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Aga Khan University Alumni Association, "AKU-NAMA : Winter 2010, Volume 3, Issue 2" (2010). *Alumni Magazines*. Book 7.  
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# AKU-NAMA

Aga Khan University Newsletter and Magazine for Alumni

Winter 2010, Vol. 3, Issue 2



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AKU Reunion in Dallas: (left-right) Louis Ariano, Carol Ariano and Farhat Abbas.

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# Stepping Up to the Challenge

Adeel A. Butt



*Reuters*

In 2010, Pakistan experienced floods that inundated nearly a fifth of the country. By some estimates, over 20 million people have been affected. The Aga Khan University and its alumni have played their part in helping those affected. They have provided primary medical care at relief camps, staffed wards in hospitals and taken over unused government facilities, donating time, professional expertise and money to help their compatriots. However, millions still remain without shelter or food, and at great risk from water-borne diseases. With the winter now here, the need for assistance is even greater.

While numerous government, non-governmental and international agencies have set up efforts to help the affected, there is a sense of lack of effective leadership

to address the enormous task at hand. There is a need for a professionally staffed disaster relief agency which can become the central management hub in any national emergency. The agency should be run on the principles of independence, transparency and accountability.

Even though many have stepped up to meet the challenge, we need even more. From community associations, civil society organisations, local governments all the way through to national and provincial institutions, we need leaders – not one but many.

P.S. We urge all readers to help our less fortunate fellow citizens, through their time, expertise or donations. Remember, even a smile for an affected person is a charity that has its own rewards.

# Volunteers Make a Difference

Syed Nabeel Zafar, MBBS '08, MPH '10

The devastating floods that began in Pakistan in July displaced millions, affected 78 out of 144 districts in Pakistan, led to a state of emergency and once again, focused the world's spotlight on this country – but for entirely different reasons. This unprecedented natural disaster has allowed the people of Pakistan to demonstrate their compassion and generosity. Many individuals and organisations across the country have committed time, energy and resources to the flood relief efforts. Groups have banded together to collect funds to buy food and clothing and rush supplies to people. Institutions have 'sponsored' camps or villages, and devoted staff and time to the effort. Even as the already dilapidated infrastructure in our rural areas – roads, bridges, health centres and schools – crumbled under the flood waters, people continued to find a way to reach out to those displaced by the flood.

We left in a rush for Khairpur and Sukkur, the five of us, a senior paediatrician, a local gynaecologist, two final-year medical students and a public health specialist (myself). It was the end of August and flood waters had inundated towns and villages in upper Sindh. Our plan was to visit camps set up for the flood displaced people – five days and 15 camps later we had attended to over 500 patients, providing basic care and medications. We had also trained around 100 lady health workers (LHWs) in basic health and hygiene messages, emphasising how vital they are to the flood relief efforts and boosting their own sense of importance.

We witnessed first-hand, and for the first time, a large-scale disaster. There was so much chaos that it was difficult to grasp the situation. People cramped together in school buildings, tents or along roadsides with nothing of their own. The local government was completely overwhelmed and was struggling to provide food, water, shelter and clothes to this massive influx of refugees.

During our short visit there we saw many relief efforts that could have been better. But we also saw that



*Newborn twins being treated in a school camp in Mattiari, Sindh.*

*Anita Zaidi*

things could have been much worse. Many suffered from poor health and the floods had further aggravated the problem. The most common illnesses were diarrhoea, skin problems and respiratory infections. The most severely affected were women, children and the elderly. Nearly every child was malnourished and every woman anaemic.

Every third female of childbearing age was pregnant. Hospitals were overburdened and did not have adequate staff, beds or space. Despite the large number of people needing help, we continued our efforts, treated acute cases and sent daily reports back to AKU so that more people could be motivated to volunteer and be directed to where they were needed the most.

The poor sanitary conditions and the sheer lack of basic personal hygiene that we saw was alarming. Since they knew no better, people had no qualms about eating where they had defecated. Newborn children lay on the mud, smothered in flies. There was garbage and filth everywhere with people and animals sharing the same living quarters.

In such difficult conditions, it is vital for people to have the knowledge of basic hygiene and sanitation practices that can help prevent infections and disease. The perfect 'force' for this training challenge are the LHWs and there are about 1,500 LHWs operating in the Sukkur and Khairpur area. Since most of them are familiar with the local language and culture, they integrate well with local communities. We trained and motivated as many LHWs as we could on how to deliver health messages in the hope that it would benefit the internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the long run.

Other organisations were also involved in sanitation efforts. We witnessed pit latrines for human waste disposal being erected, hand pumps for clean drinking water being installed and soaps being distributed with rations. However, the best camp, being run by a local NGO, had empowered the IDPs to cater for themselves. At the camp, the flood affectees were cooking, cleaning, stitching clothes and guarding the gate of the camp on their own, which made them much better off than the rest.

The recovery phase of the floods, rehabilitating people, the infrastructure and the social services system is difficult and complex. But it is a challenge that can be overcome with the joint efforts of local governments, NGOs, international agencies and volunteers.

We know that volunteers from all over Pakistan are doing what they can to make a lasting impact. The silver lining here is that the flood has brought these neglected people within the reach of interventions. Now it is important that we learn from this disaster and focus our efforts, in the post-flood phase, on the crucial issue of community education.

## Fundraiser in Oxford

Mohammad Ali Rai, MBBS '08

In the wake of the catastrophic floods in Pakistan, it seemed apt to organise a fundraiser for those affected. All I really needed was a push and it came when a Canadian colleague inquired as to what I had done to help the flood relief efforts back home.

The very next morning, I circulated the idea of a fund-raising iftaar amongst my friends here at Oxford. Everyone was extremely supportive, but we were slightly scared about the turnout. It was non-term time at Oxford, students were on break and we were hesitant about the success of such an effort.

With a vague idea in our heads, we took to the streets to find out which restaurant would suit our budget. We found a quaint outlet in the colourful Cowley area of Oxford, whose owners happily agreed to work within our budget. Step one of the plan had been accomplished.

Step two was to spread the word, and fast. Facebook was of good use as we generated an event page – liaising with as many societies and individuals we could find who were still active in Oxford and not hibernating for the summer.

The big day finally arrived. Not surprisingly, it was raining. It was a not-so-perfect start and I feared the rain would turn people away.

But the turnout was a complete surprise. We had anticipated about 40 people; the restaurant had capacity for 100. Over a 110 people turned up! And the best part was there was food and plenty of it for everyone! There were people from every profession and several nations supporting the event, from Canada to as far away as Malaysia. Even my fellow 'Rhodies' – Rhodes scholars – turned up and I am greatly indebted to them for contributing to our fund-raising efforts.

