



Suntharalingam Skanthakumar

January 15, 1961 - January 18, 2022

Dr. S Skanthakumar, 61 years of age, residing in Bolingbrook Illinois, passed away on Tuesday

January 18, 2022 at his place of work, Argonne National Laboratory. He was born in Tokyo,

Japan on January 15, 1961, to Suntharalingam and Selvaranee. He was married to Karthiga in 1996.

Skanthan, as he was known to his loved ones, moved to Sri Lanka as a young child and attended the University of Peradeniya in Sri Lanka, where he received a Bachelor of Science

degree in Physics. He then worked as an assistant lecturer and later attended University of

Maryland in Baltimore, Maryland where he earned a masters and a PhD in physics. He spent

the vast majority of his career at Argonne National Laboratory in Lemont Illinois, his research

focusing on both chemical and physical properties of rare earth and actinide elements. In the

course of his research, he made seminal contributions to the development of high energy X-ray

scattering techniques and analysis for the determination of molecular structures in solutions,

winning multiple research awards in the process. He was an invaluable member of the Heavy

Elements Chemistry research group, a mentor to so many in the scientific community, from

graduate students to post doctoral fellows to visiting research scientists. He was an esteemed

member of the research community, a friend to his many colleagues, and selfless in his

assistance to them, whether inside or out of the laboratory.

He has touched the hearts of many through his passionate work, advocating for human rights in

Sri Lanka for decades. He was also very instrumental in promoting Tamil culture throughout his

community and ensuring that it was always robust wherever he went.

Skanthan is survived by his beloved wife, Karthiga, children Aerahan, Shama, and Subash,

father Suntharalingam, and sisters Vasuki and Mythili. He was preceded in death by his mother.

Visitation will be held at the McCauley-Sullivan funeral home on Saturday, January 22, 2022,

between 12:30 and 3 pm.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Manitha Neyam Trust at www.manithaneyam.org.

Manitha Neyam is a charity that runs numerous projects in Skanthan's home country of Sri Lanka to help the most vulnerable. Given how he tirelessly fought for these exact people, we

believe this would be the best use of any resources.

Funeral arrangements entrusted to McCauley-Sullivan Funeral Home and Crematorium.

Previous Events

Visitation

JAN **22**. 12:30 PM - 3:00 PM (CT)

McCauley-Sullivan Funeral Home & Crematorium

530 West Boughton Rd

Bolingbrook, IL 60440

sullivanfhjohn@gmail.com

<https://www.sullivanfunerals.com/>

Tribute Wall

DS

“ I got to know Skantha when I was a postdoc at Argonne, about 2011 to 2012, he was quick to show me the lab, help with beamtime experiments, explain how he handled data, and introduce me to his fantastic group. Skantha was always smiling, and I have the fondest memories of going to lunch with him many times, hearing about his family and his philosophy on life. He was so kind and gracious with his time. What a rare man, will miss you Skantha!

Daniel Shoemaker - February 02 at 12:25 PM

KJ

“ Uncle Skantha will be missed. He will be missed by me and my parents.



krithika Jeyendran - January 25 at 03:28 PM

KJ

“ Uncle Skantha was a kind , loving person . He will be missed . When I go back to Illinois to visit everyone there I will definitely miss Uncle Skantha.



krithika Jeyendran - January 25 at 03:11 PM

KJ

“ Krithika Jeyendran lit a candle in memory of Suntharalingam Skanthakumar



krithika Jeyendran - January 25 at 03:04 PM

NS

“ It has been a sad few days for me since Dr Jeyendran sent me news of Skantha's passing. It is Jey who introduced Skanthakumar to Sridevy and I over a decade ago. Among our few meetings in Chicago was the memorable one when I was driven by Skantha to Bolingbrook to spend some moments by the Mullivaaikaal Memorial Tree, and indeed to visit the Library there. Skantha was in elegant splendour dressed in Tamil costume when we last saw him at the International Tamil Conference in Chicago the summer of 2019. We shall miss Skanthakumar's infectious enthusiasm and his passion towards justice for the Tamil people. May his visions for justice and fairplay come true.

