



SANSKRITAM AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE (SAFL)

NEWSLETTER

APRIL 14, 2017

अध्यक्षस्य सन्देशः

Message from Dr. Natesa Janakiraman, President, Samskrita Bharati USA

Dear Parents:

We at Samskrita Bharati wish you a Happy and Prosperous Hemalambi New Year! On this occasion, I am happy to report that the SAFL program staff has decided to publish this biannual (April and October) newsletter to keep you abreast of the happenings at SAFL program and Samskrita Bharati. This is yet another effort to strengthen communication and engagement with the students and parents.

Starting with 17 students in 2009, we had around 190 registrations in 2016-17 and are expecting over 200 for the upcoming academic year, for which registrations started a month ago. There are two events in the current academic year that you will be very pleased hear. First, the SAFL program was accredited as a supplementary education program by **Accrediting Commission for Schools - Western Association of Schools and Colleges (ACS - WASC)** in July 2016, truly a cause for celebration. Secondly, **Saurabham**, the text book for third year students will be going to the printers this summer. This book completes the curriculum with the earlier two text books **Mukulam**, and **Kusumam**. These are three outstanding

creations of the Samskrita Bharati teachers to help students develop their conversational skill and set the stage for their higher studies.

Among the efforts continuing to strengthen the curriculum:

- We are working hard to increase our capacity each year by bringing in trained teachers.
- We are also keeping the students engaged beyond their graduation from SAFL by involving them in teaching activities in the local kendras, youth camps and SAFL classes.
- Also, Samskrita Bharati has started the **Campus Samskritam Network (CSN)** group mainly to cater to the needs of college going and graduated youth and
- to keep the SAFL graduates engaged with Samskritam work.

As you would agree, education is complete when classroom instructions are complimented by support and positive reinforcement at home. We have seen that SAFL students have in turn influenced their

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siblings and parents to help bring Samskritam to our homes. SAFL program thanks you for your support in the propagation of our ancient language, the bedrock of our civilization.

Jayatu Samskritam!

*Natesa Janakiraman,
April 14, 2017*



Prajnaa Shibiram 2016

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

March 10, 2017 - Start of SAFL
2017-18 registrations

March 28, 2017 - Start of
Prajnaa/Shraddhaa/Medhaa summer
youth camp registration

April 28, 2017 - Registration deadline
for requesting waivers or direct entry
exam

May 13/14, 2017 - SAMS200 direct
entry exam

May 31, 2017 - Early registration
discount ends for SAFL.

June 1, 2017 - Regular registration fee
applies.

June 1, 2017 - Results of SAMS200
direct entry exam

June 9, 2017 - Registration deadline
for prajnaa camp

June 17-23, 2017 - Prajnaa camp (near
Bay Area, CA)

June 28, 2017 - Registration deadline
for Medhaa camp



July 1, 2017 - Registration deadline for
Shraddhaa camp

July 9-15, 2017 - Shraddhaa camp
(Ewing, NJ)

July 16 - July 30, 2017 - Medhaa camp
(Bengaluru, India)

July 24, 2017 - SAFL 2017-18
registration deadline

Aug 26/27/29, 2017– Mandatory online
orientation for all 100 level classes
during respective class times

Sep 9, 2017 - SAFL 2017-18 online
classes begin

REGISTRATION FOR 2017-18

**Registration for
SAFL2017-18
academic year is
now OPEN!!!**

**[CLICK HERE TO
REGISTER!](#)**

सुभाषितम्

येन त्वेतानि सर्वाणि सङ्गृहीतानि भारत ।

यद्वलानां बलं श्रेष्ठं तत्प्रज्ञा बलमुच्यते ॥

-विदुरनीतिशतकम् ॥ ३७.५१ ॥

हे भारत ! प्रज्ञा एव सर्वापेक्षया उत्तमं बलं भवति । यतः प्रज्ञायां सर्वाणि अपि बलानि अन्तर्भूतानि सन्ति । अतः एव सर्वेषु बलेषु श्रेष्ठं बलं प्रज्ञा इति उच्यते ।

O Bhārata! Intellectual strength is the best kind of strength amongst all kinds of strengths, since it includes all of them in itself.

The value of Medha Camp Experience from Students' Perspective

Medhaa 2016: Twenty one students from the United States, all in one building in Bengaluru, India for two weeks during July 2016. At the beginning, the only thing that we had in common was our knowledge of Samskritam and our three year Journey through SAFL. By the end of the two weeks, all of us created a bond over the language that opened our eyes to Indian tradition.

