



FORMAN CHRISTIAN COLLEGE
(A CHARTERED UNIVERSITY)

Rector's Update

The latest news and announcements from Dr. Jonathan Addleton

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CHRISTMAS AT FORMAN

Christmas events dominated much of December on the Forman campus and I was able to participate in several of them before departing to the US via Scotland in the middle of the month to attend our second son's wedding celebrations. This included the traditional Forman carol service, this year held in front of the new Campus Center; the College Christmas Gala; and the Light of Hope Carol Concert, always a wonderful event. Also, Forman's Christian Life program organized carols and a short Christmas skit titled "Gift of Love" held outside Sinclair Hall.

A special shoutout to Ms. Joy and her music team for organizing the College Gala concert which included a packed Sinclair Hall and many outside visitors. Organized





under the theme "Emanuel God with us" the college choir sang songs in five languages: Urdu, English, Punjabi, Korean and Dutch. As for the Light of Hope Carol Concert, their audience included Thomas from the south of Ireland who had just cycled into Lahore from the Wagah Border as part of an epic bicycle journey that started in New Zealand several months ago!

During this Christmas season, I also appreciated two long-awaited "gifts" from Pakistan's Customs Department involving clearances for two vital shipments previously "stuck" for many weeks in Karachi Port and at Lahore Airport, one consisting of IT equipment from Huawei needed to link the new Campus Center with internet and the other involving state-of-the-art water analysis equipment, gifted to Forman by Dankook University in Seoul.



I remain hopeful that at least part of the Jim Tebbe Campus Center will be "open for use" during the early part of 2024, aided in part by not only the arrival of essential IT equipment but also the energization of the main electrical panels needed to power the facility. As reported by project manager Junaid Iqbal, *"The energization process proceeded smoothly without any immediate issues. All circuits responded appropriately to the energization, and there were no abnormal fluctuations in voltage or current"*.

Once again the FCCU Rotaract Club raised funds for their annual Secret Santa event providing individual gifts bringing great joy to each young scholar attending Light of Hope School. I also appreciated participating in the well attended Sunday morning service organized by Pastor Reuben Qamar and the Presbyterian Church on campus, marking the start of the Advent season. Other notable events held in early December before I departed for the US included annual Christmas lunches or dinners sponsored by Building and Works, Procurement and other offices and departments.

In addition, Forman was honored to host the annual 2023 Christmas gathering of scholarship recipients organized by Reconciliation And Peace Innovative Development (RAPID), a family foundation registered in California and headed by the Rev. Khushnud Azariah. Approximately 40 scholarship awardees from across Pakistan attended the December 9 event including several from Forman.

CAMPUS ACTIVITIES

Forman's English Department chaired by Dr. Fatima Syeda was especially busy during the last weeks of 2023, sponsoring a number of events including a Graduate Poster Competition on December 5 titled *"Inquisitions into Digital Literary Studies"* presented by graduate students from the department's *Digital Approaches to Literature* class. I especially appreciated the creative use of themes drawn from widely disparate authors including Dante, Shakespeare and Isaac Asimov.

Also, the English Department sponsored two sessions in its continuing *Writer's Lounge Series*, one focused on *The Night in Her Hair* by Taiba Abbas and the other featuring *Second Coming* by Athar Tahir. Author Taiba Abbas was born in Pakistan, grew up in Italy and studied in London while poet, author, and retired civil servant Athar Tahir, a three-time winner of the Patras Bokhari Book Award, founded the International Center for Pakistani Writing in English at Kinnaird College.





In addition, the English Department's Graduate Seminar Series hosted a research symposium for MPhil students studying research methods and publishing in December titled *"Recontextualization, Re-definition and Reconstruction: Literature and Literary Theory Now"*.

The student-led Ewing English Society hosted its annual *Face of Forman* event on December 11. At the end of the day, outstanding student Shoaib Khan was awarded the top prize as the *"Face of Forman,"* having excelled across all four rounds covering such diverse fields as debate, writing, and sports -- a true "All Rounder," in the best sense of the term!

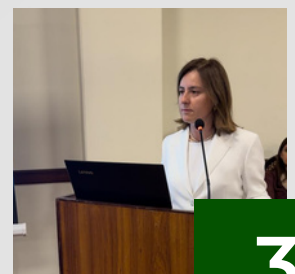
Forman Debating Society President Usama Zulfikar reported the results of the highly successful *17th All-Pakistan Debating Competition*, a long-time Forman tradition organized by what is arguably the oldest student society in Pakistan. This year, 72 institutions of higher learning from across Pakistan participated in a grueling set of debating contests over two days, planned, organized, and implemented by Forman students.

