



Malayalee Engineers' Association Houston, TX

NEWSLETTER

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Volume 20, Issue 2

Our Twentieth Year

June 2014



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“MEA had a great first half 2014 with record number of paid membership, events, and launch of new mentoring program. Thanks to All! We look forward to the continued engagement of all our members, patrons and well-wishers.”

MEA Board 2014

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Visit MEA Face Book Page at www.facebook.com/meahouston for frequent updates on MEA activities

President: Joyce John
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MEA Board of Directors for 2014

Secretary: Ranjith Nair
Planning: Vidya Raja
Community Outreach: Sajee KT

Treasurer: Sojan Antony
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Message from the President- MEA membership & engagement

The main objective of the MEA director board this year is to strengthen the organization. Strength of MEA lies within the membership base and the results of the voluntary efforts put in by its members. In the last 6 months since 2014 MEA Board took charge, we are proud to have our paid membership level cross the century mark and to have conducted 6 events. We, however, feel there is still a long way to go on these fronts!

We thank those of you who helped MEA to reach the membership target of 100+ by end of April. A list of our paid members is provided on our website at: <http://meahouston.org/about-us/membership-list/>. We have a contact list of 225+ who have been MEA members at one time or other in the past. It is time to get to the rest of them in our contact list, as well as other new members. Please take a look at the current membership list and reach out to your friends and encourage them to renew/ take new membership. If you are getting this message and still have not renewed the membership for 2014, please consider doing it NOW. Starting this year, you can pay your 2014 membership dues online at: <http://meahouston.org/join/>

We are also counting on your support for planning the various activities. MEA 2014 Board assures you that we are planning for many events focused on the member base this year. Please have a look at the tentative list of events in 2014 provided on the MEA website at: <http://meahouston.org/list-of-events-2014/>

An important factor for our success is the engagement from our member base. This year we have conducted 6 events so far. While we had huge success with our spring picnic and the technical talk, the participation of members at the other MEA organized/coordinated events were not up to our expectation. We are trying to arrange events focusing on various age groups and interests and would like to see our members actively participate in those events. Please do not limit your participation to just the MEA Night, our annual entertainment night. As a group of professional engineers, MEA has a lot more to offer than an annual entertainment night, accompanied by good food. Please also do not wait until MEA Nite to pay your membership fee. As you all know, any MEA event provides opportunity for networking. You could regret for missing out on a lot of important activities and opportunities!

We also request all members to please stay actively involved with the events we have planned for you. Kindly take leadership roles in some of the programs MEA is coordinating for its members and the community, if it is an area of your interest or expertise. Regardless of your background or experience, there are several areas such as mentoring, scholarship application evaluation, event planning and execution where you can help. Please reach out to the MEA Board at meahouston@gmail.com with your specific interest and suggestions.

Let us together make this an outstanding year for MEA and strengthen this organization!

Joyce John
2014 MEA President



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Event Highlights – 1st Half 2014

Thank you for a successful Spring Picnic on 29 March 2014

We the MEA 2014 board of directors wishes to thank each one of you who attended the spring picnic on 29 March 2014. With record high attendance, record high membership (for this early in the year) and with plenty of new members, the MEA picnic was a hugely successful event. The RSVP response over evite was very accurate and helped us to get a precise head count be well-prepared on the food service front. We served a total of over 110 adults and children - perhaps a record attendance at MEA spring picnic.

The unexpected cloud cover and cool weather in the morning hours slowed down things a little. Many people waited until the cloud cover moved and the bright sun came out, before arriving at the park. The late arrival of most people did result in a one hour delay in the start of the events and might have caused some disarray. We apologize for that inconvenience.

The outstanding accomplishment of the day was that we could get 71 members to pay the 2014 membership dues by the end of the day, a record, at that stage of the calendar year. It is noteworthy that more than 50 % of those who paid, chose to do so over the MEA website. Our online payment system was put to large scale use and the system passed its test. The system also helped us to gather current information on the members.



