



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,

Highlights from the Rector's Office for this month include a ten-day trip to England and Northern Ireland, partly for personal reasons but partly also to advance Forman connections in the UK. This included four separate engagements, each of which was both informative and gratifying:

First, I joined Dr. Nayer in personally awarding an Honorary Doctorate degree to Dr. James Shera who along with his wife studied Political Science at Forman and graduated in 1969. He subsequently migrated to Rugby where he served first as Councillor and then Mayor, the first UK citizen of Pakistani origin to preside over a major town anywhere in England. Afterward, the current Mayor of Rugby hosted a reception in Dr. Shera's honor at City Hall.

Second, I visited the Pakistan High Commission in London, meeting with the Deputy High Commissioner, even as the High Commissioner was attending the opening ceremony of the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham which eventually resulted in two gold medals for Pakistan including one in weight lifting and another in the javelin!

Third, I met more than a dozen Forman alumni at the nearby Beirut Restaurant in Knightsbridge, hosted by Bilal Warraich, President of Forman's UK/Europe Alumni Association, along with Esther Das (Vice President) and Eraas Haider (General Secretary). Several other "Old Formanites" joined us for dinner including some who have been long established in the UK and others who arrived more recently as Forman graduates seeking to further their education in Britain. Both Dr. Nayer and Dr. Kauser Abdullah Malik who happened to be in the UK at the time joined the Forman alumni for this engaging and enjoyable dinner.

Fourth, I spoke at Ballywillan Presbyterian Church in Portrush on the Northern Ireland coast, providing an update on Forman to a congregation that over the years has supported FCCU in a variety of ways. Former Forman Philosophy Professor Dr. Sean Moran who taught during the winter term joined in the service, playing a beautiful hymn on the same musical instrument that he sometimes used to memorably start his philosophy classes at Forman.

Later we joined Dr. Moran for lunch hosted by Ron and Hilary McCartney who taught math and statistics at Forman for many years. All three former members of the Forman faculty have enduring memories of their time at FCCU and asked me to pass on greetings to their many friends in Pakistan.

Prior to the trip to the UK, I had another wonderful encounter related to "Old 'Formanites", this time involving a trip to Islamabad to meet with Roedad Khan who joined Pakistan's then-new civil service in 1949 and went on to become one of the most distinguished civil servants in Pakistan's history, holding a variety of senior posts across the country; his son and grandson, both doctors, also hosted the visit.

Roedad Khan is 99 years old yet vividly recalls his early encounters with Quaid-i-Azam as well as the early years of Pakistan's independence. His memoir chronicling his years at Forman is also both touching and revealing, describing FCCU as it was more than 80 years ago in a way that we still aspire to today:

*In 1940 I returned to Lahore to join the Forman Christian College. I thoroughly enjoyed its liberal, tolerant and progressive environment, which has left a deep imprint on my life . . . My association with Jamsheed Marker in particular had a great influence on my life. It was Jamsheed who introduced me to western classical music and I recollect warm, summer evenings spent listening to Beethoven's "Moonlight Sonata" on the roof of our Garden Town residence. I was fortunate in being exposed to such a talented group of students belonging to different walks of life, and with a variety of backgrounds, all different from mine.*

Parenthetically, "Old Formanites" continue to be represented in senior positions to this day, as reflected most recently with the appointment of Sibtain Khan as the Honorable Speaker of the Punjab Assembly and Pervaiz Elahi as the Honorable Chief Minister of Punjab.

In other alumni news, Ajwa Zulfiqar, a Sociology major who graduated from Forman in 2020, has been awarded a fully funded scholarship to pursue her Master's in Anthropology at the University of Toronto starting in Fall 2022.

On the academic front, I am pleased to note that the Pharmacy Council of Pakistan has approved the initial accreditation status for Forman's pharmacy program headed by Dr. Abdul Haleem Khan, a milestone in this relatively new but increasingly popular academic offering at Forman. In this regard, let me also give a "shout out" to Chemistry professors Dr. Muhammad Saeed Iqbal and Dr. Dildar Ahmed for their pivotal roles in conceiving the idea of a pharmacy program at a liberal arts institution and then launching it at Forman!

Forman's Political Science Department announced a South Asia Partnership Pakistan grant of Rs. 500,000 under the Nigar Ahmad Research and Advocacy Fund to Folio Books to publish a book authored by Forman faculty member Dr. Ayra Indrias Patras. Based on Dr. Ayra's Ph.D. dissertation, the book explores the intersection of gender, caste, and labor in the context of marginalized women who belong to religious minorities in Pakistan.