Sri - London & Uppsala



Nadarajah Sriskandarajah - January 24 at 10:20 PM

TK

“ When I was a fresh graduate student at the University of Maryland, College Park, Skantha --who was probably about 4 years senior to me at Maryland-- would sometimes pick me up from my apartment and drop me at my electrical engineering lab, which is about 2 blocks from his physics lab.

Over the next several years, we talked about our shared interests in the political situation in Sri Lanka. There was an armed conflict pitting Tamil militants and the Sri Lankan military in a brutal war that ended in May 2009 at Mulliyavaikkal, with tens of thousands of Tamil people, many of them noncombatants, dead. Skantha planted a memorial tree at a public park in Chicago in memory of Mulliavaikkal and said what happened to the Tamil community there should never be repeated anywhere, to any community.

We are deeply saddened by his untimely demise. His family is in our thoughts. We wish them strength at this time of grief.



Tharm Kugarajah - January 22 at 04:42 PM



“ Robert Sri CashOffer lit a candle in memory of Suntharalingam Skanthakumar



Robert Sri CashOffer - January 22 at 03:38 PM

SI

“ I have known Skantha from his days as a lecturer at the University of Jaffna. When I decided to come to the US for my graduate studies he encouraged me to apply for his alma mater and helped me secure admission. By the time I arrived at Maryland he had already left for Argonne National Lab but he made sure that I am taken care of all my needs in settling into the new place. When he came back to Maryland to work at NIST, I had the privilege to get to know more about him. We used to talk many topics from Physics to human rights in Sri Lanka. I will always remember Skantha for his smiling face and thoughtful decision making. Thank you for your memories and the social service. May Skantha's Soul Rest in Eternal Peace.

Sivanesan - January 22 at 03:29 PM

“ அதிகாலையில் தொலைபேசி அழைப்பு
 இன்னும் நித்திரை முறியவில்லை
 நான் நினைத்தேன் இதுவும் ஒரு வழமையான
 நண்பர்களின் வம்பிழுப்பு என்று
 காலை எழுந்து புலன செய்திகளை பார்க்க
 கழுத்தில் கத்தி ஒன்று இறங்கியது போன்றொரு உணர்வு
 நம்ம ஸ்கந்தாவா... நம்ப முடியவில்லை கண் மங்கியது
 நண்பன் ஒருவன் கேட்டான், சிரிக்காத படம் காட்டு.
 நம் ஸ்கந்தா சிரிக்காத ஒரு படம் காட்டு என்று
 கிடைக்கவில்லை எங்குமே அவன் சிரிக்காத படம் ஒன்று
 என்றுமே சிரித்த முகம். அதிர்ந்து பேசான் எம் நண்பன்..
 மரணம் இயற்கைதான். நட்புக்கு மரணமில்லைதான்
 ஆனால் நண்பனின் மரணம்.. மறுக்குது மனது
 புன்னகை செய்த முகம் உறங்குகிறது இப்போ
 பாடசாலை நண்பன் பலவருடம் கழித்து
 யாழ் பல்கலையில் சந்திப்பு பின் பல வருட இடைவெளியில்
 முகப்புத்தக மீளறிமுகம் உன் சமூக சேவை தெரிந்தது இங்கே
 மீண்டும் அன்னியோனியம் யாழ் இந்து அறுபதினிலே
 Zoom கலந்துரையாடல்கள் பல கண்டோம் பின்னிப்பினைந்தோம்
 எம்மக்கள் சமூகம் சார் விடயம் எனில் கூப்பிட்டுக் கதைப்பாயே
 எம்மக்கள் வாழ்வாதார உதவிகள் பல செய்தாயே.
 தமிழ் வளர தமிழ் மொழி வளர மகாநாடு பல வைத்தாயே
 உன் உதவி பெற்று முன்னேற்றம் கொண்ட மாணவர் பலர்
 எம்மக்கள் தமிழ் மக்கள் வாழ்வினிலே மாற்றம் வர உழைத்தாயே
 நீ நட்பு முள்ளிவாய்க்கால் மரமது உன்பெயரை சொல்லும் என்றும்
 இன்று ஏமாற்றம் தந்து நம்மை விட்டு போனாயே.
 சிந்தனை சிதறலாக நெடுந் தூரம் சென்றாலும்
 எம்மனதில் நீ இருப்பாய் என்றென்றும் எம் ஸ்கந்தா.