English Lecturer Adeel Khalid worked with the English Department at Albion College in Michigan to observe *International Human Rights Day* on December 10. As part of the 75th anniversary of the UN-approved International Human Rights Declaration of 1948, students established a social media platform and wrote 75 letters linked to Amnesty International. Also, best wishes to Adeel Khalid as he prepares to depart for a PhD semester abroad at Leeds University in England under an HEC Faculty Development Scholarship.

As part of another international partnership, 16 Forman students connected with 11 students from Lehigh University in Pennsylvania to promote cross-cultural dialogue within the context of the ongoing Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) initiative, in this case resulting in a seven-session online writing workshop in which each student produced a short memoir. Facilitated by Mussarat Shahid and Jessica Harbaum, the online experience introduced students from *"drastically different backgrounds"*, providing opportunities to *"explore similarities and differences in the cultures to which they belong"*.



Forman's Economics Department headed by Dr. Hafiz Muhammad Ali Bhatti sponsored a talk by IMF Resident Representative to Pakistan Esther Perez Ruiz on December 12 focused on the latest issue of the IMF's *Regional Economic Outlook* series, in this case discussing *Building Resilience and Fostering Sustainable Growth*. Faculty and students from Forman's Economic Department and School of Management attended and joined in the discussion, along with faculty from the University of Lahore, University of Management and Technology, University of Central Punjab, and University of Education, among others.



Also, on December 11, the Economics Department sponsored a poster competition involving students from all thirteen sections of ECON-100 (Principles of Economics), first prize going to Asad-ur-Rehman and Marya Ijaz, with Hamna Ahmed selected as runner-up. Concurrently, the program included a "Rising EconStar" competition involving both a quiz and a declamation contest, with Zuha Randhawa finishing first and Haniya Younas finishing second. The student-led Forman Finance Society and Lucas Economics Society also co-sponsored the event.



In addition, Forman's Economics Society hosted an *Economist of the Year 2023* competition, their biggest event of the year involving ten Lahore-area universities. The program included a declamation contest based on two intriguing questions: "I am a young Pakistani economist; optimism is my middle name!" and "I can afford four-wheelers; I don't care about the rising fuel prices in Pakistan!"



Forman's Environmental Sciences Department marked World Soil Day on December 5 by hosting a presentation delivered by Dr. Matthias Liess from the Helmholtz Center for Environmental Research in Germany on approaches to Pollutant Risk Assessment.

Also, our Environmental Sciences Department organized an *International Symposium on Environmental Applications of Carbon Based Nanomaterials* on December 13. Focused on the release of arsenic into soils and water as a global challenge, the speakers noted that graphene-based nanomaterials and nanocomposites have emerged as a reliable and effective way of removing arsenic from the environment.

Forman's Chemistry Department signed an MOU with Herbion Pakistan, the well-known herbal product company; among other things, the MOU should result in internship and employment opportunities for our students, along with new possibilities for research.

Forman's Population Research Center headed by Dr. Mohammad Vaqas hosted a program on *Population Dynamics and the Importance of Demographic Analysis to Promote Evidence-Based Policy Formulation* on December 7; Dr. Tauseef Ahmed from the UN Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) served as keynote speaker.

Meanwhile, Forman's Center for Public Policy and Governance (CPPG) headed by Dr. Saeed Shafqat hosted its annual Reunion in early December, celebrating the holiday season while also welcoming a distinguished list of CPPG graduates back to the Forman campus.

Finally, Forman's Urdu Department joined with the Forman Urdu Society to arrange a wonderful *mushaira*, held under the stars at Lucas Center on the evening of December 7. Pakistani-American poets from New York, Texas, Chicago, Maryland, and California attended, with a stellar lineup of speakers including Wasi Shah, Abbas Tabish, Sohail Ahmed, Syed Salman Gillani and others reading their poems to a packed audience. Asked to provide remarks at the close of this memorable annual event, I ended the evening by reciting the following lines:

