

ARTS EXPRESS

Quarterly Newsletter



From the Founder's Desk



As you are aware, it is UCPA's conscious effort to seamlessly engage with every member of the UCPA family. As part of this, various events are organized at regular intervals to energize the body, mind and soul.

This quarter comprised of live stage performances, inspirational talks by our UCPA family members, free flow entertainment by some of the enthusiastic students and of course, the most sought after program each quarter – the 'Industry Connect Series'.

With the pandemic, now showing signs of relief, UCPA opened up for live shows with performances in Hyderabad and Vemulawada during the Mahashivaratri season 2022.

The fun filled online event 'Potpourri' – entirely conceived and performed by the young UCPAians, provided for an audio-visual treat.

As part of the Industry Connect series, our guest speaker, Sri Sanjeev Sukumaran's talk on the 'The Winning Mindset' was very thought provoking and provided the much-needed exercise to energize the mind.

'You inspire' – yet another series to 'learn from the experiences' of the fellow UCPAians was also launched in this quarter where two speakers from the UCPA family motivated the rest by taking us through their journey of experiences and life learning.

It is definitely encouraging to note the eagerness and enthusiasm - increase amongst the UCPAians, quarter on quarter.

The calendar for the next quarter is already up with quite a few interesting events to look forward to. Until then, read this edition of the newsletter detailing the entire buzz pertaining to the quarter – Jan to Mar 2022 and do share your valuable feedback.

Happy reading.

Geetha Ganesan
Founder Director

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Potpourri - A talent of bouquets

"Unity is strength. When there is teamwork and collaboration, wonderful things can be achieved."

- Mattie Stepanek

True to the above quote, all the UCPAians of age groups 5-15 came forward to showcase their talents on the occasion of Republic Day celebrations.

All the tiny tots and trusty teens were divided into four groups Sujalaam, Suphalaam, Sheethalaam, and Shyaamalaam and were asked to present any performance of their choice.

Group Shyaamalaam:

(UCPAians : Harshitha, Nandini, Nitya, Bhavika, Krittika and Jahnavi)

This group presented a small skit from the Telugu movie 'Jathi Ratnalu' which was very hilarious and entertaining too. They also performed a few magic tricks and concluded their part with an emoji-based quiz on movie titles which involved participation from the audience.

Group Sheethalaam:

(UCPAians : Junelia, Aadya, Hasini, Lakshmi and Yuvathi)

This group gave a presentation on South Korea and the trend of K-pop. The energetic dance on the song "Boy with Luv" was amazing. Towards the end, they ensured that the audience learnt a few words of Korean language, which made the presentation more interesting.

Group Suphalaam:

(UCPAians : Manaswini, Sarvani, Dhruthika, Nihira, Prerana, Shanmukhapriya and Sreya)

This group presented a skit named 'Diffy Disciples', where they imitated typical students' behavior in a dance class (more specifically trying to replicate the UCPA classroom sessions). Everybody enjoyed it a lot as many of the students could relate themselves to the characters in the skit.

Group Sujalaam:

(UCPAians : Sanjana, Aditi, Ashritha, Anjana, Purvi and Vaishnavi)

This group conducted a debate on the topic 'Are we utilizing the freedom given by our freedom fighters in the right way?'