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You can enjoy more pictures from the spring picnic at <https://www.facebook.com/meahouston>



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Event Highlights – 1st Half 2014

OTC Guided Visit – 07 May 2014

MEA organized a guided tour of the 2014 Offshore Technology Conference (OTC) on Wed, 7 May 2014. This educational event was intended for the benefit of young MEA members who are new to the Oil & Gas industry and/or to the Houston area. The tour was attended by many young MEA engineers and an engineering student and guided by experienced MEA members from the O&G industry. During the 4-hour guided tour, they got an opportunity to learn about basic O&G concepts such as upstream, midstream and downstream operations, different types of offshore facilities (Drillship, FPSO, Spar, TLP, etc.) and also got a closer look at some of the latest O&G technologies. The attendees also gained first-hand knowledge about some of the key upstream O&G equipment including, but not limited to, top drives, shale shakers, wellheads, christmas trees, blowout Preventers (BOP), remotely operated vehicles (ROV), etc. Special thanks to the enthusiastic attendees and the expert guides in making this first of its kind MEA educational event a success. From their responses, like the one below, it looks like the young engineers enjoyed it too!

“Thank you MEA for organizing a wonderful 'Guided Tour' for the Offshore Technology Conference. In a short time frame, you have given us a good idea of exploration, drilling, production in the Oil and Gas Industry. We appreciate the effort and time you took from your busy schedule for organizing the tour, this shows how committed you are and willing to share their knowledge.”

Volunteering at All-Earth EcoBot Challenge® - 17 May 2014

MEA 2014 members volunteered at the 2014 All-Earth EcoBot Challenge® held on Sat, 17 May 2014 at Reliant Center, Houston, TX. The All-Earth EcoBot Challenge®, organized by Education Foundation of Harris County (EFHC), is an innovative engineering competition for 5th through 8th graders. In this challenge, 4-person student teams designed, built and programmed autonomous robots, to accomplish missions. As part of the competition, school children also learned how to build these robots.

The May 17th event consisted of 269 teams with 4 children in each team covering various schools and other organizations. The 2014 event, which has evolved from a modest participation of 25 teams in 2009, was a huge success with over 2000 attendees. MEA congratulates EFHC on a job well done!! When EFHC was seeking volunteers to conduct the event, MEA stepped in for assistance by announcing the event to its member base and coordinating registration of its members. MEA volunteers offered assistance on the event day, helping the judges and performing some essential organizing functions.

MEA strongly encourages educational activities such as robotic challenge for children. MEA 2014 congratulates and thanks its members – Sajee Kadambathil, Ashish Krishnankutty and Thomas Mailadil, for volunteering at the event. MEA 2014 will continue to promote such events with community impact and we look forward to increased member participation in future events.



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Event Highlights – 1st Half 2014

Technical Talk: “Energy Around the Globe” – 08 June 2014

"What are the common conventional and alternative energy sources used globally? How is electricity rate determined? Who are the key players in Texas & Kerala electrical energy business?" These were just a few of the questions discussed in the technical talk on the topic "Energy Around the Globe" hosted by 2014 MEA on Sunday, 08 June, 3.30-5.30 PM at Madras Pavilion in Sugar Land, TX. This, first of the series of technical talks in 2014, was attended by about 30 MEA members and patrons.

During the session, the speaker Mr. Nalin Pillai, CEO of Bose Power & Energy and President of Canam Inc., presented the status of energy in selected parts of the world and provided statistical data on energy consumption of 14 selected nations of the world. Various aspects of electrical energy sector, from generation to household consumption, were covered in the presentation. The details on the Texas electricity market were presented in a structured manner, with questions from the engaged audience making the session very interactive. Attendees got an insight on the process of electricity generation, transmission via grid, supply of power to consumers and the pricing of electricity. A comparison of electricity sector in Texas to that in the state of Kerala was also covered. The event concluded with coffee and snacks and was followed by a great networking session among the attendees.