When I first entered the Aksharam building, I was unsure of what the experience would hold. Our days began at 6:00 am when we woke up to race to the showers to get hot water and would end at 10:00 pm after a long day filled with classes, activities, field trips, and talent showcases. Within a few days, what used to be "Good morning," turned into "suprabhAtam (सुप्रभातम्). We were chided for our use of English, and that paid off as all twenty one students began to soon adopt Samskritam in our daily conversations. From reading Sundara Kanda in Prathima Bhagini's class to learning how to teach others Samskritam, these classes provided us more exposure to Samskritam. During the multiple breaks, we would play and converse in Samskritam with a small boy named Vasishtha who resided in the Aksharam building. Every night, we would have "Manoranjanakaryakrama" – in other words, a talent show – where groups of 4-5 would spend hours coming up with a skit/song/dance of parodies of common children's tales. To gain more exposure to Samskritam, we were taken to houses in which the mother tongue was Samskritam and other Gurukulams. We listened to speakers about various topics (such as astronomy) all in Samskritam, which allowed us to realize that the language is not only about grammar and other conventions, but also can explain scientific theories. As mentioned earlier, the students came from different lifestyles and we barely knew one another. However, by the end of the 2 weeks, we came together in an unimaginable way and formed a bond over the roots of our culture. However, my experience did not end after Medhaa. Govinda Mahodaya still conducts weekly classes called Kriya, which I am part of. During this 45 minute session, we analyzed Subhashitams (good sayings) and put our knowledge of Samskritam to relevant use.

Many of us believed that our learning of Samskritam would resemble that of another foreign language at school. However, Samskrita Bharati's residential Camps (Prajnaa, Medhaa, Shraddha) allowed and encouraged me to delve into the language and truly witness the culture that surrounds the language.

Akshaya Venkatesh
SAFL Class of 2016
Grade 11
Chaminade College Preparatory High School
West Hills, CA

"जीवने अत्यधिकं महत्वपूर्णम् अनुभवम् अहं मेधाशिबिरे प्राप्तवती । मेधाशिबिरम् अक्षरे (संस्कृतभारत्याः मुख्यः कार्यालयः बङ्गलूरुनगरे) एकं पक्षम् आसीत् । तत्रैव अहं संस्कृतभाषायाः हिन्दुसंस्कृतेः च गाढं सम्बन्धम् अन्वभवम् । प्रतिदिनं प्रातःकाले बङ्गलूरुनगरस्य कोलाहलं श्रुत्वा जागृता भवामि स्म । शिबिरस्थले वसन्तः सर्वे लघुबालबालिकाः 'हनुमान् चालीसा' श्लोकान् गीत्वा एव विद्यालयं गच्छन्ति स्म । तस्मिन् वातावरणे संस्कृताध्ययनं कृत्वा बहु धन्या अभवम् । अक्षरे संस्कृतभाषा एव प्रधानभाषा । तस्मात् अस्माकं सम्भाषणसामर्थ्यम् अधिकम् अभवत् । शिबिरसमये न तु केवलं पठनं, किन्तु वयं मन्दिराणि आश्रमान् उद्यानानि आपणान् चापि गतवन्तः । सर्वत्र संस्कृतेन एव सम्भाषणं कृतवन्तः । यदि कोऽपि संस्कृतं न अवगच्छति तर्हि अहं हिन्दिभाषया उक्तवती । तस्मात् मम भाषाद्वयस्य अभ्यासः सम्यक् अभवत् । शिबिरे मुख्यशिक्षकः गोविन्दमहोदयः आसीत् । सः अस्माकम् अध्यापकः अपि च पालकः । अहं तस्य परिहासं करोमि स्म यत् सः साक्षात् अस्माकं मातुः दायित्वम् एव स्वीकृतवान् इति । प्रातः आरभ्य रात्रिपर्यन्तं पाठयित्वा पालयित्वा च 'शुभरात्रिः' इति उक्त्वा अस्मान् प्रकोष्ठं प्रति प्रेषयति स्म । सः अस्माकं अध्यापकः माता पिता नायकः च अभवत् ।"

- प्रियाकुमारः

Language. Culture. Friends. My time at Medha can easily be expressed in those words. However, each word means so much more than what meets the eye. I had been studying Sanskrit for three years prior to attending Medha. However, attending Medha allowed me to bind all three components, language, culture and friends, together, enabling me to understand the importance of Samskritam and Samskrita Bharati. The rich culture of Bangalore combined with the daily Sanskritam classes and living with students as immersed in the language as I was helped me build emotional connections and practice my fluency. One of my best times at Medha was when I was conversing in Sanskritam with the children and their families living in Aksharam. My time there allowed me to realize that Samskritam is something I must incorporate into my future, as it will keep me connected to my culture and the Samskrita Bharati family, while giving me access to immeasurable knowledge

Priya Kumar
SAFL Class of 2016
Grade 11
Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy (IMSA)
Aurora, IL



Newsletter

SAFL

Sanskrita Bharati

2068 Walsh Avenue, Suite
B2, Santa Clara CA 95050

Contact:

safl.sanskritabharatiusa.org

saf@sanskritabharatiusa.org

408 752 2182