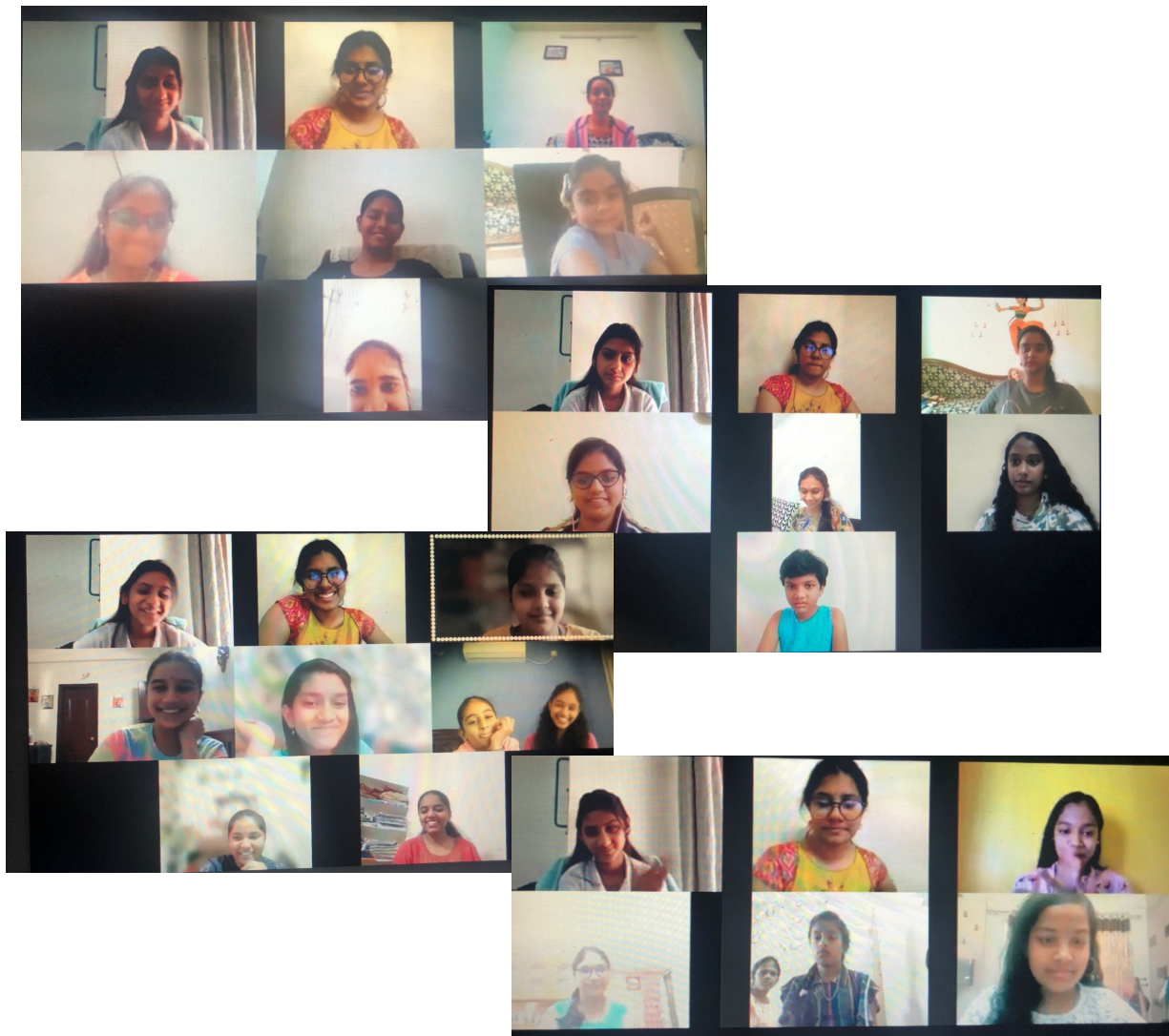
The group divided themselves into two teams and debated for and against. A good groundwork was seen in their presentation with some interesting observations made on either side. At a point, it sounded very professional with a few participants becoming highly vocal with their views.

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Potpurri - A talent of bouquets

On the whole, all the programs were interesting and colorful with elements of fun, entertainment and some insights too. It is worth mentioning here that the next generation kids at UCPA shouldered the entire show and they went in for any opportunity to showcase their talents and keep the audience enthralled throughout their performances.

UCPAians Bhavika Reddy and Harshitha Kulkarni hosted the show with grandeur.



Voice of Audience:

The entire event was put together very well in a short span of time. Amazing team work by the young UCPAians.

