

<sup>xv</sup> SPEECH  
Olympiad

THE  
ORATOR  
SPARK A CHANGE





**A Better Business.  
A Better World.  
A Better You.**







# Prof. N. D. Gunawardena

Vice Chancellor  
University of Moratuwa

It is my pleasure to issue this message for the occasion of the Grand Finale of Speech Olympiad XV, the fifteenth iteration of the intra-University public speaking competition organized by the Gavel Club of University of Moratuwa.

In many aspects, public speaking can be difficult. Specifically when it comes to giving an impromptu speech. A single speaker draws attention from a sizable crowd with a range of understanding abilities and personal objectives. The process of having to gather new ideas, composing and choreographing them in the most coherent manner, and instantly managing through stage phobia to ensure that each audience member's focus is maintained for the entire duration while delivering a key message or messages to suit the occasion are some of the necessities for a successful speech.

Additionally, a speech that meets all of these requirements also needs to be remembered. 'Speech Olympiad' will test the techniques used to guarantee that the intended message or main messages of a speech are delivered effectively with the utmost precision, crisp time management, pleasant mannerisms, etc. This 'Speech Olympiad' event, organized by the University of Moratuwa Gavel Club, deserves praise for creating an environment that allows people to realize hidden talents that might not otherwise have been revealed.

I wish the best of luck to all the contestants!



## Dr. Indika Sigera

Staff Advisor

Gavel Club of University of Moratuwa

I am delighted to issue this message for the occasion of the fifteenth successive Speech Olympiad, the Intra-University speech contest organized by the Gavel Club of University of Moratuwa.

The Gavel Club of University of Moratuwa is an affiliate of Toastmasters International and is an association of undergraduates that promotes public speaking and leadership development among students. Speech Olympiad is the flagship event in the calendar of the Gavel Club of University of Moratuwa. It is an English speech competition held among students of the University and addresses a need which has been expressed time and time again by the industry, to develop the communication skills of the undergraduates.

Further, I would like to thank the project co-chairs and organizers for their tireless effort and commitment in making this event a success despite their demanding academic schedules.

Finally, I would like to extend my best wishes to all the participants; I believe that the exposure and experience you have gained from participating in this event would help you to excel in the future career paths that you may take.



## Zamani Nazeem

Chief Judge  
Distinguished Toastmaster

It is my honour to pen these lines for the Souvenir of the University of Moratuwa Speech Olympiad 2022. As the chief judge it is such a lovely experience to see such talented young speakers conquering their fears of public speaking and triumphing. They have grown over the weeks from the inception of this contest to the finals having made a tremendous impression on the judges and the audience motivating all listeners with inspirational messages.

I like to congratulate the organising committee for the efforts right throughout. It's evident that this magnitude of event can't be done overnight much thought and planning was involved in executing this event and it was a massive success. In my opinion especially coordinating with all the faculties giving equal opportunities for all.

I like to thank my panel of esteemed and Distinguished judges for their dedication and commitment.

I take this opportunity to wish the contestants today and congratulate all the participants for a job well done.

*"The worst speech you'll ever give, will be far better than the one you never give."*

– Fred Miller

Keep speaking and keep inspiring!





# Suthira Wijayawardena

President  
Gavel Club of University of Moratuwa

People say, “Speech Olympiad is not just a contest but a journey which can change your life”. This statement puzzled me until I applied and started my public speaking journey with Speech Olympiad XIV. Speech Olympiad XIV was indeed a turning point in my life. It upgraded and forged me into a speaker that I had never ever imagined to be.

Likewise, Speech Olympiad, the premier intra-university public speaking competition, has been such a turning point which exposed the public speaking talents hidden within many undergraduates of University of Moratuwa.

The ultimate reason for Speech Olympiad to be emphasized as a journey beyond just a competition is the support and guidance that one would receive from the Gavel Family. Mentoring sessions and workshops that are organized by the club always create a conducive environment for public speaking, which a competition could not do overnight.

Speech Olympiad XV comes into life with the ultimate intention of creating a platform for undergraduates to share and inspire the world with their words, to spark a change. The 15th iteration of Speech Olympiad would not have been possible if not for the unfailing dedication of the project chairs Inodee Fernando, Oshan Yalegama, and Umesha Thilakarathna as well as the committee heads who were brave enough to face any challenge, which included holding Speech Olympiad physically after 4 years.

We are deeply indebted to all our alumni members for their immeasurable support and guidance and I would like to extend my gratitude to our staff advisor Dr. Indika Sigera for being with us through thick and thin. My heartiest gratitude also goes to our panel of judges headed by our chief judge Distinguished Toastmaster Zamani Nazeem who always guided us to conduct all stages of the competition successfully. I also would like to thank all sponsors including our strategic partner (Unilever Sri Lanka) and our bronze partner (Commercial Bank) for their unwavering support, and all the members of the Gavel Club who helped immensely to make sure that Speech Olympiad XV was yet another glorious chapter.

Finally, I wish to congratulate all the brave souls who participated and I truly believe that Speech Olympiad XV definitely will spark a change in your life.



## Dinidu Edirisinghe

Immediate Past President  
Gavel Club of University of Moratuwa

If you have ever tried to make the world a better place or tried to wake up early in the morning to work out, you would be painstakingly aware of the effort needed to create meaningful change. But whether you're a hot-blooded idealist or simply want to pick up a commendable habit, sometimes it only takes a dash of courage and self-belief to get started. Sometimes, it only takes a spark to get the fire going.

For the last 17 years, the Gavel Club of University of Moratuwa, has always been entirely dedicated to helping our undergraduates find their own voice. It has always been a supportive and nurturing place where individuals could grow, while learning the skills and mastering the confidence they need, to express their ideas and share their stories. Our flagship event, Speech Olympiad, the premier public speaking platform in our university, is now in its 15th glorious iteration, having built a solid reputation for mentoring and producing phenomenal public speakers and storytellers who have gone on to achieve amazing heights in life. Indeed, Speech Olympiad is no normal contest. For those who embrace it, it has become a life-changing journey of self-discovery.

