



FORMAN CHRISTIAN COLLEGE
(A CHARTERED UNIVERSITY)

Rector's Update

The latest news and announcements from Dr. Jonathan Addleton

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May 2023 marked the beginning of the hot season in Lahore; temperatures aside, it was also dominated by an impressive list of visitors, speakers, and special events covering a wide range of topics and reflecting Forman at its best. I often comment that a university should be a vibrant place where many diverse voices are heard and that was certainly the case over the last four weeks.

Forman's Center for Public Policy and Governance (CPPG) sponsored a highly successful "International Hybrid Conference" on *"Ethnic Nationalism and Politicized Religion in the Pakistan-Afghanistan Borderland"*. Joining with CPPG Director Dr. Saeed Shafqat, Charles Ramsey, who previously taught at Forman and is now at Baylor University, played a major role in organizing this event, the proceedings of which will be published later this year as a special issue of *Review of Faith and International Affairs* (Routledge). Speakers presenting papers joined in via Zoom from the US, Japan, Egypt, Australia, Germany, and even the University of Kabul in Afghanistan.

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During the first week of May, the Faculty of Humanities organized a guest lecture on *"The Role of Communications in Reducing Health Inequalities in Socially Disadvantaged Populations"*, led by Dr. Sayyed F.A. Shah, an expert in health communications and an Associate Professor of Communications at Jacksonville State University in Alabama.

Also, the Chemistry Department organized a field trip for Bachelor's and MPhil students to visit the well-known pharmacy company Herbion Pakistan, providing an opportunity to learn how plant-based pharmaceutical products are manufactured. Faculty members Dr. Dildar Ahmed, Dr. Athar Yaseen, Dr. Muhammad Tariq Qamar, and Dr. Hina Abed led the trip.

Following a detailed report on this interesting field trip, I was encouraged to receive a follow-up e-mail from Associate Chemistry Professor Dr. Seemal Jelani highlighting the importance of positive relationships between faculty and students as part of any successful university experience. Against this backdrop, she also included a newsletter highlighting ongoing efforts in this area, accompanied by an especially timely quote: *"Better than a thousand days of diligent study is one day with a great teacher"*.

Forman's Office of Research, Innovation, and Commercialization (ORIC) sponsored several events, including a motivational talk on *"Academia and Industrial Collaboration"*, delivered by Aezaz Hussain, founder and CEO of Systems Limited. Originally postponed because of the political situation, it was rescheduled for a later date.

Joining with our Computer Science Department, ORIC facilitated a talk and an MOU between FCCU and Knowledge Streams, a new initiative to encourage students to consider an IT career led by Knowledge Streams CEO Dr. Sohail Naqvi, former Vice Chancellor at LUMS and founding Vice Chancellor of the University of Central Asia.

In addition, ORIC organized an information session on patents led by Yasser Mahmood from United Trademark and Patent Services, a major international company founded in 1949 that specializes in intellectual property rights. Similarly, ORIC assisted in hosting a two-day workshop on *"Project Formulation"* with support from the Pakistan Science Foundation involving participants from not only Forman but also several other Lahore universities.





On June 6, our School of Management will be sponsoring the Second Forman International Conference on Business and Innovation (FICBI '23), encouraging academics, researchers, entrepreneurs, and students from diverse backgrounds to share the latest trends, development, and ideas.

Meanwhile, our newest Student Society -- the Finance Society -- organized its first event; titled "*Kick Start Trading with Binance*", it attracted a large audience of those interested in Bitcoin and other less traditional approaches to finance.

Other academic departments and student societies have also been very busy in recent weeks, including Sociology which sponsored an Online workshop on "*How to Write Monitoring and Evaluation Reports*", requested by alumni who noted that employers especially value this skill; Philosophy which organized an excellent annual conference featuring presentations by Dr. Amber Riaz from LUMS and Forman's own Dr. Qalandar Memon on "*How Philosophy Shapes Culture*"; and English which organized a wonderful Literary Festival as well as two poster presentations, one on American playwrights that included Zoom participants from Germany and India and another on "*Research Methods in Literature, Language and Linguistics*".

I am happy to note that Forman students from our Mathematics Department achieved remarkable success at the "*Falcon Hunt Online Mathematics Contest*", with M. Abdullah Kamal Batta earning a prestigious Gold Medal.

