



**M E A**  
**N E W S L E T T E R**  
**2 0 2 0**

**Malayalee Engineers Association**

**EDUCATION IS OUR  
GREATEST OPPORTUNITY TO  
GIVE AN IRREVOCABLE GIFT  
TO THE NEXT GENERATION**

-ERNIE FLETCHER



[MEAHOUSTON,ORG/DONATE](https://meahouston.org/donate)



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# MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

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Deepa Ranjith, IT/Communications  
Director

Neena Sreelaya, IT/Communications  
Director

Day Antony, Community Outreach/ Social  
Events Director

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Anoop Palassery, Secretary

Sojan Antony, Advisor

Basil Theckumpurath, Community  
Outreach/ Social Events Director



# A Message from the President

I want to start off by stating MEA's primary objective which is providing financial assistance and mentoring to economically backward and academically brilliant undergraduate engineering students in India. MEA also organizes community engagement events such as annual picnics and cultural events to provide for its members a forum to professionally and socially interact, engage in charitable activities and find ways to promote organizational growth.

I have been associated with MEA for close to 15 years and it has been an honor to support the scholarship program which has offered hundreds of scholarships to deserving students. At the risk of stating the obvious, 2020 was one of the most challenging years for people around the world and the MEA community is no exception. Many of MEA's planned events had to be canceled or postponed which adversely affected MEA's ability to attract memberships and donations towards the scholarship cause. In this situation, the scholarship program has become even more relevant as people grapple with unemployment, lock-downs, delayed entrance exams and admissions.

However, it is a testament to the commitment of the MEA community that even in such a difficult year, the organization managed to register over 50 members and raise a reasonable amount towards the scholarship cause. This has enabled the program to continue and offer new scholarships in 2020. Even so, funding challenges remain and MEA is organizing an online event on Jan 16 to showcase the scholarship program to all its members. This is also a platform for the younger MEA members to present their talents to the broader MEA community.

The 2020 board members deserve credit for organizing events such as online chess and painting competitions that saw phenomenal participation from members. At the request of MEA members, we also organized an online Question-Answer session with Uma Mantravadi, a renowned Houston based immigration lawyer.

As 2021 rolls in, it brings with it the promise of a lasting solution to the pandemic. MEA hopes to resurrect its community engagement programs in 2021 including the annual MEA cultural night while staying focused on its primary objective which is continuation of the scholarship program. We request all of you to spread the word and encourage others to renew their MEA memberships as well as donate towards the scholarship cause.

Harish Pillai  
MEA President 2020 Board



# MEA Talent

the wonderful Nair siblings- Ananthan and Kalyani



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[Click Here!](#)





# MEA Talent



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# MEA TALENT - SIVANI

[Click Here!](#)

