius has been enrolled on the List of Approved NGO, bearing Accreditation No. N/1208.

Your contribution is vital to the success of the ESU goals. Your support will indeed enable us to continue our mission at a time when English has become the working language of the global village

We would like to take this opportunity to thank committed members who have renewed their membership fees for 2010.

We would also greatly appreciate any Corporate donations and sponsorship that you may be able to offer i.e. cash donations, travel tickets, printing costs etc... If you would like your donation to be directed to a specific programme, please contact us on 208 8591 or [esumau@intnet.mu](mailto:esumau@intnet.mu)

ESU's commitment is to create global understanding and to promote human achievement through the worldwide use of the English Language.

To-date, the ESU has endeavoured to bring its aim into fruition through the following activities:

- Educational programmes that foster the enjoyment and constructive use of English;
- National and International Youth exchange and by providing a forum for its enhancement;
- International conferences, seminars and meetings that focus on topical affairs and issues; and
- Cultural activities.



## The Commonwealth Essay Competition



**Winning an award or commendation is a considerable achievement and something of which entrants can be justifiably proud.**

**THE ESSAY COMPETITION DEADLINE FOR 2010 WILL BE ON THE 1ST JUNE. THE COMMONWEALTH THEME FOR 2010 IS : SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND SOCIETY**

### THE YOUNG COMMONWEALTH COMPETITION

As from January 2010, the Royal Commonwealth Society will be launching the "Young Commonwealth Competition" which will henceforth embrace :

- (i) the long-standing Essay Competition
- (ii) the more recently established Commonwealth Vision Award for young film makers and
- (iii) a new photography competition : The Commonwealth Photographic Awards.

Established in 1883, the Commonwealth Essay Competition – "Write around the world" has evolved into a unique education project with over 50,000 students participating annually in schools around the globe.

For 2009, 55 students in Mauritius took part in this competition and the best entries were rewarded during a prize-giving ceremony held on Friday 4th December 2009 at the headquarters of Barclays Bank Plc, Cybercity, Ebene.

Class A (16-18 years) : Ms Caitkie R. Vaghjee of Eden College Girls

Class B (14-15 years) : Mr Kelvin Suddason of St Joseph's College

Class C (12-13 years) : Ms Sonam Ramburrun of Sodnac SSS

Class D (Under 12) : Mr Juneid Mosaheb of International Preparatory School

Both Ms Sharmilla Bhima, President of the English-Speaking Union, and Sir Victor Glover, Honorary Representative of the Royal Commonwealth Society, welcomed the awardees, their parents, teachers & rectors, as well as the ESU Executive Committee members. They also conveyed their gratitude to the Barclays Bank plc for once again sponsoring the prize-giving ceremony of the Commonwealth Essay Competition.

In his address, Sir Victor Glover stated that the aims of the Essay Competition are mainly to promote the use of English as a leading world language, to encourage youngsters to aspire to a high standard of academic scholarship and creative writing and to stimulate them to good utilization of modern information technology and communication

The winners received their awards from Sir Victor Glover. They also received cash prizes generously donated by the Barclays Bank Plc and dictionaries offered by H.E. Dr John E. Murton, British High Commissioner. Hereunder are extracts of the RCS Chief Examiner's report concerning the awardees:

**Caitkie R. Vaghjee** : This entry on "The Beautiful Game: Why does football inspire such passion around the world?" is an informed, informative and well balanced essay on the popularity of football. It also offers an interesting account of the phenomenon of football fans. The writer fully engages with the topic and demonstrates that she can write an essay with confidence.

**Kelvin Suddason**: The topic chosen was "The long way home..." . The Chief Examiner loved Kelvin's account of his daily journey to and from school. Kelvin's essay said so much about himself and life in Mauritius. For the reader, it becomes an emotional and sensual journey through a landscape full of sights and activity which one can only imagine. But what a skilled narrator Kelvin is and how adroitly he reaches out to his unseen audience. The Chief Examiner really enjoyed sharing Kelvin's journey to and from school .

**Sonam Ramburrun** chose the topic "A distant cousin who lives in a very different Commonwealth Country is coming to visit for the first time. Write a letter introducing yourself and your home". The Chief Examiner very much enjoyed the insight into the life of a thirteen year old girl in Le Morne, "a paradise on earth" for the descendants of slaves feeling French plantation owners. Sonam brings to life key figures in her social universe like the village priest cum headman, her grandparents and her parents. One can sense the strength of family and community which clearly makes this a special place and the love which flows like a river through everyone's lives.

**Juneid Mosaheb** chose "The beautiful game: why does football inspire such passion around the world?" Juneid's essay was indeed well written but his handwritten entry with its delightful illustrated border had a very personal feel and the Chief Examiner liked his choice of material to develop his arguments.