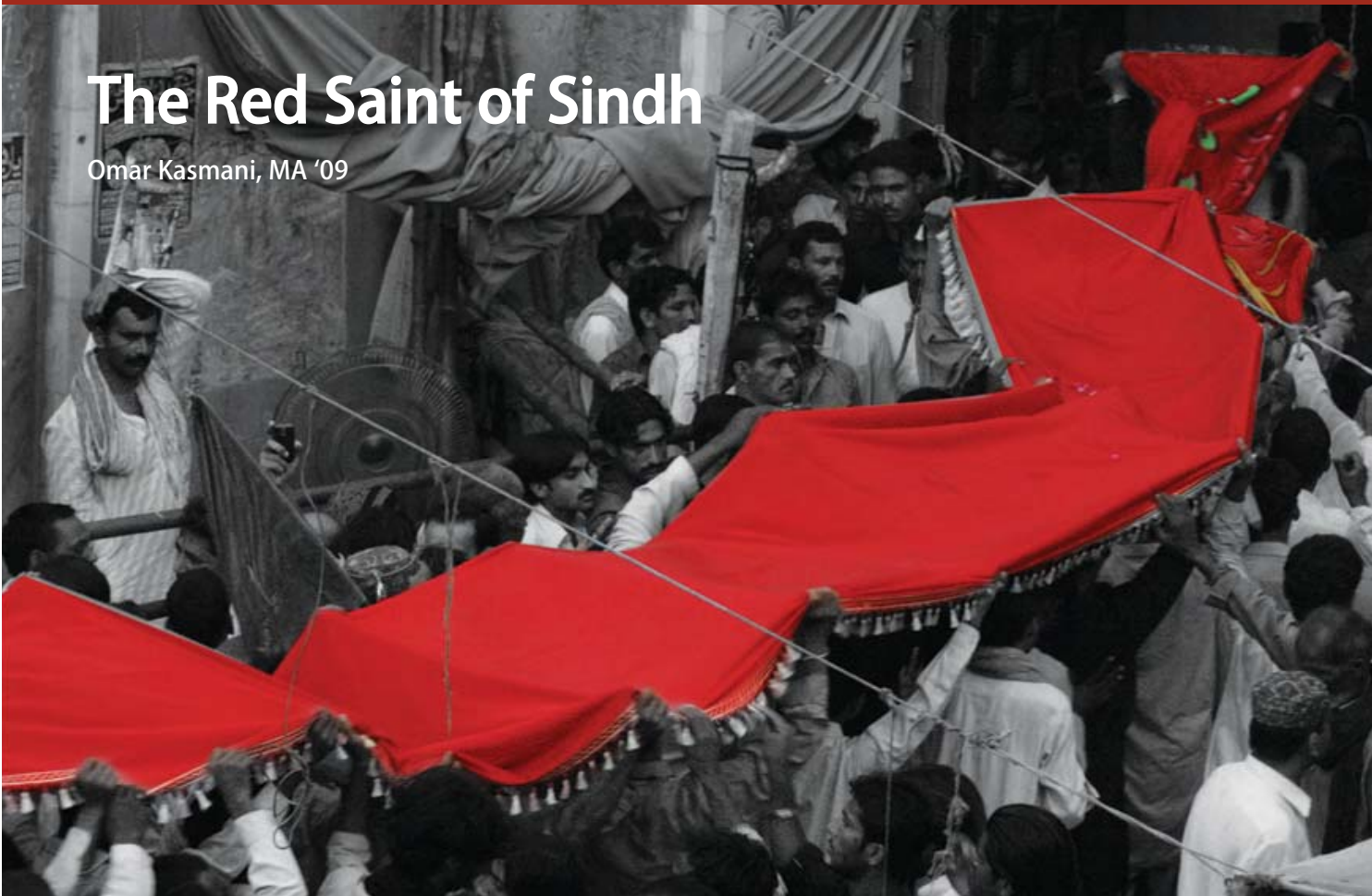
We had organised a number of presentations to highlight the severity of the floods in Pakistan. Numerous reasons have been cited to explain the slow international response to the crisis in the country, from donor fatigue in the wake of the Haiti quake to the poor global image of Pakistan. But the fact that stood out blatantly that day was that very few people actually understood the gravity of the situation.

After the presentations and dinner, we passed our donation boxes around. The response in one word: mind-blowing! Through our efforts, we managed to raise close to 3,000 pounds. We channelled this money to the Disasters Emergency Committee, which is an umbrella group of 13 UK charities, from Islamic Aid to Oxfam.

But what we all need to understand now is that post-disaster, reconstruction efforts are going to be a long and tedious challenge. Fundraisers like ours are merely the starting point of a sustained support programme for our affected fellow citizens in Pakistan. We should not need a push to remind us of our responsibility towards our very own nation.

# The Red Saint of Sindh

Omar Kasmani, MA '09



*Architect, photographer and anthropologist, Omar Kasmani (AKU-ISMC, Class of 2009) is currently a PhD candidate in Social Anthropology at the Freie Universität, Berlin, Graduate School Muslim Cultures and Societies. His research interests include gender, devotion and post-colonial subjectivities.*

Appearing much softer at dusk, the golden dome of the shrine of Lal Shahbaz Qalandar rises above the dusty town of Sehwan, 180 miles north of Karachi. Tiny makeshift shrines and altars dot the processional walk to the main entrance of the shrine, marked by a very tall *alam*, a structure erected in the memory of the Battle of Karbala (680 AD).

Walking past the courtyard, now barefoot, I let a red thread be tied to my wrist, signifying the colour of the saint. The courtyard is neatly cordoned off into male and female zones where seemingly disciplined men and women await what appears to be a daily ritual. Minutes later, right after the sunset prayer, large drums are struck, turning people in the courtyard less disciplined, the gender-divide less stark. Some observe and many participate in a kind of vigorous dance called *dhamal* in local parlance. As men dance to the beats of

the drum, alternatively lifting one foot and springing on the other, women sway their heads in a circular motion, their hair left uncovered and untied.

Inside, where the saint lies buried, people continue to make offerings, in groups and in solitude. Women sing of the saint's intercessory attributes; the ambience is made warmer by the soft rendition of '*O lal meri pat rakhiya bala jhoole lal*' (lit: O Lal keep my boat afloat). Occasionally, parties of male vocalists, whilst standing by the grave, sing or recite poems of praise and sometimes of grief for the family of the Prophet. This is often accompanied by beating of the chest by Shi'a pilgrims providing a regular beat to the recitation.

Upon entering, many would prostrate at the threshold or later at the pedestal of the shrine, a few would crack open a coconut. There are men and women who quietly read the Quran, and those who pray silently

with hands folded, clasped together or stretched out. There are some who circumambulate with chants louder than others and some whose singing voices fill the large *durbar* (courtyard) space. Many make offerings to the saint: *chadars*, rose petals, sweets and money. Some are seen touching the grave; others bow further to deliver a kiss.

An increasingly frequent sight is that of men and women using their cellular phones to take pictures or to make videos of the shrine. The democratisation of the camera, I believe, subjects the shrine visitor to posing in front of it. The impres-

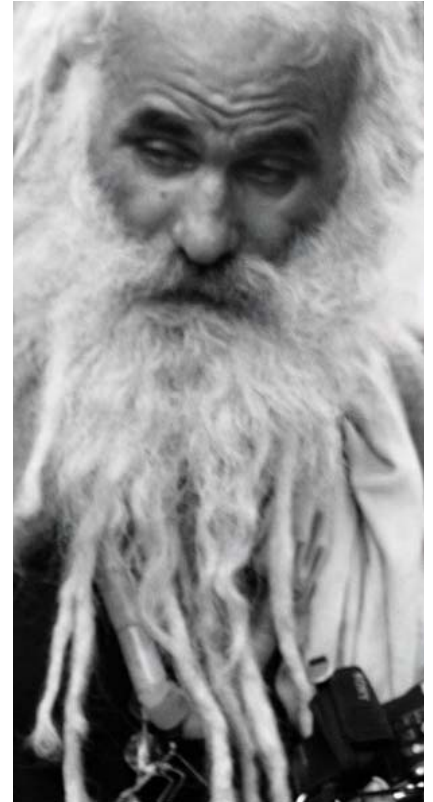
sion is confirmed as many pray facing the camera and not in the direction of the shrine as dictated by custom. My use of camera, in this sense, becomes unexceptional and in some ways not intrusive.

“

*‘O lal meri pat rakhiya  
bala jhoole lal’* (lit: O  
Lal keep my boat afloat)

”

*The images are part of a larger body of work “The red between black and white”, curated for an exhibition at the L’École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales in Paris in September 2010. This ethnographic account is part of the researcher’s MA project conducted at AKU-ISMC.*





## Step by Step to Publishing

Noor Hussain and Shairoz Ismail, MEd '07

It was our research study for the MEd degree that planted the seed.

It was a rigorous process that began with formulating a research plan, writing a research proposal and finally submitting a dissertation; a process of un-learning and re-learning that made us realise the importance of reflecting on how the theoretical knowledge of research in novice researchers is transformed into their research skills.