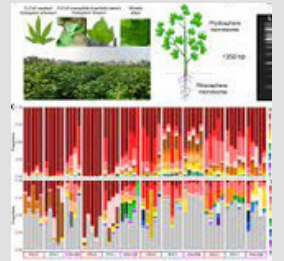
*Manzil bahut hai, Afsane bahut hai,
Raah-e-Zindagi mein imtehan aane bahut hai,
Mat karo, gila uska jo mila nahin:
Is dunya mein khush rehne ke bahane bahut hai.*

*There are more goals to be achieved,
More stories to be written,
Don't shed tears over what has been lost:
There are still plenty of reasons to be happy in this world.*



BOOKS, ARTICLES AND REVIEWS

Congratulations to several researchers associated with Forman's Kauser Abdulla Malik School of Life Sciences including Rhea Aqueel, Ayesha Badar, Nazish Roy, Qandeel Mushtaq, Aimen Fatima Ali, Aftab Bashir, and Kauser Abdullah Malik for their recent open access publication titled "Cotton microbiome profiling and Cotton Leaf Curl Disease (CLCuD) suppression through microbial consortia associated with *Gossypium arboreum*," as published by *Springer Nature*: <https://rdcu.be/dtyTc>



Sociology Professor Dr. Sara Rizvi Jafree published another article on women's health issues, this one focused on coping strategies related to the increased risk of stress and emotional fatigue among females in Pakistan during Covid-19: <https://www.tandfonline.com/.../07853890.2023.2291464...>

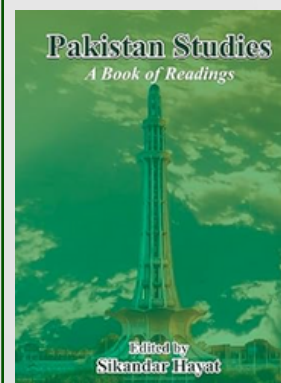


Her groundbreaking book *Social Policy for Women in Pakistan* (Palgrave MacMillan, 2023) continues to receive favorable reviews in many forums: <https://doingsociology.org/2023/12/21/social-policy-for-women-in-pakistan-by-sara-rizvi-jafree-2023-a-review-by-adhvaidha-kalidasan/> and <https://t.co/dyhsLljLg1>

I appreciate it when our faculty, staff, and students write for both the popular media and in academic journals. This month I noted especially Dr. Sikandar Hayat's article titled "Quaid's Personality Traits in the Making of Pakistan," published in the December 2023 issue of *Hilal*.



Also, Dr. Sikandar's books continue to receive favorable comments including his edited volume *Pakistan Studies: A Book of Readings* (Sange-Meel), recently reviewed by Dr. Iqbal Chawla, former Professor, Chair of History and Dean of Humanities at Punjab University who described the book in *Pakistan Vision* as "highly recommended," especially for "undergraduate students interested in knowing important aspects of Pakistan studies in a single, accessible volume". The book, featuring contributions from 11 members of the Forman faculty, has also received favorable notice in the *Daily Times*, *Friday Times*, and *Dawn*. In addition, Dr. Sikandar's book on the founders of Pakistan titled *A Leadership Odyssey* received similar accolades in a review written by Dr. Ali Saleem and published in the Winter 2023 issue of the *Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies*.



December marked the publication of the latest issue of the *Forman Journal of Social Sciences*, the fifth such volume since it was launched in 2021: <https://www.fccollege.edu.pk/forman-journal-of-social-sciences/#tab-61ba20f93a6d71be06>.

Thanks especially to the entire editorial team including Dr. Younis (Managing Editor) and Ms. Tehniyat Fatima (Assistant Editor) who produced this latest issue featuring five articles written by academics from several public and private universities in Pakistan; topics covered include health, family relationships, social media, the UN Security Council and work-life balance among female academics during Covid-19.

GIFTS AND DONATIONS

Thanks to Jamshed Marker's family for gifting 24 boxes via Syed Babar Ali, each containing 50-60 books, to the Forman Library. Previously, the late Jamshed Marker's personal library had been donated to Forman's Center for Public Policy and Governance (CPPG), providing the Center with a superb set of books focused on foreign affairs.

Shahzad Ali Malik, CEO of Guard Agri and a Forman graduate, made an extraordinarily generous contribution to FCCU over the holiday season, a gift that will be partly acknowledged by naming the Faculty and Researcher's Hall in the new Jim Tebbe Campus Center after the company that he so ably leads.