After going online for a couple of years, courtesy of a global pandemic, Speech Olympiad has made a grand entrance to its physical form once more. I would like to appreciate the phenomenal efforts of the Executive Committee headed by Suthira Wijayawardena in dauntlessly facing the obstacles that came their way.



I would be failing in my duty if I did not acknowledge the efforts of the project chairs of Speech Olympiad XV, Oshan Yalegama, Umesha Thilakarathna and Inodee Fernando, along with the committee heads and organizing committee members, in bringing our flagship event to life for yet another memorable chapter. I must also extend my heartfelt gratitude to our judges, Dr. Indika Sigera, our Staff Advisor, all academic and non-academic staff of University of Moratuwa, and our dear alumni members who extended their unwavering support in order to make this event a reality.

While I wish the very best to our five finalists to set the grand stage ablaze with their passionate voices, I congratulate all our contestants, for being brave enough to conquer their fears and share their inspirational, emotional and heartfelt stories with us.

May Speech Olympiad continue to be an unparalleled beacon of inspiration for all those who want to find their own voice and use it to spark a change within themselves and the world around them. Long live Speech Olympiad!



## Oshan Yalegama, Umesha Tilakarathna & Inodee Fernando

Co-chairs of Speech Olympiad XV

Speech Olympiad is the premier intra-university speech competition of the Gavel Club of University of Moratuwa and this year we are witnessing its fifteenth iteration. The competition has an incredible legacy of providing novice speakers and experienced speakers alike the push they require to bring their skills in public speaking to the next level. It is because we understand its importance that we commend the efforts of the organizing committee in successfully continuing this legacy.

This year's iteration of Speech Olympiad was especially momentous as it was the return of a physical venue. In recent years, due to the prevalent conditions of the country, Speech Olympiad which had historically been held at a physical venue was instead held on a virtual platform. As challenging as it would have been to adapt to the differences of the virtual platform, we were now presented with the similarly challenging endeavour of returning to the glorious physical stage of the past. We would like to mention our appreciation to our dear Alumni and past Gaveliers for relating their experience to us.

Although one would anticipate a weak enthusiasm for the daunting task of delivering a speech on a physical stage, the participation for the preliminary round of Speech Olympiad XV was remarkably overwhelming and included contestants from a diverse range of skills and experience. We arranged sessions both virtual and physical for all three stages, Preliminaries, Semifinals and Finals, conducted by speakers that included world renowned speakers, professional speakers, and proficient alumni.

The intention behind the sessions was to guide novice speakers and enhance the skills of experienced speakers. We're pleased to hear from the contestants that those sessions were beneficial, and we believe that the incredible speeches they delivered on stage were a testament of this fact. We have no doubt that the knowledge and experience they obtained through their participation in Speech Olympiad XV will propel each of them higher to a superior level of public speaking.

As the final chapter of Speech Olympiad XV unfolds, we invite our finalists to demonstrate the pinnacle of their prowess as public speakers, let their ideas be heard and to spark a change in themselves and the audience.





## Editorial

By Yathursiya Ganenthirarajan

Those who have the courage to speak in front of others are the ones who can communicate their ideas and inspire change. Every speaker, especially when speaking in front of an audience, speaks with a purpose. A well-crafted speech, with its unique elements, is what a speaker uses to connect with the audience and effectively communicate his or her message. Accordingly, Speech Olympiad was founded by the Gavel Club of University of Moratuwa in 2005 with the aim of improving the public speaking skills hidden within the undergraduates of the university. It is my distinct pleasure to share with you a memoir of the 15th glorious chapter of Speech Olympiad.

Unlike the usual speech contests, "Speech Olympiad" is a contest that carries a legacy of benefiting each and every contestant by providing them with a lifetime of expertise. Each participant was given a mentor and the required support to improve their speeches, ensuring that all participants in this journey experienced an improvement in their skills. When everything, including Speech Olympiad had switched to the virtual platform during the past two years, our Gaveliers were able to expand their horizons to the international arena. Nevertheless, everyone was more than ready to welcome Speech Olympiad back to the physical stage this year.

As we draw to a close of this successful chapter, I extend my gratitude to the project chairs Inodee Fernando, Oshan Yalegama and Umesha Thilakarathna, and all other organising committee members for their invaluable efforts. I also thank the sub-editors Savin Gunawardena and Buddisha Dissanayake, the writers, contributors and everyone else who made this souvenir possible.

After numerous mentoring sessions and sleepless nights of rehearsals, our Finalists will perform on stage with messages that will inspire the audience for a better tomorrow.

It is their chance to Spark A Change, and I wish them the best of luck!

# Vision

## Gavel Club of University of Moratuwa

---

Impeccable Rostrum where fear becomes passion...

Since the founding of the University of Moratuwa, it had aimed to and produced qualified and erudite pioneers to change the existing exoskeleton of its residential island and beyond. For those equipped with competent erudition but not the means to showcase it in an international context, the founding of Gavel Club of University of Moratuwa on the 2nd of May 2005 was a cornucopia of opportunity for sculpting a well-rounded, pioneering and erudite leader.

Branching from Toastmasters International but more economical and a tad informal, Gavel Mora aims to cultivate eloquence and leadership in the erudite pioneer undergraduate. Gavel Mora had produced numerous pioneers equipped with the communication and leadership skills on par with the best since its birth; continues to do so and will continue to do so.

Besides professionalism and sculpting polished leaders, Gavel Mora is the cozy coffee corner for many who are earnest to bounce unique ideas, review movies, books and academic stresses, and discuss current affairs, unconventional topics and anything under the sun. It is the family away from home for many undergraduates and alumni.

