



September at LVPEI

There are some prestigious awards to young scientists of great promise in India. One such is B M Birla Award given to those below 40 in recognition of outstanding scientific work. Inderjeet Kaur of our Kallam Anji Reddy Molecular Genetics Laboratory was selected for this coveted honour this year. Inderjeet is one our most productive scientists and is currently at Harvard and Massachusetts Eye & Ear Infirmary on a six month stint supported by Department of Biotechnology, Government of India through the DBT – CREST Award. Congratulations to Inderjeet (and her husband Subho who figures in our news very often too).

One of the areas in India that need significant enhancement of quality is "Ophthalmology Residency Training (postgraduate education)". This is due to a variety of factors not the least of which is inadequate exposure to current knowledge. The programme we have initiated a few years ago to expose the residents to current knowledge, technology and techniques, while highlighting the basics, is a highly successful one. Over 200 from all over India attend this week long activity and several hundred more participate through the web. An added feature is to have this group interact with an inspiring ophthalmic leader. This year we were privileged to have Dr. S S Badrinath, Founder of the renowned Sankara Netralaya in Chennai. Badri's lecture about how he built this magnificent centre of excellence had many lessons for everyone in the audience. Interaction with such individuals is essential in these formative years of these youngsters' careers before the strong winds of relatively undesirable influences sweep them away. Our thanks to Dr. Badrinath for giving his time for this.

India Today is one of the most popular weeklies of India and when it has included our colleague and Head of cornea service, Virender Sangwan among the 25 Newsmakers of this year, we were all thrilled. This adds to a long list of accolades that came along Virender's way in the past few years. Also honored was our Director of Research, Balu, with the first "Distinguished Alumnus Award" of prestigious Birla Institute of Technology which has among its alumni many luminaries in diverse fields. This is the least bit surprising given the many seminal contributions Balu has made. Kudos to Virender and Balu on receiving these well deserved recognitions!



LVPEI has begun its journey towards becoming a "paperless" medical institution several months ago and this month this initiative leaped forwards with the creation of centralised office training centre. This enables the team to scale up the effort and complete the integration of the network in a shorter time. This is an in house product with an ophthalmologist being the brain behind with support from our IT team and external consultants. This project has received the Information Week's EDGE Award for 2011 for Enterprise – IT application. My congratulations to the entire team on this recognition, so early in their project development!

Among the patients this month was the Deputy Prime Minister of Uganda. This gave us an opportunity for ADVOCACY. He was very receptive to the information we have provided him and we are following it up with our friends and colleagues in Uganda. Such efforts are required on an ongoing basis to promote the significance of eye health, and secure the commitment of Governments in making this a priority on their national health agenda. The importance of advocacy was not evident to me, as it is usually with many clinicians and scientists, until my association with International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness (IAPB) and VISION 2020: The Right to Sight.

As I write this message, the celebration of our 25th Foundation is in full swing and will give you details of that in my next communication.

Gullapalli N Rao