Special thanks go to the speaker, Mr. Nalin Pillai and all the enthusiastic attendees, for making this MEA learning and networking event a big success. Thanks also go to the management of the Madras Pavilion, Sugar Land, who graciously accommodated us.

“Score for Scholarship” Mini fundraiser – 27 June 2014



Image Courtesy: FIFA

MEA conducted a mini-fundraiser ‘Score for Scholarship’ challenge celebrating excitement about the ongoing Brazil Soccer World Cup. The challenge consisted of MEA members and contacts predicting results while making donation of \$25 or more to MEA Scholarship Fund.

The top 3 predictions will win a prize (1st: \$250 Amazon Gift Card, 2nd: \$150 Amazon Gift Card and 3rd: \$100 Amazon Gift Card).

Thanks to everyone who participated in this challenge. The 3 winners will be announced at the 2014 MEA World Cup Soccer Finals watch party on July 13th. Good Luck!



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Mentoring Program Kickoff

MEA 2014 kicked-off a formal mentoring program for the MEA scholars in India, focusing first on improving the performance of the 2013 scholars. In the past, MEA's mentoring program was more of an informal nature and had not been as effective as we were hoping for, in terms of providing needed support to all scholars. The failure of a few of the scholars to satisfy the academic criteria for continuing the scholarship to them is a matter of concern. The 2014 MEA Board is trying to address these issues by launching a formal mentoring program with a strong pool of mentor volunteers, publication of a mentoring guidelines document and creation of a mentor support group.

Mentoring Workshops - 18 May & 28 June 2014

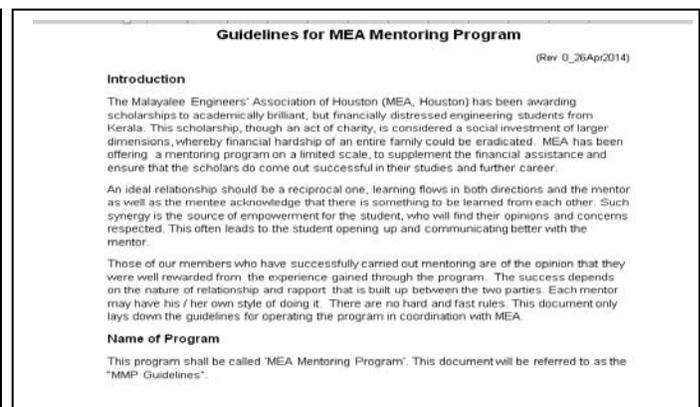
MEA conducted two mentoring workshop sessions, the first of its kind in MEA history, on Sunday, 18 May and Saturday, 28 June. These workshops included sessions on the scholarship program, lessons learned from previous attempts to introduce mentoring, communication with mentees, sharing of information from experienced mentors to the new mentor volunteers etc.

Both sessions were great, with a lot of energy on display by both the experienced and new mentor volunteers. Most encouraging was the questions posed by the newly signed up mentoring volunteers and their overall desire to support scholars in India. As always, MEA's experienced mentors had a wealth of information to share and the two workshops were all-out success. New mentoring volunteers learned that there are several areas they can help their assigned scholar in India, including but not limited to academic guidance, internship help, career counseling, and support during personal issues, serving as a responsible adult role model in their life. A few specific cases of successful mentoring from the past were also shared by experienced mentors. Special thanks go to the mentors, members of the mentor support group, the scholarship program coordinator and the MEA spouses & parents who were in attendance.

With the current pool of mentoring volunteers, all the 2013 scholars have been assigned a mentor. More mentoring volunteers are needed in order for us to extend the program to cover the scholars who were awarded MEA scholarships in 2012 and 2011. Please contact meahouston@gmail.com if you are interested to become a volunteer mentor.



