



FORMAN CHRISTIAN COLLEGE
(A CHARTERED UNIVERSITY)

Rector's Update

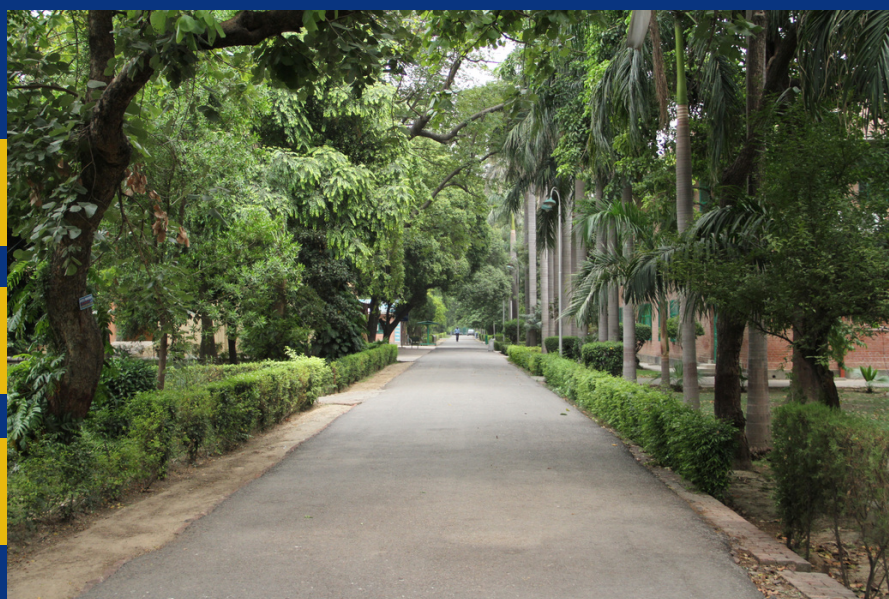
The latest news and announcements from Dr. Jonathan Addleton

In This Issue

Campus Updates

Faculty & Staff Achievements

Recent activities



Happy Easter and Eid Mubarak!

This year Ramadan and Lent as well as Eid-ul-Fitr and Easter all take place during the same approximate time period, providing for a fitting season of reflection during an otherwise very busy month.

NECHE VISIT

Highlights of the month include completion of the brief but busy visit by the New England Commission for Higher Education (NECHE) accreditation team, led by Dr. Bill Clements. As described by the team, this was a "peer-to-peer" consultation that concluded with an "exit interview" that highlighted a number of very positive "Forman strengths".

As Dr. Clements described it, Forman "embodies" its Mission statement and plays a "transformative" role in "changing lives". While identifying several "challenges" that need to be

worked through during the coming months, the team also offered considerable positive reinforcement, even commenting upon their departure that they "almost felt like Formanites" and were taking "a little bit of Forman with them"!

In addition, the NECHE team commended Forman for the high level of attendance in a series of "Open Forums", involving in each case at least 100 participants and often many more. They thanked Forman for the "openness" and "transparency" displayed throughout their visit.

NECHE team members also commented that Forman is "in the right place at the right time", noting that the NECHE process coincides with the preparation of a new strategy, providing an important opportunity to further cement connections between the two.

Importantly, the NECHE visit coincided with our annual Alumni Reunion, held this year on Saturday, March 2, on FCCU's Main





Ground; the timing provided a welcome opportunity for the NECHE team to observe that the wider Forman community extends beyond our faculty, staff and students to also include a large number of committed alumni. A music performance by Sanam Marvi helped set the tone, providing a wonderful atmosphere throughout the evening.



Finally, let me give a huge “shoutout” to our NECHE Core Committee as well as to Chairs, Deans, Faculty, Executive staff and others for their strong support, both during the NECHE visit and in the months leading up to it.

Looking ahead, we will receive a final written report from the NECHE team during the coming weeks as the precursor to a follow-on meeting in the US, probably in October in Boston. At that time, I will be given the opportunity to formally present the case for FCCU candidacy status to the entire NECHE Commission.

STRATEGY DISCUSSION

Discussions over Forman’s new strategy have also taken center stage during the last few weeks, a process that dates back to at least early 2023 when a major “stock-taking” exercise was undertaken to assess the impact of our current strategy covering the period 2018-2023 (and later extended by the Forman Board of Directors (BOD) and Board of Governors (BOG) to June 30, 2024).