- நண்பன் புவனேந்திரன் -



MY

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Murugesu Yoganathan - January 22 at 10:10 AM

JF

“ I will always remember Skantha with a smile in his face. I had the opportunity of interacting with him when he was at the University of Maryland in College Park and doing his research at the National Institute of Standards and Technology NIST. He was a good scientist but he will always be remembered as a good man, a kind human being. With my deepest sympathies.

Jaime Fernandez-Baca - January 22 at 10:05 AM

R.

“ This heartfelt message is for you Skantha
Now you have passed away
I Never thought you would passed away so soon. miss you very dearly
You are so gentle and kind I wish I could still see your smiling face
Our school memories never fade away
Losing someone irreplaceable causes pain that's hard to hear
There are no words of comfort that could ever be sufficient for what has happened. Instead, I send prayers to God that he may lend your family the strength to get through this very difficult time.
School mate Sivanesan

R.Sivanesan - January 22 at 08:09 AM

RB

“ Reggie Bastiampillai lit a candle in memory of Suntharalingam Skanthakumar



Reggie Bastiampillai - January 22 at 08:00 AM

MY

“ Dear Karthiga, Aerahan, Shama, Subash and appa:
I am so sorry for your loss. Please accept my heartfelt condolences. My thoughts and prayers are with you and your family during this difficult time. May Skantha's Soul Rest in Peace!
M. Yoganathan
Syracuse, NY

Murugesu Yoganathan - January 21 at 10:51 PM

KS

“ Skantha Anna is a man of great honor, dignity and respect. I had the privilege of meeting him in May 2009, during the campaign 'Break the Silence USA- 1000 miles on foot from Chicago, IL to Washington, DC'.

Skantha Annan was a major source of strength to us during that journey. I appreciate everything he did to alleviate the difficulties we faced during that time- from providing mental, moral, emotional and financial support to being there for us from day 1 to its end in November 2009. Skantha Anna's contribution towards the wider human rights struggle of the Tamil Eelam people will always be remembered and appreciated by us and like minded people everywhere. He touched many of us with his genuine and good works and continues to inspire us all.

While joining you all in celebrating the life and legacy of Skantha Annan, I also extend my condolences to his wife, children, father and siblings.

Thank you for your service to humanity and for the betterment of mankind everywhere.

May your soul eternally rest in power Skantha Anna.

K'annan K'annan Sreekantha - January 21 at 08:28 PM

PA

“ There are no words to convey how terrible this is. You are in our prayers.

