



FORMAN CHRISTIAN COLLEGE
(A CHARTERED UNIVERSITY)

Rector's Update

The latest news and announcements from Dr. Jonathan Addleton

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If May proved to be the “busiest” month on record, June might well go down as the “hottest month”, at least as far as the weather at Forman Christian College (A Chartered University) is concerned. Fiona and I briefly experienced the cold and snow of the high altitude Deosai National Park on our Eid long weekend trip to Skardu in mid-June. However, there is no doubt that Lahore is witnessing one of its hottest summers ever – and much of the summer is still ahead of us!

Despite the extreme heat, we welcomed many visitors while also hosting various academic, student, outreach and other activities on campus.

For example, the Mass Communication Department hosted a two-day “Regional Hub” event on June 20-21 funded by the International Communication Association (ICA) and organized around the theme *Communication and Global Human Rights*: (<https://www.ica hdq.org/BlankCustom.asp?page=ica24>). Dr. Firasat Jabeen and her colleagues did a wonderful job in inviting speakers from across Pakistan and beyond, with some participating on-line and others joining in person from universities in Punjab, Sindh, KPK, and Balochistan. This is the first time an ICA event has been held in Pakistan, paving the way for the even larger regional ICA conference that Forman will host in early December.



Similarly, Forman's Computer Science Department held its annual *Computer Science Senior Projects Exhibition (COMSPEX)* in early June, featuring more than 20 projects aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Many from the IT industry attended including representatives from TKXEL, Devsinc, Venturenox, and Khazana Enterprises, among others.

Omais Ahmed, Saad Yasin and Ahmad Tariq were awarded "Best Senior Project in the Applications Category" for their project *IntelliRoads: Next-Gen Traffic Management System for the Cities of Tomorrow*, supervised by Dr. Muhammad Haroon Shakeel. In the Research Category, the Best Senior Project Award went to Saad Muzzafar, Muhib Nadeem and Yamna Hassan for their project *B-NIAS: Bi-directional Neural-Interfaced Automation Symbiosis*. As for Best Poster, that award went to Hamaz Ahmed, Subhan Wasif and Maheen Khurram for their project *Thought Visualization Using LLMs*.

The COMSPEX event was well covered in the local media including the *Lahore Rang* morning television show:
https://youtu.be/p90lO9zj_5Q?si=GOW_HuRA5Dsy0qHC and
https://youtu.be/J5AXKiifhKM?si=6_s_K5Ygo38VuEWx



Forman's School of Management presented a *Brand Wars!* competition organized by Maryyam Khan, providing opportunities for students to apply their business, marketing and brand management skills in a "real world" setting adjudicated by business leaders from such companies as Geo News, AF Ferguson, Metro Pakistan, and others.



In a similar vein, students enrolled in the *Communication Campaign Design* course offered by Forman's Mass Communication Department were invited to ARY News/Hum TV to discuss their class project; supervised by Assistant Professor Dr. Syed Saqib, it was titled *Digital Detox* and focused on electronic waste management. Beyond electronic waste management, other topics covered during the Communication Campaign Design course, all organized around the UN SDGs, included nutrition for pregnant and lactating women; breaking gender stereotypes; environmental outreach; and combatting drug use, among other concerns.



In addition, Forman's Mass Communication Department organized a talk on *Codes of Journalistic Ethics* led by Ahmad Abu Bakar, an Analyst for Talon News. Also, Dr. Saqib co-chaired a session on *Media and Education* that was part of the *Second International Media Conference* hosted by the University of Central Punjab.

Forman's English Department sponsored a performative event titled *The Aesthetics of Pakistani Folk Poetry*, held in Sinclair Hall on May 30.



Forman's Geography Department hosted a seminar on *Climate Change and Variability*, using examples from Pakistan. Topics covered included *Use of GIS in Addressing Climate Change; Impact of Climate Change on Tourism; Effect of Climate Change on Wetlands; and Karakoram Anomaly and Glacial Lake Outburst Floods*.