# “His” Sky Canvas

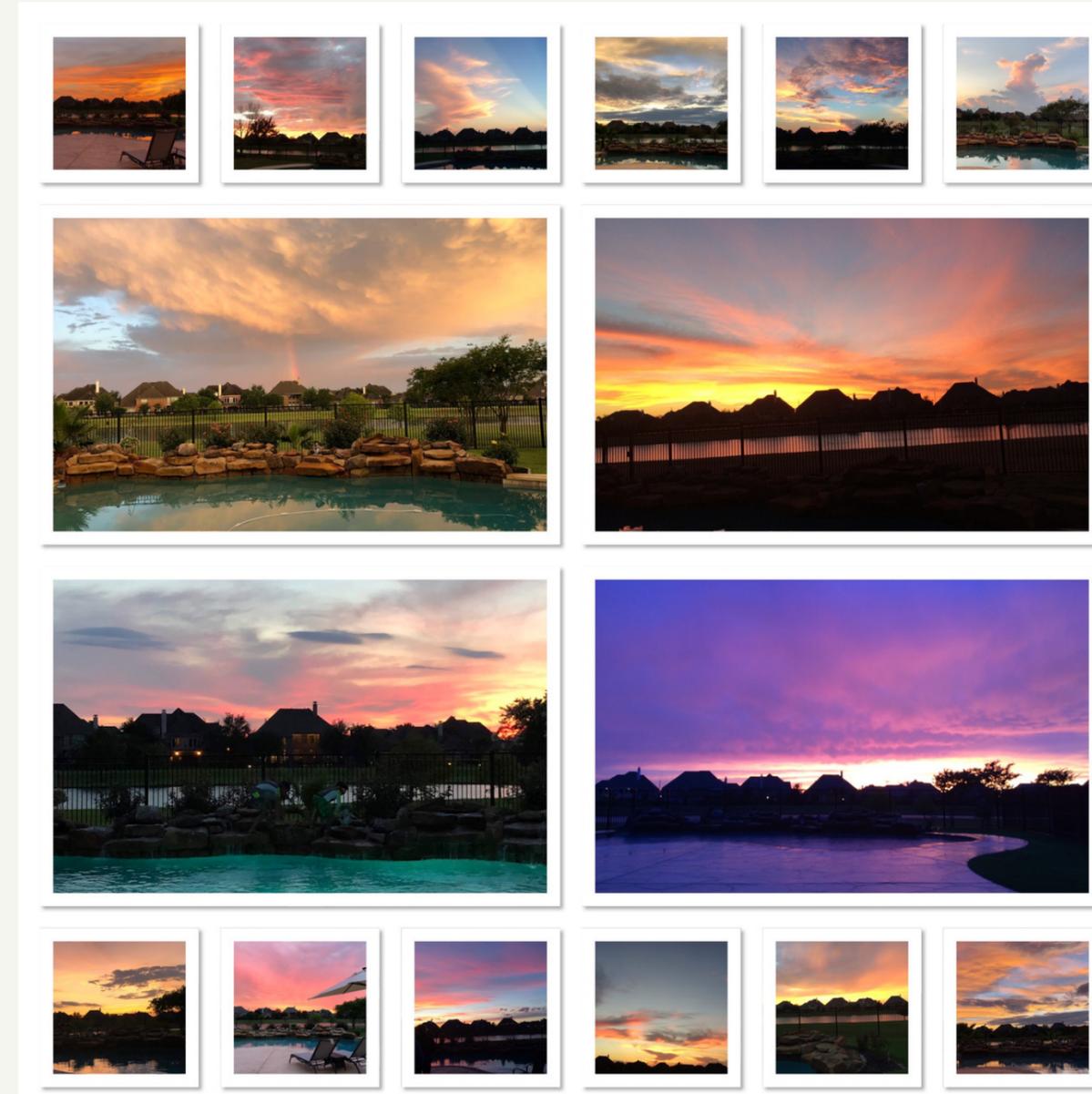
## Cuckoo Joy

The Almighty pulls up his canvas over the evening sky and starts creating this breathtaking painting in front of my eyes. My gaze is fixed to the horizon. I’m spellbound at the magnificence and grandeur of his creativity. The splash of colors tossed at ease - ochre, amber red, purple, blue, yellow - is beyond brilliance in its range and intensity. The budding artist in me wonders about the colors that adorn his palette. The creation is spectacular and the change of shades stunning. The painting attains its finale when the Sun God finally bids goodbye for the day! I’m overwhelmed at the privilege of this display by the supreme artist. He is teasing me, I guess! My heart swells with deep gratitude.

Sharing few of these displays for your eyes to cherish...

## About the Author...

Ms. Cuckoo Joy resides in Houston, Texas, and works for GE Power, Schenectady, New York. She was actively involved with MEA Houston in 2016 as its President. The pictures displayed are photos of the horizon from her backyard patio.



# COVID -19 IMPACT ON MEA

ANOOP PALASSERY

As is the case with literally everything,, well, except online shopping, MEA was impacted by COVID 19. Memberships dropped, fundraisers cancelled, get-togethers banned.

