

# **CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY EFFORTS OF CARSONS CUMBERBATCH COMPANY LIMITED TOWARDS EDUCATION AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Carson Cumberbatch Company Limited, as a responsible corporate citizen, strives to develop capabilities of the youth that in return would help the country to achieve socio-economic objectives. The company in its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activities gives much emphasis in helping education of youth and offer opportunities for youth to further national harmony through interaction and knowledge sharing.

The Company endeavours to further its efforts by focusing on increased participation of youth in these activities.

## **National Annual Prefects' Day**

One arm of the CSR initiatives of the Carsons Group is the promotion of education through infrastructure development. We strongly believe in the maxim that the youth of today are the leaders of tomorrow; and so have chosen to invest in supporting the youth of the nation. One of the projects that we carry out towards this end is the hosting of an annual Prefects' Day. This program is an annual event since 2002. From a humble beginning of 45 schools from Colombo and sub-urbs and has grown to become a national event each year with the ministry's concurrence and the active participants of Academia of Universities ministry officials and leaders of the business community, it has earned its deserved place of school prefects leadership development. Last year there was 73 schools had a very interesting thought provoking interactive session followed by a cultural presentation. This year we have invited 123 schools and looking forward to propitiate this social integration of future leaders to further communal harmony and for lasting peace

Last year, under theme of "Inspirational Leadership towards Self Energy" there were approximately 750 prefects with accompanying 100 teachers from 15 districts, from national, private and international schools, from Colombo as well as Killinochchi, Jaffna, Trincomalee, Amparai, Batticaloa, Matara, Ratnapura, Anuradhapura, Kandy, Kalutara, Galle, Gampaha, Kegalle and Putlam.

The event is facilitated by AIESEC an international student exchange program, as a part of Carson's facilitation in improving their management competencies. We take this opportunity to appreciate their support in this venture.

The primary aims of this exercise are:

- a. *to create a space for the youth of the nation to develop awareness of each other*  
Rationale: Given Sri Lanka's diverse geographical, ethnic, religious and class construction, it is of vital importance that we learn to celebrate our differences and identify the elements that are held in common, so that we can pool our resources for the betterment of the nation.
- b. *to develop leadership skills in the youth of the country*  
Rationale: The youth of today will be the ones responsible for the nation's future socio-economic fabric. Therefore, now is the time to instill and direct them in the ways of leadership.

## **Knowledge Sharing Web- site**

This project has reaped immensely satisfying results. As a follow-up, we have initiated the setting up of a website for knowledge sharing among the participants as well as the alumni. This holds much potential for the future, since those who meet at these Prefects' Days can maintain contact, exchange and share information and experiences. The potential value of this is immeasurable.

## **Extension of the annual event to other less privileged schools**

Extension of this project for the benefit of less privileged schools, Carsons have piloted cluster prefects day facilitated by D S Senanayeka College Colombo, Horana Thakshila College and Hanwella Rajasinghe Central College. These sessions brought together 100 schools of the vicinities to an interactive day program.

## **CAPACITY BUILDING AND DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONAL SCHOOLS**

At the invitation of the Ministry of Education, the Carsons Group undertook the capacity development of three schools in the Colombo district: Oruwela Kanishta Vidyalaya (OKV), Hanwella Rajasinghe Central College (HRCC), and Kanapathy Maha Vidyalayam (KMV). All schools are regulated by the ministry and administer the national curriculum. Since the needs of the three schools differed from each other, Carsons employed three different approaches in supporting their development.

Since the type of facilitation and support needed for OKV and HRCC were similar, although at different levels, the initial project activities were combined. The primary objectives were:

- c. To equip every student with sufficient computer skills to meet the requirements of the job market
- d. To equip every student with competent communication skills in English
- e. To equip the school authorities with competent project management skills

### **ORUWELA KANISHTA VIDYALAYA (OKV)**

Carsons donated a computer and set up a skills development course for all teachers and parents. The aim was to develop the capabilities of the teachers so that they could train students in basic computer skills. The community carried this initiative further and the provincial council of the area has now constructed a room dedicated for computer education.

Having engaged a dedicated foreign teacher for one year and now have hired two local teachers with the administrative support of the school authorities, regular classes are conducted improve English language skills of students of grades 1 and 2. The classes are conducted to interested teachers and parents as well. Carson's undertook the facilitation of the annual English Day, at which we were pleased at the marked improvement in the English language skills of the students and at the enthusiasm and active participation of the teachers and parents.

According to the principal, the school is gaining popularity and the intake of students for 2006 has seen an increase of 30 per cent.

### **Hanwella Rajasinghe Central School**

30 teachers were given extensive training in computer skills and teaching instruction and in turn these teachers have begun especial classes to the advance level students of the school.

Having a foreign teacher for one year two dedicated local teachers are currently engaged to improve interactive English skills of the advance level students.

Aesthetic studies facilities are improved with Carson's initiative of offering cash donation and project management skills to put up new premises.

## **COMPETENCY DEVELOPMENT OF UNDERGRADUATES**

### **KELANIYA UNIVERSITY**

With the objective of creating a culture of learning competencies relevant to the contemporary job market, 80 first-year undergraduates from the 2004/2005 batch at the Kelaniya University were identified and were trained in a competency development programme for a period of one year. Carson's intends to continue this programme with every fresh intake on an ongoing basis.

### **RUHUNA UNIVERSITY**

The authorities of the Ruhuna University are studying the feasibility of launching a similar programme, which Carsons is willing to support. In addition, Carsons is already involved in supporting the university's engineering faculty under the guidance of the department of Interdisciplinary Studies by facilitating the training of its undergraduates to equip them with skills that will help increase their employability.

## **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT - BIYAGAMA**

In an effort to support and improve the education opportunities of school children and young adults in the village of Biyagama, has undertaken several projects:

- a. Annual book distribution to more than 1,000 students from the villages in the vicinity of Biyagama. Most of the recipients come from low-income households.
- b. Scholarships to three students from low-income households who have obtained high marks at the GCE Ordinary Level exams. This scholarship takes the form of a monthly grant designed to cover any expenses connected with higher education needs. Should any of them gain university admission, they are given a lump sum at the commencement of their university education after which they continue to receive a monthly grant throughout the entire period of their university education.
- c. 24 school leavers from the community are provided computer training, annually. The training is conducted at a computer lab donated and maintained by the Company. The training takes place over a period of six months and is conducted by a professional instructor. The training focuses on equipping the students with relevant computer skills that would enable them to secure employment.

### **Helping Tsunami affected people**

In 2005, several one-off projects were undertaken – e.g. cleaning a tsunami-damaged school in Hewatte and providing sanitary facilities to schools in the vicinity of the brewery.

Carsons have donated Rs. One million to construct a new pre-school in the tsunami affected Hambantota area.

The company has commenced its housing project at Kalutara to build 20 houses the Tsunami victims and a community centre.

### **Indonesia**

Our plantation companies in Indonesia are furthering their efforts of community development to enhance socio economic standards of surrounding villages. During the foregoing year it has contributed to the education of youth by renovating school buildings and continuing provision of teachers to improve the quality of teaching in the schools of neighbouring villages

Company continuous its efforts in improving health and well being of villagers using the professional services of the medical staff. Polio vaccination, monthly medical camps, provision of milk and extra food to the children less than five years and supply of clean water having laid a pipeline to the adjacent villagers are meeting the long felt needs of the community.

In the social development front, the company actively supports the Independence Day celebration, facilitation to religious ceremony and the logistic support to religious institutions.

In support of their economic life's selected skills development of the villagers and development of plasma plantations has given boost for their sustainable development