In addition, students from our Computer Science Department secured the second runner-up position at *COMPPEC 2023*, receiving recognition for their innovative "*Sunno*" application designed to aid Pakistan's deaf community. Sponsored by Pakistan's National University of Science and Technology (NUST), this high-profile, two-day Computer Project Exhibition and Competition was launched more than ten years ago and remains one of Pakistan's premiere events for highlighting student projects.

Let me also congratulate Rizwana Shami, Associate Professor of Chemistry in the College section, who recently completed her PhD from the University of the Punjab. The title of her very timely PhD dissertation was "*Fabrication of Functionalized Composite Membranes for the Removal of Natural Organic Matter from Wastewater*".

In addition, Ayesha Junaid, who teaches at Forman's Center for Language Development, recently completed her PhD in Linguistics from the University of Management and Technology (UMT) in Lahore. Her dissertation was titled "*An Analytical Study on Doctor-Nurse-Patient Communication to Improve Healthcare Practices in Lahore*".



Visitors to Forman this month included Bilal Musharraf, son of General Pervez Musharraf, former president of Pakistan, and a proud "Old Formanite" who, according to Bilal, often happily recalled his student days at Forman. One purpose of his trip was to return a shield given to his father on a visit to Forman for a "Special Convocation" in 2003 -- a shield that will eventually be displayed along with other Forman artifacts in a prominent place, perhaps in the new Campus Center.

Also, Ambassador (and "Old Formanite") Noel Khokhar gave a thought-provoking reflection to a large and appreciative audience on his tenure as Pakistan's Ambassador to Ukraine in a talk sponsored by both CPPG and our Business School. Having only recently concluded his assignment in Kiev he described in fascinating detail Ukraine's response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, as well as his role in assisting more than 2,000 Pakistani students, many of them medical students, in the early days of that conflict.

Other visitors during May included former Forman Board Chairman Dr. Peter J. David visiting from the UK, and current Forman Board member George Boota visiting from the US, both of whom remain actively involved in various research, training, and community development programs in Pakistan.



Forman's Marketing and Outreach Department arranged a "Post Graduate Open House" outside Sinclair Hall in late May, combining at one event representatives from our various schools and departments offering advanced degrees while also providing prospective students with details on programs, facilities, opportunities, and admission criteria. Students attended from several Lahore universities. Relevant offices, including Admissions, Academic Services, Career Services and Internships, Financial Aid and Scholarships, International Education, and Residential Life were also represented.

As we admit students for our next Forman class, I am pleased to note that FCCU will be launching two new MPhil programs in Fall 2023, one in Education and another in Mass Communication, both areas of interest that are vital to Pakistan's future. Also, our Computer Science Department will be introducing an MS in Software Engineering and an MS in Data Science in Fall 2023.

Mass Communication students arriving for the first time in Fall 2023 will benefit from our new Media Center, situated next to the CPPG annex and including a state-of-the-art radio studio, television studio, and video editing facility. Contributions from Friends of Forman, as well as the German aid program GIZ, helped make this Media Center possible. A special shoutout also to Rachel Hassan, now in Canada, for her work in helping to plan and launch this wonderful facility.

The Media Center will be officially inaugurated on June 7 and the plaque unveiled at that time includes a striking Biblical reference, underscoring the appropriate journalistic response to both propaganda and "fake news": *"Examine all things carefully, holding on to that which is good"* (First Thessalonians 5:21).



As the FCCU Admissions season moves forward, we look forward to enrolling many new students at all levels -- college, university, and post-graduate -- for the Fall 2023 semester. Our research shows that Forman students learn about Forman primarily through social media and word-of-mouth (including from in-person conversations with faculty, staff, students, parents, and alumni). If you know potential students interested in attending Forman, by all means, talk to them about your experience at FCCU!

Even as we strengthen our post-graduate programs, we offer a helping hand to those from less privileged backgrounds aspiring to be the first in their family to attend college. Once again, those efforts include an eight-week summer tutoring program sponsored by our Church Relations Office that this year enrolled more than 200 students who hope to attend various colleges in the Lahore area in Fall 2023 including Forman.

As head of the Church Relations Office, Dr. Farzand Masih routinely invites guest speakers to address students in the tutoring program as part of an effort to motivate and inspire them -- including only a couple of weeks ago his daughter Sarah Farzand who is working toward a PhD in Astrophysics at the University of Helsinki and whose area of specialization includes "collider signatures of the electroweak baryogenesis"!

Both Vice Rector Dr. Trimble and myself had the honor of attending the annual lunch hosted by Forman's Academic Advising Office, headed by Dr. Atiq-ur-Rehman. As in past years, I much appreciate the many members of faculty who volunteer to serve as academic advisors, providing important guidance for our many students as they chart their way through what to a first-year student often appears to be a formidable and even intimidating academic process.