Details of how to enter the 2010 essay competition will be announced shortly by the Royal Commonwealth Society. For more information and registration, please visit the following website : <http://www.thercs.org/youth/essaycompetition>

Details about the Commonwealth Vision Awards for young film makers and the Commonwealth Photographic Awards can be obtained on : <http://www.thercs.org/youth/visionawards> and <http://www.thercs.org/youth/photoawards>

### The International Relations Conference 2009

The annual ESU International Relations Conference was attended by Mr Rajen Gangoosingh, Executive Member and Secretary of the English-Speaking Union – Mauritius Branch. The conference took place at Mansfield College, Oxford from 9 to 14<sup>th</sup> August 2009. Held annually for over 40 years, this year's conference was attended by 34 delegates from 28 countries. The conference dealt with issues relating to both international relations and to Britain's international role in the world today. Topics included "The United States in World Affairs: Continuity or Change", "International Relations" and "Global Warning".

The aim of the conference was to give participants the opportunity to expand their knowledge of Britain and to widen their outlook on world issues. It also offered a unique opportunity to make individual contacts with people from various fields, cultures and backgrounds all over the world.

"Most speakers at the Conference were prolific personalities specialised in their respective fields and what was most interesting was the fact that delegates had the opportunity of obtaining first hand experience in British institutions and ways of life. It is not everyday that delegates are given the opportunity to know the inside story of the House of Lords presented by a person like The Lord Watson of Richmond CBE, with all his intrinsic details and humour".

Delegates also enjoyed a trip to Stratford-Upon-Avon to see the RSC performance of *As You Like It*, at the Courtyard Theatre after visiting the birthplace of Shakespeare. Delegates also had the opportunity of having a guided tour to the most important institutions of Oxford.

Mr Gangoosingh qualified his experience as being a great opportunity for him to make new friends from the various parts of the world. "Sharing views on various global issues hence creating global understanding through English" said Mr Gangoosingh.

### The President's Fund for Creative Writing in English

The President's Fund for Creative Writing in English which operates under the aegis of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Human resources (Culture Division) aims at encouraging and assisting deserving writers to have their creative works in English published.

Chaired by Mrs S. Hawaldar, the Fund meets, on a monthly basis, to scrutinise, discuss and finalize eventual publications.

For two consecutive years, The English-Speaking Union has nominated Mr Rajen Gangoosingh, Executive Member and Secretary of the ESU to be its representative on the Board of the President's Fund.

Mr Gangoosingh qualified his nomination on the board of the President's Fund For Creative Writing in English as an "enriching experience" particularly since the Fund shares the objectives of the ESU, i.e. help promote the English language across Mauritius.

### ESU Globe Cultural Seminar

This seminar provides teachers with insights into the crafts involved in creating a production for the Globe Theatre. The course offers a more practical approach to teaching Shakespeare, exploring how the relationship the Globe architecture creates between actor and audience and how this translates to the classroom. The seminar allowed teachers to consider how Shakespeare is translated both in terms of performance and classroom curricula across the world.

For 2009, Mrs Razita Dabeedial-Guness of France Boyer de la Giroday State Secondary School was appointed for the part-scholarship placement to be held at the Shakespeare's Globe in London from 9<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> August 2009.

Unfortunately, we were informed that Mrs Dabeedial-Guness was unwell upon her arrival in London and was unable to attend the seminar.

During the one-week seminar, delegates were able to enjoy three productions including *As You Like It*, *Romeo and Juliet* and *Troilus and Cressida*. They also had the unique opportunity to participate in workshops and seminars which have armed the teachers with practical approaches to teaching Shakespeare creatively in the classroom. The delegates were invited to a special celebratory dinner with ESU new Director-General, Mr Mike Lake.



- Dates of next year's programme are being finalised
- Deadline for applications : Friday 30<sup>th</sup> April 2010
- Delegates have to attend three of the Globe's productions
- They will meet with members of the Globe Theatre Company to explore how productions at the Globe are conceived and mounted through a journey to London and back stage tours
- They will review discussions and Q&A sessions with company workers
- They will assist to practical workshops including voice, movement, theatre design.
- Delegates must be English teachers with experience of teaching Shakespeare.
- Delegates must be involved in every aspect of the programme or course.
- Delegates must be

#### Basic outline for 2010

### NEWS FROM ESU - LONDON

At the 2007 International Council meeting, Prof Anne Zentgraf, Chairman Emeritus of ESU Denmark, was elected as the President of the International Council of the English-Speaking Union. Lord Hunt, Chairman of the ESU International Council presented the New President with the International Council Medal.

