



# The Vellore Advocate

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

WEB SITE: [www.vellorecmc.org](http://www.vellorecmc.org)

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“Not to be Ministered Unto, But to Minister”

Spring 2002

## The Vellore Consultation 2002: “The Greatest of These is Love”

First Corinthians 13 was a much quoted text at the 2002 Vellore CMC&H Consultation. Held January 20-23 in the Ida Scudder Auditorium on the College Campus, the Consultation brought together over 200 staff, students, alumni, advisers and friends of the institution. The Rev. A.C. Oomen opened with a reflection on Paul’s hymn to Christian love, but he also cautioned the attendees with the words of the evangelist John in his Revelation, who told the believers in Ephesus that they had “lost their first love.”

For three days, the Consultation wrestled with the question of how to maintain our “first love” for God and for the people of India. The forces of materialism and globalization challenge our commitments and force us to re-examine our goals. How can Vellore CMC&H continue to be a center for loving care in an increasingly competitive health industry? How can an institution that now sees over a million outpatients a year show forth Christian love toward each of them? How can we cope with growing corruption and cynicism in high places?

In response, the assembly developed and approved ambitious goals for the coming decade. The rehab institute will add the Paul Brand floor to upgrade quality and quantity of care; mental health and low cost effective care will expand. Research facilities will be enlarged. More staff housing will be built and



*With Dr. Scudder's statue in the background, past and future directors; Drs. Pulimood, LBM Joseph, Joyce Ponnaiya, George Chandy and V.I. Mathan meet at the Consultation.*

more efficient and environmentally sound water and waste systems will be installed. A new medical education building will be launched, where new courses of study will include nurse practitioner, nuclear medicine and dialysis nursing. The College will add an entire new department of biomedical engineering. These are just a few of the many goals for the decade outlined in the consultation report.

All agreed that these improvements and plans will be as nothing if we “have not love.”

## Board of Directors Appoint Rev. Dr. Louis L. Knowles



Dr. Louis Knowles joined the Vellore CMC Board as President on January 4, 2002.

Dr. Knowles served as Executive Director of Oikocredit USA, an organization that extends low interest credit for development of poor communities in countries around the world. He has also worked with the Council on Foundations as Director for International Programs and with the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA as coordinator for world hunger concerns and welfare issues.

Dr. Knowles is an ordained minister of the Presbyterian Church (USA). A graduate of Stanford University, he received his Doctor of Ministry from San Francisco Theological Seminary. Dr. Knowles also earned the Master of Public Administration degree from Harvard University.

Dr. Knowles remarked, “The Vellore Board’s distinguished history of Christian service and professional excellence is a wonderful gift to humanity. I look forward to carrying this tradition into the new century.”

## New Director Appointed at CMC&H



*Current CMC&H Director, Dr. Joyce Ponnaiya with Dr. George Chandy, current Medical Superintendent and newly appointed Director of CMC&H, standing in front of a portrait of Dr. Ida Scudder.*

At the Vellore Christian Medical College & Hospital Council Meeting, held in India on January 17-18, 2002, one of the new appointments was that of CMC Medical Superintendent, Dr. George M. Chandy, Professor of Gastroenterology and Hepatology, as Director-Designate of CMC&H. Dr. Chandy, a CMC alumnus, batch of '67 also did a postgraduate Hospital Administration course at CMC in collabora-

tion with Tulane University.

Dr. Chandy will begin his service as Director on September 26, 2002, upon completion of Dr. Joyce Ponnaiya's term.

Congratulations, Dr. Chandy! Our felicitations to Dr. Ponnaiya, for her many years of service at CMC&H. We wish her well as she looks forward to future years of service at Vellore.

## Enhancing Academic Excellence - Research

A group of medical alumni has come together in an attempt to increase resources for research at Vellore CMC&H. This effort dovetails with the results of the January consultation at Vellore, during which many staff expressed the need for an organized system of helping researchers to obtain grants. There was also discussion about the desirability of creating an inventory of basic research equipment that could be shared by many departments. The consultation ended with a recommendation that a new position, Vice Principal for Research, be created in the medical college.

In response to this initiative, the Vellore CMC Board (USA) at its February 22 meeting established a new endowment fund: "Enhancing Academic Excellence - Research." Donations to this fund will be held in perpetuity by the board, and the income will be forwarded annually for the use of the vice principal for research in Vellore.

Dr. Ajit Varki, spokesperson for the alumni group, remarked "Academic excellence and the spirit of enquiry have been a long-standing tradition at CMC&H and have played a critical role of sustaining both the high quality of medical education and the caring mission. Research in particular is also a key factor in maintaining the national and international reputation of this institution, which in turn impacts directly and indirectly on its other primary missions. Our alumni group has developed various initiatives to support research at Vellore, including raising the seed money to begin this important endowment. We hope that additional alumni as well as other well-wishers will rally around this cause." Tax-deductible contributions for the new endowment can be sent at any time to the Vellore CMC Board (USA).

## Neonatal Staff Work to Save Babies

During my recent visit to Vellore CMC&H, I was urged by several people to seek out Dr. Atanu Kumar Jana, head of the Neonatology Department. Dr. Jana, it was said, had pioneered in the care of premature babies in a place where the most expensive and latest technologies used in the U.S. and Europe were beyond reach. When I was able to meet Dr. Jana, these reports proved to be true. Using his inherent genius for such things, Dr. Jana has developed techniques such as “kangaroo care.” This simply means that he has found that very premature babies, who are in constant danger of hypothermia, benefit greatly from being placed for extended periods of time on their mother’s chest. The warmth and regular breathing of the mother stimulates the baby to also breathe regularly, a problem for many of them.