The latest draft of a prospective new strategy covering the period 2024-2030 has been circulated to various audiences including, most recently, to Forman faculty and staff via a *Daily Buzz* message. Now is the time for comment – if you have suggestions that you would like to make, please provide them to me directly, before an updated working draft is circulated to BOD and BOG members via e-mail attachment during the later part of April. One important feature of this proposed new strategy is that it is closely linked to the ongoing NECHE accreditation process.

COLLEGE NEWS

March was an especially busy time for the College section of Forman Christian College (A Chartered University). Having reported on the annual English language play (*Fools* by Neil Simon) in last month’s *Rector’s Update*, I am pleased to note that this production was followed a few days later by the equally successful annual Urdu play (*Zair o Zabar*).

Drawn from Khawaja Moinuddin’s famous drama *Taleem-e-Balighan* (Education for Adults), *Zair o Zabar* presented an entertaining, satirical and at times hilarious “take” on the times in which we live. As always, the sets and the acting were spectacular, reflecting very well on the exceptional directors, cast and crew who brought this unforgettable production to life!





The College Farewell Dinner held on March 5 was another highlight, in this case involving 1,500 departing students and featuring a welcome speech by a first-year student and farewell speech by a second-year student.



Individual College hostels also sponsor farewell dinners during alternate years - this year, I had the privilege of attending the Griswold Hall dinner. As I described it at the time, it was a "magical evening," made even more so by the strings of tree lights decorating the courtyard.

After a hiatus of several years due to Covid-19, Forman's Registrar Office renewed the tradition of organizing a College Valedictory 2024 on March 8 to celebrate the achievement, dedication and hard work of our College graduates. In addition, Mr. Bilal Ahmed was honored as "Outstanding Teacher of the Year", even as various students received medals, certificates, and sports awards. While this year's celebration focused on awards, next year we hope to host a much larger function similar to our annual university Commencement in which all graduates are involved.



attractive and historic structures on the Forman campus. While undertaking much-needed repairs, Tajammul and his team also took the opportunity to reconfigure some of the rooms, adding to the number of classrooms and office space available without undermining the architectural and structural integrity of the building.



The "D Block" event included an Awards ceremony to recognize students for their music achievements going back to the wonderful Christmas Gala presented late last year. Among other things, the program included a beautiful rendition of our new College Anthem with its wonderful chorus:

*We seek to learn, in wisdom spread
God's truth and knowledge shines ahead
As brother stands with brother
Forman Christian College,
By Love Serve One Another*

I also attended the ribbon-cutting ceremony marking the completion of renovations on "D Block" as well as the official launch of renovations on its identical twin ("A Block") which should be completed by August. To my mind, both buildings are among the most



Finally, the College played a special role in a February Friends of Forman visit involving Executive Director Roger Dermody and various Friends staff, board members and other supporters. This included a program in which both students and families shared their College experience, touching in some cases on various especially memorable events and activities such as the Christmas Gala, Science Fair, Urdu and English dramas, Christian Studies program and Character-Building classes. In addition, the visit included a campus tour followed by a reception, providing further opportunities for sharing and discussion.

UNIVERSITY UPDATES

Forman's academic partnership with the Global Liberal Arts Alliance via Antioch University titled *Re-Imagining the Diversity of Local Languages in Pakistan* posted an impressive digital exhibition that many *Rector's Update* readers may want to explore further:

<https://ohla.info/faculty-repository-re-imagining-linguistic-diversity-of-local-languages-of-pakistan/>.



This oral history initiative in which English Lecturer Adeel Khalid played a prominent role was part of a Language Documentation linguistics course that also involved significant student participation. As Adeel notes, the program was supported by Dean of Humanities Dr. Altaf Ullah Khan; Department of Mass Communications Chairperson Dr. Firasat Jabeen; Department of English Chairperson Dr. Fatima Syeda; and Dr. Saqib Saleem who is responsible for the Forman Media Center, among many others.

Following Pakistan's elections on February 8, I had the honor of meeting with seven Forman undergraduates from Dr. Shakila Noor Sindhu's Political Science class who participated as election observers in seven different polling stations in the Lahore area, providing these students (Fazila Sahbai, Momina Afzal, Kawish Sani, Muhammad Ali Sajjad, Makhdoom Abdullah Malik, Umair Khan, and Muhammad Abdullah Ibrahim) with a first-hand experience in how elections in Pakistan work.

As always, I appreciate participating in poster displays and student presentations of various kinds. Examples this month include the Sociology Department's poster exhibit on March 8. On this occasion, I was particularly struck by the number of student projects that included research directly related to Forman – research that I hope we can learn from as we seek to further understand and strengthen our institution.