Three members of the Geography Department faculty – Dr. Khadija Shakrullah, Hafsa Batool and Ahsan Iqbal -- delivered papers at the *18th International Geography Conference* held at the University of Peshawar's Bara Gali Summer Campus in early June, organized around the theme *Climate Change, Sustainability and Resilience*.





Dr. Shakila Noor Sindhu, Assistant Professor in Forman's Political Science Department, organized a one-day conference on June 3 on *Mapping Governance Challenges in the 21st Century*. Former Forman professor Dr. Ryan Brasher joined online from Simpson University in California as the keynote speaker.

Forman's Physics Department organized a one-day workshop titled *Computational Tools in Research: COMSOL Learning, Latex Writing and Introduction to Overleaf*.



Forman's Mathematics Department joined with the Salam Mathematics Society to sponsor a "MATHALON", later featured on the television program *Hum News: Drive Link of Pictures*. The event was held over two days and several other Lahore area universities also participated.

Forman's Religious Studies Department hosted a talk by Dr. Safi Kaskas on *Rethinking Religious Education in the Modern World*. Dr. Kaskas migrated to the US from Lebanon as a young adult, spent a career in business and was co-founder of East West University in Chicago; he is also a senior researcher at George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia.



Forman's Center for Learning and Teaching (CLT) hosted an on-line session on *Leveraging AI for Teaching and Learning* led by Edd Pitt (University of Kent) that attracted nearly 1,200 registrants from around the world. The course was part of a free online initiative titled *Shaping the Future of Education: AI Across Campus* that continued for two weeks.

This series of lectures also included several other sessions including *Implementing AI on Campus* delivered by Hoda Mostafa from the American University of Cairo. Also, Ajit Jaokar (Oxford University), Chee Leong Lim (Taylor University in Malaysia) and Asman Salman (American University in UAE) spoke on *Intertwined Futures: AI, Higher Education and the Workplace*.

In addition, CLT organized a free summer series of 17 webinars on Research Methodology involving experts from Pakistan and abroad. HEC endorsed the courses which attracted hundreds of student and faculty registrants from dozens of universities in Pakistan and 35 foreign countries.

The first such webinar involved Ameen Lutfi (LUMS) speaking on *Theories of Research*; this was followed by David Santandrea (Mohammad bin Zayed University in the UAE), Joyce Draiby (Lebanese American University) and many others. Several faculty members from a number of universities in Pakistan including Forman also contributed.

Forman's Office of Research, Innovation and Commercialization (ORIC) organized a workshop on *Fundamentals of Research*, designed especially for undergraduates interested in formulating a research topic, analyzing data and then presenting it.

Partnering with ORIC, Forman's Kauser Abdulla Malik School of Life Sciences organized a one-day conference on *Advances in Plant Genomics for Climate Change*. Speakers came from across Pakistan and beyond and included participants from LUMS, University of Agriculture (Faisalabad), University of Adelaide (Australia), National Agriculture Research Center, and the Pakistan Central Cotton Committee, among other institutions.



I attended the Population Research Center's Prize Distribution Ceremony, celebrating the winner of its research essay competition funded by ORIC and organized around the theme *Healthy Families and Communities in a Changing Society*. As part of the competition, 15 essays were short-listed, out of which three were selected for cash awards.

I also attended an impressive ceremony marking the completion of the fourth Diploma in Business Management program, offered by our Business Management School to emerging business leaders through a continuing partnership with Honda Atlas.





Forman's first *International Psychology Conference* was highlighted in last month's *Rector's Update*. However, I also want to mention here that Insha Fayyaz, a Sociology major from the Class of 2024, presented her final thesis at that conference, providing useful exposure at an international event. Supervised by Dr. Sara Rizvi Jafree, she studied the influence of social anxiety on student academic performance at FCCU; based on her analysis, she provided recommendations related to counseling, peer group support and academic assessments.

Also, the Forman Psychological Services Center situated on the TSA/FCCU premises organized a one-day workshop on June 6 on *Cognitive Behavior Therapy with Psychosis*, facilitated by clinical psychologist Dr. Nazish Habib. I especially appreciated that this off-campus facility is now being used in this fashion and hope to see more such events in the future.

