

பர்மிங்காம் பக்கங்கள்



Q3 2025 NEWSLETTER

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ATS President Address



Dear ATS Family,

As we close out the 4th quarter of 2025, I want to take a moment to reflect on what an incredible journey this term has been. Together, we've celebrated our culture, strengthened our community, and created countless memories — from our youth programs and outreach efforts to our upcoming grand **Vetri Vizha 2025** cultural event at the Wright Center on **Nov 23rd.**

I am deeply grateful to our executive committee, Board of Directors, volunteers, sponsors, and every member who has stood with us and contributed their time, talent, and energy to make ATS thrive. Your passion has been the heart of every successful event and initiative.

As our current leadership term comes to a close, I am excited to see a newly elected team carry the torch forward. I have full confidence that they will continue to grow ATS with renewed ideas, dedication, and unity — building on the strong foundation we've created together.

Let's continue to celebrate Tamil culture, language, and friendship — the essence that makes our community so special.

With heartfelt gratitude, Charles Daniel President, Alabama Tamil Sangam



NOVEMBER 23RD SUNDAY, 2 PM - 8 PM

WRIGHT CENTER

LOCATED IN SAMFORD UNIVERSITY

872 MONTAGUE DR, BIRMINGHAM, AL - 35229

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Youth Article



Pooja Ravi



என் இனியவளே!! தூரிகை கொண்டு உன் அழகை ஓவியமாக வரைந்து ஒளிரும் சித்திரமாக உருவெடுத்தாயோ...



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Youth Article



Avani Mehta

Girls Greatness

Avani Mehta, 10-year-old resident of Vestavia Hills, recently started Girls Greatness with the goal of helping underprivileged girls around the world. Believing that books are "magical," she chose to begin with a book drive. Together with her friends (Mae, Zoyee, Anjali and Haynes), she organized a collection of gently used books, and thanks to generous donations from classmates, friends, and families, they gathered more than 200 books. As she began reaching out to organizations, she realized that so many children—not just girls—could benefit from this effort.

With that, the scope of Girls Greatness broadened to support underserved kids everywhere. While collecting the books was fairly easy, the next challenge was finding organizations that could accept them and make sure they reached children who would benefit most. With her parents' help, she reached out to many groups and eventually partnered with the following organizations:

Amuno Rural Hub, Uganda – A rural-for-impact organization giving children a fair shot at education and life. <u>amuno.org</u>

- MUKTI, West Bengal, India NGO empowering the Sundarbans through healthcare, school support, and women's empowerment.
- Community Legal Services, Arizona, USA Non-profit law firm advocating for fairness and justice for underserved families. <u>clsaz.org</u>
- Vidyarthi Mitra Foundation, India Empowering underprivileged children through education, pride, and confidence. <u>vidyarthimitrafoundation.org</u>

Avani started in Spring of 2025, and saw through completion over the summer

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Youth Article Continued









"I felt accomplished because the project was successful. I received many pictures and videos from these organizations that were so thoughtful and sweet. When I saw those photos, I did feel very happy, but I also realized how few resources they have compared to what I have in my school. I'm very grateful for what I have, and I want to continue to do more projects like this one."

This book drive marks only the first step for Girls Greatness, with more initiatives to come in the future.

Avani Mehta Girls Greatness (President)

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Alabama Tamil Academy Article



Sharon Baskar Raj

My name is Sharon Baskar Raj. I am studying Nilai 4 at ATA. Even though it's challenging we kids try to have fun learning our mother tongue. I have made some Tamil friends along the way. Without ATA, I wouldn't have any Tamil friends. I had an opportunity to dance along with my Tamil friends as a tribute to actor Vijaykanth, that turned out to have more than 150K views in YouTube. In ATA, every student gets a chance to do a Tamil related project about a person, place or about a subject and present that in front of the congregation. It is always fun to learn about a new subject. I personally love reading or hearing stories being read to me.

Recently in ATA, we started having story time for about 30 min with all the classes combined, before having our class time. This story-time really helps me to learn new words. I would like to thank all the teachers for their dedication to teach us Tamil Sunday after Sunday. Also, I would like to thank the parents for their effort in bringing us to classes as well as to practices and performances. I am happy to mention that our student population increased a lot this year.