Since then, until today and from tomorrow onwards, Gavel Mora had stayed, stays, and will continue to flourish and stay true to its mission of sculpting a family of internationally recognized true leaders competent in public speaking and productive informal discourse.

# Speech Olympiad XV Finals

## Programme

- 4.30 pm - Fellowship & Arrival of Guests
- 5.00 pm - Introduction
- 5.07 pm - Lighting the Oil Lamp
- 5.15 pm - National Anthem
- 5.20 pm - Welcome Speech by President
- 5.25 pm - Souvenir Launch
- 5.30 pm - Prepared Speech Contest
- 6.30 pm - Break
- 6.50 pm - Impromptu Session
- 7.05 pm - Speech by Chief Guest
- 7.20 pm - Felicitations & Recognitions
- 7.23 pm - Speech by Unilever Representative
- 7.30 pm - Prize giving for Contestants
- 7.45 pm - Prize giving for Semifinalists
- 7.50 pm - Comments by Chief Judge
- 7.55 pm - Interview with Finalists
- 8.00 pm - Announcing the Winners
- 8.10 pm - Vote of Thanks
- 8.15 pm - Conclusion



# Club Photo



# Gavel Mora

## 2022



good time with  
good people  
makes the best  
memories...







Kingston  
University  
London

#1

**BRITISH UNIVERSITY  
FOR IT DEGREES  
OPERATING IN SRI LANKA**  
[THE GUARDIAN RANKINGS 2021]

**MSc IN IT**

- ✓ SOFTWARE ENGINEERING
- ✓ NETWORK & INFORMATION SECURITY
- ✓ IT & STRATEGIC INNOVATION

**EXCLUSIVE OFFER**

**JANUARY 2023 INTAKE**

COURSE FEE  
FULL PAYMENT OFFER

**Rs.225,000 + USD 100x10**

INSTALMENT PLAN : Rs. 17,000 X 15 MONTHS + USD 100 X 10 MONTHS

UNIVERSITY FEE

MASSIVE SAVING OF

**Rs.200,000** (APPROX)

\*CONDITIONS APPLY



MEMBER OF



The Association  
of Commonwealth  
Universities



FOR MORE INFO

**011 7 572 572**

GOLDOOR INSTITUTE

No.166/15,Sega Centre Soysapura, Moratuwa.

E-mail : goldoor55@yahoo.com

Tel : 077 39 414 93

# Cambridge English

COLOUR

Exam Preparation Center

Starters  
(4 - 7) years

Movers  
(8 - 11) years

Flyers  
(9 - 12) years

KET  
PET (13 - 19) years  
FCE



is a Cambridge  
English  
Qualification  
registration center  
for the  
British Council

Reg. No. WH7785





# The Winning Speech at Speech Olympiad XIV

By Niruthikka Sritharan

## Play the Game

Play the game loyal Scottites play the game

Ever onto victory and fame

Raise the green and brick on high

Proudly let our colors fly

Play the game loyal Scottites play the game

The cheer of the mighty girls of Scott house was loud and clear,  
Madam/Mr. Contest Chair, honourable judges and fellow players.

That day was the Primary School Sports meet. As grade 4 kids, our game was to run and jump over a set of miniature hurdles. I was leading. Just 2 more to go... I took the leap. But tripped and fell. Lying on the ground, I saw the others win. I was left all alone on the track. Nobody had even noticed me. 'I'm not getting up' I decided. But even in the blend of the noise from the cheers of all 6 houses, the shouts of captains, the claps of parents, my ears picked up the line: "Play the game. Loyal Scottites play the game."

My house Scott with its legendary motto "Play the game" is always regarded as a place for winners and even losers, but not quitters. What if I get kicked out for stopping midway? Let's just get up. And that day I did get up to limp to the finishing line. But that wasn't the only hurdle race I had to complete. There were many more in store for me.

In 2016, we had my grandparents' 60th wedding anniversary. My grandpa had 5 siblings and my grandma had 7. You can imagine the number of granduncles, grandaunts, uncles, aunts and cousins of mine who had gathered for this celebration.

Yet I was the only granddaughter of my grandparents. But this privilege doesn't come without a price. I was pushed to the front, against my will, to deliver a few words about them.

The eyes of the audience were all on me. But amidst those were eyes that held expectations. The eyes of the ones who had carried me, embraced me, cooked for me, told bedtime stories for me, danced with me, played with me. The stories I could tell about the groom and bride of the day were countless. YET...

(5 second silence)

This silence crushed me. All alone on the stage, I had once again become the 4th grader who had stood all alone on the track. But this time I ran away from the stage and not towards my goal.

The bride herself came up to me.

"Grandma, I am sorry. You must be disappointed."

But she wasn't. My grandma would never be disappointed in her only granddaughter, whatsoever. Still, I felt upset.

Staying speechless despite having so much to say was becoming a habit. A habit I was ashamed of.

I was down in the dumps. But my grandma decided to cheer me up.

"Darling don't look so down. You want to get over your fear of speech. Let's make it happen. We'll look at it like a game. The one you play on that computer. Even if you lose, you are always glued to the computer. So, if facing your fear becomes a game, will you do the same?"

Yeah, this could be a game. It's a tough game. But tell me, would Super Mario, Minecraft or Call of Duty be best-selling games if they were as simple? Nah... A game's worth playing only when it's tough. I am a gamer, and I will play this game.

And, therefore, I came up with a new game strategy.

Level 1 =>I listened to everything from ted talks to podcasts, from toastmasters to speech masters, from best speakers to great leaders.

Level 2 =>I registered for several speech competitions. Barely passed the preliminaries in any of those. But at least I learnt to embrace failure.

Level 3 =>From speaking just once a year for some competition, I joined the Gavel club to speak once a week.

And my dear gamers, with all the upgrades, boosters, shields, and score multipliers that the gavel club had to offer me, I gradually surged forward.

