



FORMAN CHRISTIAN COLLEGE  
(A CHARTERED UNIVERSITY)

# Rector's Update

*The latest news and announcements from Dr. Jonathan Addleton*

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## Dear Fellow Formanite,

Christmas Greetings and Happy New Year! This is the 24th edition of the monthly *Rector's Update*, marking the first two years of my time as Rector of Forman Christian College (A Chartered University). It has been a gratifying twenty-four months and I consider myself very blessed to be part of the Forman community.

Fiona and I are remaining in Lahore throughout this Holiday Season and continue to enjoy the wide variety of celebrations taking place on the Forman campus during these weeks, complete with lights, parties, carols, and other events. No doubt this celebratory spirit will continue through the end of this year and beyond.

We purposefully put up lights early to ensure that they added to the atmosphere at our first full set of three in-person Commencement activities in three years: the Commencement ceremony itself; a reception for family and friends afterward; and the traditional party for the graduates of the Class of 2022! Governor of Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman spoke at the Commencement and it was wonderful to have our graduates back on campus for the weekend.

This year's class included 897 receiving Bachelor's degrees and 249 receiving post-graduate degrees, bringing the number of graduates in the Class of 2022 to well over 1,100. Aima Kashif with a GPA of 4.00 delivered the Valedictory address at the Baccalaureate level while Rabia Idrees and Rabida Latif delivered the Post Graduate Valedictory speeches.

Our visitors from Friends of Forman -- Executive Director Roger Dermody and Board Chairman David Renwick -- were also able to see our lighted campus before their return to the United States. One of the highlights of the last part of their trip was a visit to Youhanabad where they visited with the family of one of our needs-based scholarship students, seeing firsthand the pride that parents take when one of their children become the first in their family to attend university.



Forman's Research and Review Club continues to make outstanding contributions to the Forman community through its efforts to encourage research and publications by various members of our faculty. Indeed, its regular newsletter is a catalog of achievements and successes in terms of faculty research, conference participation, and publications. Occasionally, it also brings distinguished faculty from other universities to campus, as was recently the case with an intriguing and inspiring lecture by Dr. Iftikhar H. Malik -- Professor Emeritus at Bath Spa University in the UK -- who spoke on *The British/Muslim Interface Before Orientalism and Since: Researching Female Narratives*.

We have been pleased to welcome back to campus Associate Professor Dr. Hira Khalid, returning from a Fulbright Fellowship in which she served as a Visiting Professor at the University of Minnesota Twin Cities. While there, she worked on a project titled *Discovery and Development of Allosteric Cyclin-Dependent Kinase 2 Inhibitors for Non-Toxic Ovarian Cancer Chemotherapy*; contributed to two publications; and participated in the Fall meetings of the American Chemical Society (ACS), providing a poster presentation based on the work of her PhD students.

Associate Professor Shinho Chung and Environmental Studies student Zia Ul Islam joined more than 300 others in attending the 8th International Water Industry Conference in Deagu, South Korea. Pakistan was an area of special interest, given the recent flooding. Dr. Shinho presented on *Challenges and Possibilities of Innovative Research on Wastewater Treatment Using Membrane Bioreactors*. Meanwhile, Zia Ul Islam joined more than 100 researchers in the conference poster competition, securing third place for his presentation on the *Evaluation of Different Cell Entrapping Beads and Air Scouring for Improvement of Performance of Quorum Quenching MBR*. After the conference, both Dr. Shinho and Zia Ul Islam attended seminars on the latest developments in wastewater treatment at both Yonsei University and the University of Seoul before returning to Pakistan.

Dr. Ayra Indrias Petras, Assistant Professor in Forman's Political Science Department, was the featured speaker in a well-received Webinar sponsored by the Center for South Asia at Stanford University, speaking on the topic *Intersection of Caste, Religion, and Occupation: The Story of Christian Sweepers in Pakistan*. Dr. Sharika Thiranagama, Associate Professor of Anthropology at Stanford, served as moderator.

Meanwhile, Forman's Sociology Department hosted the Fourth Annual Conference on Marginalized Populations, presenting empirical research by various scholars on marginalized groups such as religious minorities, urban impoverished groups, informal workers, vulnerable women groups, and members of Pakistan's "third gender" community.

Looking ahead, Dr. Sikandar Hayat has been asked to play a key role in the upcoming Population Association of Pakistan's 23rd Annual Population Research Conference in Islamabad, serving as Co-Chair for Plenary Session One on *Population Growth, Human Development, and Social Cohesion*. Forman Sociology Professor Dr. Mohammad Vaqas Ali will serve as a Panelist at that same session.

Forman's own Population Research Center, headed by Dr. Mohammad Vaqas Ali, also organized a Webinar, this one involving Dr. Naeem-uz-Zafar, Chief Statistician at the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, speaking on Digital Population and the Housing Census (2022).

In addition, Forman's Population Research Center joined with a number of other institutions -- including similar centers at the Institute of Business Administration (IBA) in Karachi, the University of Peshawar, and the Balochistan University of Information Technology, Engineering and Management Sciences -- to host a joint Webinar assessing the devastating impact of the recent floods on Pakistan.