First Mentoring Workshop





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MEA General Body Meeting – June 28

The first MEA General Body Meeting of 2014 was held on June 28 at St. Joseph Church Auditorium, 211 Present St, Missouri City, TX 77489. The meeting was attended by 24, including 20 members. The following three scholarship plan amendments were passed by the General Body:

- Increasing the maximum family income from Rs 100,00 to Rs. 150,000/yr for scholarship eligibility starting with the year 2014 and provision for MEA Director Boards to raise the income limit in increments of Rs. 10,000 until year 2019
- Modified time of award to specifically state that new scholarship awards for current year shall be made not later than 31st March of the next calendar year
- Added 'electronic transfer of funds' as one of the methods of payment



2014 Scholarship evaluation team was selected at this meeting. The team consists of Vijay Kayath, Cuckoo & Joy Mathew, Deepa & Aravind Subramani, Jakson Sunny, Roshan Edison and Joseph Ponnoly. Special thanks to them for volunteering in this important MEA committee.

During the meeting Joyce John, President and Sojan Antony, Treasurer presented half yearly state of MEA covering status updates on MEA membership, events, mentoring program and financial plan. MEA members in attendance were also given a chance to provide their feedback on areas where MEA could do better. Some of the themes that have come up from this feedback includes organizing more programs (eg: outdoor activities such as soccer, volleyball, etc., talent competition) catering to the members of younger age group and more technical talks. MEA Board would further review these comments and try to make adjustments to the planned events to the extent possible. At the same time, MEA Board requests volunteers to come forward and take initiative to organize some of these events. Please reach out to the MEA Board at meahouston@gmail.com with your ideas and plan.



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Forthcoming Events - Science Talent Search (Deadline 24 Aug 2014)

MALAYALEE ENGINEERS' ASSOCIATION, HOUSTON

Prizes

High School First	: \$250	Second: \$150	Third: \$100
Middle School First	: \$200	Second: \$100	Third: \$75
Elementary School First	: \$100	Second: \$75	Third: \$50

Science Talent Search 2014

'Inspiring young minds to explore engineering, science and technology'

www.meahouston.org/sts2014

How to participate?

1. Register for the Science Talent Search (STS) at the website. The event is divided into three categories, viz. elementary school, middle school and high school.
2. Make a trifold 36"x 48" poster in one of the topics. The posters will be judged on **content (research), creativity and presentation.**
3. Drop off the poster at one of the locations. We have drop off location at Clear Lake, Katy, Sugar Land, The Woodlands, Cypress, Houston and Spring. Please see the STS website (link above) for exact locations.

Entry fee : MEA member family: Free
Non MEA individual: \$15/entry | Team: \$10/person

Other rules:
Entries can be individual or team(2 or 3 person only).
Only one entry per person (individual or team).

Drop off locations: Visit the website at meahouston.org/sts
Questions? Please visit our STS website, or you can mail at meahouston@gmail.com.

Poster topics

- Energy:** Energy: To sustain our civilization we need energy. Describe any alternate and green sources of energy that you find interesting and believe has potential.
- Global Warming:** Global Warming: Do you believe in Global warming? If so, what are the evidences, causes and remedies? How can normal citizens like us help, and discuss why?
- Futuristic:** Paint a picture of all that you think will be invented by circa 2100, supported by evidence and arguments.
- Health Sciences:** Discuss health science in general, focus on one disease or cure that has caught your interest, and discuss why?
- Career in engineering, science or technology:** If you choose a career in engineering, science or technology, tell us in which area will it be and why?

Viewers' Choice Award: Audience at the MEA event will vote and select one winner for each category.
Prizes: High School: \$100; Middle School: \$75; Elementary School: \$50

Categories: Elementary School, Middle School, High School. **Format:** Poster board Trifold 36" * 48"

Submission Deadline : 24 August 2014 **Award Announcement:** 14 September 2014 (tentative)

B Media



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Forthcoming Events – World Cup Soccer Finals Screening & Cultural Nite

World Cup 2014 Finals – 13 July 2014



We would like to announce a World Cup soccer finals screening event on Sunday, 13 July. You are invited to this MEA event, a social gathering session with food and sports for our members, with finals screened in a 45 seat theater.