Three International ESUs were unanimously ratified for launch in 2010. ESU Bangladesh will launch on 24-25 January and ESU Malta and Turkey will launch on 27-31 May and 4 June 2010 respectively.

## ESU PUBLIC SPEAKING COMPETITION 2010

Monday 17<sup>th</sup> to Friday 21<sup>st</sup> May 2010 are the dates set for the 29<sup>th</sup> annual ESU International Public Speaking Competition to be held at the HSBC's London headquarters.

This annual competition not only showcases the very highest standard of public speaking by young people from around the world, but also gives the students an excellent opportunity to meet and understand each other's backgrounds and cultures.

The theme for the 2010 competition will be "Speculation on Our Future".

As you will all recall, our candidate for 2009, Mr Sebastien Ng Kuet Leong, of College du St Esprit, won the First Prize of the International Public Speaking Competition with his speech entitled "Colouring Grey Matter, Brain Boosting". This was a remarkable achievement and it is not utopian to now hope that future participants can do as well as Mr Ng Kuet Leong.

Preparations for the 2010 Public Speaking Competition, at National level, are now well underway. Schools have to send in the names of their participants, if they have not done so yet.

Key dates for the National Public Speaking Competition 2010 are:

Heat 1 – Zone 1, North Region : Tuesday 26/1/2010 at Droopnath Ramphul State College

Heat 2 – Zone 1, Port Louis Region : Thursday 28/1/2010 at Loreto College Pot Louis

Heat 3 – For Zone 2 : Tuesday 2/2/2010 at Gaetan Raynal State College

Heat 4 – For Zone 3 : Thursday 4/2/2010 at Loreto College Curepipe

Heat 5 – For Zone 4 : Tuesday 9/2/2010 at College du St Esprit

Semi Finals : Thursday 25/2/2010 at College du St Esprit

National Finals : Wednesday 17/3/2010 at the Town Hall of Curepipe

A separate competition will be held for Rodrigues participants on Thursday 18/2/2010. Venue: Rodrigues College. The winner of the competition will be able to take part in the National Finals on Wednesday 17/3/2010.

The winner of the National competition will receive a return air fare Mauritius-London-Mauritius and free accommodation & pocket money for his/her participation at the International Public Speaking Competition to be held in London. He / She will spend 5 days in London with finalists from other countries.

The DVD of the 2009 IPSC is still available. Please contact the ESU to reserve a copy. This will help participants to improve their public speaking skills and be better prepared for the forthcoming competition.

## Buckingham Palace Award Ceremony 2008-09

Winners of ESU competitions in England for 2008-2009 received their awards at Buckingham Palace on 12 November.

The winner of the International Public Speaking Competition, Sebastien Ng Kuet Leong, representing Mauritius, was invited to the Award Ceremony at Buckingham Palace. However, Sebastien was unable to attend as he was sitting for his "A-Levels" examinations. Sebastien has been invited by the ESU to attend next year's ceremony at Buckingham Palace.

## E-TEACHER SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM OFFERED BY THE US EMBASSY IN COLLABORATION WITH THE ESU



ESU school members were offered the opportunity to nominate a teacher from their school for the E-Teacher Scholarship programme, organised by the Embassy of the USA, in collaboration with the ESU.

This programme offered by the U.S Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs consisted of seven innovative on-line graduate level classes intended for English teaching professionals worldwide through two different universities, the University of Maryland, Baltimore County and University of Oregon.

22 applications were received. A jury panel comprising Mr Prem Burton, one of ESU Vice-President, and Messrs Brian Davies and Rajen Gangoosingh, members of ESU Executive Committee, short-listed 8 candidates who were interviewed.

The following teachers will take part in the "English Teacher Professional Development Distance Learning Program" starting January 2010:

- Mr Sivananda Vencatapillay of the Mahatma Gandhi Institute.
- Mrs Toolsee Vencatalapillay of Loreto College, Pot Louis
- Mrs Sobha Devi Beeharry-Panray of Sharma Jugdambi SSS
- Mrs Anitah Aujayeb of Gaetan Raynal State College
- Mr Ibrahim Deelun Somauroo of Hamilton College (Boys)

We would like to thank all teachers who showed an interest in this programme and who sent in their application.

## THANK YOU

During 2009, we were happy to welcome many new members, including school members.

We now count 57 school members and would like to invite those who are not members yet to join the ESU.

We would also like to take this opportunity to reiterate our thanks to all those who have happily supplied volunteer help and support to the ESU during the year.

Special thanks to the British Council, the British High Commission and the US Embassy for your continued support and donations.

**THANK YOU TO ALL MEMBERS,  
DONORS AND SPONSORS FOR  
YOUR ON-GOING SUPPORT  
TOWARDS THE ESU.**