



January 2017 at LVPEI

The Annual Champalimaud Research Symposium is an annual event held every January. Here, we have an opportunity to review the progress of our research effort, interact with some very eminent persons from the medical, ophthalmological and biological sciences; and provide an opportunity for our researchers to present their work. This year, Prof. Joan Miller, Chair of Department of Ophthalmology and the Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary, Harvard Medical School, delivered the "Champalimaud Oration". She reviewed her pioneering work in the treatment of retinal vascular diseases for which she had received the Champalimaud Award in the year 2014. She traced the entire evolution of the different therapeutic approaches for these potentially blinding diseases. It was indeed a feast to the ears and the mind. Dr. Soumya Swaminathan, Director-General of the Indian Council of Medical Research and a distinguished scientist who has made seminal contributions to the area of tuberculosis, was the Special guest for the day. She presented a panoramic view of all the developments in the control of this disease, which causes the most morbidity in the world with India having the greatest and a disproportionate share of the global burden. Another invited lecture was by Prof. Niyaz Ahmed, Director of the International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Dhaka. These scintillating lectures combined with our own presentations, providing a treasure of new information and how all the products of research are making a difference.

In research, we have continued our expansion with the addition of a "zebra fish facility" – the Allahadini Mishra Zebra Fish Research Centre for ocular tuberculosis research - at our Bhubaneswar campus.

During our Institute's genesis as well as growth, we have benefitted immensely from the munificence of many individuals and organizations. Mr. Jagdish Chanrai, who has business interests in many countries, is supporting the upgradation of our Bhubaneswar tertiary care campus. In recognition of this generous gesture, we have named this campus after his father, Shri Mithu Tulsi Chanrai, on the occasion of the 11th anniversary of that campus. This gift came at the right time as the demand for expanded facilities has increased significantly. I would like to convey our gratitude to Mr. Chanrai for this support.

In line with our goal of providing the benefits of best of technology to the most disadvantaged, we have installed an in-house developed tele-ophthalmic slit lamp at the primary care vision centre in the village of Harisal in Maharashtra state. This is part of the Microsoft initiative of "Digital Villages" in partnership with the Maharashtra government. We are pleased to be part of this exciting initiative which is now looking at a massive scale up. This is connected to our Hyderabad campus. I compliment Ashutosh Rchhariya and his group for this development.

The Annual Ocular Surface workshop was attended by several corneal specialists from India, the US, Mexico and Greece. The visiting faculty included many from the Harvard group and Bascom Palmer Eye Institute in the US. All aspects of ocular surface were discussed. This is one of our most popular courses for international audience.



Yet another course was Master's Dissection Workshop to provide hands-on training in orbital surgery using human acrylic replica skulls in lieu of human cadaveric skulls. Prof. Robert Goldberg of UCLA was the guest instructor.

In addition, several other guest lecturers have contributed to our education programmes and we convey our deepest gratitude for this.

Virender Sangwan, cornea consultant, won the Sun Pharma Research Award 2015 for Medical Sciences-Clinical Research. Several in our group have received honours, both National and International, and I compliment them for continuing to enhance our image.

I end this month's communication with the story of four year old Prithvi. Congenital cataract and delayed care caused vision loss to his parents. Realizing the high risk, his parents got Prithvi evaluated soon after his birth at our Vijayawada tertiary care campus. He was found to have congenital cataract which was promptly taken care of, restoring sight to him. Now Prithvi has become a guide to his parents for all their activities at his tender age. It is the awareness of his parents from their experience that led to this happy story. Prithvi and many others like him are getting the benefits of timely intervention, thanks to many generous individuals and our dedicated team.

- Gullapalli N Rao