And here I am, back on a stage and back on track. You gotta cheer me on, because this year, for my grandparents' 65th wedding anniversary, I'm gonna rock the stage, hopefully.

From trying out wrestling to building a deep learning neural network to making a cup of tea for your mum to learning Bharatha natyam there are countless quests you can take on. These mini adventures make up the grandest mission assigned to you - your LIFE.

Place all that you've got on this ultimate game.

Make new strategies. Play differently. But NEVER NEVER GIVE UP.  
Simply PLAY THE GAME.





# The First Runner-up Speech at Speech Olympiad XIV

By Shehan Paul

## Know Your Limits

“Hey, you, yeah, I’m talking to you, who do you think you are? Prince of England? Know your limits. Putha putha putha, there are some things in life which we can do and which we can’t do. You should be very careful and know your limits, okay? Have you heard the news? That Sagarika’s son Paul has started learning in English medium! I mean honestly, these people should learn how to know their limits right?”

Have you ever been a subject of such a conversation? Have you ever been in a situation where people around you say what you can do or what you can’t? Have you ever been told “Know Your Limits”? Contest chair, Ladies & Gentleman, let me tell you a story about a boy who was told like that every time when he wanted to do something different.

Alright, how do you usually tell a story? Something like a fairy tale? Let me try this one.

“Once upon a time, there lived a little boy, who was neither a prince nor a pauper, he lived in a land where domestic violence and alcoholism were a big part of day-to-day life. A land where garment factories and Middle East were the salvation. However, the Boy and the family were living a life of happily ever after.... until One day, when a tragic news came home...” I’m sorry about that, I got carried away a bit. Why do I have to make it dramatic when it is more realistic? So, let me keep the Fairy tale tone aside for a bit.

I still remember, it was just like yesterday, when I was three years old, my father passed away. He was diagnosed with cirrhosis, a disease which is caused due to excessive alcoholism. This was quite a shocker for my mom especially, because that day she had her own dreams of becoming

a Beautician one day. But all of a sudden, she had to give up everything and be the sole Breadwinner of the family, but she didn't have anything. She didn't have money, or land, she didn't have a job..... But there was one thing though - there was a cattle, yeah a cow. So, she gave up everything and became Dairy Farmer.

She started wearing my father's clothes, boots and his big old cow bullocking hat. She became tougher and rougher like a man. For the past 20 years, she struggled with life so that I could have a better life. So if anyone of you asks me who the Iron Lady is, I would never say that it is Margaret Thatcher, No No for me, it's my mom. But frankly, people around us had something different to call her, they call her, "Shepherd Lady" and I was automatically labelled as Shepherd Lady's boy or sometimes Village Drunkard's boy.

When you are labelled like that people around you assume that the things that you can do or the opportunities that you have, are limited. They believe that you will end up as your father being an alcoholic or you will take up your mother's job. But my mom wanted me to dream big.

This is something sentimental, this is the first book my mom used to teach me English. I remember back in those days, she would come to me and teach me how to pronounce big words like "**Aeroplane**". I was so fascinated by the language. So, one day I went to my mom and said, "Mom, I wanna study in English medium" she said, "Wow nice, go for it!". But this idea of studying in English medium was considered to be kinda like a Taboo topic. Because in my village people believe that if you want to study in English medium, you have to be either the son of the politician or the son of village wealthiest man. (giggles) I was neither, I was just the village drunkard's boy, just the shepherd lady's son. So, people were so concerned about my education.

"Sagarika,' I don't think this is a good idea, come on, this is not like Sinhala, this is an entirely different language, at least you should have a

family background or family exposure, which Paul doesn't so why take all the troubles of doing something fancy like this."

But I didn't want to listen to them. And I didn't. I sat for my O Levels in bilingual classes, got 9 A's. Then came the big exam, A Levels - sat for A Levels via Maths stream, got 3 A's and was selected to the Engineering faculty of the University of Moratuwa. You might know, typically a Sri Lankan student will have to wait at least a year until they get their university entrance. An entire year without doing anything; what a waste of time. But I didn't want to be like that, had something in mind. From my early childhood days, I was so passionate about foreign languages and literature. I was a big fan of you know who.... William Shakespeare. I remember, even without understanding a single word or a single line, I used to love reciting the lines of Hamlet. "To BE or not to BE? That is the question." So I had this crazy idea of sitting for A Levels once again via Arts stream, doing languages and literature. You might be thinking, what?? This guy did A Levels in Maths and now he wants to do in Arts again, I mean what?

Believe me, even my friends had the same problem. "Machan are you crazy? You have been selected to the Engineering faculty of University of Moratuwa. For god's sake this is the 21st century, literature? Come on, do something like CIMA!". Did I listen to it? No. I pursued my passion. Today I'm happy to say that I'm an Engineering undergraduate who is able to speak four languages other than my mother tongue. But I'm still that Village Drunkard's boy, I'm still that Shepherd Lady's son. But, there was more to it, I was brave or foolish enough to break those limits set by other people or by myself sometimes.

So in life you may come across similar situations where people around you or that voice inside of your head says, "these are your limits, know your limits". When you are trying to fly, they might say, "You don't have wings ", when you are trying to dive, they might say, "You don't have gills". But remember, each time whenever you hear those words "know your limits", open heartedly, whole heartedly, with a big smile in your face..... tell them  
"I am Limitless."

# The Semi Finalists



**Chemini Mallikarachchi**



**Damsith Adikari**



**Dulini Himeka**



**Dulmi Fonseka**



**Kethmi Ruwanima**



**Linoja Mendis**



**Amirthavarshani Ananthan**



**Saeedha Nazar**



**Selani Indrapala**



**Thulasithan Gnenthiram**



**Udesh Dangalla**



**Malintha Fernando**

# The Finalists

## Amirthavarshani Ananthan



**Department of Textile & Apparel  
Engineering-Level 2**

Gavel Mora is where I felt warmth for the first time in my university life. Gavel Mora is my family. Don't we all get excited about our family's big event? Well, that's precisely what Speech Olympiad is to me. From being a preliminary round contestant in Speech Olympiad XIV, to being a finalist here, the gavel family has helped me more than I could ever imagine. During this one year, I learned a lot from my mentors. The love I now have for public speaking is because of all my mentors.