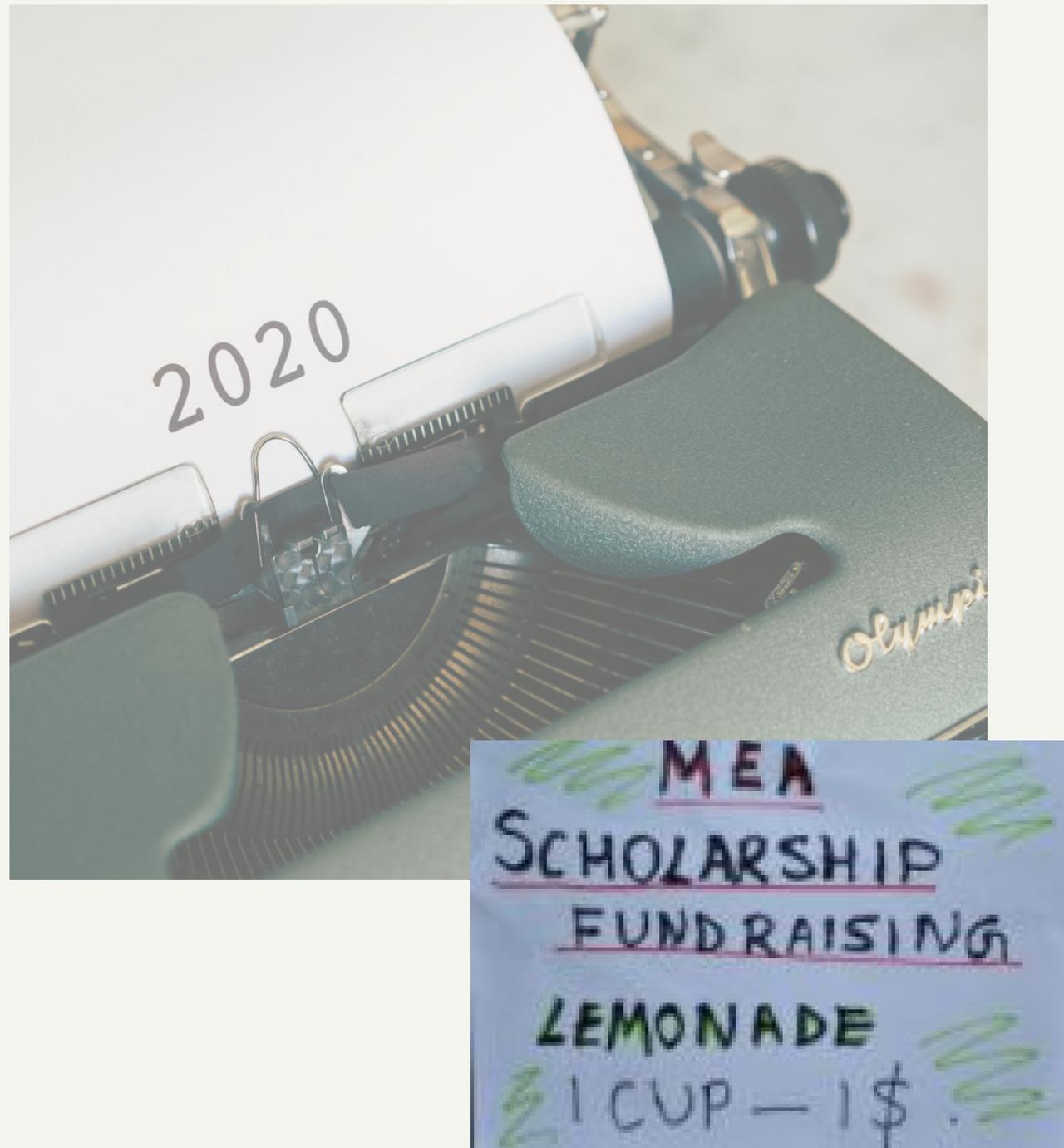
Our aim, the centre point of our endeavor, was kept at the forefront: the gift of education for the scholars.

