



October 2016 at LVPEI

"Excellence" is one of our founding values and we have strived to live by this throughout our twenty nine year journey. Our rigorous adherence to this has been attracting people to our Institute from all parts of India and many countries abroad. One of our strongest areas has always been the subspecialty of cornea (the present Tej Kohli Cornea Institute). The positive outcomes of this are multifold.

Many have publicised about our work, several have become donors and some who are in positions of influence have become advocates for eye health. During this month, at the Tenth General Assembly of the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness (IAPB), the keynote address was given by the President of Liberia, Dr. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, at the Opening Ceremony. Dr. Sirleaf is a woman of great distinction, considered as one of the most influential leaders in the world and a Nobel Peace Laureate. She is one of the key figures in the development of UN strategy for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Dr. Sirleaf's connection to eye care happened through her family experience when one of her sons came to our Institute for corneal transplantation. Seeing the immediate benefit of such care, she visited us on one of her visits to India and talked about the possibility of our assistance in building an eye health system for her country. We were pleased to accept this responsibility and the first step was taken this month with the launch of outpatient services in the upgraded ophthalmology department at the country's main Medical Centre, The Kennedy Medical Centre, in the capital city of Monrovia. The support of Lions International SightFirst Programme and Operation Eyesight Universal in making this possible is greatly appreciated. The situation of Liberia should make our outgoing graduates realise how much they can do to make a difference in this world after their training. I commend Dr. Gurcharan Singh who exemplifies this. He just completed his fellowship and volunteered to work in Liberia and get the programme moving. This is an illustration of the potency of high-quality tertiary care as a conduit for advocacy at the highest levels.

October 17th was our 30th Foundation Day. This year this was combined with our Graduation Ceremony. This was celebrated across our network and all the campuses were connected for the celebration. Prof. Ajit Rangnekar, former Dean of the renowned Indian School of Business (ISB) was the keynote speaker. He talked about building and sustaining great institutions and the common underlying themes for such organisations. He complimented the LVPEI family for possessing many such traits and how each one of these contributes to make it even stronger. Prof. Ken Nischal, well-known pediatric ophthalmologist from the University of Pittsburgh and a frequent visitor to our Institute gave his own story as an example of career building for the new graduates at the Graduation Ceremony. Ken's should be an inspiring example for the outgoing graduates as they begin their careers in our profession.

Our team was well represented both at the annual meeting of the American Academy of Ophthalmology in Chicago and at the General Assembly of International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness at Durban, South Africa. Many participated as chairs and moderators of sessions, delivered invited lectures and presented free papers and posters. This was also an opportunity for networking and to enhance the existing collaborations as well as to build new ones with different organisations and individuals.



Our technology group at the Innovation Centre, Srujana, got a shot in the arm when they were awarded the runner up prize of US \$ 50,000 for their low cost "Folding Phoropter", from "Clearly Vision Awards" for innovations across the world. These kinds of innovations will enable us to have a wider access and reach many more who need eye care. Congratulations to the entire Srujana team. Our engineering and technology research group also built a new image capturing software that can capture and store pictures and videos directly from slit lamps, laboratory microscopes and operating rooms now. Congratulations to the team for this superlative effort.

As part of our "Next 25" – Institutes of Excellence programme, an "Institute of Dacryology" was inaugurated, thanks to the support from Shri Kudilal Govindram Seksaria Foundation of Mumbai. Javed Ali deserves to be complimented for his efforts in getting this off the ground in a very short time.

Two more primary eye care vision centres were inaugurated taking the total to 141.

We had our usual share of laurels, both nationally and internationally and I offer my congratulations to each of the recipients.

On the education front, we had several workshops and also a symposium on "Paediatric Neuro-ophthalmology". 150 delegates attended the symposium, comprising of ophthalmologists, neurologists and neuro-radiologists from across the country. Ken Nischal from Pittsburg and Dan Milea from Singapore constituted the guest faculty.

As we celebrated the 30th Foundation Day, true to our tradition, we have honored two individuals for their long term contributions by adding new dimensions to our Institute a quarter century ago and building on it. Both these, Savitri Sharma, who initiated the Microbiology Laboratory and added the first laboratory research component, and the famous artist Surya Prakash, who built the culture of integrating art into our Institution building, added much to the image of our Institute. The Institute honored them by the installation of "Savitri Sharma Chair of Microbiology" and "Surya Prakash Art Gallery". Both these further reflect our practice of "Excellence".

- Gullapalli N Rao