Congratulations to Syed Mohsin and Fatima Ghani on being awarded a prestigious MEXT Research Scholarship to study for their Master's degree in Japan starting in Fall 2024.



Looking ahead to the next academic year, I attended two successive evening ceremonies, one involving a farewell to the outgoing presidents of our 39 student societies and the other including a swearing-in ceremony for new presidents whose tenure will extend throughout the next academic year. From my perspective, our student societies contribute significantly to our community life while also providing students with many opportunities to demonstrate leadership and management skills.



Finally, I welcomed the opportunity to attend the *27th Annual Award Ceremony and Annual Dinner* sponsored by the Forman Debating Society, one of the oldest student societies in South Asia. Special thanks to outgoing FDS President Usama Zulfikar and FDS Advisor Dr. Ambreen Javed on a terrific year!



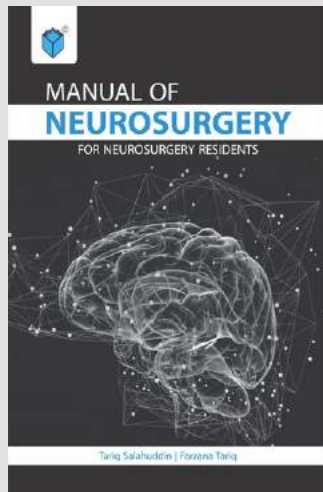
ALUMNI NOTES

June concluded with an Alumni reunion sponsored by Forman’s Lahore Alumni Chapter and held on the Forman campus, always a wonderful occasion.



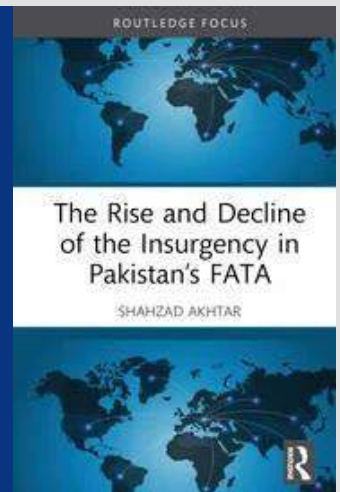
I often mention that I can’t travel anywhere in Pakistan without meeting someone with a Forman connection. This happened yet again during my recent flight on PIA from Lahore to Skardu over the Eid holidays when I met Ali Abbas, a second year Computer Science student from Gilgit who was heading home for the summer holidays.

Badia Raza who heads our Marketing and Outreach Department also experienced something similar when she visited the German Embassy in Islamabad during June. There she met an “Old Formanite” holding a senior management position at Metro Cash & Carry who welcomed this unexpected opportunity to reconnect with someone from his alma mater.



I was delighted to attend the launch ceremony for Forman graduate Dr. Tariq Salahuddin’s new book *Manual of Neurosurgery* (Paramount, 2024). Dr. Moeed, Pakistan’s former National Security Advisor and current Rector at Beaconhouse National University was Guest of Honor. As I learned at that event, Dr. Moeed’s own father was an Old Formanite!

Old Formanite Shahzad Akhtar, Assistant Professor at the University of Lahore, visited the Rector’s Office and passed on a copy of his book *Insurgency in Pakistan’s FATA* (Routledge, 2023). He received his advanced degree from New Zealand.



[Hafiz Fawad Ali](https://pu.edu.pk/home/section/allpress/15050), who studied at Forman during 2010-2012 and is now a Lecturer at Punjab University’s Hailey College of Commerce was selected to participate in a US-based leadership development program hosted by the Center for Science and Leadership in Portland, Maine:

<https://pu.edu.pk/home/section/allpress/15050>.

Javed Qadir Bakhsh reports the sad news of his friend Benson Burq from Chak 224 in Gojra who passed away in June: *"We shared fond memories together at Forman Christian College, where we served as president and general secretary of the Student Christian Movement (SCM) in 1974-1975"*.