Despite the challenging times, MEA was able to continue supporting the scholars and award scholarships to many students in 2020.

MEA extended 2020 membership validity to 2021 to encourage more members to support.

Our goal has always been to support our scholars' education through these difficult times.

How can you help? Donate. Be a member.



LEMONADE STAND FROM MEA  
2011 ANNUAL PICNIC

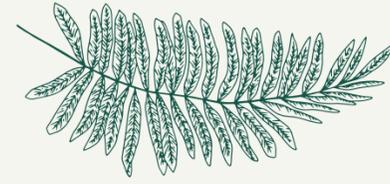
# MEA Scholarship Program

In the year 2000, we at MEA Houston started our Scholarship Program as a humble effort, providing scholarships to two engineering students in Kerala. Many volunteers have dedicated countless hours over the past two decades to get where we are today. To date, we have provided scholarships to approximately 200 brilliant students who come from impoverished families.. In the past decade, we have provided for an average of 13 students per year. We receive hundreds of applications every year, so we have developed a criteria based, data-driven algorithm for preliminary screening. A committee of MEA members carefully analyzes the pre-screened applications to arrive at a short-list of finalists. These finalists are rigorously examined case by case by MEA members or someone in our volunteer network in Kerala who visits the student's home to verify their need.

This program has no overhead; 100% of the money we collect is distributed to the students. Our scholarship award is \$600 each year per student for the entire duration of their undergraduate degree (\$2400 per student over 4 years of B.Tech). So far, we have given out nearly \$500,000 in scholarships. We consider the scholarship recipients (MEA Scholars) as a social investment. We seek students who not only require financial aid, but can utilize that aid to uplift themselves and their communities. MEA Scholars attend top-rated government colleges (IIT/NIT/CET, etc.), which is indicative of the caliber of students we reach. After graduation, MEA Scholars frequently pursue rewarding careers at top IT companies, research institutes, and government institutions. Several MEA Scholars have attended graduate school as well.

Our mentorship program serves to provide guidance and support for students and propel them to success in their academic pursuits and professional careers. MEA members volunteer to mentor students throughout their studies, building a productive relationship where students benefit from having an experienced professional to consult with as needed. MEA members who volunteer as mentors or as a member of the selection committee have reflected on their experience as a captivating and gratifying endeavor. The relationship between mentor and mentee serves to create a place where the students may express themselves freely and explore manners in which they might further themselves and their career. Mentoring can be as challenging as it is rewarding, considering the harsh realities many of these students face and the effects such realities have on their lives. However, mentors serve the vital function of being the catalyst for a student's transformative journey to success.

The scholarship program finds truly remarkable individuals every year who have overcome extraordinary circumstances. We have the privilege to support these students toward the finish line of their struggle, playing a small part in helping create a new generation of brilliant professionals who uplift their communities. There are many ways you can aid in this quest to enrich the lives of a few outstanding students, by making a simple donation to the program, by serving as a volunteer in the selection committee, or by being a mentor. Your support and participation is vital in ensuring the success of this program and of the students involved. When making a contribution, please make sure that MEA is included in the list of charities your employer may provide a matching contribution to. We encourage you to reach out by phone or email to any of the MEA office bearers or members who have served in this program, and figure out the best way you can be a part of our mission.