As fledgling researchers, we were anxious about receiving clear directions and effective supervision. Fortunately, Dr Nilofar Vazir, Associate Professor, AKU-IED agreed to supervise us. Although our studies had many contextual and methodological differences, her extraordinary expertise as a dissertation supervisor made our thesis research work and writing, a significant learning experience and a milestone in our teaching career. This exceptional learning opportunity eventually convinced the two of us to reflect on our overall experience as research supervisees and on the entire process we had been through. We decided to write a reflective paper that could provide some useful underpinnings for both neophyte researchers and research supervisors.

Despite living and working in different contexts, we remained enthusiastic about our aim. We corresponded over email, exchanging feedback till we were satisfied that our learning could add to research literature. The result was 'Learning, re-learning and un-learning: our journey across the dissertation process: reflections of two student teachers' published in the international journal, *Reflective Practice*.

This paper is significant to us in two ways. First, it provides a comprehensive view of the entire process of research work under a research supervisor, which we narrated by sharing sufficient evidence of the professional interaction among supervisors and supervisees. In addition, it emphasises the pivotal role a research supervisor plays in ensuring the quality and authenticity of the study. Secondly, by being published at an international forum, it has revealed our competency as authors. This has motivated us to continue to write and share our learning experiences with colleagues.

What we have realised is that it is necessary to carefully proofread the final version, fulfill copyright formalities and address acknowledgements. This has indeed been a successful step in our journey as learners.

## Towards Excellence

Sindhu Nawaz, RN Diploma '07

This is a story of Aga Khan Hospital for Women and Children, Kharadar and its integration with the University Hospital.

The Janbai Maternity Home, as it was originally called, was established on April 15, 1924 with the support of Sir Sultan Mahomed Shah Aga Khan III and the philanthropist, Weir Bunde Ali Kassim. It now functions as a full-fledged secondary hospital with 48 beds, a labour room, an operation theatre, nursery and outpatient clinics. It also has been offering midwifery training since 1967, with 1,210 graduates to date.

On July 1, 2009 the nursing services were merged with the Aga Khan University Hospital. Initially, the merger was not easily accepted – change is not always welcome! To help the process, the Aga Khan University Hospital nursing team arranged an introductory learn and lunch session, where apprehensions and queries could be answered.

Several steps followed: a training need analysis where skills and theory were assessed, special classes arranged for those who needed assistance, and follow-up to help people improve their grades based on their knowledge, attitude and practice.

Like they say, no one can go back and make a brand new start, but anyone can start today and forge a brand new ending – and this is precisely what happened here. Initially while wearing their brand new AKUH uniforms, staff felt insecure. Their Janbai identity had gone away, an identity very close to their hearts; shifts had been stretched to nine hours, and adjustments had to be made with families. They were worried about the firm rules towards policies and accountability for their own actions. They were worried that the homely environment of sharing and caring would disappear, they would have to stretch themselves and learn new technology, rationalise their nursing care, and above all be vocal, confident, assertive and independently responsible for their patient's right.

If the key to success is the ability to adapt, then yes, our team has become accustomed to the new uniform, duty hours, policies, procedures and documentation. Now we all can rationalise our nursing interventions, develop nursing care plans and proudly say that we provide quality care!



Gary Otte

## Research Grants: A Nightmare for Junior Researchers

Kashmira Nanji, BScN '04, MSc '09

You are entering a dimly lit room. On one side you can see huge stacks of papers and on the other, a group of people working away. Moving closer, you realise that those piles are actually grant applications and the people, reviewers. Suddenly, one turns to look you in the face; you realise that he is holding your grant application. He smiles and stamps the paper and hands it over. Your application has been rejected. You hear a faint, familiar sound in the background – an alarm clock ringing, waking you from this nightmare. Thank god! It is just a dream.

This is the nightmare that haunts every junior researcher. Granting agency policies have made it increasingly difficult for young researchers to obtain funds, which has the potential to drive an entire generation away from careers in basic biomedical research.

To make matters worse, internationally, research funding has fallen and there is very tough competition for grants from well-known agencies

such as the National Institutes of Health. Local funds are also declining, as the Higher Education Commission and Pakistan Medical and Research Council have suffered major cuts in their budgets. However, let us have confidence in the skills we have gained at AKU. During my MSc programme, we were told that there are two steps for success in the field of research. First, formulating an original and innovative idea for research and second, convincing reputable funding agencies to support it.

Well-thought out research ideas do not appear out of the blue. Successful researchers read numerous papers in related fields to develop their own ideas. They also note the funders, the agencies interested in specific areas or projects. Their next step is to obtain feedback from colleagues and mentors on both the research idea and the prospective funding agencies.

Success in research is also dependent on the ability to effec-

tively propose an idea to granting agencies. First impressions matter a great deal: a concise and convincing proposal is essential for getting one's research funded. Reviewers usually spend a short amount of time reading each application and if they do not like your idea after reading the first page, they are not likely to approve your grant application. Also proposals that do not match an agency's objectives are less likely to succeed.

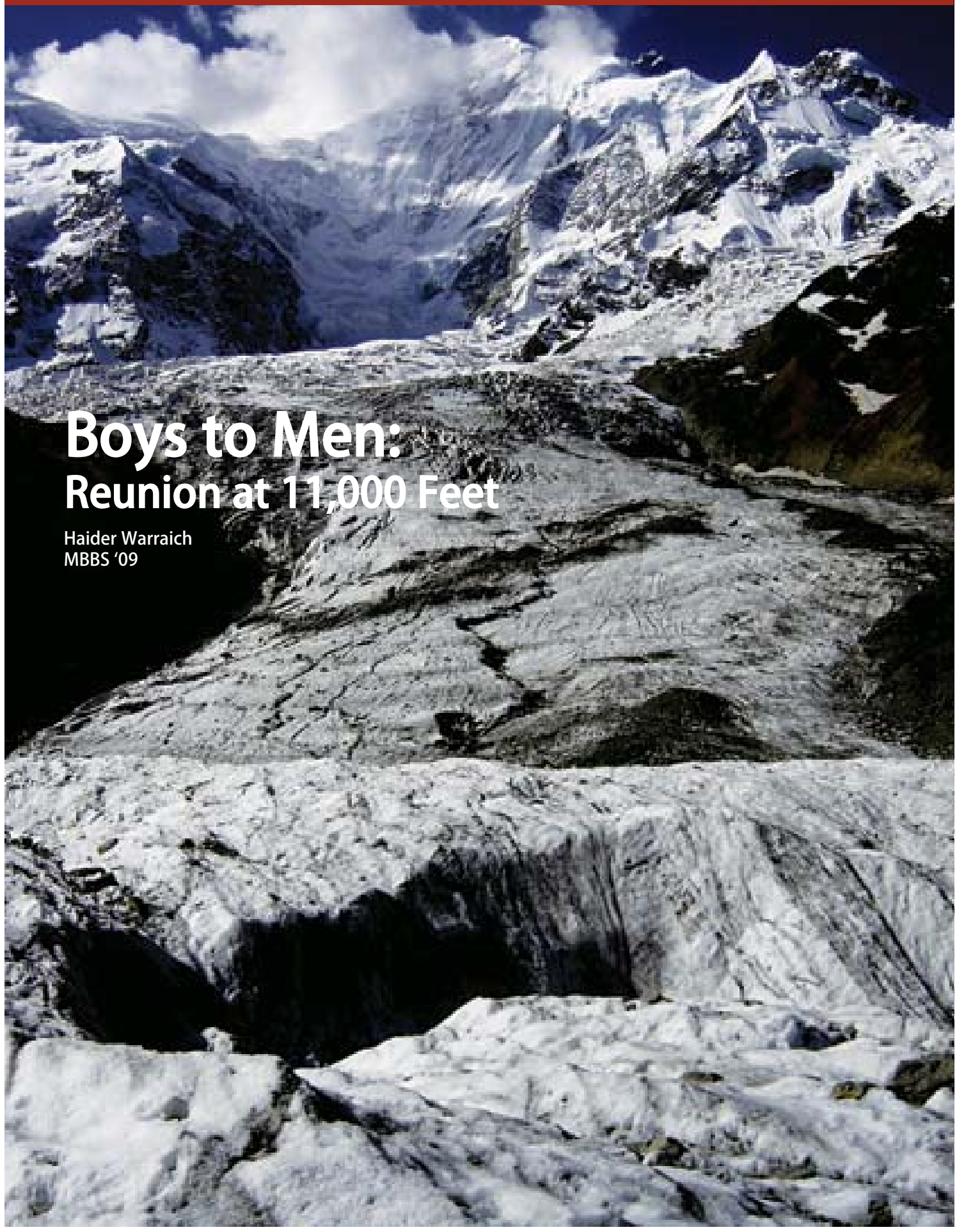
Working as a junior researcher is definitely not a 9 to 5 job – it is an ongoing struggle. You know that when you are not working, you are potentially falling behind your competitors (read strong track record researchers). However, there is no doubt in my mind that with continual effort we can successfully compete for grants from renowned funding agencies and excel in our careers.