Finally, Forman graduate Muhammad Zubair who completed his Intermediate at FCCU in 2016, BS in 2020 and MS in 2022 reports the passing, also in June, of Muhammad Ashraf, more usually known among Forman Hostelites as "Chacha Ashraf":

"I want to draw your attention towards a person who spent 50+ years of his life at Forman . . . He was Mr. Ashraf who we used to call Chacha Ashraf. He was a serviceman in the mess. He retired in 2020 (as I remember) . . . but died yesterday in his village. I just want to request you to acknowledge his services . . . for many of us Formanites he is a golden memory. His smiling face was always present to welcome us"

Estd. 1864

PUBLICATIONS



Dr. Sikandar Hayat's article "Jinnah's Personality Traits and their Relevance and Role in the Making of Pakistan" appeared in the latest issue of the University of Punjab's history journal Volume 37, Number One, January-June 2024:

https://pu.edu.pk/images/journal/HistoryPStudies/PDF_Files/04-v37_1_2024.pdf



Dr. Sara Rizvi Jafree, Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology, has published an article exploring mental health and quality of life issues faced by those suffering from chronic liver disease, the fifth most common cause of morbidity and mortality in Pakistan.



Dr. Nukhbah Taj Langah joined with Dr. Ambreen Javed (as well as a PhD scholar in Finland) to prepare a paper titled *A Journey of Introducing Academic Writing in an Evolving Liberal Arts Institute in Pakistan: A Case Study of FCCU*; the paper will be included in a forthcoming book published by State University of New York (SUNY) Press. In late June Dr. Nukhbah also joined in a workshop with a team from New York University/Abu Dhabi in Rome.



I attended the official launch of Forman's student-led philosophy journal *Miller's Dream*, edited by Zainab Imran. As always, I was impressed by the depth, range, and content of our student contributors which this year included Beenish Ahmad (on Free Will); Sarah Tariq (on Mothers and Daughters); Rafay Ahmad Butt (on Language as a Bridge Between Thought and Society); Haris Hassan (on the Philosophy Behind Effective Teaching and Learning); and Muhammad Sohail (on "Intellectual Rubbish").

I am pleased to note that the June 2024 issue of the *Forman Journal of Social Sciences* (Volume 4, Issue 1) is now available, thanks to the dedicated efforts of the editorial team including Dr. Sara Rizvi Jafree (Editor), Ms. Tehniyat (Assistant Editor), and Dr. Younis (Managing Editor): <https://www.fccollege.edu.pk/forman-journal-of-social-sciences/>

An HEC approved journal in the "Y" category, this latest issue includes two articles using primary data collected during the COVID-19 pandemic, one assessing the impact of the pandemic on academic performance and the other analyzing the role of religiosity in reducing stress. Other articles discuss the role of gender diversity in propelling economic growth and innovation; explore the extent to which energy transitions impact environmental transmissions; assess the influence of childhood traumatization on the mental health of young prison inmates; review infertility challenges facing women in Pakistan; and discuss the role of media in contributing to body dissatisfaction and eating problems.

INTERNATIONAL CONNECTIONS

Quality control and accreditation are both very much on my mind this summer. In this regard, Dr. Nayer as Registrar attended the annual International Network for Quality Assurance Agency in Higher Education (INQAAHE) conference, this year held in Romania. Pakistan's Higher Education Commission (HEC) also presented at the conference, drawing in part on Forman's external accreditation experience involving the New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE).

Our international partnerships continue to bear fruit. In this case

that included an opportunity to attend the AMICAL Annual Conference online, focused this year on Artificial Intelligence (AI) and covering such topics *Designing Engaging Courses with Generative AI; The Future of Higher Education in the Age of AI; and Essential AI Tools for Academic Integrity and Success.*

On short notice I arranged an informal lunch in my residence for two Program Associates from the American Bar Association (ABA), visiting Pakistan as part of a Rule of Law Program. Given that the focus of their program is on issues related to human rights

and gender, several members of our faculty were also invited to attend, providing our visitors with a variety of useful perspectives.