Forman's Department of Mass Communication ran a series of one-month social marketing campaigns supervised by Assistant Professor of Mass Communications Syed Muhammad Saqib Saleem, specifically designed to promote community engagement related to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The campaigns focused on various social issues such as climate change, water conservation, women's empowerment, mental health, food waste, and transgender rights. As part of their assignment, students first designed campaigns and then implemented them through various mechanisms such as podcasts, videos, seminars, posters, and community visits.

Also, Forman's Population Research Center hosted a webinar featuring Dr. Afshan Tahir from the Punjab Population Welfare Department titled *Landscape Analysis of the Family Planning Situation in Punjab*. As part of another webinar, this one sponsored by the Education University of Hong Kong, Dr. Ashar Johnson Khokhar, Associate Professor in the Department of Education, spoke on *Discovering Pakistan, the State and its People: (Mis)representation of Diversity in Education Material/Textbooks*".

I sometimes hesitate to mention faculty publications in the monthly *Rector's Update*, given the realization that not all such publications come to my attention and are recognized in this fashion. However, I was very pleased to see that Dr. Abeeda Qureshi, Assistant Professor in Forman's Political Science Department, had her article titled *Reserved Seats for Women in Pakistan: Reinforcement of Patriarchy and Powerlessness (2002-2018)* published in the journal *Women's Studies International Forum*.



Also, Sociology major Ms. Rania Khan published her final year thesis in the HEC-recognized journal *Global Digital & Print Media Review* under the title *The Need for Interventions to Reduce Time Spent on Social Media and Strengthening of Family Relationships in University Students*. It is always notable when student work is published in an academic journal -- congratulations to Rania Khan as well as her professors for this wonderful achievement.

Meanwhile, Ms. Fatima Abid who is also majoring in Sociology presented her final year thesis at the International Social Sciences Conference hosted by the University of Lahore. Titled *COVID-19, Online Teaching and Its Impact on the Wellbeing of University Teachers in Lahore*, it too provides an important example of a Forman student researching a topic of special interest and then presenting it before a wider audience consisting largely of faculty and other researchers.

Let me take the opportunity to congratulate Dr. Mehwish Raza -- Assistant Professor and Dean of Forman's Faculty of Education -- who was selected as the principal candidate for the Fulbright Post Doctoral program for 2022-2023. As a participant in this prestigious program, her program is scheduled to begin in Spring 2023, possibly at Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College, Arizona State University.

Last month I reported on the Forman faculty's success in partnering with the Global Liberal Arts Alliance (GLAA), specifically related to its Global Course Connections initiative. The full list of awardees from Forman's Department of Education is now available and includes not only Dr. Mehwish Raza but also Syed Jaffer Gardezi, Ammar Khan, and Rimesha Farooq. Other faculty participating include Adeel Khalid (Mass Communications), Qurratal Aen (English), Naomi Justin (English), Farheen Ibraheem (Mathematics), and Shamail Zehra (Mass Communications). All nine of these faculty members have been involved in either in-person or online linkages with various international institutions including the American College of Greece; the American College of Paris; Universidad San Francisco in Quito; Oberlin College (Ohio); Hope College (Michigan); and Antioch College (Ohio).



A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed between FCCU and the American Institute of Pakistan Studies (AIPS) in early June is already having a positive impact in a number of ways including in bringing guest speakers to the Forman campus. One recent example is the visit by Dr. Michael L. Hirsch, Professor of Sociology and Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences at Huston-Tillotson University in Austin, Texas to speak about *Opportunistic Research Strategies*, with a view toward helping faculty publish even when they are busy and burdened with multiple other tasks. Earlier, Dr. Matthew A. Cook, Executive Director of AIPS and Professor of South Asian and Postcolonial Studies based at North Carolina Central University, made a presentation at FCCU titled *Graphic Pluralism in Colonial Sindh: Script, Culture, and Sufism*, exploring nineteenth-century debates on the introduction of an Arabic-style script for the Sindhi language.

Student societies contribute significantly to our common life at Forman, introducing important topics and building the kind of environment in which our students can explore new possibilities. In this regard, Forman's Student Activities Office announced the launch of OmniLife, a new student-led society supported by our Computer Science Department and focused on promoting virtual reality, augmented reality, and extended reality. Supported by the interactive entertainment experience company Omnilife Virtual Reality, the intent is to work toward launching the first chapter of an Augmented Reality/Virtual Reality Association in Pakistan.

Finally, Forman Christian College (A Chartered University) experienced the sad passing of Dr. Muhammad Azam Khan, Head of our Urdu Department. A renowned poet writing under the pen name Akhtar Shamaar, he authored many books and was also much appreciated as a researcher, columnist, essayist, and cultural critic. Some of his lectures appear online including the memorable interactive workshop on *How to Teach Ghazal* that he presented to Forman College in 2014. An integral part of the Forman community, he is already much missed and will never be forgotten.



**Dr. Jonathan Addleton**

**Rector, FCCU**