*Kashmira Nanji is working in the Department of Family Medicine, AKU as a Senior Instructor (Research).*

FEATURE

# Boys to Men: Reunion at 11,000 Feet

Haider Warraich  
MBBS '09



Around this time last year, as the class of 2009 transitioned from being students to alumni, my group of friends decided to make one last challenging trip together to the northern areas of Pakistan, as we had done throughout our years at AKU. Having already hiked across Naran, Kaghan, Nathia Gali, Beeran Gali, Fairy Meadows and up to Nanga Parbat, this time we decided to visit the Hunza Valley and trek up to the base camp of Rakaposhi.

We started our journey in a rented bus, driving all the way from Islamabad along the Karakoram Highway (KKH) to Gilgit and beyond. The ride was fun, partly because of the ruckus that a dozen or so boys released from five years of virtual incarceration can create and also because the drive along the KKH itself is an extraordinary experience with its deep valleys and high mountains – it is as if everything is drawn to an almost separate scale than the one we are used to.

By the time we camped at one of the many spots that provided a magnificent viewpoint of Rakaposhi, we had been on the road for two days straight. But the view that greeted us in the morning more than overcame any lingering doubts we may have harboured about our adventure. Refreshed, we packed up and departed for Hunza, where we camped out in an apple orchard in full bloom – with Rakaposhi still overlooking us. After a feast of some exquisite yak meat, we moved on to view the storied Altit and Baltit forts, once homes to the royal family of Hunza and famous for never having been captured by the enemy. Little can compare with the view of the Hunza Valley from the top of Baltit Fort, with the Indus river snaking by the feet of magnificent Rakaposhi.

Having had enough of the scenic appetisers, we set off for Tagafari, the most beautiful of Rakaposhi's multiple base camps. Short of time, we battled sunburn, aching muscles, limited food and water supplies, and lest I forget, rabid bees, as we made our



*The Brave (left to right): Haider Warraich, Usman Salahuddin, Faisal Khan, Asif Iqbal, Arslan Shaukat, Atif Bashir, Raafay Sophie, Junaid Haroon, Rehan Zahid and Ahsan Raza.*

Haider Warraich

way across the river, through woods and pastures dotted with grazing animals, avoiding poisonous (but very alluring) berries, to finally reach Tagafari base camp, where the mighty Minapin glacier meets Rakaposhi. Enraptured by this magnificent setting, we could better reflect on the human condition and a world that seems doomed to Sisyphean labour!

On the face of it, all we gained were numerous comments and

'Likes' for our pictures on Facebook and the envy of all those who could not make it. But our journey to the mountains was a pilgrimage of sorts, where the mountain gods taught us, amongst other things, humility, and a sense of the natural beauty that exists within our very own country. It is indeed a shame that only a few can make this journey and experience a transcendence that no esoteric ritual can emulate.



*The last few steps to Tagafari base camp were the hardest.*

Haider Warraich

## Five Seasons in the Sun

Sana Khalid, MBBS '10

“Time flies at AKU”, said our facilitator teaching the blood and inflammation module, an AKU graduate himself. As we sat through the class, we thought that if we finished this chapter it would be a big achievement, let alone completing five years at AKU.

We may all be familiar with four seasons, but at AKU we have five: one for every year that we spend here.

The first season is all about getting used to the surroundings. It is a year of big decisions, of the sort that one has never made or never will again.

Decisions like whether to study from Guyton or Harrison, whether to be a part of the many societies on campus or to just stick to studying, whether to contest the elections as a candidate or to just support a friend, whether to study from Lippincott or just do Dr PI's (Dr Pervaiz Iqbal) lectures – all have to be made. And before you know it, you are studying for your first professional. Not knowing what to do, like a docile sheep you follow the herd, you spend the day in the library trying to study and the night in the graveyard cafe. And just when you feel like you are on the brink of failing the first exam in your life, a senior student comes to the rescue and introduces the magical word of *totas* (sample questions) to your vocabulary. And what follows is well known. We sail smoothly into the second season of AKU.

Some ambiguities still remain. But this time around, one is more accustomed to the surroundings. This year marks one of the most dreaded modules of all, neurosciences and its professional exam, one of the toughest of the five years. This season ends too.

Before you know it, the lab coats become your daily attire, your patients are no longer simulated, their pain and suffering no longer unreal, their smiles and tears no longer fake. If you think you have climbed up the professional ladder, think again, because you have just been thrown, once again, to the very bottom. Only this time, it is a changed world. Once it was your facilitators guiding you, now it is the consultants, once it was the lecture halls, now it is the wards. You soon realise that homework is not all

about memorising facts, but it is also about finding out your consultant's likes and dislikes. It is a time when you look up to the final year students and consider them Mr/Miss Know-All and wonder in awe if you will ever be able to reach their level. Third year is all about waiting for that one rotation in ENT and Eye. Very soon you turn a page as the fourth year finally dawns.



*AKU Medical College courtyard, Pakistan.*

If I were to summarise year four, its LR OR (Labour Room, Operating Room). Don't get me wrong, but most of our rotations do revolve around that one room. In obstetrics and gynaecology you see mothers delivering, in paediatrics you are concerned of the well-being of the child who has been delivered and in anaesthesiology, you assist in putting mothers to sleep.

The final season at AKU is a year of realisation that so many things have changed around you: your group, your ambitions and sometimes even your whole perspective toward life. You realise that behind that façade of Mr/Miss Know-All is someone who is afraid of being insulted in front of their seniors. It did surprise me that at the end of five years one leaves this place equipped with the knowledge of diagnosing diseases, understanding patients and learning to read laboratory reports. So time does actually fly and all I can do is smile in affirmation to what my facilitator said at the beginning of my seasons at AKU.

## A Journey Just Begun

Shirin Chunara RN Diploma '91,  
Post RN BScN '96

I am a proud AKU alumnus living in the USA. Like many of us, I too had a dream: to pursue higher education, the seed of which was sown when I was only a second year nursing student. Looking at many of our faculty who had Master's and PhD degrees

– back when not many nurses had these credentials – I would always wonder, what it would be like to be a nurse with a graduate degree to her name? Seventeen years later, I hold an MSN degree and am a Family Nurse Practitioner. This is a very different role from a traditional nurse for now the scope of what I can do has increased: I have the authority to diagnose as well as prescribe medicines. This is quite challenging as one has to keep abreast of new medical guidelines and also learn about new diseases and conditions.

What I have learnt is that the sky is the limit. We are very fortunate that our roots in nursing come from Aga Khan University School of Nursing and we can very proudly tell everyone that we are AKU grads!

Higher education can open the doors to many opportunities in the future. We can make a difference in a person's life, or in a community, in a nation and together in the whole world. But equipping one's self with adequate formal education is the key. In education the "journey has just begun".



Ayesha Vellani

## My Way

Shazia Naz Waris, Post RN BScN '09

Everyone has a life story and I want to share my enriching experiences as a nurse with my fellow nurses.

