



November 2016 at LVPEI

Our collaborators around the world are one of our greatest assets; and our partnership with the University of New South Wales (UNSW) in Australia is one of the longest and most cherished ones. Over a quarter century we have benefitted immensely from this partnership in the areas of education, research, public health, product development and funding. This happened almost entirely due to the unreserved support and friendship of the late Brien Holden. The visit this month of the Vice-Chancellor of UNSW, Prof. Ian Jacobs, a world renowned oncologist, further strengthened this bond. We had wide ranging discussions with him and identified areas of furthering our collaboration as well as exploring new frontiers of relationship. We are grateful that he made this visit during his short and hectic schedule in India. This was followed a few days later by the visit of yet another Vice-Chancellor, this time of the University of Bradford from United Kingdom. The collaboration with this university is relatively nascent but very intensive and exciting in certain aspects pertaining to infectious diseases. Thanks to Prof. Brian Cantor, the Vice-Chancellor, and his team for including us in their India itinerary.

Our strength in research and education is due to the great talent in our faculty. This is reflected in how well many of them are regarded all over the world. The 'Institute Fellow' award this month to our Director Emeritus of Research, Prof. Balasubramanian, from the famed Indian Institute of Technology in Kanpur was news for celebration. Balu received this award along with two other illustrious figures from Indian science. Thanks Balu for continuing to enhance our image. Jachin Williams is a valued member of our community eye health group and has been spearheading all our efforts in community screening programmes for the past nearly quarter century. When he was felicitated as an "Eye Health Hero" by the International Agency for Prevention of Blindness, it was a recognition so well deserved as he personally touched the lives of hundreds of thousands living in the remotest locations, and made a difference. Congratulations Jachin and your outstanding real life partner, Beula. Several of our other colleagues were recognised both nationally and internationally and to all of them, my congratulations.

Several education programmes happened including the entrance interviews for ophthalmology fellowships, the Fifty Second version of the Indian Contact Lens Education Programme, admission of a new batch into Diploma in Community Eye Health programme, and a new internship programme in vision rehabilitation for those who completed their Masters in Rehabilitation sciences, among others.

The annual fun camp for clients and families of our Rehabilitation centres was attended by over 300 people who participated in a lot of interactive games. This annual event provides one more opportunity for these families to share each other's experiences as they work with our rehabilitation group in achieving the goal of "realising the full potential" for their children with vision loss.



Our Ramayamma International Eye Bank crossed the 3000 mark of distributing transplantable corneas during the year, with a month to spare, and this is the highest ever. This coincides with the move to their sparkling new premises on our campus, thanks to the continuing generosity of the members of Gunnam Ramayamma family and the Tej Kohli Foundation. This augurs well as we march towards a goal of 5000.

Our innovation activity is continuing to proliferate. The Head of the Engineering group of our Innovation Centre, Ashutosh Richhariya, developed a portable device for the early detection of eye infection and dry eye. This effort is funded by a bilateral India-Canada Initiative.

Our Bhubaneswar campus recorded the highest ever monthly surgical volume. Thanks to the entire team for their efforts.

Our journey to go green by installing solar power in all our campuses had its beginning with the launch of solar plants in our Gullapalli Pratibha Rao Campus housing our Optometry Institute and Community Eye Health groups. Thanks to Manoj Edakkatil and Ramam Atmakuri for making this happen.

Our Institute has been the beneficiary of the generosity of so many individuals and organizations in more ways than one, sometimes from unexpected sources. This month's experience was unique and special for us. Ramya, a young client of our Vision Rehabilitation Centre, was awarded a cash prize for her outstanding scholastic performance in class ten. She immediately made a donation out of this to the Institute, in the spirit of giving back to help others like her. A touching gesture indeed! Her generosity inspires us in our continued efforts to help all those with vision loss to realize their full potential. I also wish to place on record our indebtedness to Ramya and her parents, who nurtured such a trait in her.

- Gullapalli N Rao