Do I need to thank my family? No; but for all those sleepless nights of speech crafting, encouraging me more on impromptu speaking, all those fun events this whole year-long, especially the Awurudu and Valentines meeting both of which have a special place in my heart and last but not least for conducting the most prominent event which is a platform to learn - Speech Olympiad XV, I have much love to you, Gavel Mora.

## Dulmi Fonseka



**Department of Architecture  
-Level 4**

Being a Speech Olympiad finalist is the single most awaited moment in my entire university life. Ever since I joined Gavel Mora, competing in the finals of Speech Olympiad has been my dream. But I must say it was not an easy path to achieving that dream. I've had a lot of failures, a lot of setbacks and a lot of challenges to overcome. And through all these hardships, whenever I was about to give up, what kept me going was the never-ending support, the unwavering faith and the limitless love of my Gavel family. Without them, I wouldn't be here.

From being a reserved finalist at SOXIII to being a finalist at SOXV, I have come a long way in my public speaking journey, and I owe it all to my Gavel family. So I would like to dedicate my performance at the Grand Finale of Speech Olympiad XV to my loving Gavel Mora family. Thank you so much guys for always being there for me. This one's for you.

## Malintha Fernando



**Department of  
Building Economics  
-Level 2**

Speech Olympiad is an intra-university contest, but it gives a vibe of an international speech contest. That is why it has been one of my dreams to perform on that grand stage. What makes this competition a success every year is the unbreakable bond, affection, dedication and solidarity of the Gavel Mora family. It is always lovely to witness that.

At first, I thought that I would not take part in this year's edition, but later on, I realized that it would be a waste to miss this massive opportunity as it is one of a kind experience. I am full of euphoria that I competed and got selected to perform on the grand stage at the Grand Finale.

It is more than a competition as it brings forth dozens of opportunities. Simply, it is an ultimate package with mentoring sessions, webinars and many more. It is all made possible because of the unwavering support and dedication of the Gaveliers of Gavel Mora. Everyone has got together in making this competition a massive success, and it feels so good to be a part of it.

Gavel Mora is the place that made me fall in love with public speaking, and I am forever grateful for that. My heartfelt gratitude goes to my mentors, Gaveliers, friends and family for always being with me and encouraging me.

Visca el Gavel!

## Selani Indrapala



**Department of Electronic &  
Telecommunication  
Engineering-Level 2**

After years of virtual speech contests, Speech Olympiad XV finally gave us the experience of a physical Speech Contest. From the preliminaries, right until the Grand Finale, the experience has been surreal.

Not only was I able to polish my public speaking skills, but it also made way for new friendships to be created, memories to be made and to feel as if I were a part of a beautiful family.

A huge thank you goes out to Gavel Mora for giving us the opportunity to be part of such a wonderful event.

## Thulasithan Gnanenthiram



**Department of  
Computer Science  
& Engineering-Level 2**

Four days before the preliminary round of Speech Olympiad XV, I was unsure what to talk about. I felt that I had to write a speech that should definitely win, but nothing that I wrote seemed good enough. The speech that I loved wouldn't secure a win, I thought. While I was battling with myself, my mentors came to the rescue and saved me from falling into complete despair.

“Speech Olympiad is not about winning, it's about telling the world what you REALLY want to share”, my mentors told me. The decision was clear. I forgot about competing. I spoke about what I truly believed in.

This is just one example that shows how Gavel Mora has helped me mould myself into a better person. Me making it to the Finals of Speech Olympiad XV is not just about the hard work that I put in alone. It's the little things; a smile, a kind word, a small gesture of appreciation from every single member of this huge family that coalesces into a huge lake of hope that makes me confident enough to talk in front of people that I truly care about. I dedicate this stage to all of them.





# Face-to-Face

An Interview with Dulmi Fonseka  
Vice President Education (2021/22)

## 1. How did your Gavel journey begin?

Well, my Gavel journey began all the way back in 2019 when I came to the first ever Gavel meeting held that year. It was a room packed with people and I still remember how Senali akki with a big smile on her face gave me a warm welcome, how Kithmin aiya told us that he'll give us gifts from Japan if we did a table topic and how Kasun aiya was the only one who laughed at my round robin even though it was not that funny. They made me feel as if I belonged there which kept me coming back to gavel again and again.

## 2. How has Gavel helped you reach where you are today?

I wouldn't be here if it was not for Gavel Mora. If not for the continuous support of my Gavel family who were always there for me through thick and thin, surviving university would have been impossible. Be it competitions, mentoring, organizing meetings, working on projects, giving life advice or simply listening to my complaints, they were always there just a phone call away. They would always make sure that I was okay.

## 3. What does public speaking mean to you?

Public speaking is one of my passions. Speaking on stage, sharing your stories, hearing the applause of the audience, the rush of emotions, and the thrill, it all makes public speaking an experience worth reliving again and again. That's why I do public speaking. That's why I love public speaking.

#### **4. Are there any speakers you admire? Who are they and why do you admire them?**

The speaker I admire the most is Dananjaya Hettiarachchi. I still remember the first time I listened to his winning speech 'I See Something'. I almost didn't believe he's from Sri Lanka and the moment he pulled out a full rose in the end I remember thinking to myself, "Wow, he is a magician". And ever since then I too wanted to create magic on stage with my stories.

#### **5. Where do you find inspiration for your speeches?**

My too old and boring yet interesting life with ups and downs. I always try to speak about my life experiences and what I learned from them.