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Member Article



Madhavi Ravi

அயல்நாட்டில் இந்தியர்கள்

திரைக்கடல் ஓடியும், திரவியம் தேடும் திசைமாறிய பறவைகள் நாம் கலப்பை பிடிக்கவில்லை ஆனாலும் களைத்து போகிறோம்.

ஓடி ஓடி உழைத்தாலும், காலும், கையும் விரைத்தாலும், அன்பாக பேச யாரும் இல்லா அனாதைகள்.

ஓய்ந்து இருக்கையில் சாய்ந்து கொள்ள உறவுகள் அருகில் இல்லா ஊமைகள், ஒளிரும் விளக்குகளும், உல்லாச மாளிகைகளும் உள்ள நாட்டில் நம் மனம் எனும் வீட்டில், இருளில் மூழ்கி வாழ்பவர்கள்.

இங்கோ தாயவளின் பாசம் கிட்டவில்லை, தாய் மொழிக்கோ மதிப்பு இல்லை.

டாலருக்கு வாழ்க்கையை அடகு வைத்து, மீள முடியாமல் தவிக்கின்றோம், நித்தம் தேடுகிறோம் — நம் மண்ணின் வாசனையை...

சொந்த நாட்டில் பழுசுமந்து வாழ்ந்தாலும் பலகோடி இன்பம் அதில் உண்டு; அதிலே சொர்க்கமும் உண்டு.

இனியும் வேண்டுமோ இந்த அயல் நாட்டுவாழ்க்கை? இருந்தும் வாழ்கிறோம் — சொந்த நாட்டில் இல்லாத சுகம் இந்த நாட்டில் இருக்கிறதென்று!

நன்றி – மாதவி ரவி

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Member Spotlight





Antony & Sumathi Family

Tell us about yourself and journey to the USA

My name is Antony, and my wife is Sumathi. We are blessed with two children—our daughter, Roveena, and our son, Robin. We arrived in the United States on May 27, 1997, which also marked our first wedding anniversary. At the time, our daughter was just three months old. We initially settled in Hoover and have called it home ever since. A few months after I arrived, Sumathi joined me, and together we began building our life here.

Back then, Hoover was a much smaller city with only a handful of Indian families and a small Indian grocery store nearby. Despite its size, we never considered moving to a larger city.

The warmth and hospitality of the people here made us feel like family. That sense of community is what anchored us to this place, and even after nearly 30 years, Birmingham still feels like home.

Back then, there were only a few Tamil families in the area, and there was not a formal Tamil Sangam yet. During that time, Kalai Mugizhan was actively organizing cultural events, and I became involved in coordinating them. It was a humble beginning—just a small group of families managing everything, from decorating venues to setting up audio systems and organizing stage performances.

As Sumathi often says, we grew to love this place and its people, and that love has kept us active and connected to the community for many years.

What is your message to people moving to USA for the first time?

Starting a new life in a new country is never easy. When we leave our home country, we leave behind family, friends, and the comforts of familiar food and culture. It's natural to feel a mix of emotions—excitement, uncertainty, and even loneliness.

When you arrive in the United States, one of the most important things you can do is build new connections. This country is vast and diverse, and while the journey may be challenging, it's also full of opportunity.



Member Spotlight Continued

Get involved in ATS events and activities, join groups, and meet new people. These connections will not only help you feel at home, but they'll also create a strong support system. For families, this sense of belonging is especially important—it helps children stay engaged, build friendships, and grow up in an environment that values both culture and community.

The warmth of the people and the strength of tamil community can turn a new place into a true home. Embrace it, contribute to it, and you'll find that your journey here becomes one of growth, connection, and lasting memories.

What Motivated You to Get Involved in ATS?

For me, it all started as a simple hobby. Over time, being part of ATS has helped me grow both personally and professionally. It taught me the importance of time management, collaboration, and community engagement. Our children also enjoyed participating in cultural programs—especially dances and dramas. Every event felt like a festival, filled with joy and togetherness.

Antony has always had a passion for organizing events. Even during his college days, he was actively involved in coordinating cultural programs. After moving to the U.S., he found an opportunity to continue that passion. He and Mr. Kalai Mugizhan worked together to lay the foundation for what eventually became ATS.

Even today, whenever we attend a Tamil cultural event, that same sense of family and togetherness remains. It's that feeling of belonging that continues to inspire and motivate us to stay involved and give back to the community.



