



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,

So far November has been busy but gratifying, especially as Forman welcomed all its College and University students back to campus. Having now served at Forman for more than one year, this is the first time that I have witnessed a "full campus," complete with students walking between classrooms and the wonderful sight of impromptu cricket, volleyball, and other games in the late afternoon, organized on what I call Forman's iconic "front lawn" stretching from the Ahmad Saeed Administration Building at one corner to the Armacost Science Building at the other. I love the fall season, especially now that our campus has returned to "full occupancy."

It was gratifying, too, to witness the arrival of vibrant in-coming classes at the College (1,689 new students), University (996 new students), and Post-Graduate (293 new students) level, even as we prepare for the University Commencement Ceremony for the nearly 1,000 graduates of this year's Class of 2021, scheduled for November 27. As I have discovered, as part of Forman tradition these celebrations typically involve three distinct events: the Commencement Ceremony itself; the reception afterward for parents and friends; and a more informal party for graduates to celebrate and say their final goodbyes. Last year's Commencement ceremony for the Class of 2020 was online. However, we now look forward to also having the Class of 2020 back on campus early next year for their two remaining events, one a reception organized in their honor involving family and friends, the other a party to which all members of the Class of 2020 will be invited.

Germany is marking the 70th anniversary of German-Pakistan diplomatic relations with a number of events and Forman is participating in some of them, led in part by Humboldt Fellow Dr. Samina Mehnaz, Head of Forman's Kauser Abdulla Malik School of Life Sciences. This included an event recently hosted by the Pakistan Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Islamabad where she met her former MPhil Biotech student Muhammad Adeel, now a senior official in the Ministry. Dr. Samina also helped organize the first visit to Forman by the German Embassy's new Science and Education Attache, primarily to officially hand over scientific equipment for use in Forman's research labs. Meanwhile, William K. Makaneole, the new US Consul-General in Lahore, also recently visited the Forman campus, having been provided with a tour of our Centre for Public Policy and Governance led by Dr. Saeed Shafqat.

Four current or former members of Forman's faculty organized an entire panel for the University of Wisconsin's Annual South Asia Conference, the most prestigious event of its kind in North America which this year was held online. The panel, involving Dr. Raja M. Ali Saleem along with colleagues Umber bin Ibad, Charles Ramsey, and Ryan Brasher, explored the theme "*Contested Identities Pakistan*", each presenting papers covering such topics as contrasting views on patriotism among students from different religions and ethnic groups; the politics of memory and the impact of the opening of the Kartarpur Corridor, providing access for Sikhs in India to a major Sikh shrine in Pakistan; identity in Pakistan as portrayed in the narratives depicted at the Pakistan Military Museum in Lahore; and the concept of "Post-Islamism," as reflected in the religious thought of the Islamic scholar Ahmad Ghamidi.

Other online events taking place in recent weeks include an International Conference on the *Urdu Ghazal in the Twenty-first Century: New Trends and Experiences*, organized by Forman's Urdu Department and involving 20 scholars from Pakistan and beyond. Also, Forman's Sociology Department organized its third conference on *Marginalized Populations*. Finally, a three-day Training Workshop on *Peace Journalism* was organized with Norwegian support involving a mix of in-person and online participants from Pakistan, Norway, Scotland, and elsewhere. Dr. Altaf Ullah Khan and Rachel Hasan played key roles in organizing this workshop, the first public event held in Forman's new Media Center, situated next to Forman's Centre for Public Policy and Governance.

Dr. Saadia Sumbal, Assistant Professor in Forman's History Department, kindly passed on to me a copy of her new book *Islam and Religious Change in Pakistan: Sufis and Ulema in 20th Century South Asia* (Routledge). I was also pleased to see two illuminating articles that she recently published, one on elites in Kalabagh during the colonial era in the *Journal of South Asian Culture and History* and the other on the construction of religious authority in Pakistan in the *Journal of South Asian Studies*. Parenthetically, occasional references to publications in the *Rector's Update* only scratch the surface in terms of research undertaken by Forman faculty: As Vice Rector Dr. Douglas Trimble notes in his Academic report prepared for the upcoming meeting of the Forman Board of Governors, during 2020-2021 FCCU faculty published nearly 300 articles in academic journals, covering a broad range of areas including education, computers, mathematics, humanities and the natural as well as the social sciences.