#### **6. What matters more - content or delivery?**

I'd say both. It's like the two sides of a coin, you just can't do without one another. You need good content with personal stories that would keep the audience hooked to what you're saying. That coupled with good delivery will make it hard for the audience to take their eyes off of you which will make listening to your speech an experience in itself.

#### **7. How much do you prepare before a speech?**

I prepare a lot. I work with my mentors, revise my speech several times, get my content finalized and start practicing my delivery. I practice it in front of the mirror, in front of my family, my friends, and my mentors and get their feedback on my speech. Even after doing all that I still get butterflies in my stomach before every speech I do.

## **8. What additional things did you gain as a Gavelier along with your incredible public speaking skills?**

I would say leadership skills, how to work as a team, how to negotiate with people, how to make people believe and do what you say, how to hype up others, how to provide comfort when someone's down, being patient while mentoring kids, how to cheer at the top of your lungs, how to pose for pictures after winning competitions, how to stay calm and positive in the middle of chaos, how to overthink everything you do, how to make action plans and to do lists and how to stay awake well past midnight. I'd say basically all the essential life skills to survive in this competitive world.

## **9. As a public speaker you have participated in many competitions. Can you share some tips for preparing for a public speaking competition?**

Start preparing well ahead of time. For if you stay until the last moment it's going to be really stressful. So first thing is to find a story or a message that you are passionate about sharing. You need to believe in what you're saying. Then once you've drafted the script revise it with the help of your mentors, get as many feedback as possible. But don't forget to set a deadline for feedback because you can't keep altering your speech forever. I usually stop taking feedback at least two days before the competition day. Practicing is key. Practice, practice and practice. On the day before the competition eat well and sleep early. On the day of the contest dress well as it can give you confidence and arrive at the venue early so you can check out the stage and your mics. Always believe in yourself and have confidence in your ability, because a little confidence can go a long way. Then as you stand on the stage to

deliver your speech always take a deep breath and smile, let it all sink in before you start speaking. And you'll see that miracles will happen.

### **10. Finally, what advice do you have for new aspiring speakers?**

Don't give up. Because the journey of being a public speaker is definitely not a bed of roses. You're going to fail many times. You're going to be disappointed over and over again. There will be many setbacks and challenges for you to overcome. Even the simplest task of coming up with a story can feel hard sometimes. At those times remember don't ever give up. Keep trying, keep pushing your limits, challenge your comfort zones and just keep doing what you're doing. And one day you'll realize all the pain was worth it.

# Speech Olympiad XIV, In Retrospect

summary of the previous Speech Olympiad

*"Am I audible and visible enough?"*

Right after a year, the Speech Olympiad Shield was ready to be engraved with a new champion's name. With the experience of an entirely virtual Speech Olympiad the previous year - 2020, the organising committee was fully prepared to put up a fight against the challenges caused by the pandemic. Unlike any other year, seventy-eight undergraduates at University Moratuwa, unmasked themselves and appeared in front of the web camera (which was not a "new normal" at that time, with speech contests being held virtually) in order to share their stories, and leave a legacy. Thus, the first challenge, the preliminary round, was tackled successfully. Then came the semi-final round. The twelve semifinalists were extensively trained and the stage, the zoom meeting rather, was set for the semifinal. After a very intense battle, five talented contestants managed to get into the Grand Final.

The Grand Final, the utmost dare of the journey, was held in a hybrid manner. The five finalists were able to pause the breath of not only the audience but also the judges, for a while, with their unsurpassable speeches. After witnessing an extraordinary evening, the judgement of the audience, the Most Popular Speaker award, was won by Niruthikka Sritharan. The Best Prepared Speaker award and the Best Impromptu Speaker award were taken by Shehan Paul and Niruthikka Sritharan respectively.



The most impending moment, announcing winners of the event, was handled by the Speech Olympiad XIII champion, Jayoda Dissanayake. While Selani Indrapala picked up the Second Runner-Up mini shield, Shehan Paul picked the First Runner-Up mini shield. Finally, Niruthikka Sritharan conquered victory and was able to leave her legacy on the shield for decades.

The success of Speech Olympiad XIV would not be a reality if not for our strategic partner, Unilever Sri Lanka, who supported us through each step. Moreover, we are grateful to the Gavel Mora family for their assistance and support to make this event a success.



# Speech Olympiad, Through The Ages



*Memories Along The Years*







"High Quality Furniture for your Life"



වඩුවා  
මොරටුව  
0774697665



වඩුවා  
මොරටුව  
0774697665



වඩුවා  
මොරටුව  
0774697665

OLYMPIC DESIGN

C U S T O M T A I L O R S

SINCE 1999

Olympic Design

No: 180/15, Soysapura, Moratuwa.

Tel: 011 260 79 48 / 072 33 84 587



OLYMPIC DESIGN



OLYMPIC DESIGN

For


- Blazers
- Uniform



**FIND YOUR  
DREAM HOME**  
**SANJEWA CONSTRUCTION**

ISLANDWIDE SERVICE  
Call us for more details

Hotline : **0117446411**

 **077776018**

 **077776042**

**0770026117**

# DREAM BIG 2022



Verity Price is not just a public speaker but an accomplished singer and actress as well. She is the first African and just the sixth woman to be crowned as the world champion of public speaking. Doing all of this while being an avid hiker and

fulfilling her countless responsibilities as a mother makes Verity's accomplishments all the more impressive.

The goal of Verity's session was to teach us the art of crafting a winning speech. She began by telling us the story of how she developed the right mindset for a world champion. Her first time participating in the world championship of public speaking was in 2012. She did not take the competition too seriously.

Verity wrote a story the day before the competition and entered with a carefree attitude. Despite her best efforts, even in subsequent years, she could never do better than placing 3rd in her Division. But in 2021, Verity Price trained 4 hours a day, every day, for 3 months.