I had never met a nurse before I joined this profession. During my high school years, I read about Florence Nightingale in a textbook and she so captured my attention that I wanted to pursue nursing. It was not easy entering this profession as my entire family did not support my decision. "We do not want to waste our girls on nursing; nurses have no worth" were the words of one uncle. Nonetheless I was able to join the profession at the young age of 16. I came to live in a hostel and it was a challenge to adjust to the new environment. But with the support of my teachers and friends, I was able to excel in my nursing diploma. Today, I still vividly remember the words of my principal, "You are the right hand of our institute."

There were many memorable incidents during my diploma programme. As a second year student, I shared a room with three others. One particular day, thinking it was 6 am and that we were late for clinicals, we hurriedly changed into our uniforms and rushed for breakfast – only to glance out of the window and see stars shining in the dark sky. It was 6 pm and not 6 am and a reflection of how passionate and enthusiastic we were about our nursing duties.

On completing my diploma, I joined Aga Khan University Hospital as a registered nurse in 2003. I will never forget those early days of learning and how I progressed in refining my nursing skills. I soon realised that the nursing profession

was the right choice for me. With the great nurse leaders at the Hospital as role models and mentors, there have been many opportunities to mature and increase my nursing capacities.

For three years I worked as a bed-side nurse in the obstetric unit with postnatal mothers and newborns. I was a unit team leader and also worked as a nursery nurse, special care nurse and medication nurse. In 2007, Aga Khan University offered to sponsor my Post RN BScN studies – and that was one of the happiest moments of my life. It reaffirmed the fact that my dedicated efforts had not been wasted.

I completed my two-year degree programme and rejoined the same obstetric unit as a Clinical Nurse Instructor where my main responsibilities are in staff development, patient safety and satisfaction. We have a multidisciplinary team approach that is exciting and challenging and always a learning experience for me.

I hear from other nurses about the lack of work satisfaction but I don't agree. I feel that I am one of the luckiest people in the world. My profession has not only given me satisfaction but has also made me one of the strongest earning members in my family, which now sees me as a role model.

I want to continue this amazing journey in nursing. The challenges that I have faced and overcome in life have made me a stronger person. I am also proud of how I changed my family's perception about the profession, and I am pleased to know that they are now proud of my achievements as a professional nurse.

## When Care Matters



*Hasan B. Alam, MBBS '90 is Associate Professor of Surgery at Harvard Medical School and the Director of Surgical Critical Care Fellowship Program. He is also the Director of Research, Division of Trauma, Emergency Surgery and Surgical Critical Care at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston. Dr Alam is an internationally renowned investigator in the field of trauma research, and an inspiring teacher in both clinical and laboratory settings.*

### **Tell us about your early years?**

I received my medical education in Karachi, Pakistan from the Adamjee Science College in 1984 and a medical degree from AKU-MC in 1990. After interning for a year at the University Hospital, I did my residency at the Washington Hospital Centre, serving as the

chief resident in general surgery from 1997-98. Later, I did a fellowship in trauma and surgical critical care at Washington Hospital Center, followed by a postdoctoral research fellowship at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences in Bethesda, Maryland. I was associate profes-

sor of surgery at the Georgetown University Medical School and the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences. I then shifted to the Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) in 2005.

**Can you tell us a little bit more about your work at MGH?**

After I took up the directorship of the Surgical Critical Care/Acute Care Surgery Fellowship at MGH, under my leadership, this programme has become one of the most sought-after fellowships in the US. I am also the Medical Director of the Knight's Surgical Laboratory at MGH. Currently, I am going through the promotion process to be appointed as full professor at the Harvard Medical School.

**What other activities are you involved in outside Harvard Medical School?**

I have had several administrative and leadership responsibilities over the last few years which span across local, regional, and national arenas. Since 2008, I have chaired the American College of Surgeons Committee on Trauma and the State Trauma Outcomes Committee for the Department of Public Health in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. I am also a consultant to the Massachusetts Health Commissioner for trauma related issues.

At the national and international levels, I am part of 15 major societies to which I actively contribute on various committees. Recently, I was elected as a member of the American Surgical Association, the nation's oldest and most prestigious surgical organisation whose membership is widely acknowledged as a seal of academic excellence. I am also on the editorial boards of four peer-reviewed journals including the Critical Care Medicine, the most prestigious publication in its field and also serve as an ad-hoc reviewer for 20 publications.

**What is the focus of your research?**

My interest is in developing life saving methods for trauma patients. Therefore, my research work focuses on innovative methods for controlling bleeding, resuscitation, cooling the body for preservation, developing drugs to prevent death following lethal injuries, treatments

for brain injury, and design of new tools and devices. A number of my findings have been translated into clinical practice during the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and have saved many lives.

**How do you obtain funding for your research work?**

Over the last 10 years I have secured competitive federal research grants from a variety of sources. These projects developed advanced dressings for the control of bleeding, new methods for replacing lost blood, drugs to maintain life following massive injuries, and improved our understanding of the cellular changes during shock. In 2009 alone, I was awarded three grants as a principal investigator worth nearly \$8 million (including a new R01 grant from the NIH). Soon after my arrival at the MGH, I established a première trauma research programme which was funded by numerous grants from the US Department of Defense and the National Institutes of Health.

**What do you believe is the impact of your work? How are people benefiting from it?**

Injuries are the leading cause of death for young people. In the US, more individuals under the age of 34 are killed by injuries than all other causes put together.

Even in developing countries intentional and unintentional injuries are rapidly becoming a major health care issue. The economic impact of death and disability in this segment of the population is clearly huge. Developing methods to save lives of these young people has enormous health care, social, and economic implications.

**Within two years of joining the MGH, you were awarded the Charles J. McCabe Surgical Resident's Teaching Award. How would you assess your journey as a teacher?**

Teaching is the most enjoyable aspect of my academic career, and the major reason why I will never go into private practice. In many ways we try to evolve into role models. I have benefited enormously from my teachers at AKU and in the US, and I continue to use them as inspiration during my own development and growth. In some sense this is a journey without an end.

**You appear to have struck a balance between research and teaching, clinical work and administrative responsibilities. Give us an insight as to how you managed to successfully achieve this?**

There is no simple formula, but experience has taught me that five things are critical for success: 1) Finding the right mentors, 2) impeccable time management, 3) careful planning and setting meaningful goals, 4) writing regularly, and 5) marrying the right person. My residents often laugh about the last point, but without a supportive spouse you can't juggle all these responsibilities without sacrificing your family.

Intelligence and hard work are not as important as discipline and perseverance. You will find nearly everyone around you to be intelligent and hard working. But, in a demanding academic environment, people who can't manage their time properly don't thrive. Similarly, the common trait in all academically successful individuals is that they write very well, and they write regularly.

All of my trainees are required to write something every day, at least five days a week. Whether they write a manuscript, grant proposal, research protocol, blog or poetry is not as important as the fact that they acquire the discipline to write on schedule. The written word is the currency of academic promotion, and you can't succeed without being a prolific writer.



# The New Face of Nursing

*Salimah Meghani, Post RN BScN '97, went on to earn several degrees from the University of Pennsylvania: MSN in Adult Acute Care, MBE in Biomedical Ethics and PhD in Nursing/Health Disparities. She has also completed her postdoctoral training from the University of Pennsylvania, School of Nursing at the Center for Health Disparities Research. She is now Assistant Professor in the Biobehavioral and Health Sciences Division, Penn Nursing.*

## Why did you choose nursing as a career?

I wish I could say that I knew all about the wonderful possibilities of a career in nursing at the very outset but my professional beginnings were not very well thought out. The motivation at the time was the emphasis by His Highness the Aga Khan on the profession of nursing and its promise for improving both the lives of people and the social standing of women.

## What are your current involvements?

My role at Penn Nursing includes teaching, advising and mentoring students as well as developing and sustaining a programme of research on health disparities, health care decision-making, behavioural economics and symptom management outcomes in vulnerable populations. I am also an Associate Fellow of Bioethics at University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine and a member of the New Courtland Center for Transitions and Health.

In a nutshell, my role is to contribute to the rich academic culture of the University through scholarly work, leadership and to prepare the next generation of nurse clinicians and researchers.



## What can you tell us about your current research? What do you believe is the impact of your work?

My research programme, supported by the National Institutes of Health and other grants, is geared towards improving health outcomes in the most vulnerable populations. My current research is related to cancer pain treatment disparities among racial and ethnic minorities; it addresses why certain groups of individuals are treated differentially

in health care and the mechanisms that make irrelevant characteristics relevant in health outcomes. My work has raised awareness of these issues and I have participated at national level to strategise policies to ameliorate these disparities.

My research has also explored inequities in opioid (such as morphine) availability for pain relief between developed and developing nations; a component of this work includes efforts to understand the policy-level impediments underlying these international disparities.

## What stereotypes, if any, have you faced about nursing? What has changed and why?

Although we have come a long way, stereotypes about nursing are still present in many segments of society. The stereotypes have changed in instances where nurses have stepped out of their traditional roles and demonstrated potential as leaders and visionaries.

By way of an example – and since I am a pain disparities researcher – a number of past presidents of the American Pain Society have been nurses. These nurses have offered leadership and vision to a large national professional body comprising of bench scientists, anaesthesiologists, surgeons, den-

tists, clinical psychologists and pain specialists among others.

I believe that such a cross-disciplinary partnership is one avenue to addressing stereotypes among health professionals. At the same time there is a need to educate the public about the important contributions nurses make nationally and internationally.

If stereotypes about nursing still exist in the 21st century when nurses are contributing to valuable research, impacting clinical outcomes and changing health policy, then perhaps we need to re-evaluate if we have failed as a profession to articulate our important role to the public.

### **What are some of the challenges you faced and still face in your career path?**

Professionally, among the most important challenges are to strive continually to stay ahead of the rapid developments in the field, finding balance among the many roles, and to remind myself that I must learn everyday and renew my perspectives.

In terms of career options in nursing, the sky is the limit cliché appropriately applies. One can choose to become a bedside nurse making a direct difference to patient populations, or can aspire to become an academician preparing the next generation of qualified professionals, a cutting edge scientist leading a team of researchers, or a policy maker influencing how health care is to be delivered.

### **How did Aga Khan University contribute towards preparing you for your current role?**

I give AKU credit for equipping me with the tools and aspirations to be successful in a rigorous scholarly environment. The University really provides its graduates with a sound foundation which makes their future transitions smooth and seamless.

I see AKU as an oasis of hope for many whose beginnings are humble but futures remarkable. I would note that AKU has a very progressive academic culture that is rigorous, dynamic and socially responsive, and that leverages national and international partnerships. However, three areas where AKU can develop and improve further are research intensiveness, cross-disciplinary partnerships, and building strong endowment funds for the University.

## **Vigil at AKU**

**Taimur Khan, MBBS '02**

There were long balconies before the small hostel rooms  
And it was barely light enough to see the heavy clouds  
Drift before the sun could break another day.

Another young man sitting on one of those rooftops  
Smiled and reassured me saying it will go well,  
And I inspired appraisal and air in the same breath.

There were biscuit crumbs and long bones on  
A crumpled white bed sheet in my room, and  
The room itself was full of dreams,

Which often emerged from  
Teabags or sugar tins, a set of strings or a dusty book,  
And slid into the closet, hushed between a row  
Of shirts, or inside the knot of a tie I could not tie.

That was the problem - where to look for them, especially  
When the wind blew bleating wet and stark, and there  
Still was a faraway place alive with things that made it home.

They were dreams but all were not as roses.  
Some were monsters that I thought if I ever saw,  
I would want to die.

And most of this time, although I was not there, as it were, in  
a world without me,  
The Indian-red building heaved with allegories  
Of young minds in sleep and awe, as the body in excess came  
apart in their hands.

It was strange to know thyself as body,  
Or to think in those days what beckoned me  
To the sounds I did not know and words I could not say.

### **Nominations Wanted!**

The AKU-NAMA Editorial Board seeks nominations for distinguished alumni profiles from all programmes, departments and entities. Please send a short profile of your nominee to:

[alumni@aku.edu](mailto:alumni@aku.edu)

# Medical College in Dallas

Shain Amershi, Executive Coordinator, AKU Alumni Association North America

Words cannot express the festive atmosphere at the medical college alumni reunion in Dallas, Texas this July. It was by far the largest AKU Medical College alumni reunion held in recent memory with over 150 attendees. Even though it was a week-end of stormy weather, we were not to be deterred. Those present at the reunion will agree that dealing with delayed flights, last minute scrambles for tickets and accommodation were all finally well worth the effort.

Speaking on the occasion, president of the AKU Alumni Association, North American Chapter, Dr Faiz Bhora, encouraged the alumni to actively participate in their Association and acknowledged individuals who have been active members. Farhat Abbas, Dean of the Medical College in Pakistan, then expounded on the possibility of collaboration between alumni and the University.

AKU is expanding internationally and Carol Ariano, Vice President, Human Resources gave specific examples of positions that the University is currently looking to fill and the role alumni could play in this process. The formal part of the evening ended with Louis R. Ariano, Registrar, thanking alumni for attending the celebrations. This was followed by a short video on AKU that captured the difference the University has made and its ambitious goals to become a comprehensive university in several parts of the globe.

Post dinner, awards were handed out to key persons to acknowledge their contribution to the growth of AKUANA followed by a pleasant surprise: a show by talented alumni. Hafeez Diwan, MBBS '91 was the MC and stand-up comedian for the evening while singers Saira Khan,



*AKU's first MBBS graduates at the Alumni Reunion in Dallas: (l-r) Dr Asad Abbas Abidi '89, Dr Basith Ghazali '88 and Dr Shahid Shafi '88.*  
Abdul Haq Wahedna

MBBS '89, Asad Abbas, MBBS '89 and Ali Kizilbash, MBBS '90 entertained the audience with their amazing vocals. Some impromptu singing and dancing took place with every-

one present having a wonderful time. Two anniversary celebrations were announced: the Class of 1990 and the Class of 1995 celebrating their 20th and 15th anniversaries respec-



*Celebrating the 20th anniversary of their graduation, the MBBS Class of 1990 reunite in Dallas.*  
Adeel A. Butt

tively. Both Classes took the opportunity to make short presentations about their 'life journey' with the Class of 1990 announcing that they were raising funds to set up an endowment for the University.

Last but not least, the local organising committee, Azam Kundi, MBBS '92, Basith Ghazali, MBBS '88, and Saira Khan, MBBS '92 among others, must be acknowledged for their efforts to make this an exemplary evening for alumni to meet and celebrate their successes.

The event also saw discussions between alumni and University faculty and staff on a permanent alumni aku.edu email address, a visiting faculty programme, and the challenges of accommodating medical students waiting to be placed in US institutions for their electives.

Mark your dairies: AKU Alumni Reunion 2011 will be held on the July 4 weekend in St. Louis, Missouri. Hopefully there will be an even better turn out next year.

Please visit the AKUANA website for more information on activities and events: [www.akualumni.net](http://www.akualumni.net)

## AKUTEXANS' Match



*Team 1: Asad Khan (c), Behzad Zafar, Zain Urfi, Mustafa Raoof, Waleed Kayani, Ali Hashimi, Umair Khan; Team 2: Ali Kazmi (c), Ahmed Awais, Safdar Ansari, Fraz Ahmed, Zakariya Imam, Salman Bandeali, Imran Tahir.*

Houston, October 10, 2010: Houston was the setting for an unusual cricket match between Team 1 and Team 2! In the first 10:10 match (10 overs each) Team 1 beat Team 2. In the second match of 8 overs each, Team 2 took revenge and beat Team 1.

