

MALAYALATHINU ORUPIDI DOLLAR

“MalayalathinuOrupidiDolllar” is a new initiative of the Federation of the Malayalee Associations of Americas (FOMAA). Its objective is to promote the Malayalam language, and Kerala culture and history. FOMAA’s National Advisory Council officers are responsible for implementing this initiative.

Current FOMAA National Advisory Council Chairman Raju Varghese is the chairman of the MOD Project Committee; Council Vice Chairman C. K. George is its vice chairman; Secretary Easow Sam Oommen serves as the project’s secretary and Council Joint Secretary Jose Abraham is the joint secretary. FOMAA Joint Treasurer IpeMaret will provide the financial oversight, along with FOMAA Treasurer Feisal Edward.

Other members of the committee are Mr. Willie John Jacob, Mr. GopinathaKurup, Mr. Philip Madathil, Mrs. JessyParathundil and Mr. Pradeep Nair. Eleven FOMAA Regional Vice Presidents assist the MOD Project Committee with fundraising.

Objectives of the MOD Project are as follows:

1. Provide scholarships to students at Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam

Providing scholarships to students enrolled at M.G. University’s B.A., M.A. and M. Phil in Malayalam programs is one of the project’s objectives. The MOD committee works with the University to find suitable candidates and offer scholarships. The MOD Committee has sanctioned a budget of rupees 2 lakhs (approximately \$3,500.00) toward the scholarships. These scholarships will be awarded at FOMAA’s Kerala Convention in 2012.

The first MalayalathinuOrupidy Dollar awards were distributed on January 14, 2012, by Hon. Revenue Minister ThiruvanchoorRadhakrishnan, at the 3rd FOMAA Kerala Convention in Kottayam. FOMAA President John Uralil presided over the function. Raju Varghese, Advisory Board Chairman, delivered the welcome speech and Mr. Madhavan Nair, former General Secretary of Kerala Sahithya Academy, was the keynote speaker. Felicitation speech was delivered by Easow Sam Oommen, Secretary of the Advisory Board, and FOMAA Joint Treasurer IpeMaret proposed the vote of thanks.

The winners of the First MalayalathinuOrupidy Dollar were:

NeethuValson, B.A. Malayalam (U.C. College, Alwaye)

Arathi P. Nair, M.A. Malayalam (Nirmala College, Muvattupuzha)

Ashamol, S., MPhil. Malayalam (M.G. University Campus, Kottayam)

VarshaThampi, MA Journalism (M.G. University Campus, Kottayam)

Each winner received a scholarship in the amount of Rs. 50,000.

2. Teach Malayalam language and Kerala history in American universities

Promotion of Malayalam language, and Kerala culture and history courses at university level in USA is an important goal of the project. A few universities that offered such courses in the past were forced to discontinue them due to lack of funds. The MOD committee will explore the feasibility of teaching Malayalam in select universities, with college-level credits. FOMAA is in discussion with Rutgers University to explore the possibility of teaching Malayalam at the school.

3. Donate Malayalam books

The MOD Project Committee encourages donation of Malayalam books to public libraries all over the country. At the moment, very few libraries in North America have Malayalam books in their collection. Donation of Malayalam books will greatly benefit those interested in reading Malayalam books. FOMAA is partnering with Deecee Books, the leading publisher in Kerala, to implement this project. FOMAA has donated Malayalam books to Yonkers public library in New York and Howard County Public Library in Maryland.

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