Dr. Ayra Indrias Patras participated as a keynote speaker in an International Round Table on *Preventing Violence Against Women*, sponsored by the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne in

Australia on International Women's Day. During her stay, she also gave a two-hour guest lecture to the unit on "Ecumenical Studies" organized by Pilgrim Theological College, also in Melbourne.

Forman's class on Existential Philosophy and Literature organized a talk delivered by Forman Associate English Professor Dr. Qurra-tul-Aen; drawing on her recent book on the same subject, she covered *The Absurd as an Existential Concept: A Discussion of Absurdity/Absurdism in Rajiv Joseph's Post 9/11 Plays*, focusing especially on his famous play *Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo*.

Thanks to Dr. Shinho and our Environmental Studies Department for having received funding approval from the Korea Mine Rehabilitation and Mineral Resources Corporation (KOMIR) for their proposal titled *Hydrogeochemical Evaluation of Arsenic in Shallow and Deep Aquifers of the Sheikhpura Region of Pakistan*. The issue of arsenic in Pakistan's water supply is a growing concern and I welcome this opportunity for Forman to become more involved.



Forman's Urdu Department organized a talk on Religious Harmony and Moral Values, comparing views on this topic among various religions while also emphasizing tolerance as a virtue.

Meanwhile, Forman's Center for Public Policy and Governance (CPPG) hosted a lecture by Dr. Sosheel Solomon Godfrey from Charles Stuart University in Australia on March 20, in this case focused on competitiveness and the agriculture policy environment in Pakistan, especially as it relates to the dairy industry.

Forman's Population Research Center organized a panel discussion on March 27 focused on *Increasing Population and Sustainable Development*. Panelists included Ms. Saman Rai (Director General, Punjab Welfare Department); Dr. Muhammad Amjad Ramzan (Sir Ganga Ram Hospital); and Mr. Abu Hassan Madni (Tehsil Population Welfare Officer, Punjab Welfare Department).

Dr. Maryyam Khan was chosen as Vice President of the South Asian Women's Development Forum to moderate a virtual session on *Women in the Informal Sector* at a March event sponsored by the UN Commission on the Status of Women.



Accompanied by a number of Forman students, Dr. Sikandar Hayat visited the History and Pakistan Studies Department at Punjab University on March 23 to deliver a lecture on the 84th Anniversary of Pakistan Day.

Although it does not take place until the end of the year, I plan to continue to reference the upcoming regional International Communications Association (ICA) meeting that Forman's Department of Mass Communications will host in December 2024: <https://www.icahdq.org>. This is the world's largest academic forum for communications and the media and this will be the first time that it is taking place in Pakistan. For further details, please contact ica.pakistan@fccollege.edu.pk. Prior to the December ICA meeting, Forman's Department of Mass Communications will arrange a smaller ICA-affiliated regional conference at Forman in June.

Finally, let me express thanks and appreciation to Dr. Julia Flowerday upon her departure for her many contributions to Forman over the past several years, both in guiding students and teaching courses in Anthropology and other areas. Her work related to Gilgit/Baltistan has been especially important and we wish her the best as she finalizes her prospective book on this beautiful – and vital -- border area of Pakistan that includes some of the most spectacular landscapes in the world. We also look forward to return visits including when her book is formally launched.



FACULTY PUBLICATIONS

Dr. Nukhbah Taj Langah, now teaching at the University of Malaya in Kuala Lumpur but still affiliated with Forman, was one of three co-authors of an article exploring themes related to post-colonial literature published in the University of Punjab's *Journal of Research in the Humanities*: <https://jrh.com.pk/index.php/Journal/article/view/258>.

Dr. Ayra Indrias Patras authored an article on "Examining Pakistan's Relationship with Religious Minorities: A Case Study of the Christian Community" published in the National University of Science and Technology's *Journal of International Peace Studies*.

Dr. Sikandar's edited volume *Pakistan Studies: A Book of Readings* that includes chapters written by a

number of members of the Forman faculty is included in the list of “Suggested Instructional/Reading Materials” that are part of the HEC-approved Pakistan Studies curriculum for Bachelor students taking General Education courses.

Dr. Saeed Shafqat wrote a detailed and informative Friday Times review of a new book titled *Sabotage: Lessons in Bureaucratic Governance from Pakistan, Taiwan and Turkey* (Lexington Books), written by Forman graduate Adnan Rasool who currently serves as Assistant Professor of Political Science at the University of Tennessee in Martin : <https://thefridaytimes.com/22-Mar-2024/governance-bureaucracy-and-politicians-pakistan-turkey-and-taiwan>

A shoutout, too, to Ms. Syeda Khair-ul-Bariyah, Assistant Professor in the College Chemistry Section, for her book *Peregrination of the Soul*, published on-line by Daastan. Conceived as a theatrical production, it is very much influenced by Forman’s core values and character-building classes.