She also spoke about crafting a winning speech. Verity summed up the entire speechwriting process in 4 steps represented by the letters G, I, F, and T. They are,

1. Get clear on your message
2. Intentionally craft your story
3. Fill in the gaps for your audience
4. Tie it all together

The final part of the programme was a Q&A session where the participants could clarify their concerns about public speaking. Participants as young as 14 years old directed questions on a broad array of topics from incorporating humour into a speech to dealing with a stutter. Verity patiently handled all of these questions, providing clear and insightful answers for the participants.

And thus, Dream Big 2022 came to a close. The third instalment in the Dream Big saga was concluded successfully, leaving all participants in eager anticipation for next year's edition with another world champion.



# Gavelier Achievements

Speech Olympiad has always been a steppingstone for our gaveliers to make many more achievements in the year that followed. Listed below are some of the remarkable achievements by our gaveliers who represented Gavel Mora in the public speaking arena.

- National Youth Award for Best English Speaker and Best English Announcer of the Year 2020 presented by National Youth Services Council - Shehan Paul
- 1st Runner Up of Best speaker 2021, All Island Inter University Speech Contest organized by the University of Kelaniya Gavel Club - Shehan Paul
- 2nd Runner Up of Best speaker 2021, All Island Inter University Speech Contest organized by the University of Kelaniya Gavel Club - Selani Indrapala
- Winner, 3-Min Challenge, an adaptation of the 3 Minute Thesis Competition, organized by the IEEE ProComm Student Branch Chapter of University of Moratuwa - Shehan Paul
- 1st Runner Up of Intra-Uni, 3-Min Challenge, an adaptation of the 3 Minute Thesis Competition, organized by the IEEE ProComm Student Branch Chapter of University of Moratuwa. - Niruthikka Sritharan
- Champion of the Speech Weaver 2021, Inter University Public Speaking Contest organized by the Gavel Club of University of Sri Jayewardenepura - Shehan Paul
- 1st Runner Up and at the Ignite 2022, the all-island inter-university speech contest sponsored by District 82 Toastmasters - Amirthavarshani Ananthan

- 2nd Runner Up and at the Ignite 2022, the all-island inter-university speech contest sponsored by District 82 Toastmasters - Malintha Fernando
- 2nd Runner-up at the International Speech Contest organized by Toastmasters International District 80 | Singapore - Shehan Paul
- Champion of the NextGen Orator Competition 2022 organized by the IEEE WIE Student Branch Affinity Group of University of Moratuwa - Saeedha Nazar
- Champion at the T.M.A.Y Contest organised by the Gavel Club of University of Colombo. - Thulasithan Gnanenthiram
- 2nd Runner Up of Prepared Speech at Viva Voce, Public Speaking Contest organized by CIPM Gavel Club and Interact Club of St.Peters' College, Colombo - Thulasithan Gnanenthiram
- 2nd Runner Up of Commentary at Viva Voce, Public Speaking Contest organized by CIPM Gavel Club and Interact Club of St.Peter's College, Colombo - Navindu de Silva
- 1st Runner Up of Impromptu Speech All Island Best Gavel Speaker (AIBGS), organized by All Island Gavel Community, Sri Lanka 2022 - Selani Indrapala
- 2nd Runner Up of Evaluations Speech All Island Best Gavel Speaker (AIBGS), organized by All Island Gavel Community, Sri Lanka 2022 - Shehan Paul

# Contestants of Speech Olympiad XV

## Participants

Abirame Ganeshamoorthy  
Ahmas Shathir  
Amirthavarshani Ananthan  
Ashan Bbulewela  
Chamath Ranasinghe  
Chathura Gunasekara  
Chehal Jayasuriya  
Chemini Mallikarachchi  
Damika Anupama  
Damsith Adikari  
Dilmi Nishara  
Dinujaya Wijewickrama  
Disini Thevinka  
Dulini Himeka  
Dulmi Fonseka  
Gavin Senaratne  
Hansika Dahanayake  
Hasali Perera  
Hassie Jayasekara  
Hesandu Hemal  
Hisny Ahamed  
Imanthi Rajanayake  
Isumi De Silva  
Kavindya Wijayarathna  
Kethmi Ruwanima  
Lasitha Randula Amarasinghe  
Linoja Mendis  
Lochana Gunasekara  
Malintha Fernando  
Mineth Weerasinghe

Muditha Dilshan  
Namina Wijetunga  
Navindu De Silva  
Nipuna Dulara  
Nirodha Sandaruwan  
Niyumi Nethmanthi  
Odil Janandith  
Pavan Pitiwaduge  
Poorni Ranaweera  
Prabhash Dissanayake  
Prathibha Rajapaksha  
Rahul Jeyanthan  
Saeedha Nazar  
Sahan Abeyrathna  
Sandali Liyanage  
Sanjana Kapukotuwa  
Selani Indrapala  
Shamini Kumarasingha  
Shimzara Zakariya  
SriIndrakunar Nirushan  
Tharindie Pilapitiya  
Tharindu Hemantha  
Theresa Weerasinghe  
Thulani Amanda  
Thulasithan Gnanenthiram  
Udesh Dangalla  
Udula Abeysinghe  
Vaishnevan  
Vinasirajan Viruthshaan  
Yathursiya Ganenthirarajan

## Semi Finalists

Damsith Adikari  
Dulini Himeka  
Kethmi Ruwanima  
Linoja Mendis  
Saeedha Nazar  
Udesh Dangalla

Amirthavarshani Ananthan  
Dulmi Fonseka  
Malintha Fernando  
Selani Indrapala  
Thulasithan Gnanenthiram  
Chemini Mallikarachchi

### **Reserved**

Theresa Weerasinghe  
Namina Wijetunga  
Ameera Thiwanka

## Finalists

Amirthavarshani Ananthan  
Dulmi Fonseka  
Malintha Fernando  
Selani Indrapala  
Thulasithan Gnanenthiram

