

Savindhi Perera-Jainudeen

Savindhi Perera-Jainudeen is a well-known Sri Lankan community youth leader and emerging youth leader in the South Asian and Australian communities. Savindhi is 25 years of age, born in Melbourne, and was educated at Camberwell Girls Grammar School. At the age of 16, she was selected as 1 of 20 young Victorians by the Australian Government to engage in policymaking at the Australian Parliament for the Australia 2020 Youth Summit. She has completed a Bachelor of Economics with majors in Economics and Politics and Master of Diplomacy and International Trade, which were both undertaken at Monash University. She was also awarded a Monash University Ancora Imparo Student Leadership Scholarship.

By profession, Savindhi was selected and completed the Victorian Public Service graduate program for one year after her tertiary studies. Currently, Savindhi works as an Economist for the Victorian Government at the Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources. Through the Victorian Public Service Young Professionals Network, Savindhi has been selected to shadow the Deputy Secretary for Employment, Investment and Trade. Over her last four working years in Government, Savindhi has also worked for the Department of Treasury and Finance and Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning. Savindhi is a founder executive committee member of the Economics Society of Australia Young Professionals and member of the Australia Institute of International Affairs.

Savindhi has been an active member in the Sri Lankan community from the age of 12. She is currently the President of the Committee for Sri Lanka, where she is the first-ever youth president. The Committee for Sri Lanka is a high profile organisation in the Sri Lankan community that has produced 6 members that have obtained Order of Australia medals. Some events organised include the Sri Lanka Independence Day celebrations co-hosted with the Sri Lankan Consulate Office in Victorian and raising funds for the 'Walk to School Project' to provide school shoes for children in Sri Lanka where funds raised were matched by Rotary organisations from all over the world. Savindhi was awarded Rotary International's Paul Harris award for her commendable leadership on this project. Savindhi is passionate about youth empowerment and has increased the engagement of young Sri Lankans in community activities including bilateral relations between Sri Lanka and Australia. She understands that the youth have a lot to learn from older generations and traditions to uphold, whereby early involvement bridges the gap and facilitates two-way learning.

Savindhi's contribution to the Sri Lankan community also includes being the Executive Director of the Miss/Mr/Mrs/Teen Miss/Teen Mr Sri Lanka Australia Pageant which provides a platform to become ambassadors for young Sri Lankan Australians. This experience allows youth to learn about and engage with their culture through wearing traditional outfits, meeting Sri Lankan leaders in Australia and Sri Lanka, and raising awareness for charitable causes. This program has trained over 100 participants over the last four years. Savindhi is also the owner of Savish, a Sri Lankan Bridal Wear label, that provides access to Sri Lankan ethnic outfits, jewellery and advice on traditional wedding components. It is a service that is greatly appreciated by young Sri Lankans that want to represent the Sri Lankan culture but do not know how. Savindhi has also worked for and closely with the Sri Lankan Consulate office in Melbourne and a member of the Aus-Lanka Business Council.

Savindhi is a known young leader in the Sri Lankan community and has been asked to represent young Sri Lankan-Australians at forums such as in boardroom meetings with the Sri Lankan Foreign Minister, AsiaLink Diplomacy and the High Commissioner for Sri Lanka in Australia. For her efforts in the Sri Lankan community, Savindhi was awarded the Young Sri Lankan High Achiever and Leadership Award from the former Consul for Sri Lanka in Victoria.

Recently, Savindhi has become a recognised youth leader in the South Asian community. She is the Executive Director of the Miss/Mr/Mrs South Asia Australia Pageant, which brings together communities from six countries: India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Sri Lanka. This platform raises awareness for domestic violence, a cause which the participants advocate for and is a pressing issue in the South Asian community. The Minister for Multicultural Affairs met with Savindhi and the South Asian ambassadors raised from this platform to discuss the important activities they will be carrying out.

Savindhi enjoys attending and speaking at multicultural events, engaging with people from different communities, learning about and embracing other cultures, advocating for the importance of diversity and discussing critical issues in the multicultural community in Victoria.