- Suchitra

UCPA Inspire

People develop and establish their personality / identity based on their experiences. While the personality is built on a cluster of experiences, the persona gets created. Such personas make the very existence purposeful and continue to inspire others around.

UCPA takes pride in introducing a new series 'You Inspire' - a platform for people to share their life experiences, which made them what they are today, thus inspiring others to emulate.

R. Harisankar, Co-Founder, UCPA, facilitated the event.

Mr. C.S. Mohan Rao

The first speaker - Mr. C. S Mohan Rao, DSP (Retired)

A curated team at UCPA got an opportunity to meet and interact with a man who says, "I am retired but not tired. While the body and soul are different, age is only for the body and not for the soul."

He strongly believes that richness can be achieved by knowledge and not money.

Despite having a busy schedule and handling tough criminal cases to crack in the police department, he could ensure a decent work-life balance, giving the required time to the family. This, according to him is very important to lead a successful life.



'His enthusiasm in practicing and performing 'Ghantasala' music numbers with commitment, even after retirement, goes on to prove the popular saying where there is a will there is a way'. All it requires is passion and hard work and then one can see that - age is just a number. His inhibition-free personality was seen when he sang an old Telugu song upon request, almost instantaneously. Such was his enthusiasm that, given the time, he would be ready to engage the audience for the next one hour with his excellent vocals.

Fellow UCPAians felt truly inspired.

Voice of UCPAian:

"The social system of families itself is a blend of responsibilities and relentless sacrifices. There are millions of parents who are working relentlessly for their families, keeping their passion and goals aside.

This event is dedicated to all of them who are inspiring their families by striking the balance between responsibility and passion.

It is a wonderful initiative by UCPA to get their stories out. These stories of the two inspirers are a mark of patience, dedication, passion, discipline, determination, focus and perseverance. My deepest gratitude to Team UCPA who ideated and initiated this series."

- Padmavathi

UCPA Inspire

Ms. N. Ambika



The second speaker - Ms. Ambica Srinivas

UCPAian Ambica is one of those strong individuals with a high pedigree of determination. She is committed to pursue her passion (Bharatanatyam) after almost 18 years of sabbatical. She shared her story of how she could overcome the pressure in managing the family, even as she turned all the hurdles into stepping-stones, marching ahead, without deviating from her focus.

She has proven herself as an artist, with a couple of performances within a span of two years after commencement of training at UCPA.

Additionally, she encouraged her two daughters to learn this dance form, who are also now a part of the UCPA family. She said, "It was not easy for me to take some of those bold steps without my determination, that showed me the path. And, I walked towards my destination". She stands as an example for everyone that nothing comes in the way of pursuing a passion if you are super committed.

The speakers were also invited to a luncheon at the UCPA Headquarters for a meet and greet.



Mr. G. Ganesan handing over the appreciation certificates to the UCPA inspirers - Mr. C.S. Mohan Rao and Ms. N. Ambika

Each successful person has a story to tell which may inspire and motivate today's generation to identify, explore and shape their personalities. UCPA aims to provide this opportunity to share and learn through the 'You Inspire' Series.

Keep watching this space for more inspiring stories.

- Team UCPA

Industry Connect

Mr. Sanjeev Sukumaran

As part of the Industry Connect Series, on the 27th of March 2022, Team UCPA had a wonderful opportunity to listen to Mr. Sanjeev Sukumaran, Chief Human Resource Officer, Syngene International Limited.

Being the amazing storyteller that he is, Sanjeev addressed a curated set of UCPAians on how to achieve **'The Winning Mindset'** through some of his life experiences.



Sanjeev strongly believes in changing the 'belief' before changing the 'behavior' to see the desired outcome. He focused on the importance of 'goal setting' - big or small, which is the purpose of any action. Through a very engaging story of the '9 Rabbit Syndrome', he advised the audience not to change the goal when something does not seem to be going right; instead change the approach and apply the tactics accordingly. "Focus, persistence and patience have their own rewards and nothing gets achieved overnight", he added.