Member Spotlight Continued

Serving in Leadership at ATS – Our Experience:

Sumathi: Over the years, I've served in several roles within ATS—from food and program committees to cultural planning. From 2013 to 2015, I had the honor of serving as President, leading a team that connected with nearly 100 families. It was a deeply rewarding experience, especially as the first woman president, supported by an all-women leadership team: Uma Karthik as Secretary and Meena Rams as Treasurer.

During our term, we introduced new ideas like launching a website and creating a photo archive to preserve memories. Every leadership team has helped strengthen our community, and I'm proud of the unity and dedication we shared.

Antony: From 2017 to 2019, I had the privilege of serving as President of ATS, along with Ramanathan Solamalai as Secretary and Lakshmikanth as Treasurer. Our focus was on organizing cultural programs for adults as well as kids – Aaram.

Transparency and accountability were key priorities—we shared quarterly financial updates and released balance sheets. One of our proudest achievements was launching the Tamil School –Alabama Tamil Academy, a milestone made possible by the hard work of Rajasekar, Srinivasan, Muthu, and others.

What do You Value Most About Being Involved in Our Community?

For me, friendship is the most important thing in my life. I truly enjoy meeting new people and socializing. It's what keeps me energized and connected. My love for Tamil culture inspires me to stay involved and contribute wherever I can. I also have a strong passion for entertainment and creativity, which I cherish deeply.

Seeing how much ATS has grown over the years fills us with pride and joy. It's amazing to witness the strength and unity of our community.



Member Spotlight Continued

Views on Women Empowerment?

Sumathi: When I was younger, I believed it was best to stay in the background and let others lead. But over time, I've come to understand the importance of stepping forward with confidence. I often tell women today: "Push yourself beyond your limits. Don't hide behind anyone—believe in your own strength and potential."

Today's younger women are incredibly talented and well-informed. Unlike our generation, they have access to endless resources and opportunities. My message to them is simple: make the most of it. Use your knowledge to pursue your goals and make a meaningful impact.

Be bold, be confident, and be courageous. Strive not only for success in your careers but also for leadership and service in your communities. Empowerment begins with believing in yourself—and inspiring others to do the same.

What is your message to our younger generation?

IWhat we admire most about today's children is how much more informed they are compared to when we were at their age. We should encourage them to follow their passions rather than pushing them into paths they don't enjoy.

Message to the ATS Community

A community is built by its people—without participation, it cannot grow. While we may have our differences, staying involved and contributing is what keeps us united and thriving.

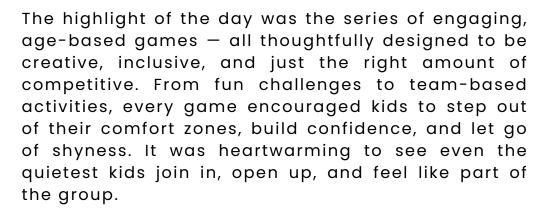
Community offers more than just support—it creates a sense of family. No matter what interests you, I encourage everyone to participate, get involved, and contribute. Come, join, and support the ATS community—together, we thrive. Everyone has unique talents, and this is the perfect place to share them. Let's live with purpose and make meaningful contributions. The community around us is what lifts us through every challenge.

Sometimes people hesitate to get involved but overcoming that hesitation is the first step toward building a stronger society. Reflecting on the past brings us pride and joy. Looking back, we feel grateful and overwhelmed by all that we've accomplished together.



KODAI GALATTA

Kodai Galatta was a vibrant and joy-filled event hosted by ATS in collaboration with ATA Leadership, created to warmly welcome new students and families to Tamil School. Held at the cheerful Galleria Woods kids' play area on August 3rd, the event brought together children, parents, and volunteers for an afternoon packed with laughter, energy, and community spirit.



These games did more than entertain — they sparked courage, inspired sharing, and helped form new friendships. Children learned the value of teamwork, communication, and supporting one another, all while having a blast. The atmosphere was filled with cheers, high-fives, and happy chatter as kids played freely and families connected.

To celebrate everyone's efforts, medals were awarded to winners from each age group, adding excitement and recognition to the day. But in truth, every participant walked away a winner — with smiles, new friends, and a sense of belonging.

Kodai Galatta wasn't just about games — it was about community, confidence, and connection. A beautiful start to the season, the event truly set the tone for a year of learning, laughter, and lasting memories at Tamil School.