Increasingly, students, staff, and faculty are expressing interest in environmental concerns. To mark World Environment Day 2023 on June 5, Forman's Department of Environmental Sciences is organizing a one-day event on *"Tackling Plastic Pollution Together: Steps Towards a Circular Economy"*. The program includes speakers from both industry and the NGO sector as well as a display of plastic items suitable for reuse and recycling.

In response to a student request for additional information on programs designed to address sustainability concerns, I talked at length to Chief Engineer Tajammul John about some of the positive steps we have taken in recent years to move our campus in a "greener" direction. Among other things, he mentioned that conventional fluorescent lights have largely been replaced with energy-efficient LED lights across the campus. Also, we are working on a solar master plan for the entire campus that we hope to begin implementing during the coming months.

"Play Ball" -- with these unfamiliar words (in Pakistan, at least!), Forman officially inaugurated the first purpose-built university baseball field in Pakistan. Coach Brian Furches along with Global Sports Partnership, was the catalyst for this landmark event, and guest players came from several area institutions including the University of the Punjab. Although a relatively new sport in this country, it may surprise some readers to learn that Pakistan has an active Baseball Association, competes internationally and has won a number of medals in various South Asia-specific baseball competitions in recent years.



Also on the sports front, it was gratifying to learn that four of our College student-athletes have been selected to participate in the Pakistan Cricket Board's U-19 Regional Championships: first-year students Ahmed Faraz (Jhang Region) and Sharwan Kumar (Lahore Region) as well as second year students Muhammad Numan Khan (Lahore Region) and Azan Khan (Mirpur Azad Kashmir Region). Our female athletes are also achieving success including at the First HEC Intervarsity Weightlifting Championships recently held at Government College University in Lahore: Wafia Khalid secured third position in the 81 kg category while Eeman Fayyaz placed fourth in the 57 kg category.



I was pleased to join our Engineering team in officially launching an extensive renovation of the Forman College's historic D Block, also named the Dr. Peter J. David Building. Rupees 30 million has been set aside for this important initiative which should be complete by the start of the Fall semester in early October 2023. I regard D Block with its distinctive high ceilings, red bricks, and green window frames as one of the most attractive buildings on campus -- and this will be the first renovation involving this particular structure since its completion in the early 1940s, more than eighty years ago.



Faculty publications that came to my attention this month include *"Maternal Stress and Health Quality of Life in Mothers with Special Needs Children"* written by two Forman professors, Sara Rizvi Jafree (Sociology) and Syeda Khadija Burhan (Education). The article was published in *Advances in Women's Studies*, a Turkish-based academic journal issued by Ataturk University.

Also, Chief Engineer Tajammul John mentioned to me that Daud Nosham, a member of Forman's engineering team between 2017 and 2021 and now a PhD candidate at the University of Nebraska, just had a research paper accepted for presentation at the upcoming American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers annual convention in Tampa, Florida. The paper focuses on building environments using a health-focused rather than an energy-centered approach, with a view toward better understanding how improved air quality can improve academic performance in schools.

Thanks to our Quality Enhancement Cell (QEC) headed by Sarah Suleman for producing the Spring 2023 *Campus Profile*. For those interested, total enrolment in all programs was placed at 8,388 students (5,097 at the university level and 3,291 at the college level). Full-time faculty numbered 365, including 261 at the university level and 104 at the college level. Finally, FCCU now offers 59 different programs including 26 Bachelor's programs, 19 Master's/MPhil programs, and 5 PhD programs.

We look forward to welcoming Dr. Jim Appleton, former president of the University of Redlands in California, to our campus in early June. A long-time member of the Friends of Forman Board, he will assist us as we launch a new strategy formulation process to replace our current strategy covering the period 2018 through 2023. Many people from within the Forman community will participate as this process unfolds during the coming weeks and months and I welcome input from everyone!



Finally, it was my honor to attend an impressive ceremony at Aiwan-e-Sadar in Islamabad in early May, organized to showcase Education Excellence in Pakistan. The highlight of this event -- and indeed the entire month of May -- was to meet Dr. Arif Alvi, President of Pakistan, receiving on behalf of Forman Christian College (A Chartered University) the Education Excellence Award 2023 from the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry, yet another example of the recognition and respect accorded to our institution as we mark the 20th anniversary of denationalisation.



DR. JONATHAN ADDLETON
RECTOR