He urged the audience to find a 'Guru' who can see the worth in them and set their inner angels free through a beautiful tale of Michael Angelo, the sculptor of 'David' in Florence.

While he started the session by saying that he did not have a 'mantra' or a solution to success, he did give the UCPAians a powerful message to set goals, work hard and pursue them with focus.

The audience were visibly seen motivated by the session and UCPA looks forward to the experiential learning from such eminent speakers in the quarters to arrive.



Voice of UCPAian:

I was in a dilemma to take up a challenging work role...but "the winning mindset" event by Mr. Sanjeev has helped me overcome my inhibitions and take a bold step in my career. Thank you UCPA

- Padma

Shivaarchana'- Maha Shivaratri Jatara Mahotsavam Sri Raja Rajeshwara Swami Devasthanam, Vemulavada

Team UCPA was invited by the Department of Culture, Telangana State Government, to perform during the festival 'SHIVAARCHANA', conducted in association with Sri Raja Rajeshwari Swami Devasthanam at Vemulavada. Maha Shivaratri Jathara Mahotsavam is a three day annual festival at this ancient temple (popularly known as Dakshina Kasi), coinciding with the Mahashivaratri celebrations in Vemulawada .

Team UCPA represented by Geetha, Navya, Subhanvitha, Sanjana, Lasyanjali, Bhavika, Dhruthika and Sarvani, performed here on the 28th of February 2022. Dance numbers in praise of Lord Shiva, weaving stories from the Shivapuram, were presented on this occasion.

Dr. Mamidi Hari Krishna, Director, Dept. Of Language and Culture, Govt. of Telangana and Sri. Chellamaneni Ramesh were highly appreciative of the program and made a special mention about the 'discipline' that was vividly seen in the presentation which makes team UCPA's performance very unique.

Sri. V. Anil Kumar, Commissioner, Endowments Department, Govt. of Telangana personally congratulated Team UCPA for their commitment and dedication to this art form.

UCPA feels fortunate for having grabbed this opportunity to perform on such an auspicious occasion. It was indeed a delightful and fulfilling experience for all the performers.



Voice of UCPAian:

"Felt like being in a Gurukul @ UCPA. We had hardly five days after this program got confirmed and worked relentlessly towards perfection. We wouldn't compromise at any point. This called for more practice hours and we had to stay back a couple of days at the UCPA HQ as we practiced day and night until we were satisfied. Proud to be a UCPAian"

- Navya Sravani

Natyanjali 2022

Shri Shringeri Shankar Mutt

'Naatyanjali Hyderabad' - an annual event hosted by UCPA in association with Sri Shringeri Shankar Mutt, Nallakunta, on the occasion of Maha Shivaratri - was successfully conducted for the 6th year in succession on the 1st of March 2022.

As part of this program, every year, various artists belonging to different Indian Classical Dance forms come together to offer their prayers (Nrityaseva) at the feet of Lord Nataraja through their performances. This year, owing to the pandemic situation, the performances were restricted to the host team - UCPA.

A team of eight members from UCPA - Geetha Ganesan, Navya Sravani, Subhanvitha, Sanjana, Lasyanjali, Dhruthika, Sarvani and Bhavika performed various dance numbers in praise of Lord Shiva. This included an invocatory number 'Gajavadana', a popular devotional song composed by the legend Sri Purandaradasa; the vibrant

Natesha Kauthvam; a composition of Swami Surajanand (specifically choreographed for the occasion) - 'Gangadheeshwaram Shankaram'; Swami Dayananda Saraswati's popular number - 'Bho Shambho'; and finally, the Shiva Shadakshara Stotram.

Naatyanjali Hyderabad 2022, witnessed houseful devotees and art lovers who received the show with great aplomb. The performances at the temple premises have always been a divine experience for the UCPAians and so was it this year too.

The highly satisfied host team closed the evening with a promise to get back with another glorious event next year, the 'Naatyanjali Hyderabad' - 2023.