பர்மிங்காம் பக்கங்கள்



Article by: Madhavi Ravi

தமிழ் பள்ளி ஆண்டு விழா அறிக்கை

<u>முன்னுரை:</u>

"கேடில் விழுச்செல்வம் கல்வி யொருவற்கு மாடல்ல மற்றை யவை"

என்ற வள்ளுவரின் குரலுக்கேற்ப தமிழ்ப் பள்ளியில் அக்டோபர் 10, 2025 அன்று ஆண்டுவிழா நடைபெற்றது. திரு. கரு. மணிக்கவாசகம் அவர்களின் முன்னிலையில் மாணவர்களின் கற்றல் திறமைகள் மற்றும் கலை நிகழ்ச்சியின் மூலமாக இந்த விழா சிறப்பாக நடைபெற்றது.

<u>தமிழ்த் தாய் வாழ்த்து:</u>

"தமிழ் மொழி தான் எல்லா மொழிகளுக்கும் தாய்" — இதனை உணர்த்தும் விதமாக, இரண்டாம் மற்றும் மூன்றாம் நிலை மாணவர்களால் தமிழ்த் தாய் வாழ்த்து பாடப்பட்டு, அந்தப் பாடலின் பொருளை நடனத்தின் மூலமாக சிறப்பாக வெளிக்காட்டி இவ்விழா தொடங்கப்பட்டது.

மொழியின் சிறப்பு:

"சொல்லில் உயர்வு தமிழ்ச் சொல்லே" அதை தொழுதே அனைவரும் படித்திட வேண்டும் என்றுஅனைத்து வகுப்பு மாணவர்கள் மற்றும் பெற்றோர்களால், தமிழ் மொழியின் சிறப்பை பாடலாக பாடப்பட்டு நம் மொழியின் முக்கியத்துவம் உணர்த்தப்பட்டது.

தேசிய ஒற்றுமை:

நம் நாட்டின் ஒற்றுமையைப் பறைசாற்றும் விதமாக, **பாரதிவிலாஸ்** பாடலுக்கு நிலைஒன்று மற்றும் நிலை மழலை மாணவர்களால் மழலை மொழி மாறாமல் சிறப்பாக நடனம் ஆடி அனைவரையும் மகிழ்வித்தனர்.



தமிழ் பள்ளி ஆண்டு விழா அறிக்கை ...

<u>சங்க இலக்கியம்:</u>

ஒரு மனிதன் நல்ல மனிதனாக வாழ இலக்கியங்கள் மிகவும் பயன்படுகிறது. தமிழில்உள்ள இலக்கியங்களில் மிகவும் பழமையான நம் சங்க இலக்கியத்தைப் பற்றி, நிலை நான்கு மாணவர்களால் நாடகம் நடத்தப்பட்டு, நமக்கும் இலக்கியங்களைப் தேடி படிக்கவேண்டும் என்ற ஆர்வம் தூண்டப்பட்டது.

<u>ஊக்குவித்தல்:</u>

மாணவர்கள் தமிழ் மொழியை கற்றுக்கொள்ள ஆர்வத்தை தூண்டும் விதமாக, சான்றிதழ்கள் மற்றும் பரிசுகள் வழங்கப்பட்டு, பெற்றோர்களிடமும் தமிழ்பள்ளியைப் பற்றிய கருத்துக்களை கேட்டு, மற்றவர்களையும் தமது பிள்ளைகளை தமிழ்ப் பள்ளியில் சேர்க்கப் பெரிதும் உறுதுணையாக இருந்தது.

<u>முடிவுரை:</u>

ஒரு வண்ணமயமான நாளின் முடிவு இது. மாணவர்கள், ஆசிரியர்கள் மற்றும் பெற்றோர்கள்இணைந்து கொண்டாடிய ஒரு சிறந்த தருணம். இது மாணவர்களுக்குதிறன்களை வளர்க்கவும் உத்வேகத்தை அளித்தது. இவ்விழாவின் வெற்றிக்குப்பின் பள்ளியின் முதல்வர், ஆசிரியர்கள், பெற்றோர்கள், மக்கள் அனைவரின் ஒத்துழைப்புடன் விழா இனிதே, சிறப்புடன் நிறைவு பெற்றது.

வாழ்க தமிழ்! வளர்க தமிழ்!

-மாதவி ரவி

பர்மிங்காம் பக்கங்கள்



தமிழ் பள்ளி ஆண்டு விழா அறிக்கை ...