## 2019 LIST OF MEA SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

### Name

Ajith Kumar P M

Althaf Hussain

Anusree K

Arjun K

Mohammed Hisham K

Muhammed Fazil P C

Nanda Kishor M Pai

Padmanabhan Rajesh Nair

Riswan Faisal

Safeela Nasrin V K

Samuel Augustine

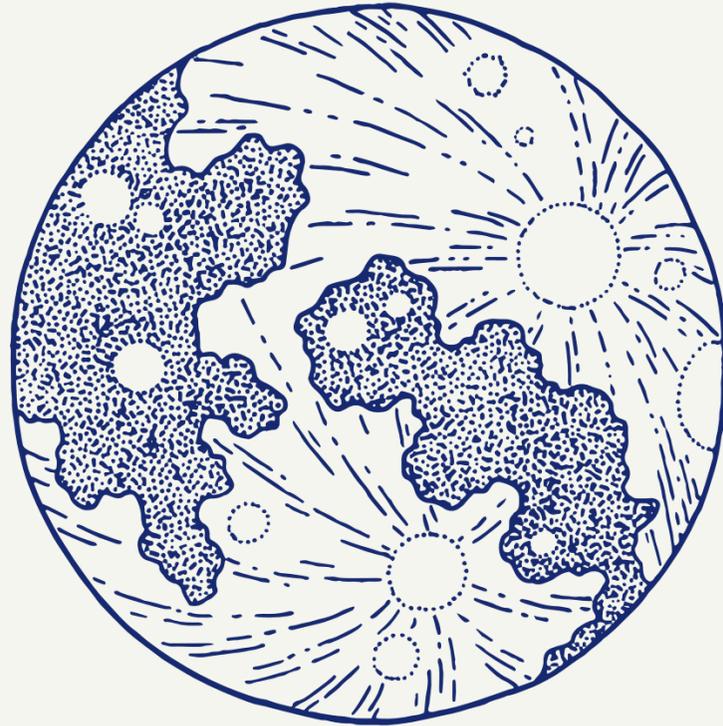
Sivaprasad K L

For complete list please refer to

<http://meahouston.org/scholarship/recipients/>

# IMMIGRATION UPDATE SEMINAR

UMA MANTRAVADI



**Your Immigration Questions Answered...**  
**MEA Immigration 101**  
 a free webinar with renowned immigration attorney  
**Uma Mantrawadi**

**Date:** Sunday Jun 21, 2020  
**Time:** 3.00PM US Central Time

**Location:** Zoom meeting *(please scan the QR Code for the meeting URL)*

**Please join to listen in and get your questions answered**

For questions or to get your questions included, please email us  
[meahouston@gmail.com](mailto:meahouston@gmail.com)

Hosted by  
**Malayalee Engineers' Association, Houston**






# MEA 2020 OUTREACH EVENTS-CHESS COMPETITION

FOR MOST PEOPLE, THE PAST SEVERAL MONTHS WAS A COMBINATION OF REMOTE WORK, SCHOOL AND SOCIAL DISTANCING TO FLATTEN THE CURVE DUE TO THE GLOBAL PANDEMIC. WE HAVE SEEN EVENTS BEING CANCELLED, POSTPONED OR BEING HOSTED VIRTUALLY.

On July 18th 2020 MEA board hosted online chess tournament on lichess.org website with the help of long time chess player in Houston Coach Bryant . This event was streamed live on twitch.tv with live commentary from Coach Bryant to keep all parents informed on game updates. There were two arenas setup for the tournament, one for 10-14 years & other for 6-9 years. Each player started the game with 10 minutes on their clock & continued to play for 1 hour with different players which the lichess platform matched them to. At the end of this 1 hour tournament players with the most point was declared winners in each category. In both age groups we had excellent participation & we were truly amazed by the tactical skills that these kids displayed during the tournament. Winners from each category were awarded certificate & gift card. MEA board would like to thank everyone for their patience and effort in putting together such an entertaining event. We would like to specially thank coach Bryant & our volunteers for a job well done.