STUDENT SUCCESS

Umar Zafar who majored in Political Science and minored in Sociology before graduating from Forman in 2023 has been granted a full scholarship to study for a Master’s degree in International Relations at John Hopkins/SAIS in Washington, DC. While at Forman, Omar helped edit *Siyasiyat*, Forman’s student-led magazine published by our Political Science Department. He also served as President of the Art Junction Society during 2022-2023.



I especially appreciated his reflection on his time at Forman: *“Four years at FCCU prepared me academically for the bigger ventures of life. However, for me it was the never-ending support of some of the faculty members who saw potential in me and pushed me to reach new horizons, leaving a lasting impression”.*



Sociology graduate Fatima Ghani has been awarded the Monbukagakusho (MEXT) Scholarship, providing an opportunity for her to pursue an MA in Global Studies at Sophia University in Japan. Her undergraduate research at Forman focused on the sociology of mental health and illness, earning her a “Best Thesis” award.

Reflecting on her achievement, Fatima notes that *“I am utterly grateful for the support from the Sociology Department throughout my time at FCCU. Special thanks to Dr. Sara for maintaining a high quality, challenging and stimulating learning environment; Ms. Shermeen Bano for her constant feedback and guidance at every stage of my thesis, and Dr. Julie Flowerday for deconstructing the canons and sweeping me off feet (in the best way possible) by introducing a paradigm shift”.*

Spring 2023 graduate Sijjal Shafique who majored in Psychology and minored in Sociology was awarded an Erasmus Scholarship from the European Union. Now enrolled in a Master’s program on the *Psychology of Global Mobility, Inclusion and Diversity* at the University of Limerick in Ireland, she has already completed her first semester at SWPS University in Poland.



MPhil Sociology student Beenish Fatima was selected for the Emerging Leaders Program sponsored by the Acton Institute in Grand Rapids (Michigan). Ms. Beenish was one of only 16 students world-wide (and the only one from Pakistan) selected for this highly rated program scheduled to take place during Summer 2024.



Forman U-Grad participant Muazzam Adeel was awarded an Alumni Small Grant from the US Department of State to conduct a seminar on *Empowering Environmental Responsibility* in partnership with Forman's Earth Watch Club, followed by the launch a new waste segregation initiative; as part of this effort, he has also established a "Bio Enviro Educators" (BEE) team involving students from Forman as well as other universities in the Lahore area.



MEDIA COVERAGE

Thanks to the efforts of our Marketing and Communication team, *Rector's Update* readers might have noticed an impressive "uptick" in references to Forman in Pakistan's electronic and print media. This includes many newspaper articles in both Urdu and English and a wonderful interview with FCCU sports instructor Ms. Sadia Abdul Khaliq along with four of our female cricket team players which aired on *Discover Pakistan*.

Forman's "brand" is gaining traction on social media as well. For example, the video *We Are Formanites* received 18,000 views on Facebook and 33,000 views on Instagram in just three days while a second video posted on Women's Day crossed 7,000 Facebook views and 26,000 Instagram views in less than two days! Meanwhile, a similarly successful video titled *A Day in the Life of an FCCU Student* garnered 15,700 Facebook views and 21,000 Instagram views in just sixty hours.



SPORTS NEWS

It has been a busy time for sports as well. For example, in late February Forman competed in the Inter-Collegiate Athletic Championship at the University of Engineering and Technology (UET) in Lahore, placing third among the nine teams which participated. Notable performances included third positions in the 400 meters (Kanan Zafar), Long Jump (M. Sami Khan), Triple Jump (Rana Muhammad Umer) and 4x100 Relay (M. Sami Khan, Rana M. Umer, Kanan Safar and Abdur Rahman).

As mentioned in a previous *Rector's Update*, Forman also partnered with the Pakistan

Baseball Federation to host the 18th All-Pakistan Women's Baseball Championships on our new baseball field, with WAPDA emerging as the overall winner following a thrilling final match which also received media attention.

On the College front, the four College residential hostels (Griswold, Kennedy, Newton and Velte) held their two-day Sports Fiesta in late February as residents displayed their skills in baseball, basketball, badminton, cricket, football, chess, Ludo and table tennis.