ATA ANNUAL DAY & AARAM EVENT CONTINUED

Article by: Kartika Ramani

Our Future in Focus: ATS Youth Committee Shares Their Year of Growth and Connection

When they began their two-year term, the Alabama Tamil Sangam (ATS) Youth Committee members likely did not realize just how much they would gain. This year, their work culminated in the highly successful **AARAM Talent Show and ATA Annual Day**, a signature event that truly showcased the committee's dedication and commitment. They saw the **highest attendance ever, with over 150 attendees** who enjoyed a riveting 3-hour program featuring more than 20 acts, ranging from traditional folk music and instrumental performances to dancing, singing, and skits. The creative costumes and content were a true **feast for the eye and soul**.

The event was honored to host **Mr. Karu Manickavasagam**, founder of the first Tamil school in Houston, Texas, and an advisory board member of the American Tamil Academy, as the guest speaker. His words were a powerful source of encouragement and inspiration, reinforcing our local commitment to preserving and exploring the richness of the Tamil language, culture, and traditions.

While the community celebrated this spectacular event, the young organizers themselves experienced a much deeper, more personal reward. As the committee members reflect on their term, their feedback confirms that this was not merely an exercise in event planning. The experience was truly about building confidence, vital skills, and a lasting connection to our shared heritage and community.

Beyond the Event: New Skills and Stepping Up

For many, coordinating ATS events was the real-world education they did not know they needed. It was a chance to practice leadership in a supportive environment.

Madhav Madabushi put it simply: "Being part of the ATS Youth Committee helped me grow as a leader and a team member. Coordinating events taught me to stay **organized**, **communicate clearly**, **and adapt under pressure**. I gained confidence and learned the value of teamwork and responsibility."



ATA ANNUAL DAY & AARAM EVENT CONTINUED

Adithya Mohanraj felt a similar push to take charge. "Being part of the youth committee has helped me grow into a more **confident and responsible leader**. Working with others taught me teamwork, communication, and decision-making skills, while also pushing me to take initiative and adapt to challenges. Overall, it strengthened my sense of purpose and commitment to making a positive impact."

Finding a Deeper Connection to Community and Culture

One of the most significant takeaways for the students was the genuine sense of belonging they experienced while working side by side with their peers, fostering a strong sense of community and cultural connection.

"Participating in the Youth committee has been very rewarding and eye-opening," shared **Ashvath Yeshwath**. "I had the chance to develop new skills that pushed me out of my comfort zone... One of my biggest takeaways was the **sense of community I felt**. Working alongside others who shared similar goals and passions made the experience meaningful and motivating. I also enjoyed connecting with people from the Birmingham area, learning more about the ATS culture, and building relationships."

For **Saharsh Prasanna**, the experience reinforced the importance of heritage. "Through my experience in the ATS Youth, I learned the importance of **preserving and celebrating Tamil culture**. Working with other Tamil youth helped me appreciate our language and traditions while building leadership and teamwork skills."

Making an Impact, One Project at a Time

From planning to design, the committee members were hands-on, showing their dedication to making ATS activities a success.



ATA ANNUAL DAY & AARAM EVENT CONTINUED

Divya Ramani loved being able to put her creativity to work. "Serving on the ATS Youth Committee has been such a rewarding experience for me. I was able to contribute to several events, from helping plan the **youth talent show** to designing flyers for all of our activities. I especially enjoyed working with the team to create a posterboard for the **AARAM event**... Being part of this committee has helped me grow in confidence, creativity, and community spirit." We're incredibly proud of the Youth Committee for its outstanding contributions this past year. Their experiences remind us that supporting our youth means investing in the future of our culture and our community.



The ATS greatly appreciates the hard work and dedication of the outgoing Youth Committee members!

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CONTACT & FEEDBACK

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ATS appreciates your interest and thanking you, for submitting your articles for this newsletter. We encourage you to send articles for the next Q4 newsletter to atscommunication@alabamatamilsangam.org

Your feedback is more valuable to us to improve further!

Submit your feedback CLICK HERE *



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ATS EXECUTIVE TEAM (2024-2025) (Outgoing)

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President Charles Raj Daniel



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We sincerely thank each and every one of you for your continued support to ATS in so many ways. Let's keep the momentum going - celebrating our culture, language, and community together!