Memorandums of Understandings signed this month included an agreement involving Forman Christian College University (FCCU) and the Lahore College for Women University (LCWU) to cooperate on webinars, training workshops, and an international conference focused on gender studies. Faculty members from both FCCU and LCWU will also cooperate with George Washington University in Washington, DC to support these activities. The first webinar anticipated under this agreement was held in late October, led by Forman's Dr. Arfa Sayeda Zehra who spoke on female empowerment. A few days later, Dr. Arfa traveled to the Gulf to speak at the opening session of the *Mehfil-e-Urdu Festival* in Dubai where she also received an award for her services to the Urdu language.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, various offices and departments at FCCU have pioneered the use of video and other technologies, some of which will remain an important part of Forman's approach to education in the months and years to come. For example, our Center for Learning and Teaching led by Dr. Rukhsana Zia has played an especially important role in providing in-service training and promoting various types of applied technology, some of which have been shared even further afield. A good example of this was Head of Faculty Advising Atiq-ur-Rahman's short video *Five Steps to Create Course Trailers/Short Videos*, accepted by EDUtech Asia as part of their online Show and Tell program featuring innovative ideas from across Asia.

Student achievement is another important theme that I like to recognize in the *Rector's Update*. This month, that includes a "shout out" to Cheryl Rajis from the Forman Music and Dance Society for winning a Gold Medal in the Ghazal category at the recent All Pakistan Music Conference. Meanwhile, Babar Kamil, Chair of the Forman College Health and Physical Education Department, reports that Forman placed third out of ten teams in the Lahore Board Inter-Collegiate Volleyball Championships hosted by Government College University, with student Humayun Shoaib being selected for the All-Lahore Volleyball Team that will compete in the All-Pakistan Inter-Board Volleyball Championships.

Congratulations to students at both Forman College and Light of Hope School for their impressive results in Pakistan's annual Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education (BISE) exams. Some 1,500 Forman College graduates appeared for Part 2 of the BISE Intermediate exams, taken at the end of the US equivalent of Grade 12. The "top scorer" was Muhammad Fasih Iqbal who scored 1098 out of a possible 1100 marks. Seventy students in this graduating class registered a total of 1,000 marks or better in the test.

Meanwhile, another 1,500 Forman College first-year students (US equivalent of Grade 11) received their Part 1 BISE Exam results, with the following students securing the highest marks in their respective disciplines out of a maximum of 520 points: Muhammad Abu Huraira in Pre-Engineering (518); Ruhan Ashfaq and Farakh Farooq in General Science (508); Saad Bin Zahid and Muhammad Ali Khan in Pre-Medical (500); and Muhammad Qasim Abbas in Humanities (446). Also, Abu Huraira in Commerce scored 539 out of a possible 550 marks in the Commerce category.

As for Light of Hope established as Forman's "Lab School" six years ago for the children of our service staff, 15 students recently graduated, having completed the US equivalent of Grade 10. In this case, Sytaish Iqbal scored the highest in the class, reaching 1073 out of a possible 1100 marks. This first Light of Hope graduating class includes nine boys and six girls, most of whom will continue their education at either Forman College or Kinnaird College for Women.



BISE results have also been announced for 21 Light of Hope students (11 girls and 10 boys) in grade 9, offering encouragement for next year, given that final Grade 10 results are based on a combination of scores achieved in both Grade 9 and Grade 10: Laiba Basharat (highest achieving girl) scored 497 and Yeshua Emmanuel (highest achieving boy) scored 492, both out of a maximum possible 505 marks,

I continue to read the results of survey research conducted by Forman's Quality Enhancement Cell with interest. This month, that research included the QEC Intermediate Student Survey directed toward 1,525 outgoing Intermediate Students from the Class of 2021, seeking to measure views on their two-year FCCU experience. Almost half the graduating students responded, with 94 percent stating that they were "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with their time at FCCU. Students came from all regions of Pakistan, with 86 percent of them from Pakistan's Muslim community, 13 percent from Pakistan's Christian community, and one percent from other religious communities. "Campus Atmosphere" registered the highest satisfaction rate (97 percent), with features such as the beautiful campus (99 percent) and the honor of bearing the title "Formanite" (98 percent) singled out for special praise. Some 87 percent of the respondents stated that they would recommend Forman to other potential students, a slight decline from the previous year.

Finally, I was tremendously touched by the announcement by Forman's Advancement and Alumni Office regarding a new Endowment Fund established with the support of Ms. Aimon Saleem (Class of 2009) and Mr. Rufus Vindod (Class of 2010). This fund is named after two Forman personalities who spent decades serving the Forman community, often in unsung ways: Mr. Naseer Ahmed known as "Naseer Bhai" who worked at the official campus barber from 1945 to 2011; and Mr. Abdul Rehman who for decades sold snacks on campus. Known as the "Naseer Bhai and Abdul Rehman Endowment Fund," proceeds will be used to support financially needy students. Additional donations to this fund that so poignantly demonstrates Forman's motto ("*By Love Serve One Another*") will be warmly welcomed!



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