After becoming the Routledge Series Editor for South Asian Literature, Forman Professor Fatima Syeda has co-edited (with Zeenat Khan) a new book titled *Narratives of Trauma in South Asian Literature* that includes essays covering Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal, and Afghanistan. One of Dr. Fatima Syeda's own essays is included in this new volume, titled *The Construction and Dissolution of the Masculine Self: Re-Reading the Unspeakable Trauma in Sorayya Khan's Noor*.

Two Forman professors received notable recognition during the past month in the form of awards:

First, Dr. Ghazala Irfan, head of Forman's Philosophy Department and President of the Pakistan Japan Cultural Association in Lahore, was awarded *The Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Rays* from the Government of Japan for her work in promoting Japanese culture as well as friendly relations between Pakistan and Japan.

Second, Dr. Arfa Sayeda Zehra was recognized with a *Lifetime Achievement Award* from her alma mater Government College Lahore for her contributions as a leading "educationist and rights activist", joining other "Old Ravian" luminaries this year including Dr. Muhammad Amjad Saqib (founder of Akhuwat); Ramiz Raja (Cricket Board Chairman); and Shamsad Ahmed (former Foreign Secretary), among others. Also, Dr. Arfa was invited to deliver the Convocation Address at the 29th Convocation of the Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture in Karachi.

I was intrigued to recently learn that "Old Formanite" Mohammad Khan Achakzai, Governor of Balochistan during 2013-2018, has been involved in efforts to preserve the memory of his late father Abdul Samad Khan Achakzai (1907-1973), a Pushto nationalist, politician and literary figure. First imprisoned in 1930 during the British period for agitating for independence, he spoke Arabic, Persian, Urdu, English, Balochi, and Sindhi but loved his mother tongue Pushto best of all. I had the honor of first meeting Mohammad Khan Achakzai when he returned to campus in January 2021 to visit his old hostel room in Griswold Hall. Although I did not realize it at the time, he was even then working on an English translation of his father's Pushto-language memoir *Zama Zhrwand aw Zhrwandoon* ("The Way I Lived").





Congratulations to another Forman graduate, Abdullah Burki, for being selected to participate in the US Department of State's International Visitor Leadership Program focused on *Youth and Civic Engagement -- Youth Activism in India and Pakistan*. As a Political Science major at Forman, Abdullah Burki worked with former Political Science Professor Dr. Ryan Brasher on a number of topics including those related to Identity and Belonging among Afghan refugees. As a participant in the International Visitor Leadership Program, he will hold discussions with others involved in youth and civic engagement in Ohio, Georgia, Florida, and Washington, DC.

While on the topic of alumni, I recently received a note from a friend in Albania working at the Lezhe Academic Center in that country. He included a screenshot of the textbook *World Cultures: A Global Mosaic* used at the Center, co-authored by Forman graduate Iftikhar Ahmed and published by Prentice-Hall. As he added at the end of his note, "You are impacting the world!"

Meanwhile, our Advancement Office recently honored Forman faculty and staff who contributed to various Forman Scholarships funds in 2021-2022. More than Rupees 35 million was raised during this period, with Rupees 3.2 million of this amount contributed by 112 separate members of our faculty and staff.

More than 1,600 students visited Forman's bi-annual International Education Expo, held on our Main Ground in November and involving representatives from a large number of international colleges and universities in the UK, Australia, Malaysia, the US and elsewhere.

In College news, the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Pakistan (ICAP) congratulated two graduating students -- Muhammad Hadi Zahur and Abuhuraira -- as ranking "among the top 20 students in their respective disciplines" in this year's Lahore Board examinations. Both students have also been offered the opportunity to compete for the Edhi Chartered Accountant Talent Scholarship.

As one astonishing reflection of the long history of Forman Christian College, the College Sports Department hosted the *135th Annual Forman Athletics Championships* on Forman's Main Ground with Vice Rector Dr. Ivan Suneel as Chief Guest, surely the most long-running athletic competition anywhere in Pakistan! Head of the Department of Health and Physical Education Babar Kamil joined his colleagues to organize the event which involved approximately 400 student athletes. Sameer Buttar received the best Athlete Award while Kanan Khan was declared Second Best Athlete.

As many friends at Forman are aware, I was born and spent much of my early childhood in Murree, graduating from Murree Christian School (MCS) in 1975. Although MCS has since shut its doors, MCS alumni have contributed more than \$65,000 to support an "MCS Lounge" in Forman's new Campus Center now under construction, \$1,000 for each year of its 65-year existence. We look forward to dedicating that lounge and indeed the entire new Campus Center next year.



At the same time, my MCS connections continue in other ways including in terms of forging new links with FCCU: over the past few weeks, several MCS graduates have lectured at Forman including Graham Duncan who gave two talks at Forman's Center for Public Policy and Governance (CPPG) reflecting on his career as a senior British civil servant; Andrew Wilder from the US Institute for Peace (USIP) in Washington DC who joined with eminent journalist Rashid Ahmed for another CPPG talk, this one focused on missed opportunities for peace in Afghanistan; and Dr. Daniel Brown, Director of the Institute for Study of Religion in the Middle East in Istanbul, who delivered two talks to student and faculty in Forman's Religious Studies Department. I have always maintained that education can have a life-long impact and these examples from the small school that I attended in the foothills of the Himalayas long ago are yet one more example of that.

Once again, thank you for your interest and contributions to Forman and all the best for 2023!



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