



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,

This edition of the *Rector's Update* is being written from the United States where I am attending the Fall Friends of Forman Board Meeting during a time of transition: Long-time Friends of Forman Director Sam Schreiner is retiring and Roger Dermody, a former architect, and pastor, will now assume this position; at the same time, Friends of Forman Board Chairman Gaylen Baxter is also retiring, even as Rev. David Renwick who most recently served at National Presbyterian Church in Washington, DC is taking her place. Let me express deep appreciation to both Sam and Gaylen for their service on behalf of FCCU, even as we welcome Roger and David onto the Friends of Forman Board. Both Roger and David will be visiting the Forman campus later this year.

As the new semester starts, I am happy to highlight a number of faculty achievements that have come to my attention. This includes the news that Dr. Samina Mehnaz, Professor and Chairperson of Life Sciences at Forman, presented a paper at the *7th Asian Plant Growth Promoting Rhizobacteria Conference for Sustainable Agriculture* held at the University of Putrajaya in Malaysia. While in Malaysia, she attended a dinner hosted by Ms. Amna Baloch, Pakistan's Ambassador to Malaysia; "Old Formanite" Muhammad Adeel, currently serving in Pakistan's Foreign Ministry in Islamabad, also attended the conference and helped organize the dinner.

Scientists from 17 countries attended the conference on sustainable agriculture, providing opportunities to strengthen Forman's connections with not only Malaysia but also institutions of higher learning in other Asian countries. Already, Dr. Samina Mehnaz is working on a collaborative project with the Director of the Institute of Bioformulation at Techniche University in Malaysia which has agreed to host a Forman PhD-student in their labs for six months.

Also, Dr. Farid Malik from the Business School presented a *Roadmap for Producing Synthetic Natural Gas (SNG)* from Thar Coal in Pakistan at the Pittsburgh International Coal Conference, convincing the Sindh Government to pursue cheaper synthetic natural gas from Thar rather than import liquified natural gas from Qatar. Dr. Farid Malik now serves as consultant for a project aimed at building a pilot plant in Karachi to produce gas from Thar coal, with a view toward eventually building a large-scale production facility in Thar.



Dr. Zamurrad Awan's new book *Women and Social Change in Pakistan* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing) has just been published. Focused on Punjabi women in the larger socio-cultural context of Pakistan, it is a larger and expanded version of her PhD dissertation and represents an important contribution to the literature on women's studies in Pakistan.

A recent newsletter published by Forman's Research and Review Club and involving the Faculties of Social Sciences, Natural Sciences, Humanities, and Education reminds me that my occasional references to faculty publications only scratch the surface in terms of areas of research in which our faculty are involved. As Dr. Sikandar Hayat describes it, the club was founded in 2018 "to encourage collegiality" as well as "friendship" across the university: "The members act like a family, supporting and sharing knowledge and skills with each other in the pursuit of research and ultimately publications". Forman's Research and Review Club now has more than 40 members, providing another example of the kind of engagement across departments and faculties that I hope will always be a hallmark of FCCU.

As it happens, Dr. Sikandar Hayat was himself the subject of a recent laudatory review in the well-known British journal *Asian Affairs*. Written by Quaid-i-Azam University Professor Ilhan Niaz, the article is titled "*The Hayat Hypothesis: Imperial Crisis, Muslim Modernism, Jinnah's Charisma, and the Birth of Pakistan*".

While faculty publications typically focus on research and are published in academic journals, I also appreciate it when members of the Forman community reach out to a broader audience. Most notably, Dr. Hassan Shah, Dean of the Faculty of Natural Sciences, was recently interviewed by *Narwai Waqt*, leading to a multi-page spread in both the newspaper and in their Sunday magazine.

Also, Dr. Samina Mehnaz's article "Microbes and Sustainable Agriculture" was published in the special *Darwn* supplement to mark German Unity Day, a befitting contribution given her role as an "Ambassador" for the German Humboldt Fellowship program in which she has also participated. Also, Rachel Hasan, Chair of Forman's Department of Mass Communications, was interviewed on BBC Urdu, providing another opportunity to reference Forman before a large audience.

Congratulations to Ms. -- now Dr. -- Hina Abid for successfully defending her thesis *Development of Natural Polymer-based Contact Lens Materials* from the Institute of Polymer and Textile Engineering at the University of Punjab. She did her M.Phil. in Applied Chemistry from the University of Engineering and Technology in Lahore and has taught in Forman's Chemistry Department since 2013.





Several Forman-sponsored conferences, workshops, and seminars are either underway or planned. For example, Forman's Faculty of Humanities sponsored another in a series of "Peace Journalism" events in partnership with Metropolitan University in Oslo (Norway), this one titled *Surviving the Social Media Onslaught: Mainstream Journalism, Peace, and Democracy in the Transitional Societies*.

Also, Forman's English Department is sponsoring a Fall conference titled *Inter-Dis-connections of the Prefix 'Post' In Contemporary Literary, Linguistic and Cultural Studies*, involving the presentation of peer-reviewed papers as well as guest speakers (via Zoom) from not only Pakistan but also Belgium and the United States. Meanwhile, Forman's Sociology Department is preparing for its 4th Conference on Marginalized Populations, scheduled to take place in December.