As an aside, a number of companies in the Lahore area including some with Forman connections are offering discounts to members of the Forman community including faculty, staff, students, and alumni. Examples include Chiltanpure International (25 percent discount on organic products); Celeste Home Fashion (15 percent discount on home fashions); and Evercare Hospital (15 percent discount on clinical and medical services). For more details, contact Forman's Marketing and Outreach Office which also covers Alumni Affairs.



SPORTS ACTIVITIES

In College sports, Health and Physical Education Chairperson Babar Kamil reports that a trio of Forman teams finished in third place in three successive Lahore Board Inter-Collegiate championships: Tennis (hosted by Government College University on December 6); Volleyball (hosted by Islamia College on December 15); and Table Tennis (hosted by Punjab College on December 18).

The final match of Forman's 2023 Intramural Cricket Championships was held on Forman's magnificent central cricket grounds on December 14. This year's competition involved 28 teams,

an indication of the popularity of cricket on the Forman campus. Arman Ahmed, Head of our Student Wellness Office, attended as Chief Guest.

I neglected to report another sports-related item in the last *Rector's Update*: The FCCU sports team including both men and women participated in the LUMS Home Sports Fixture 2023, returning to Forman with the "Best Delegation Award" for their outstanding performances in several different sports.



OTHER ACTIVITIES

Here is a link to one of the most heart-warming stories that I read during December, providing a detailed description of the Kushhali Fellowship program involving a partnership among the Center for Law and Justice, British Council, Lancaster University and FCCU and providing opportunities for young women from Pakistan's sweeper community: <https://www.thenews.com.pk/tns/detail/1141117-a-programme-for-prosperity>.

Once again, Forman's annual Entrepreneurship Fiesta was a big success, involving not only Forman but also participants from other universities, industry leaders, and the government. The event took place on December 15 and was inaugurated by Perveen Sarwar, CEO of Sarwar Foundation; once again, Dr. Bushra Usman from Forman's School of Management played a key leadership role.

Forman Music teacher Kanwal Suleman and Urdu teacher Asif Silas accompanied seven Forman College students to Chand Bagh School in late November to compete before large crowds at the 19th All Pakistan Music & Art Competition as well as the All Pakistan Bilingual Essay and Writing Competition, with student Sameed Butt awarded second place in the ghazal category.

Dr. Samina Mehnaz was guest speaker at the Third International Conference on Environmental Sustainability hosted by the Birla Institute of Technology and Sciences in Dubai in late November 2023, chairing a session on "Unmasking the Potential of *Gluconacetobacter Azotocaptans* in Plant Growth"; the conference was organized by the Society for Environmental Sustainability based in Lucknow (India) and included a visit to the International Center for Environmental Sustainability in Dubai.



Also, Dr. Samina was subsequently interviewed on the Pakistan Television News morning show *Subh e Pakistan*: <https://youtu.be/aZHxQyCxlaw?si=97jaCjyJdlRhDjrN>. In addition, she was featured in a television interview broadcast by SAMAA News Channel, highlighting her ranking among the "top two percent" of researchers worldwide for 2022.



Already thinking ahead to next year's applications, the Admission Office headed by Suleman Khairullah organized a "Lunch & Learn" session for career advisors and program coordinators from some of the best schools in Punjab offering High School, A-Levels, and International Baccalaureate (IB) programs. The program included lunch, a virtual Campus tour, and presentations on the admission process, merit scholarships, financial aid, and other topics. Participants included representatives from Aitchison College, Beaconhouse, City School, Lahore Grammar School, and the International School of Choueifat; representatives from St. Andrew's Church, the National Catholic Education Commission, and the Presbyterian Education Board also attended.



I attended several Board meetings in recent weeks including those related to Kinnaird College and the Christian Educational Endowment Trust (CEET). With respect to the CEET land that forms part of the Forman campus, I note that already some of this space is being used for parking, crop experiments, solar panels, and our new baseball field. Also, a recently renovated CEET residence is now doing "double duty," both for CEET offices and as an "overflow" guesthouse. In addition, fees collected from those who use the CEET parking lot are subsequently donated to the Forman scholarship fund.

Finally, I am pleased to note that Dr. Rukhsana David, principal of Kinnaird College, was elected as Chairperson of both Forman's Board of Directors (BOD) and Board of Governors (BOG), the first female in Forman's history to assume this vital position. Let me also express my deep appreciation for outgoing FCCU Chairperson Dr. Qaiser Julius who recently completed his six-year term, providing many contributions and wonderful leadership throughout his tenure.



**DR. JONATHAN ADDLETON
RECTOR**