



The Vellore Advocate

NEWSLETTER OF THE VELLORE CHRISTIAN MEDICAL COLLEGE BOARD (U.S.A.), INC.

WEB SITE: www.vellorecmc.org

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“Not to be Ministered Unto, But to Minister”

Fall 2005

Dear Friend of Vellore CMC:

As you can see from this issue of the Advocate, these are exciting and challenging times for our friends in Vellore. The pace of change in India is quickening, and the importance of our international partnership with CMC increases every day.

As medical care in India continues to modernize at an accelerating rate, it is critical that Vellore’s legacy of service to the poor and downtrodden be maintained and extended. The most powerful witness to our faith legacy is that we offer the best medical care available to the poorest of our brothers and sisters. This can only continue with your help.

I am proud that the Vellore CMC Board (USA) is continuing to provide significant support for CMC in a variety of important ways. On page 3 of this letter, you will find a summary of how the U.S. Board has supported Vellore over the past decade. Your donations in response to this letter will help leverage much larger funds from the U.S. government, corporations and foundations.

Please consider a generous gift at this time, and let us know on the response card how many copies of our brochure you need for distribution to friends and colleagues.

Sincerely,

Louis L. Knowles
President

CMC Doctor treating villagers



New Resources for the Battle against HIV and other Infectious Diseases

This past July, CMC celebrated the opening of two important and closely-related new medical initiatives: The Infectious Disease Training and Research Center (IDTRC) and the Prof. Benjamin M. P u l i m o o d Infection and I m m u n i t y



Laboratory (BMPIIL). Dr. Dilip Mathai (photo above) and his colleagues in Medicine I are the initiators of this new training and research capability. These physical facilities are the first of their kind in South Asia.

Physicians from all over India and from other nations will train at CMC in HIV Medicine, Tropical Diseases and Health Care Epidemiology. Other services will include HIV counseling and voluntary testing. Over 1,000 HIV patients in Vellore district will receive monthly supplies of antiretroviral drugs. The Center and Lab will be involved with identifying and combating local epidemics, and there will be programs addressing the socioeconomic needs of people living with HIV.

BMPIIL will conduct anti-infective research, study antimicrobial pharmacokinetics, monitor patient immune status, establish rapid diagnosis of emerging infectious diseases, and track pathogens causing hospital infections. Collaborators in the Lab will come from the Division of Infection and Immunity of the University of Birmingham, :United Kingdom. Dr. Haragopal Thadepalli of UCLA will be among international visiting faculty.

In addition to major support from the government of Norway, Dr. George M. Chandy thanks the following supporters: National AIDS Control Organization (NACO) of India; World Health Organization; Haukeland University of Norway; Sexual Health Resources Center; Friends of Vellore UK; the Vellore Board (USA), CIPLA Ltd., and Pfizer, Ltd, among others.

Reaching those who are despised and rejected...

Lalitha (not her real name) lives with her widowed mother in a village in Vellore district. Her father was a day laborer who struggled to feed and clothe his family. Just shortly before he died, he arranged for Lalitha to be married to a truck driver when she was 17. Shortly thereafter, he died. Two years into the marriage she became pregnant and went for prenatal care to CHAD, one of the community health programs operated by Vellore CMC. Routine testing revealed that Lalitha was positive for the HIV virus. Her husband was asked to come in for a test, and he, too, was shown to be positive for the virus. Upon hearing the news, the husband and father-to-be left home and has not been heard from again.

CHAD referred Lalitha to the main CMC hospital, where she was cared for in the Obstetrics and Gynecology department. Dr. Jessie Lionel has developed a program to help pregnant women who test positive for HIV/AIDS and to prevent transmission of the virus to their babies. Lalitha was advised to undergo pre-natal therapy with the anti-HIV drug, AZT, and to give consent to be sterilized after the delivery of her child. On May 11, 2005, her baby boy weighing 7.5 pounds was delivered by an emergency Caesarian. Under the supervision of Vellore doctors, Lalitha fed the child with formula and administered AZT syrup for six weeks. So far, no sign of the virus has been found in the child.

With only her mother as a wage earner, Lalitha could not pay the bills for her care. She approached CMC for financial assistance, and after an assessment of her financial situation, she was asked to pay \$12 and the rest was covered by special funds.

Funds donated to assist HIV positive pregnant women and their babies will be used to help Lalitha and others in similar circumstances. Contributions for any amount are encouraged. The Board is also looking for a larger contribution of \$2,500 that is needed to pay for a social worker who will assist women to find employment and will help them cope with the fears and antipathy of their communities. With the cooperation of the Indian government, CMC is now providing anti-retroviral drugs to many patients, which holds out hope of an extended life span for mothers such as Lalitha.

Vellore continues its work with the people of the tsunami zone

Health and economic needs of the Nagapattinam coast remain acute. CMC has a team of physicians, community health workers, social workers and community nurses in place. Using resources provided by friends around the world, CMC is now launching a mobile medical clinic to provide primary care to remote villages where little has been done to date. The unit will be equipped to do minor surgeries, antenatal and pediatric care and other basic services.

CMC specialists are conducting monthly camps. As of July, 6 camps had been held and 2,000 people had been examined. 50 people were taken to CMC for intensive care. A special eye camp was conducted and surgeries scheduled.

To address the core problem of economic disruption and the need to diversify livelihoods, CMC is drawing on its extensive experience in community development work to initiate the following activities: a computer training center, training in six trades, an endowment to assist girl children until they marry, assistance to local orphanages, and construction of a community hall that will facilitate training and other social interaction.



Med Student Interviews Woman from village hit by Tsunami

In a separate initiative, RUHSA, the CMC rural facility, is focused on the low-income village of Sirkali Taluk in Nagai district. It will be providing vocational training and workshops on various forms of shop-keeping.

Congregations Provide Core Support for CMC Mission

Local congregations are increasingly becoming the instruments not only of local outreach but also of international mission. This is part of a groundswell of mission-oriented activism among grassroots Christians throughout the U.S.

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VELLORE CHRISTIAN MEDICAL COLLEGE BOARD (USA), INC.
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The mission of the Vellore Christian Medical College Board (USA), Inc., in response to the healing ministry of Christ and inspired by the legacy of Dr. Ida S. Scudder, is to provide a focus for excellence and integrity through the support of the wide range of programs of the Christian Medical College and Hospital, Vellore, India.

The Vellore Board was pleased to receive first-time gifts this year from five eastern seaboard churches: the **Indian Church of New Jersey**; **Christ Church (Church of South India, Rockland County, New York)**; **Bethel Assembly of God, Mt. Vernon, New York**; the **Presbyterian Church of Whitestone, New York** and **Trinity United Methodist Church of Conneaut Lake, Pennsylvania**. Another first-timer during the tsunami response was **Southside Fellowship of Greenville, South Carolina**.

Also noteworthy are plans to visit CMC Vellore by representatives of **Park Street Congregational Church of Boston** and **Christ Lutheran Church of Baltimore**. The Rev. Jacob David of the **Church of St. Paul's and Resurrection** (Episcopal) in New Jersey is organizing a group of church young people for a volunteer work trip next January.

The Board also wishes to thank **Riverdale Presbyterian Church of New York** for its recent generous gift along with the many congregations across the nation that continue to give to CMC on a regular basis.

ASHA Update

Beginning her third year as CMC Deputy Director responsible for ASHA grants, Dr. Priya Abraham notes that today, most ASHA expenditures are made in India, not the United States. The change comes with growing globalization and recent economic liberalization in India. An advantage to purchasing in India is that CMC faculty members can be more closely involved in determining if products being considered for purchase meet required professional and technical standards.

Dr. Abraham guides the bidding process, analysis, purchasing and contract monitoring, following rules laid down by U.S. government agencies. Like all other CMC deputy directors, Dr. Abraham must find time for her administrative responsibilities on top of a full-time job in her department, which is virology.

Current ASHA grants are funding the following innovations at CMC: a pneumatic delivery system for blood and other samples; a brachytherapy unit for high intensity cancer radiation therapy; and a Basic Science Laboratory. Two contractors have submitted bids to install the pneumatic delivery system. CMC expects to make its decision by September.



Vellore CMC Board (USA) in Partnership with CMC

Since 1982, the Vellore CMC Board office in New York has worked with CMC to file 19 successful grant requests with the American Schools and Hospitals Abroad (ASHA) program of the U.S. government, garnering over \$8 million in commitments. Among the many items purchased with ASHA funds are: medical education building, radiotherapy and nuclear medicine complex, linear accelerator, cardiac catheterization lab, integrated water system, angiography suite, digital radiography system, blood bank upgrade, and basic science laboratory.

Between 1996 and 2000, as part of the centennial celebration and campaign, the Board raised \$1.6 million and contributed a total of \$2 million for the Ida S. Scudder Building for Women and Children.

Over the past decade, the Board has underwritten senior training fellowships in the U.S. and many other countries for 61 CMC faculty. Financial support for the program to date totals \$330,000, much of which is paid for out of current giving. The fellows have included staff from all areas of the hospital.

Over the last decade, the Board has assisted 193 volunteers from the health professions to work at CMC. The value of their time comes to \$1,317,820. In this same ten-year period, the Board helped to orient 136 medical students who went to CMC for elective studies. Students came from nearly every major medical school in the country.



Share the Good News about Vellore with Others

Enclosed with this issue of the Advocate is a copy of the Board brochure, "Vellore: Excellence in Health Care for a Developing World." This is a basic publicity tool, and it is available in quantity at no charge to people who wish to distribute it to friends, colleagues, fellow church-goers and other groups. Please let the Board staff know how many copies you would like to receive by filling in the space on the response card. You will receive them within two weeks.

Prof. Shirley David of College of Nursing to Tour the U.S.A.

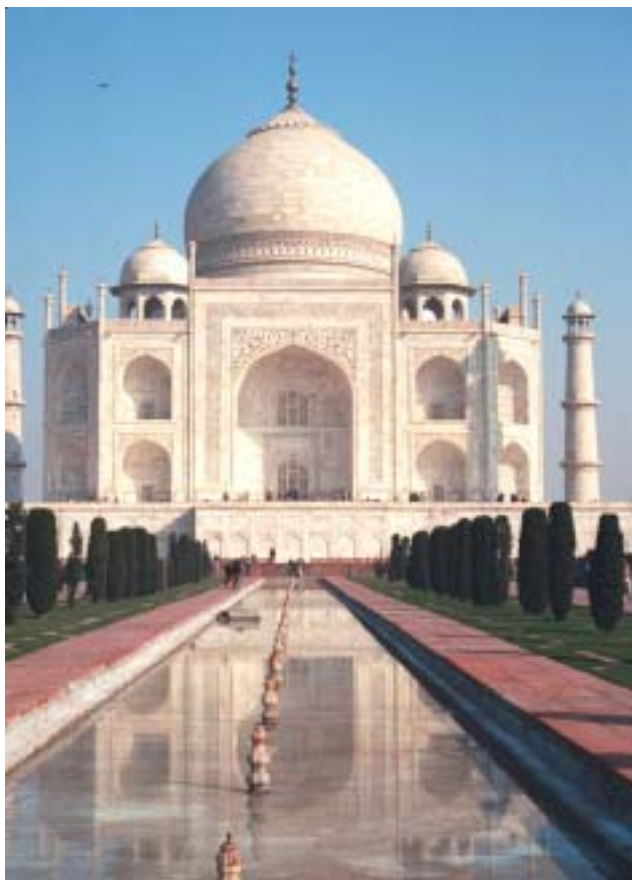
The Vellore CMC Board is pleased to host Professor Shirley David of the faculty of the College of Nursing. Professor David will be touring the United States from August 31 to October 9. During the visit, Prof. David will be meeting with Vellore CMC alumni and supporters. She will be presenting on the theme: "The Future of Health Services in India and the Role of CMC."

Professor David received her Bachelor's in nursing in 1981 and her Masters in 1986 at CMC Vellore. For over ten years,



she has supervised nursing in CMC's operating rooms. She has recently added to her responsibilities the role of Deputy Director for International Relations for CMC.

Prof. David will be visiting Washington/Baltimore, Houston, San Antonio, St. Louis, Kansas City, Chicago, Minneapolis, Vermont, and New York, among other places. For more information about Prof. David's visit, contact the Vellore Board office. Our toll free number is 1-800-875-6370, our e-mail address is: usaboard@vellorecmc.org



Tour of India: From the Taj Mahal to Vellore

After two previous, highly successful tours of India, our Vice Chair and tour leader extraordinaire Dorothy Williams is organizing a new tour to India from February 4 to 19, 2006. Starting in New Delhi, this group will travel from India's capital to the Taj Mahal, India's most famous monument, then on to Cochin in Kerala, and Bangalore, India's new silicon valley. The tour ends with a 3-day stay at the Christian Medical College, where the visitors will have the opportunity to see this amazing institution first hand. Participants will visit many areas of the institution's work, from the various hospital departments to the villages served by Community Health's outreach programs, and will have the opportunity to interact with many of CMC's stellar faculty and staff.

Comments from the previous tours:

"I never would have gone to India as a tourist. I went to India because I was going with Dorothy, someone I know and respect. I enjoyed it tremendously."

Rebecca Baker

"I truly believe that visiting Vellore further opened up my heart to compassion. For this, I am forever grateful!"

Kathy Sakai

*For more information, contact the Vellore Board office. Tel: 1-800-875-6370 or
Email: usaboard@vellorecmc.org.*