### **Reserved**

Chemini Mallikarachchi



# Committee Members of Speech Olympiad XV

## Logistics

### Pillar Heads:

Dasis  
Anuki  
Thulasithan  
Nithuran

### Members:

Imanthi  
Namina  
Prabhash  
Samitha  
Sanjana  
Thulani Amanda  
Sarani  
Wimukthi  
Hithesh  
Dinuka  
Ashen  
Udula  
Javin  
Udesh  
Dinuka  
Prathibha

## Marketing

### Pillar Heads:

Shenali  
Kethmi

### Members:

Linoja  
Kavindya  
Nirodha  
Viraj  
Inodee  
Dasis  
Viruthshan  
Venuri  
Nirushan  
Pavan  
Thulani Magedara  
Saritha  
Mineth  
Gayesha

### Web Developers -

Sandil  
Pavan

## Editorial

### Pillar Heads:

Savin  
Buddhisha  
Yathursiya

### Members:

Chehal  
Gavin  
Udesh  
Saritha  
Hansika  
Odil  
Chemini  
Udula  
Theresa  
Saadha  
Tharindie  
Isumi  
Geethma  
Mineth  
Sandali

## Education

### Pillar Heads:

Selani  
Amirthavarshani

### Members:

Sadhana  
Saeedha  
Hansika  
Ashen  
Prathibha  
Damsith

## Finance

### Pillar Heads:

Malintha  
Viruthshaan

### Members:

Shanaka  
Julian  
Pipuni  
Isumi  
Udula  
Javin  
Sandali  
Theresa  
Gavin  
Tharindie

Are you a tutor looking to

# Grow

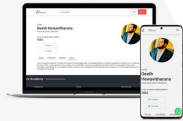
Your Online Classes?



Thousands of students are waiting for you

## Connect with us. Get your Tutor Profile Now

Get a personal storefront for all your online classes. List all your classes in one place where students can join in one click



## Reach out to more students than ever before.

We are a platform with 3000+ students. And they are looking for Tutors like you. Signup now and let them find you



## Manage everything in few clicks.



Experience the premium of tutoring. All your ZOOM meetings, recordings and pdfs - everything within the comfort of your finger tips

## Payments made easier than ever

Collect class fee's from students in the most convenient ways. With 100% transparency in your dashboard. Accept VISA, MasterCard and many more



## Top level security for your hardwork



Worry no more about safeguarding your hard work. We provide top notch security for all our users. Your digital presence is fully safe with us

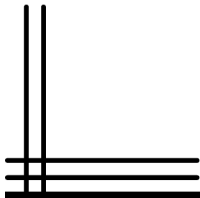
 077 217 8144

[aceacademy.lk/joinus](https://aceacademy.lk/joinus)



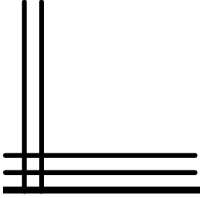


# Best Wishes from Hirushi Abeysinghe





# Best Wishes from **Kravings**



# Executive Board of Gavel Club of University of Moratuwa (2022/23)

President	Suthira Wijayawardena
Vice President - Education	Zafra Rifky
Vice President - Membership	Nirodha Sandaruwan
Vice President - Public Relations	Shehan Paul
Secretary	Shimzara Zakariya
Treasurer	Kavishka Cooray
Sergeant at Arms	Yohan Abeysinghe
Event Coordinator	Muditha Adhikari
Promotions and Online Media Coordinator	Kavindya Wijayarathna
Immediate Past President	Dinidu Edirisinghe
Assistant Vice President - Education	Niruthikka Sritharan
Assistant Vice President - Membership	Thinithi Palyangoda
Assistant Vice President - Public Relations	Charithma Hettiarachchi
Assistant Secretary	Hasali Perera
Assistant Treasurer	Chathuni Sooriyaarachchi
Assistant Sergeant at Arms	Lathika Wathsara
Assistant Event Coordinator	Harith Meehitiya
Assistant Event Coordinator	Thisara Sanjana
Assistant Promotions and Online Media Coordinator	Ishini Saparamadu
Assistant Promotions and Online Media Coordinator	Viraj Wijesooriya



# Acknowledgments

- Chief Judge of SOXV, Zamani Nazeem
- All the Toastmasters who judged at the Preliminaries, Semi-Finals and the Finals
- Strategic Partner, Unilever Sri Lanka
- Past District Director, Toastmasters International District 82 - DTM Sriyanthi Salgado
- International trainer and speaker, DTM Thomas Chen
- Finalist, 2021 World Champion of public speaking -DTM Kin NG
- Notable Alumni
  - Kaushalya Batawala
  - Kasun Ranasighe
  - Samadhi Poornima
  - Malindi Jayatunga
  - Yasoda Gamage
  - Rajitha Katugaha
  - Praveen Kumarasighe
  - Mohamed Yasir
  - Rochelle Silva
- All mentors who supported and guided us.
- All contestants who took part in the competition
- All our past Gaveliers
- All current members of the Gavel Club
- Everyone else who helped



The Banker  
**TOP 1000**  
WORLD BANKS 2022

**12** CONSECUTIVE  
YEARS

**Commercial Bank becomes  
the only Sri Lankan Bank  
to be ranked among the Top 1000 Banks  
in the world for 12 consecutive years**

Being a part of this prestigious list is a testament to our never-ending commitment to banking excellence.

Our unwavering dedication to settle only for the best has gotten us to and will continue to get us to these excellent heights.

We thank all our stakeholders for being a part of the journey of success and pledge to continue to strive towards greatness in the years to come.

The Most Awarded Bank in Sri Lanka

 **COMMERCIAL BANK**



# THE ORATOR

SPARK A CHANGE



Gavel Club  
University of Moratuwa

<sup>BY</sup> **SPEECH**  
Olympiad

*Strategic  
Partner*



Unilever