As Bezil Paul from the Residential Life Office

which helped organize the Fiesta noted, “Residents from all hostels poured their hearts into every game, displaying determination, skill and fair play throughout the event. Cheers and applause echoed across the campus as spectators witnessed thrilling matches and memorable moments . . . the event not only showcased the athletic talents of FCCU students but also highlighted the values of sportsmanship, teamwork, and camaraderie that lie at the heart of the FCCU community”.



OTHER NEWS

Visitors during March included USAID Mission Director Kate Somvongsiri and Shally Prasad, Director of USAID/Pakistan’s Office of Democracy, Rights and Governance based in Islamabad. Among other things, their schedule included a visit to Hope Tower and Forman’s Center for Public Policy and Governance (CPPG). Given that March was Women’s History Month, the USAID Mission Director also took the opportunity to record a short video message in front of Hope Tower to commemorate the USAID/FCCU partnership in constructing our largest female hostel.

For my part, I attended the monthly meeting of Rectors and Vice Chancellors, the March meeting having been hosted by the University of Management and Technology (UMT). Later this year I hope to host a similar meeting for Rectors and Vice Chancellors at Forman.

Meanwhile, two student teams representing our FORMUN Society participated in a Model UN program hosted by Kinnaird College in early March, earning a total of eight awards

including the outstanding Diplomacy Award and several Special Mention and Honorary Mention awards.

A special thanks to Forman’s Marketing, Advancement, and Communications team headed by Badia Raza for hosting a well-attended *Iftar* dinner on March 19 in which Forman alumni played a prominent part. In this case, *Iftar* also provided an opportunity to promote Forman’s annual *Zakat* campaign focused on scholarships. Dr. Tahir Shaheer served as Master of Ceremony while Attiazaz Munawwar Ud Din who heads the Formanite Alumni Association delivered an insightful address highlighting the importance of *Zakat* and the transformative impact that it can have. Also, Ch. Shafaat Ahmed from the FCCU *Zakat* Committee shared his perspective on the importance of community solidarity when addressing various social concerns.



Forman's Career Services Office hosted a talk by Bob King, CEO of Sage Freight, on leadership and management in the corporate world, providing both insight and wisdom related to possible future careers.



Let me also thank Dr. Furry George and her colleagues at Light of Hope School for organizing the annual Light of Hope Easter Arts and Crafts Exhibit on March 18 and again on March 19, featuring Easter-themed products created by our creative and talented K-10 students.



Rev. Majid Abel brought two visitors to campus during the month including former Forman chaplain Rev. Robert Johnson who mentioned to me that his time at FCCU had *“changed his life”*; and Dr. Diamond Emanuel, a Forman graduate who now serves as a community pediatrician at Nottingham University Hospital in England where he has also been designated as doctor for child protection. As always, I appreciate any opportunity to welcome “Old Formanites back to campus!

As a follow-on to last month's Twelfth Annual Advising Fair, Head of Faculty Advising Dr. Atiq-ur-Rehman notes the importance of Departmental Advising Sessions in ensuring that all students have access to competent and up-to-date faculty advice. Online academic and advising alerts embedded in Empower are also important and should be viewed as part of this continuing effort to strengthen the student advising function at Forman.



As always, I appreciate the opportunity to speak at our quarterly orientation programs for new faculty and staff, organized by Forman's HR Department. These are wonderful occasions, providing an opportunity for me to discuss the history, vision and mission of Forman to new employees who are themselves becoming a vital part of the Forman story. At the most recent such session, 31 new employees participated and were welcomed as the newest members of the Forman team!

Members of the Forman community may notice a number of familiar visitors during the coming weeks including former Rector Dr. James Tebbe and former professor (and current Board member) Dr. Michael Murphy. Again, I always appreciate the opportunity to invite those who have been associated with Forman in whatever capacity back to campus.

Finally, I note that this year I spent Easter in the United States and hope to spend Eid in Pakistan. My brief US trip this time was organized around the Friends of Forman Board meeting held in March and hosted by Peachtree Presbyterian Church in Atlanta. While in the US, I also took the opportunity to visit with one of Forman's long-time donors in Seattle; meet with Dr. Christopher Blake, President of Middle Georgia State University in my hometown of Macon, GA; and drop by the NECHE offices in Boston, both to thank NECHE staff for the recent accreditation visit and to prepare for my hoped-for appearance before NECHE commissioners later this year. As always, it is an honor and a privilege to represent Forman Christian College (A Chartered University) at these and other venues!



DR. JONATHAN ADDLETON
RECTOR