Naveena and Pathmakumar



Pathmakumar - January 21 at 04:42 PM

KN

“ ஸ்கந்தா! ஐம்பதாண்டுகளாய் உற்ற நண்பர்களாய் வாழ்ந்தோம். கருணையின்றி ஆண்டவனோ கண்ணிமைக்கும் பொழுதினிலே காலனை அனுப்பி காவு கொண்டு விட்டானே. உன் பிரிவு செய்தி பேரிடியாய் வந்ததையா வாட்சப்பில். அது கனவாக இருக்கவேண்டும் கண்விழிக்கும்போது உன் வாட்சப் செய்தி எதேனும் வராதா என்று ஏங்கினேன். ஆனால் அங்கோ உன் படங்களும் செய்தியுமாய் வந்தவண்ணமே உள்ளதையா. நண்பா பூவுலகில் கடமை எல்லாம் முடியவில்லை எங்களையும் குடும்பத்தாரையும் ஏங்கவிட்டு பொன்னுலகத்திற்கு ஏகியதேன் அவசரமாய். நீ பிறருக்கு உதவுதெற்கென்றே பிறவி எடுத்த புண்ணிய ஆத்மா. ஆண்டவனுடன் போராடி உன் உயிரை மீட்டுவரும் சக்தி எனக்கில்லை. ஆதலினால் இறைவினிடம் வேண்டுகின்றேன் நான் அங்கு வரும்வரை என் நண்பனின் ஆத்மாவை சாந்தியோடு உன் பாதார விந்தத்தில் பணியசெய்.

ஆருயிர் நண்பனை இழந்து தவிக்கும் நித்தி

kathiresu Nithiyanantharajah - January 21 at 12:44 PM

SS

“ I know Skantha since 1981. He was one year senior to me at University of Peradeniya. he was very helpful and whenever we have problems or issues with our assignments we always go to him and he will help us even in the wee hours. In 1986 he joined University of Jaffna as an assistant lecturer and I worked under him as a junior assistant lecturer. He was excellent in teaching and I learnt a lot from his teaching and the way he talk to the students. That time he implemented that all the lab instructors have to teach their lab courses in English. This really help several of us to polish our English and I am really thankful to Skantha for this initiative. When we moved to US, we still continued our interactions scientifically and personally. He is a well know scientist in his field and I always admire his scientific work. I lost a very good colleague, friend and a mentor! I still cannot believe that Skantha is no more! Rest in Peace my dear friend Skantha ! Our prayers and thoughts are with Skantha's family.



Shuttha Shutthanandan - January 21 at 12:28 PM

KA

“ *Kalaravi lit a candle in memory of Suntharalingam Skanthakumar*



Kalaravi - January 21 at 12:14 PM

JJ

“ *There are no words to express the shock and sorrow came with the news of Skantha's sudden departure. May the almighty give the strength to the family and friends to cope with the loss.*
Jeyapal

Jeyapal Jey - January 21 at 11:15 AM

GS

“ *What an amazing human being Skantha was. Peace to his family and friends.*

Giselle Sandi - January 21 at 10:04 AM

SS

“ *Thanks for sending details
It's really sad to hear the young man Skanthan Anna passed away our deepest sympathy to Karthiga Acca and children*

Please pass our sympathy and condolences to Varsukie Annie And her family

We will pray the soul RIP

Loves and prayers from

Kumar Thambi

Kunchu

Arujun & Tess

Archana

Melbourne

Australia

satchi sivanandakumar - January 20 at 07:52 PM

SM

“ Please accept our heartfelt condolences to Skantha’s family and friends. I have known Skantha from 1970’s from Jaffna Hindu primary school to date and he always had a lovely smile and never hurt anyone.
May his soul rest in peace and our thoughts and prayers for the family at this difficult time.

Sukirthan JHC school mate - January 20 at 06:29 PM

E(

“ #USTAG #TamilAmericans MOURN the untimely passing of Dr. #Skantha_Skanthakumar of Chicago. #Skantha was a leading #Tamil activist, Community organizer, #HRDefender, physicist. Deepest condolences to Family. RIP. -United State Tamil Action Group-
@CeylonToday @jmccdun @TNAMediaoffice
<https://twitter.com/UstpacAdvocacy/status/1483941699630120960>
The Mullivaaykaal Memorial Tree in Bolingbrook Park he established:
<https://twitter.com/UstpacAdvocacy/status/1483943856584511490>
The Tamil sage Valluvar statue he adorned:
<https://twitter.com/UstpacAdvocacy/status/1483946942925266955>



Elias Jeyarajah (USTAG) - January 20 at 05:57 PM