Shermeen Bano, Lecturer in Forman's Sociology Department, reports that she will be leaving for Canada later this summer, having been offered a fully funded PhD fellowship in the Sociology Department at the University of British Columbia. According to Shermeen, "*I am genuinely grateful for the opportunities and experiences I had during my time at Forman Christian College.*"

As most readers of the Rector's Update know, our US-based support group Friends of Forman plays a vital role in supporting scholarships and contributing to special projects such as the Jim Tebbe Campus Center. From time to time, Friends also provides important links to our past, with the children and grandchildren of those connected to Forman continuing to contribute in various ways.

This month, those contributions included a gift via Friends from the grandson of Dr. F. Mowbray Velte who was an English professor at Forman nearly a century ago. His mother Marguerite Velte Hasbrouck -- born in Lahore in 1933 and the daughter of Dr. Velte -- was also a long-time Forman supporter, contributing to Friends until she passed away last year at the age of 90; his Aunt Lois, another of Dr. Velte's daughters who died only last month at the age of 95, was also a long-time supporter of Forman Christian College (A Chartered University).

OUTREACH ACTIVITIES



Forman's Admissions Office organized an Open House for prospective graduate students in the Jim Tebbe Campus Center, showcasing offerings, facilities, financial aid, and admissions criteria at the graduate level. Most academic departments were represented as well as various support offices such as Admissions, Careers Services, Financial Aid, and Church Relations. More than 500 students attended from Forman and other Lahore-area universities.



A delegation from the Pak Mission Society that numbered more than twenty and included representatives from various churches and NGOs visited Forman, mostly to see our campus and become more familiar with some of the support programs offered to Christian students including admissions, financial aid, coaching classes, and the Christian Life program.



I was privileged to attend the closing ceremony of the *Khushali* ("Prosperity") Program, a pioneering partnership involving Forman and the Center for Law and Justice (CLJ), along with the French Embassy, British Council, and University of Lancaster, among others. The Speaker of the Punjab Assembly also attended. The 30 female graduates, all daughters of sanitation workers, wore "caps and gowns" to the ceremony, providing a graduation experience that most probably never thought that they would have.

One *Khushali* graduate was missing from the graduation ceremony, a young seventeen-year-old selected as one of three Pakistanis to attend an annual summer youth gathering in Moscow; she had already departed for Russia from Pakistan the day before. However, her proud family were present to collect her graduation certificate. Forman graduate Mary Gill from CLJ and her team played a key role in organizing this inspiring program.

We were once again pleased to provide a venue for the Pakistan Bible Society's annual Summer Sports Festival. This year, the program started on May 31 and continued through June 15, involving hundreds of young people participating in several sports including cricket, football, basketball, and athletics.

Also, our Admissions Office participated in a National Youth Conference in Lahore on June 19-20 sponsored by the Brethren church network in Pakistan. More than 2,000 people attended, providing opportunities to interact over two days with a diverse group of potential students as well as their parents, pastors and youth leaders.



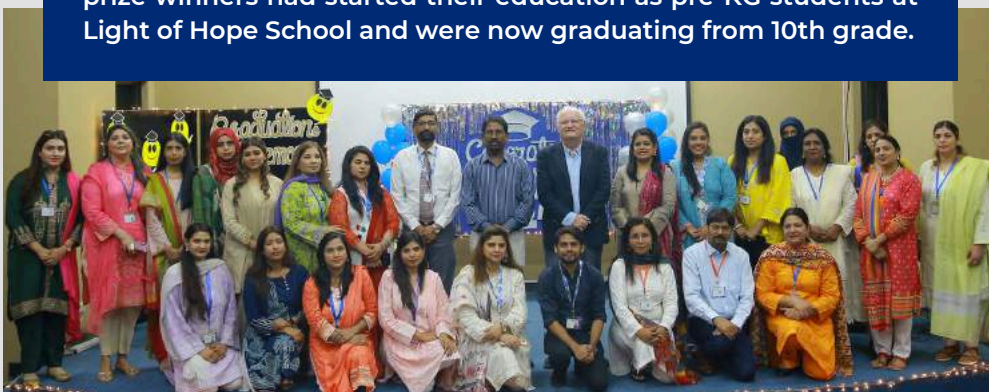
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I was privileged to attend the closing ceremony for the Pre-College Summer Coaching Classes held on June 14, organized by Dr. Farzand Masih who heads Forman's Church Relations Office and assisted by Dr. James William and others. For me, the energetic Bhangra dance performed by some of the male students to mark the end of their program was the highlight.