Program: FIFA World Cup Soccer Finals Screening, with food and social gathering

Place: Seven Meadows Community Clubhouse at: 23610 Seven Meadows Pkwy, Katy, TX, 77494

Date: Sunday, 13 July 2014

Time: 1:30 pm to 4:30 pm CST

Admission is FREE for MEA senior members aged 60 & above and who have retired from fulltime jobs. For others, admission is based on a suggested contribution of \$5 per head.

We look forward to seeing you there. Please RSVP to meahouston@gmail.com by July 10th with total no. of attendees and how many to watch the finals screening. Note the seating for finals screening is limited and will be on a first-come, first-serve basis for MEA members & family.

MEA Cultural Nite – 20 Sep 2014



We are pleased to make an advance announcement of the date for the MEA Cultural Nite 2014. Please save the date.

When: Saturday, 20 September 2014; 4:30- 9:00 PM

Where: Durgabari Auditorium, 13944 Schiller Road, Houston, TX-77082

Tentative Program:

4:30 - 5:30 Social Hour, Science Competition
Judging by Audience

5:30 - 8:00 Cultural Program, Science Competition
Award Ceremony

8:00 - 9:00 Dinner

Ticket charges are yet to be determined and will be announced by end of July.

Please mark your calendars and join us in making the event a big success. We are also looking for volunteers to help us plan and organize the event. Please email us at meahouston@gmail.com if available to help.



MEA Member Stories

Gayathri Rajesh – Promising Tennis Talent



Gayathri Rajesh, daughter of MEA members Rajesh Kavilveedu and Anisha Rajesh, is an upcoming tennis player in the United States tennis tournament circuit. She was the finalist of the Girls 12s section of USTA closed Regional tennis tournament, a national open tournament in which top ranking players from various states in the US competed. Gayathri, a seventh grade student at Woodcreek Jr High school (Katy ISD), is very passionate about tennis and has been playing the game since 8 years of age and has competed in various zonal, state and national level competitions. She is a Texas Super Champ player and was ranked number 20 in Texas in Girls 12s section. She has just recently aged up to Girls 14s section. She recently won the consolation finals of Girls 16s, Bay Area Racquet Club Junior Open tournament.

Gayathri is the Katy ISD Jr District Champion and was named the Most valuable Player (MVP) of her school in Tennis. Along with tennis, Gayathri's other interests include playing Violin for her school orchestra team and learning Bharathanatyam. Gayathri is a high honor roll student, an avid reader and was selected as one of the best students in reading in her division at her school.

Share Your Stories

Please send in articles about your child accomplishments or summer experiences (India trip, vacations, etc.). We will publish them in the next issue. The newsletter presents a great opportunity to the MEA member families and children to showcase their talents. It also helps us in making the newsletter more interesting and exciting. Please email your articles to meahouston@gmail.com.



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MEA Membership Status

A big 'THANK YOU' to all of you who have signed-up so far! Thanks also go to all those who helped us in our last membership drive! A current membership list is provided at the MEA web page at:

<http://meahouston.org/about-us/membership-list/>

It is encouraging to note that 80+ of the current members signed-up or renewed their membership online. If you are getting this newsletter, but have not renewed your MEA membership yet, please do so online at the MEA web page at: <http://meahouston.org/join/>

For those of you, who still prefer to pay their membership dues by check, please use the form below.

MEA 2014 - Membership Registration by mail

Please fill the form below and mail to Malayalee Engineers' Association, C/O Joyce John, 7006 Cool Water Ct., Sugar Land TX 77479. Include your membership fee of \$50 in the form of check.

Name:

Email:

Phone Number(s):

Address:

Employer:

Engineering College:

Home Town in Kerala:

Spouse Name:

Alternate Phone:

Privacy statement: All your personal details will remain private with us. We however, publish the name of member, name of employer (or state self-employed / retired) and alma mater of our paid memberships on our website. If you would like to keep this information private too, please do mention it in the comment field below.

Any comments: