

PAUL HARRISON AWARD 2022

The *Paul Harrison Award* was instituted to honour medical graduates or post-graduates of CMC Vellore, who, through their outstanding and selfless contribution in the field of healthcare, have been able to uphold the motto of the institution, '*Not to be ministered unto, but to minister.*' The awardee for this year, by his exemplary life, embodies the very word '*service*', having spent over 3 decades bringing hope and health to a remote part of India.

Dr Gordon Mervyn Rangad was born in 1949 in Shillong, in what was at that time the state of Assam. From a very early age, he wanted to become a doctor, drawing inspiration from two of his aunts, who were among the first women doctors in that region. Their dedication and the love and compassion for others is something that has stayed with him all his life. In 1966, he joined CMC Vellore- a fact that he attributes, not to a coincidence or happenstance, but to God's larger plan for his life.

As an undergraduate student, he was involved in various activities, particularly music. He had planned on going to the US, when he attended a talk given by Dr. V. Benjamin, his then Professor of Community Health. Even though Dr. Rangad does not remember the content of the talk, it marked a turning point in his life and thinking.

Dr. Rangad trained in General Surgery in CMC Vellore, standing first in the University and receiving the *U Mohan Rau Prize* from the University of Madras. He then joined a small Mission Hospital of the Church of North India in a small village in upper Assam, catering to tea garden workers and a rural population. The Diocese had opened a new hospital some distance from there in a larger town, and he was appointed as the Medical Superintendent, looking after both hospitals. In a change of circumstances and wanting to be more involved in academic work, he joined St. John's Medical College Bangalore as Tutor in Surgery. He was a well-liked teacher and was also the Warden of the Men students' Hostel. In 1982, he was asked to join the KJP Synod Hospital, Jowai, Meghalaya as Medical Superintendent. He responded to this challenging situation and worked there for close to six years.

In 1988, Dr. Rangad moved to Shillong, and two years later, joined the Nazareth Hospital as Consultant in Surgery. Soon after, he was appointed the Chief Medical Officer, a post he holds to date. In 1990, Nazareth Hospital had 150 beds, that have increased over the years to the present strength of 400 beds with multiple specialties, that cater to both the rural and urban population. The Hospital has an active Community Health Department, that covers a number of villages and Health Centres. The Hospital is recognised by the National Board of Examinations to conduct post-graduate courses, is accredited at entry level by the NABH, and is on the way to full accreditation. It is one of the leaders in the academic scene, conducting CMEs and workshops in different subjects. Recently, the Department of General and Minimally Invasive Surgery started a new initiative, conducting a

workshop on Gasless laparoscopic Surgery, along with the Association of Rural Surgeons of India. The Hospital is now participating in the Gasless Surgery Registry for India. Dr. Rangad has been awarded an Honorary Fellowship by the Association of Minimal Access Surgeons of India (AMASI) for his contributions to the field of laparoscopic surgery and training, especially in the North-East.

Dr Rangad is also an elder of his Church and has been instrumental in leading the Healing Ministry of his Church. With his passion for music and understanding of the impact of music on young people, he has been closely involved in building up the choir in his church. Under his leadership, the Laban Presbyterian Church Choir is well known in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills. The Choir has been able to tour different places in India, including visiting CMC Vellore twice. For Dr. Rangad, church activities, especially the choir, have been a source of renewal and restoration over the years.

It is the interaction with patients and their families that motivates Dr. Rangad to carry on even after all these years. Getting to know them, sharing their joy and grief, providing compassionate care and kindness have been more than reason enough to lay his skills and service at the feet of His Master.

In the many times of uncertainty and despair, Joshua 1:9 has strengthened him: *“Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.”* As has the love of his family- his wife, Lucretia, and their two daughter, Drs. Lashngainlang and Lahunlang. He credits his wife with being the backbone of their family, given the busy and demanding life he leads.

In recognition of his outstanding contribution to the health of the most disadvantaged and marginalized in India, particularly in North-East India, the Christian Medical College, Vellore is proud to bestow the Paul Harrison Award for 2022 upon its illustrious son, Dr. Gordon Mervyn Rangad.