In addition, Forman's Population Research Center organized a Webinar titled *An Introduction to Data Sets Made Available by the Punjab Bureau of Statistics for Secondary Data Analysis*. Sajid Rasul, Director General of the Government of Punjab's Bureau of Statistics, provided the keynote address.

Forman's partnership with the American Institute for Pakistan Studies (AIPS) continues to bear fruit, in this case providing the impetus for a well-attended lecture delivered by Dr. Brannon Ingram, author of *Revival from Below: The Deoband Movement and Global Islam* who teaches in the Religious Studies Department at Northwestern University in Evanston, IL where I spent four years as an undergraduate.

Forman once again hosted the annual "Falling Walls" event, established with the support of a German NGO by the same name to recognize and promote entrepreneurship in Pakistan and around the world. Nearly a dozen students selected from universities from across Pakistan gave three-minute "pitches" on their various ideas, with the winning entry given an opportunity to "pitch" their idea to a larger audience in Berlin during the coming months. Miriam Khalid once again played a lead role in this effort, setting the stage for this year's winning entry which focused on increasing efficiency in the all-important energy sector.

Forman's Office for Research, Innovation, and Commercialization (ORIC) announced a five million rupee revolving fund to promote research at FCCU. Senior baccalaureate and graduate students are eligible to apply, along with faculty.

The head of China's Consulate in Lahore visited Forman for the first time to attend the official launch of Ayesha Siddique's *China-Pakistan Relations in the Twenty-First Century*, published by Forman's Center for Public Policy and Governance (CPPG). During the event, he also announced a 500,000 rupee donation to Forman.





Also, as the second in a continuing series of *Formanite Talkies*, our Alumni and Advancement Office brought a number of Forman alumni who are lawyers together to network, engage with Forman students and talk about their profession. Several speakers recalled their "funniest memory" of Forman, evoking much laughter on the part of those who participated. Some expressed appreciation for Forman's role in strengthening their English language skills while others mentioned that their participation in various student societies helped increase their confidence while also helping to prepare them for their post-Forman careers.

My own outreach in recent weeks included attending a small dinner hosted by the American Business Forum (ABF) in Lahore featuring Federal Minister of Finance and Revenue Dr. Miftah Ismail who spoke on the devastating economic impact that recent flooding will have on Pakistan. Also, our Registrar Dr. Nayer recently attended another ABF dinner, this one featuring the new US Ambassador of Pakistan Donald Blome as a guest speaker. In addition, USAID Mission Director Reed Aeschliman visited the Forman campus for the first time, expressing a special interest in seeing Hope Tower which USAID helped fund a decade ago.

Forman's Career Services and Internships office headed by Adnan Ilyas hosted an "*Appreciation Ceremony 2022*" for corporate partners and others who have further strengthened and deepened internship opportunities for Forman students, more than 420 of whom participated in various internship opportunities last year.

Several corporate sponsors lauded Forman students as well as Forman graduates for their contributions, having arrived with the skills and temperament needed to contribute immediately in the workplace. For example, Ms. Masooma Zeeshan, CEO of GameTrain, noted that several senior positions in GameTrain were occupied by Old Formanites (well, not actually so "old" -- some of them are recent Forman graduates!). Companies participating included Adsell's Advertising, Allied Schools, Askari Bank, GameTrain, Honda Atlas, HUM News, NEO TV, and the Pakistan Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, among many others.

A shout-out, also, to the recent graduates of the School of Management's Diploma in Business Management program, having completed their evening program sponsored by Atlas Honda, with a view toward strengthening the business skills of their own senior and mid-level staff.

With respect to fund-raising, Forman recently hosted an Appreciation Ceremony in the Rector's Conference Room honoring the Christian Endowment Education Trust (CEET) chaired by Eric Massey for their 1.8 million rupee donation to Forman, focused largely on scholarships.

Also, Forman's Pharmacy Department celebrated its accreditation with a special event at which Forman graduate Dr. Chughtai, founder and CEO of Chughtai Labs, served as Guest of Honor. Later that week, Dr. Chughtai contributed a 10 million rupee check to Forman's scholarship fund.



Let me also take this opportunity to thank members of the Forman community for their continued generosity and commitment related to flood relief. Taken together the Forman Flood Relief Appeal and the Friends of Forman Flood Relief Appeal raised more than six million rupees (contributions are still being accepted). Also, many readers of this newsletter will have contributed to the collection of food, toiletries, shoes, clothing, and other in-kind gifts for flood-affected victims sponsored by our campus Rotaract Club in partnership with Forman's Islamic Society.

Against this backdrop, let me also commend several members of the Forman community for their own individual efforts related to flood relief that also reflects Forman's motto, *"By Love Serve One Another"*. In this regard, let me especially thank Coach Brian Furche and his family who reached out to supporters in the US in the immediate aftermath of the catastrophic floods, mobilizing the funding needed to personally distribute 450 food ration bags, 400 tarps, and 200 cricket bats to flood-affected families in Swat. Other members of the Forman faculty have also been directly involved in various types of flood relief work.

Finally, Fall is the time of year when the Forman community expands exponentially, with the start of classes as well as the opportunity to welcome new students at both the College (Intermediate) and University (Baccalaureate and Graduate Studies) levels. Although we expect the number of admissions to continue to increase during the coming days, so far those numbers include more than 1,700 new College students and more than 1,200 new University students. Please make an extra effort to personally welcome any of these new students that you happen to meet during the coming days while walking around our wonderful campus!



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