## Nurses Reunite!



*Dinner at the AKU-SON Alumni Reunion, Dallas.*



*Abdul Haq Wahedna*

## People in New Positions

**Dr Robert Armstrong** has been appointed the Foundation Dean, Medical College, East Africa. In this role Dr Armstrong will serve as the Chief Academic Officer and Chair, Academic Committee, East Africa. Before joining AKU, he was Associate Professor and Head, Department of Paediatrics at the University of British Columbia and Chief, Paediatric Medicine at BC Children's Hospital and BC Women's Hospital. Dr Armstrong has conducted extensive research in the areas of childhood disability, the development of population-based strategies for the prevention of developmental disorders and clinical and health services strategies for improving outcomes of children with disabilities.

A prize winning author, researcher and scholar in language testing, **Professor Rea-Dickins** is the new Director, AKU-IED, EA, as well as the Principal of the Tanzania Institute of Higher Education. Her career experiences include assignments in Sub-Saharan Africa including five years at the University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania and appointments at the University of Warwick and University of Lancaster, UK. Prior to joining AKU, she held the position of Chair of Applied Linguistics in Education at the Graduate School of Education, University of Bristol, UK. She has written and/or edited 10 books, and guest edited special issues of leading journals in the field of language testing and assessment in education. A book co-authored by Professor Rea-Dickins was awarded the Frank Bell Prize.

**Zahir Janmohamed** has been appointed the new Director General, Resource Development. He has over 25 years of experience in the financial and non-profit sectors. Amongst his various voluntary leadership experiences, he has served on the board of the Scarborough Hospital in Canada, as well as been a trustee of the United Way of Greater Houston and The Post Oak School in Texas. He will be responsible for expanding the University's resource development base and donations.

**Dr Rahat Qureshi** has been appointed as the Chair, Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology at Aga Khan University, Karachi. She holds an MBBS from Dow Medical College and is a Fellow and Member of the Royal College of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, UK. She has been associated with the department for over 23 years.

**Dr Anita Zaidi** has been appointed the Chair, Department of Paediatrics and Child Health. She graduated from AKU in 1988 and pursued her residency in paediatrics and fellowship in medical microbiology from Duke University, North Carolina and a fellowship in infectious diseases at the Children's Hospital, Boston, Harvard Medical School. Dr Zaidi also holds a Master of Science in Tropical and Public Health from the Harvard School of Public Health.

## Campus Talk

The Society for College and University Planning (SCUP) presented its **Merit Award for Excellence in Planning for District or Campus Component** to AKU for a University Village land use plan for its new Faculty of Arts and Sciences in Pakistan. This award was presented to the University and Goody Clancy, the planning consultant during a ceremony at SCUP's annual conference. The university village will provide 500-plus acres of residential neighbourhoods, retail, service and entertainment facilities for students, faculty, staff and their families.

The University's Department of Emergency Medicine was recently designated as a **World Health Organization Collaborating Centre**, one of the first in the world for emergency medicine and trauma care. The Centre will carry out public health research in emergency medicine and trauma care, focusing on the epidemiology of injuries and on identifying cost-effective solutions for emergency care. It will also be involved in the capacity building of public health professionals in injury prevention and control, and of emergency health care providers in the principles of emergency trauma care.

## AKU's Flood Relief Efforts

The University's response to Flood 2010 is a 'living' demonstration of its guiding principles of impact, access, quality and relevance: over 620 faculty, staff and students volunteered their time for field or administrative work; AKU employees contributed a day's salary to fund medications, collecting over Rs 7.9 million towards this effort; and health services in the field were backstopped by the entire University's machinery.

At present, AKU is providing basic health care in 14 districts, 10 in Sindh, three in the Punjab and one in Balochistan. Teams are providing services through camps, mobile units, and basic health units or hospitals temporarily taken over from the government.

In addition, more long standing issues such as malnutrition are also being addressed. AKU has linked up with the Ministry of Health's National Programme for Family Planning and Primary Health Care to reach out to the most vulnerable of children in Sindh. A rapid nutrition survey of children under 5 in AKU-run relief centres and the surrounding communities has been completed with the results feeding into an in-depth review of the nutrition training offered to LHWs. Micronutrient supplements and supplementary foods are also being distributed. AKU doctors and paramedics staff are counselling communities on WASH (water, sanitation and hygiene) to educate about the long term benefits to the child, the family and the community.

In the recovery phase, the University is using its experience to empower communities to sustain this effort in the longer term.

## Medical College

1995

**Muna Bhutta**, with an MRCOG from the UK, presently works as a Consultant, Obstetrics and Gynaecology in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. She is a mother of four and her husband, Dr Waheed Hashmi, is a general, paediatric and laparoscopic surgeon.

1997

**Suraiya Rahman** moved from Kansas to Los Angeles with her family this summer. Practicing as a paediatric hospitalist in Kansas, she developed an interest in teaching. She is now enrolled in the Master of Academic Medicine, an online programme customised for working professionals at the University of Southern California (USC). She was happy to find a fellow alumnus from the class of 1999 in one of her courses. Suraiya also teaches first and second year medical students at USC's Keck School of Medicine, which reminds her of AKU. One of the courses she teaches is Professionalism in the Practice of Medicine.

1998

**Adil Haider** was recently appointed Director of the Centre for Surgery Trials and Outcomes Research, Johns Hopkins School of Medicine.

2001

**Agha Feroze's** special interests lie in aesthetics and anti-aging procedures. He has set up clinics in Rawalpindi and Islamabad which he runs with his wife's help. He is also the founder and managing director of two local charities.

**Asad Ali** is Assistant Professor at the Department of Paediatrics and Child Health at Aga Khan University, Karachi.

**Ayesha Hasan** is currently paediatric Chief of Staff at the Winnie Community Hospital in Texas.

**Yassar Ahmed** recently finished his infectious diseases fellowship from the Baylor College of Medicine in Houston and is now an infectious diseases consultant within the Texas Medical Centre.

2002

**Hamid Bashir** remembers the class of 2002 as very diverse, involved in musical events and annual days. During his residency and fellowship days in the US, aware of the negative image of Pakistan, he set up *Music4Cause*, a forum to promote peace and harmony via music. In less than a year, its YouTube page has received more than 8,000 hits. His music has made it to the ARY music channel and he performed for the Daniel Pearl World Music Day.

**Muna Ahmed** welcomed a new addition to her family, Zorina, who was born September 14, 2010.

2006

**Fazal Arain** is currently doing a PhD in neuroscience from Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee.

2007

**Zuhaib Ibrahim** won the first prize in the surgical resident jeopardy held by Pennsylvania keystone chapter of the American College of Surgery. Residents from eight general surgery residency programmes participated in this event.

2009

**Hassan Khan**, who did his MSc in Epidemiology and Biostatistics from AKU, is working as a research coordinator at the Community Health Sciences Department at Aga Khan University, Karachi. He is also the

Karachi site coordinator of a research study on developing a model surveillance system for cardiometabolic diseases, with Emory University, for the Centre for Cardiometabolic Risk Reduction for South Asia.

2009

**Abdul Saboor Memon**, after completing his residency in anaesthesia from AKU, has been working as a Senior Registrar at the Memon Medical Institute, a project of Memon Health and Education Foundation.

2010

**Anam Khan** recently got married to **Waleed Kayani MBBS '07**, who is doing his residency at the Baylor College of Medicine.

**Komal Masood** recently got engaged to Ehad Afreen KEMU '10.

**Mariam Anis** got engaged to **Farooq Khan MBBS '06**, who is doing his residency at the University of Cincinnati and they are due to get married this coming February.

## Institute for Educational Development

2006

**Najma Raja**, a graduate from the Centre of English Language's Advanced Diploma programme, was recently awarded a shield for the Most Dedicated Teacher from the principal of the PECHS Government College for Women.

2007

**Anthony Gioko** was one of the regional winners of the 2010 Innovative Teacher Awards at the Pan-African Innovative Education Forum hosted by the Microsoft Partners in Learning Network. "I will tell my students this is like playing in the World Cup, but better

– it’s for teachers!” He received his award for Innovation in Content, one of the four main competition categories and went on to represent Africa at the sixth annual Worldwide Innovative Education Forum held in South Africa in October.