Winners for the 10-14 year group:

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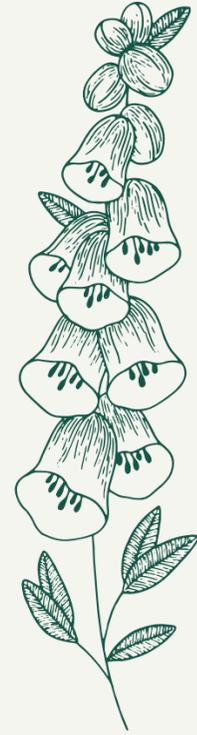
- 1) Alvin T Mathew / Ivan Jose  
(co-champions)
- 2) Mahadev Nair

6-9 year group:

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- 1) Ann T Mathew / Narayan Nair /  
Namish Nair

# “MEA 2020 OUTREACH EVENTS : “END THE PANDEMIC” ART CONTEST



August 1st 2020 MEA board kicked off “End the Pandemic” Art contest for Kids & Adults. There were 4 age groups competing in this event Group 1: Ages 3-5, Group 2: Ages 6-10, Group 3 – Ages 11-17, Group 4 : 18 & above. Participants were requested scan & email a unique piece of artwork portraying the theme & slogan “End the Pandemic” following the submission guideline. Participants were given 3 weeks to work on their artwork. These entries were judged by MEA board selected judges based on creativity, uniqueness, inclusion of the “End the Pandemic” slogan and message, interpretation of the theme, overall visual appeal, composition, and age appropriateness. We had phenomenal participation for this event & judges had a great time reviewing creative submissions from participants. This platform gave these emerging artists an opportunity to showcase their creations. All the submissions for this contest are published in MEA facebook page. Winners from each group was awarded certificate & gift card. Our praises and congratulations extend to all the winners. We would like to specially thank our judges & our volunteers who worked behind the scenes to make this event a successful one.

List of the winners are below:

## 3-5 Age group:

- 1) Vihaan Varma
- 2) Dhruv Sathyan

## 6-10 Age group:

- 1) Trisha Arun
- 2) Sivani Kiran
- 3) Dhruv Varma

## 11-17 Age group:

- 1) Medha Menon
- 2) Bhadra Praveen Alayil and Reema Raj
- 3) Joy Joseph

## 18 and above Age group:

- 1) Mathew Melvin
- 2) Radha Nair

# “Winning Entries from the “End the Pandemic” Art contest



# An Evening to Remember

Due to the current COVID situation and the restrictions imposed by health authorities, MEA was not able to conduct its most awaited cultural night in 2020. In lieu of the usual MEA annual activities, MEA conducted a scaled down online event with live streaming on Youtube on January 16th, 2021 showcasing its flagship scholarship program. The event also had multiple cultural programs by members of MEA family.

The scholarship committee presented the long history and current activities of the scholarship program and highlighted the stringent process that goes behind vetting the final scholarship awardees. Many founder members of MEA presented the primary motivation behind starting MEA:

- provide financial assistance and mentoring to economically backward and academically brilliant undergraduate engineering students in India and
- provide a forum to professionally and socially interact, engage in charitable activities and find ways to promote organizational growth.

Many scholarship recipients came online to talk about how the awards changed their lives for the better. Most of the recipients now work in different locations around the world and many have gone on to complete post graduate studies. Firsthand stories from the students is truly inspirational and justifies the volunteer effort being put in behind the scholarship initiative.

The scholarship focused programs were interspersed with cultural events by members of MEA family. The high-quality programs provided a stage for the participants to showcase their talents and also entertained the guests. The primary objective of the event was to improve MEA membership and solicit donations towards the MEA scholarship funds. The event was extremely well received, and the membership count has seen an uptick post the event. MEA board was truly amazed by the turn out for this event and the board thanks the entire MEA family for making this a successful event. The board also thanks all the volunteers who worked selflessly for many hours and contributed to the success of the event. Our young MCs Isha and Reema also did an amazing job in keeping the audience engaged through the event.

The entire recording of the event can be seen on Youtube at the following link:

<https://youtu.be/UL9KjMZqD8o>



# An Evening to Remember: Link

The entire recording of the event  
can be seen on Youtube at the following link