As always, Fiona and I appreciated attending the annual Awards Ceremony at Light of Hope School along with Dr. Martin from the Education Department, noting in particular that several prize winners had started their education as pre-KG students at Light of Hope School and were now graduating from 10th grade.

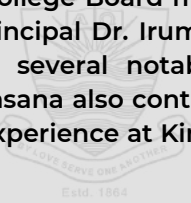


OTHER ACTIVITIES

Every month I attend a gathering of Vice Chancellors and Rectors from universities in the Lahore area. This month it was Forman’s turn to host the event, organized around the theme “Assessment”. Universities represented included Beaconhouse National University, University of Management and Technology, Minhaj University, Leads University and University of Central Punjab. It was a special privilege to introduce several of the Vice Chancellors and Rectors to Forman for the first time.



As FCCU Rector, I regularly attend Kinnaird College Board meetings. This month, those meetings included an installation ceremony for new Kinnaird Principal Dr. Irum Anjum, the successor to Dr. Rukhsana David whose 14-year tenure at Kinnaird included several notable achievements related to both academic programs and campus development. Dr. Rukhsana also continues her tenure as Chair of Forman’s Board of Directors and Board of Governors, using her experience at Kinnaird to shape, guide and strengthen our own institution.



Forman organized an After School Program aka Summer Camp 2024 for the children of faculty, staff and students aged 3 to 7 years old from June 3 through August 24, providing theme-based projects, arts and crafts, outdoor play, water fun, science activities, music and dance, storytelling and much more.





Various colleagues competed in Forman's 11th Faculty and Staff Badminton Championships; winners included Wikram Masih (men's staff singles); Rehan Sohail and Wikram Masih (men's staff doubles); Rizwan Ullah (men's faculty singles); Dr. M. Umar Bhatti and Bilal Ahmad (men's faculty doubles); and Dr. Subbah Mir (female faculty and staff singles).



Very thoughtfully, the Forman Sociology Society joined with the Sociology Department's Social Work class to provide Oral Rehydration Therapy sachets to each of Forman's security guards during a particularly hot day. The Mercy Health Center also participated in this commendable effort.



Many people will have noticed that renovations are rapidly proceeding on Block A, one of the historic structures on the College campus. And now, thanks to a major grant from HEDCO via Friends of Forman, we will now be able to install air conditioning in the building!

I read with interest the Annual Report on Ewing Library prepared by Chief Librarian Farrukh Shahzad and his team. Among other things, it includes a progress report on our new Digital Library, situated on the ground floor of the Jim Tebbe Campus Center where computers are now being installed.

Achievements for the year include the launch of the Forman Digital Repository to include copies of departmental newsletters, student theses, projects and other materials including the monthly *Rector's Update*. Based on funding received from the Mellon Foundation, the University of Maryland is also assisting Forman in the development of Urdu software as part of its Open Islamicate Text Initiative. In addition, library staff conducted nearly 50 instructional meetings and library tours for new students.

Finally, I am pleased to announce a special gift to the Forman Archives maintained by Ewing Library: A box of personal papers related to Gerard Brigden who served as Islamabad's first Chief Architect during the period 1962-1965. We will now begin to process and digitalize this historic collection of photographs, blueprints, personal notes and other material, making them available to a wider audience. A special thanks to Romano Karim who lives in Islamabad and made this gift from the Brigden family possible.



DR. JONATHAN ADDLETON
RECTOR