Dr. Jana’s neonatology department is the only one serving a vast population in three states, Tamil Nadu, Kanataka and Andra Pradesh. Thousands of premature babies, some weighing as little as two pounds, are saved every year by the work of Dr. Jana and his staff. Medical staff from all over India and as far away as Nigeria come to Vellore to learn Dr. Jana’s techniques.

Kavitha’s story is a wonderful testimony to the importance of the neonatology unit.

*L. Knowles*

### Kavitha

On December 26th, a nun at Sishu Bhavan, a home for women and children, in Vellore town, run by Mother Teresa’s Sisters of Charity, shivered in the cold as she went to unlock the front door. Opening the door, she saw a baby lying, wrapped in a thin rag. Sometimes new born babies are abandoned on the doorstep, but this was the tiniest baby she had ever seen. Sister tenderly picked up the baby girl and carried her inside. The nuns named the baby, Kavitha. They swaddled her in a warm blanket, phoned the

Neonatal Department at CMC&H, and took the baby in the van to the hospital department that looks after sick and tiny newborn babies. She weighed 1.14 Kg (2.5 pounds), and was extremely premature, so she was admitted to the high-risk area of the nursery, where she was placed in an incubator. After stabilizing the baby with fluids, oxygen and drugs, the doctors

were able to start feeding through a stomach tube. Days later her weight rose to 1.5 kg (3.3 pounds). Still in her incubator, she was transferred to the low risk area of the nursery.

How the nurses and doctors enjoyed caring for Kavitha; feeding, cuddling and caring for her! Even in the vital work of caring for 60 or so babies in the three nurseries, there was still time to pause at Kavitha’s cradle, to watch and to smile at this orphan. She had probably been born on Christmas Day. In what desperate situation had her mother been that she could find no room for her baby daughter? But all was not lost. The Sisters of Charity, together with the Neonatal Staff at CMC&H rescued this child and gave her life. They gave her the best of medical care and tender loving concern. Donations from friends of Vellore

paid for the cost of her hospital stay. When Kavitha’s weight reached 2.5 kg (5.5 pounds), the Sister took her home and found her adoptive parents.



*Dr. Jana standing by a premature child lying in a special lighted cradle to combat jaundice. The mechanism was built by local women in the workshops sponsored by Vellore’s Community Health and Development program.*

### TOLL FREE NUMBER

*Call us at 1-800-875-6370 if you have any questions or would like information about the Vellore Board and CMC&H Vellore.*

## Corporate and Board Members Elected

At the October 12, 2001 Annual Meeting of the Vellore Board USA, the Nominating Committee, chaired by Susan Mathew, presented a slate for election of new members.

Members elected to the Corporate body were:

Susan Cherian	Jobi David	Diane Jedlicka
Eric Gordon	Ruby Nakka	Annie Johnson Samuel
Cherian Thomas	George Varughese	Elizabeth Wolfe

Members elected to the Board of Directors were:

George Varughese	Dorothy Williams
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At the October 13, 2001 Board Meeting, Board Officers were elected:

Mani M. Mani	Chair of the Board
Ruth Case	Secretary
James Leach	Treasurer
Elise Youth	Chair of Personnel Committee

## Margaret E. Wilson Haberman Memorial Fund

The Vellore CMC Board (USA) is pleased to announce the creation of the Margaret E. Wilson Haberman Memorial Fund. Income from this endowment will be used for scholarships for women in the colleges of medicine and nursing. Mr Harry Haberman, of Denver,



Colorado, provided the founding gift of \$25,000 in memory of his beloved wife, Margaret, who passed away in June, 2001 at the age of 97. Mrs Haberman was the daughter of Dr H. S. Wilson, a Presbyterian medical missionary who served thirty years in India. Dr, Wilson also was the second principal of Kodaikanal School, an institution that has educated many missionary

children over the years. Mr. Haberman said, " My wife admired Dr. Ida Scudder's pioneering efforts to open medical schools to women. We enjoyed fifty-nine years of a beautiful marriage, and I wish to create this fund in honor of Margaret, so future generations of women may be trained to care for the poor in India."

## Planning Together for a Future

Changes in life occur and so do the needs and objectives of our estate plans. As life goes on our circumstances change and these changes may affect our future plans. We don't always take the time to keep up with important details, such as updating wills and other legal documents. Is it time for you to revisit your current plans and make changes?

New tax laws, some of which have become effective this year and other laws which may affect your plans in the near future, may require your consideration.

To help you with your charitable estate planning, send for information from the Vellore Board, available without cost or obligation through the Presbyterian Church (USA) Foundation. Contact the Vellore Board at 212-870-2640, or visit our web page at [www.vellorecmcboard.org](http://www.vellorecmcboard.org).

## Pauline S. Webb Estate

When Pauline Webb, of Wilmington, DE passed away in February, 2002 she fulfilled her wish to support Vellore's mission through her bequest of \$6,628 to the Vellore Board USA.

A long-time supporter of this ministry, she made her first gift 20 years ago, in 1982. Our appreciation for the support and future planning of Ms. Webb.

### 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.