**Shairoze Jessani** is currently working as head of the academic unit of a higher secondary school. She attended a summer programme on Islam in Cambridge last year.

In recognition of her 20 years of service at the Habib Girls’ School and for her contributions to improving the School’s education system, **Simeen Saleem**, senior coordinator in the Science Department, was nominated for the Service Excellence Award, KFC in 2009.

## School of Nursing

### 1983

**Shehnaz Jiwany** sends greetings to all former colleagues and cherishes the sweet memories of working with them at Aga Khan University and is thankful to the AKU-NAMA team for helping her connect with friends once again.

### 1985

**Mehmooda Afroz** has worked as a midwife for 12 years; of these, nine have been with AKHS where she is Assistant Manager, Nursing Development. Currently she is doing her BScN – her dream ever since she received her midwifery diploma in 1986 from Aga Khan Hospital for Women, Garden (formerly Aga Khan Maternity Home, Garden) – and plans to go onto a Master’s in Midwifery from AKU.

**Rozina Dattu** has completed her Post RN BScN programme this year, and is working as head nurse at the Aga Khan Hospital for Women and Children, Kharadar.

### 1986

**Karima Gulwani** specialises in geriatric nursing and is in her 12th year as the Director of Nursing at Santa Monica Convalescent Centre.

### 1991

After having a baby in March, **Amynah Pradhan** returned as an Oncology Research Nurse at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Maryland, and as a Nurse Practitioner at a family practice clinic. Being an advanced practice nurse has broadened her horizon in delivering primary care to the public and she hopes that this programme can also be brought to Pakistan.

**Fauzia Pesnani** (formerly Molwani) worked at AKU for almost eight years before shifting to Shell Pakistan as an occupational health nurse/administrator. Developing a keen interest in this field, she enrolled in a three-year postgraduate diploma programme in Occupational Health and Safety Management at the University of South Australia, Adelaide. Since January 2009, she has been working with a leading pharmaceutical company. She has also completed the OHSAS (Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems) 18001:2007 Lead Auditors course offered by SGS.

**Nasreen Hussain** sends greetings to all the alumni.

**Shirin Valliani** is a proud AKU alumna living in the USA. Having completed her MSN in Family Nurse Practice, she feels fortunate to have fulfilled these dreams. Her message to colleagues and friends is to always feel proud of their roots as they reach for the sky.

### 1992

**Shireen Jan Mohammad** is working as a Child Care Health

Consultant with Catco Kids Inc. In this current role, she has updated health policies, developed and conducted medical training programmes related to the health of the child, evacuation plans and health and safety inspections.

### 1998

**Muhammad Afzal** is the Principal of Department of Nursing, University of Lahore. In 2005, he was appointed Deputy Manager, Nursing at the Liaquat National Hospital in Karachi and in 2006 was promoted as Manager. After his MScN, he joined Saida Waheed FMH College of Nursing, Lahore as Senior Nursing Instructor.

### 1999

**Rozmeen Shivji** is working at the University of Chicago as an Acute Care Nurse Practitioner.

After graduation, **Shamsa Virani** moved to Los Angeles, California, where she pursued her Bachelor’s and Master’s in Nursing, and graduated as a Nurse Practitioner/Clinical Nurse Specialist from the University of California, Los Angeles in 2006. She is currently working at Los Angeles County Hospital as a Nurse Practitioner in Internal Medicine and at a Rape Crisis Centre in LA. “As tough as the job is, it makes me more understanding, patient and empathic nurse and helps me see a very different side of nursing care.”

In October 2009, she took a six-month sabbatical and went to work in Egypt with the Aga Khan Foundation. AKU-SON has partnered with the Egyptian Om-Habibeh Foundation (an AKDN affiliate) in Aswan, to build local nursing capacities.

### 2001

**Mehtab Jaffer** is presently working as a Clinical Nurse Instructor in out-

patient services at AKU. She finds it a challenging task to work with countless specialities in a clinic but it helps her acquire new skills while working with different consultants and surgeons.

**2002**

**Farida Khan** was promoted to the position of Acting Director at Al Shifa College of Nursing, Islamabad.

**2003**

**Shela Hirani** has completed her Advanced Diploma in Early Child Development from AKU's Human Development Programme and has defended her Master's thesis on *Testing Psychometric Properties of an Instrument Designed to Measure Pakistani Urban Working Mothers' Perceptions about Breastfeeding Support*. Shela is currently working as a Senior Instructor at AKU-SON.

**2004**

**Kashmira Nanji** completed her MSc in Epidemiology and Biostatistics at AKU in 2009 and received a distinction for her thesis. She was recently appointed Senior Instructor, Research, Department of Family Medicine.

**Zohra Jassani** (formerly Kabirani) is working for Aga Khan Health Service, Tanzania in Dar es Salaam. She is proud to work as an AKU graduate in a sister organisation in the East African region.

**2006**

**Rozina Mahnoja** is currently living in Melbourne, Australia and is working in geriatric care.

**Saima Khan** married just after her graduation and has a two-year-old baby boy, Shanaf Ali. She is enrolled in the bioethics programme

at Aga Khan University and will graduate in 2011.

**2007**

After graduation, **Atiya Khowaja** worked at the Cardiac Intensive Care Unit (ICU) at AKUH and recently enrolled in the Master's in health policy management programme at AKU.

**Minaz Mawani** completed her critical care nursing course from George Brown College, Ontario and is working at Cardiac ICU, AKUH.

**Sindhu Sharifani** was promoted Assistant Head Nurse at the Aga Khan Hospital for Women and Children, Kharadar.

**2008**

**Saima Rajpali** is working as a registered nurse at the Bone Marrow Transplant Unit, AKUH since November 2008. She delivered a presentation, 'Specialised Nursing Care Dealing with BMT' as part of a programme to mark the 100th bone marrow transplant procedure carried out at the Hospital.

**2009**

**Gulzar Habibullah** was offered a position as guest lecturer in the School of Nursing, Khyber Medical University. She has also been working as Vice Principal in the Community Midwife School, Battagram under the National Maternal, Newborn and Child Health Programme.

**Shireen Arif** is currently working at Baqai College of Nursing as Senior Nursing Instructor and Year Coordinator. Her recent achievements include six published articles, presented at an AKU Research Assembly, in addition to her contributions for international publications.

*Class notes compiled by Alina Sadaf MBBS '13*

**Request for Contributions**

The editors of AKU-NAMA invite you to contribute to the next issue of the magazine.

Your story may highlight interesting career options, unique job experiences, ground-breaking research, innovative public service initiatives, or other materials of particular interest to the alumni. You can also contribute opinion pieces on trends in education and modern technology, book reviews and travelogues. Letters to the editor are also welcome.

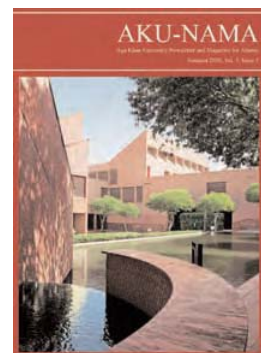
Article length should be approximately 500-600 words. Photographs are welcome but they must be high resolution digital photographs (JPEG files over 1MB).

Articles can be submitted at [www.aku.edu/alumni/alumni\\_fmar\\_ticles.asp](http://www.aku.edu/alumni/alumni_fmar_ticles.asp)

Class notes can be submitted at [www.aku.edu/alumni/alumni\\_class-notes.asp](http://www.aku.edu/alumni/alumni_class-notes.asp)

Do you know any alumni still not on the AKU-NAMA mailing list? Send them to [www.aku.edu/alumni/alumni\\_contact.asp](http://www.aku.edu/alumni/alumni_contact.asp)

Thank you for all your previous submissions, feedback and suggestions. Now let's keep the ball rolling for the upcoming issue.



We regret the error in Vol. 3, Issue 1, p.18: Dr Adnan A. Hyder is Class of 1990 not 2000.





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