Voice of audience:

"Naatyanjali has become a part and parcel of the Shivaratri celebrations at the Shankarmutt. Year after year we look forward to this Nrityaseva (an offering through dance) conducted by UCPA" - says a devotee and an art-lover.

Beating the Blues

Ms. Navya Sravani

Dance is a way of life and the joy one derives out of it cannot be explained and can only be experienced.

Dance gives you that extra energy needed to overcome tough and uncertain situations. It aids and strengthens the “never give up” attitude. I personally feel it as a very exciting journey.

Finding the inspiration to warm up your body from head to toe and then start dancing is nothing less than beating the 'Monday Blues'. When the warm-up stretches are by themselves a set of dance moves to music, what else do you need to self-inspire? Once you stretch that passiveness off your feet and dance it out, it is just magical.

While dancing is fun, it is also physically challenging. We dancers are always stuck in a loop-dance to feel inspired and find the motivation to dance. Being a passionate dancer for a decade now, I have seen days when I do not have the 'heart' to dance, I seek that external push every once a while. Sometimes, seeing my Guru, peers and others perform, I get highly energized. Other times, it would just be a throwback to the fun, dancing times that on-boarded the charm on my energy.

But over the years, I have found something that constantly inspires me. Even when there is no one around and nothing to look back for an inspiration, there is still something that simply moves me from my place and makes me dance. It gets my heart dancing and once the heart starts, the body cannot hold it on. That honestly makes me smile, express and align myself with the music. It could be 5 AM on a cold winter day, and a good music makes me dance. It could be an emotionally challenging day and I might not want to move an inch, but yet, music triggers me to dance.

Arguably, I would still stick to saying that music is the heart and soul of a dancer. Music can make or break your inspiration to dance. I made a subconscious effort to develop a good understanding of music, and I am fortunate to have a Guru whose singing inspires me to dance.

Find your music & dance,
Find your inspiration in music & dance,
And you might not find Monday Blues at all...



- Paper Penn.

Website: www.paperpenn.in

Navya Sravani is a passionate Bharatanatyam artist who is currently holding the position of 'Head of Operations' at UCPA. She is an avid reader, a voracious writer and a software developer by profession

Arrogance Vs Attitude



I might sound non paradoxical but let me begin this with a small story.

On a chilly winter evening in Bangalore in 2003, I was having a conversation with one of the veteran musicians and a keyboard player – Late Govind. We were sipping our favorite lemon tea and he posed a question to me. “Are you an arrogant performer”?

I was nonplussed and exclaimed – “Whats wrong with you? Arrogance is a negative personality trait, and we artists are all wonderful, delicate creatures, are we not?” He smiled wryly in response and continued sipping his tea. Surprised, I stopped to think about my reaction, and his. Then it occurred to me, wasn't my reaction itself a manifestation of my arrogance? Is it not arrogant to assume that the category ‘artists’ naturally overlaps the category ‘special’ or ‘delicate’, or, even ‘wonderful’?

Point made, I thought. Very clever. I saw the light in what he was trying to say. Perhaps we artists are by nature arrogant. ‘We’ as a group see ourselves as separate, blessed, special, and tortured souls at times. I pondered and thought that it's high time, we convert the arrogance into an attitude.

Attitude is nothing but developing different perspectives of how we look at things. Human mind is like an auto transmission gear box. It can rapidly shift by itself, with the mental and physical circumstances, that might not necessarily lead to great attitude always. This is a welcome feature in the automobile industry. But in humans, the mind needs to be in control of how we adapt to different perspectives and look at things, as an opportunity – an attitudinal shift as we call it. We have to have a manual transmission gear box to ensure that we have a complete control on our perspectives than allowing them to be controlled automatically.

From my personal diaries of experiential learning, I have been following the beneath attributes towards building an attitude

- Reconciliation
- Resilience
- Acceptance
- Gratitude
- Empathy

How about you?

Guruprasad Deshpande

Mentor of Change & Co Founder (UCPA)

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