



September 2019 at LVPEI

Research has always been an important functional component of our Institute. Since inception, we have invested heavily in promoting research, and one facet of that is the development of the “Clinician - Scientist” cadre. This has been giving us rich dividends in the form of research grants, publications, honours, and patents; all of which contributed to the overall enhancement of the Institute’s image. This month yet another major honour was bestowed on one of our faculty. Javed Ali, Head of our Institute of Dacryology, was selected for the Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar Award, the highest Honour in Science in India (for those under 45) by the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR). Javed happens to be the fourth one in our team to receive this prestigious Honour. In fact, we are the only Eye Institute ever to receive this award. Javed was earlier a Von Humboldt Fellow, and has also received his Ph.D. this past year. He is perhaps the only ophthalmologist who is entirely dedicated to lacrimal disorders. Our warm congratulations to Javed on this achievement!

Hosting and organizing “Public Lectures” has been one of our traditions, in order to raise public awareness on the pressing Health Care issues. This month, the “Dr. Rustam D Ranji Rotary Award Lecture” named after a respected ophthalmologist of Hyderabad, was delivered by the prominent virologist, Prof. Jacob John of the Christian Medical College, Vellore. He spoke on the epidemic of “Encephalopathy”, which was the cause of hundreds of deaths among children in the states of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. He was one of the main investigators tasked with finding the underlying causes of this devastating health problem. His lecture was an eye opener to many on how lack of diligence and basic health care can erupt into major health crises.

Our annual blood donation drive highlights our staff’s incredible display of generosity! The response was heartwarming, with 221 units of blood donated to a local Blood Bank to ensure free supply of blood for the surgical care of children with eye cancer, especially those from economically underprivileged families. My profuse thanks to all these donors!

While on the subject of generosity, our Institute has progressed this far due to the munificence of many supporters and we owe much to them. Cognizant Foundation, the philanthropic arm of the technology giant Cognizant, recently gave us a big grant to expand our work on Retinopathy of Prematurity (ROP) into 19 additional districts, in the states of Telangana, Andhra Pradesh and Odisha. We are indebted to this foundation for their continuing support to our work. ROP is fast becoming one of the leading causes of childhood blindness in India, and our group is playing a leadership role in tackling ROP through service, education, research, technology innovation and advocacy. All these efforts are aimed at averting a lifetime of blindness in these children.



As always, many of our colleagues received honours, both National and International. They together enhance our image. I congratulate each of them!

Many continuing education programmes were conducted during the month as part of the activities of our vibrant Academy for Eye Care Education. The CMEs are aimed at different cadres of eye care personnel.

The multi- disciplinary approach at LVPEI helps many individuals with debilitating diseases to realise their full potential. This is clearly exemplified in the story of a 17 year old boy from remote rural Odisha. He was diagnosed with childhood eye cancer, Retinoblastoma, in both eyes. The disease was quite advanced when he came to us. Immediate intervention by our oncology group saved his life but the eyes could not be saved. However, counseling followed by intensive rehabilitation training helped him to become self-supporting, much to the delight of his parents. He is also encouraged to develop his talent in singing, and he enthralled the audience with his songs at a recent event in our Mithu Tulsi Chanrai Campus in Bhubaneswar.

- Gullapalli N Rao