



# Azim Premji

Founder Chair, Wipro &  
Philanthropist, Azim Premji Foundation

## Delivering the 2021 10<sup>th</sup> Dr. Ida S. Scudder Humanitarian Oration

Friday 10<sup>th</sup> December 2021  
Scudder Auditorium  
Christian Medical College  
Bagayam Campus

Presented by  
Christian Medical College Vellore  
and  
Vellore Christian Medical  
College Foundation  
New York, USA

# 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Dr. Ida S. Scudder Humanitarian Oration

## Programme

### **Invocation**

College Choir

### **Opening Prayer**

Rev. Dr. Arul Dhas, Chaplain, Christian Medical College Vellore

### **College Song\***

College Choir

### **Welcome**

Dr. J.V. Peter, Director, Christian Medical College Vellore

### **Felicitation**

Dr. John Oommen, CMC Council Vice Chair & MS, Christian Hospital, Bissamcuttack

### **The Vellore CMC Foundation and Citation**

Mrs. Usha Jesudasan, Author & Member of the Board, Vellore CMC Foundation

### **Introduction of the Speaker**

Dr. Sowmya Sathyendra, Deputy Director, Christian Medical College Vellore

### **Dr. Ida S. Scudder Humanitarian Oration**

Mr. Azim Premji

### **Vote Of Thanks**

Dr. Vinay Oommen, Vice Principal (Undergraduates), Christian Medical College Vellore

### **Sevenfold Amen**

College Choir

### **National Anthem**

*\*Please turn to the last page for the words of our College Song*



## Citation for the Dr. Ida S. Scudder Humanitarian Oration 2021

**C**hristian Medical College Vellore (CMC) and the United States based Vellore CMC Foundation partnered in 2012, to establish the Dr. Ida S. Scudder Humanitarian Oration to perpetuate the legacy of Dr. Ida Sophia Scudder. By honouring exceptional individuals who exemplify her compassion, integrity and character, the Oration seeks to inspire others to emulate her dedication to the service of humanity.

Ida Scudder came from a family of medical missionaries who assumed she would follow in their footsteps. But Ida decided against a life surrounded by disease. One night, at her parents' home in India, three men knocked on Ida's door, one after the other. They asked her to help their young wives through difficult childbirth. Young Ida, with no medical training, was helpless. Three women and three babies died due to lack of medical care. Ida found her calling through this tragedy. She returned to America to train as a doctor, came back to India and established a small clinic for women and children first, and then the unique institution that is now known worldwide as Christian Medical College Vellore.

Ida read these verses from the Bible every day. "Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonour others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil, but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres." Her example of compassionate care and utter selflessness serves as the inspiration for succeeding generations in CMC.

On this, the 10th anniversary of the Dr. Ida S. Scudder Humanitarian Oration, we are delighted to honour Mr. Azim Premji. Mr. Premji took over Wipro, the family business, at a young age and diversified the company by adding IT, software technology, soaps, precision engineering and other services. His pioneering vision, pursuit of excellence and bold leadership quickly brought Wipro, and India, to the forefront of the IT world, even as all its businesses became highly successful.

Two characteristics define Mr. Premji - passionate altruism and limitless philanthropy. Mr. Premji's contribution to India is the shining example that a company can be run successfully with transparency, integrity and by consistently practising good ethical values. He personally promoted the idea that personal wealth should be used to build a more equitable society. To contribute to developing a more just, humane and sustainable society, he founded the Azim Premji Foundation in 2001. The Foundation today works extensively with India's public education system to help improve its equity and quality, runs the philanthropic Azim Premji University in Bangalore, and supports over 400 not-for-profit organizations with multi-year financial grants. The Foundation has already begun construction of its second University in Bhopal, and two others in quick succession.

Committed to easing suffering when the pandemic broke India's health care system in 2020-21, the Foundation responded quickly and with great compassion, generously funding health care organizations, including CMC, who played a critical role in the response to COVID-19.

By embracing humanity, living selflessly and consciously being a committed steward of his wealth, Mr. Premji has shown that these are values that everyone can live by. These qualities, as well as his personal austerity, humility and simplicity make him an excellent role model for all Indians.

In recognition of Mr. Azim Premji's unsurpassable benevolence and his steadfast commitment to creating an India with equity, he is eminently worthy to be linked with the name of our beloved founder, through the award of the 2021 Dr. Ida S. Scudder Humanitarian Oration.

## Dr. Ida Sophia Scudder (1870 – 1960)

Ida Sophia Scudder was born to pioneering Christian medical missionaries in Ranipet, Tamil Nadu. Her first memories of India were of the devastating famine of the 1880s. It was, thus, with relief that she went back to the USA for her schooling. She was filled with trepidation when she was called back to India in 1890 to tend her ailing mother. Her epiphany, wrought through the horrifying experience of 3 young women dying in childbirth due to constricting societal norms, led her to train as a doctor. She chose a path she had never planned to walk on. Her decision to 'help the women and children of India' redefined her life.



Ida went back to America in 1894 and trained in medicine in Philadelphia and Cornell. She returned to Vellore at the dawn of a new century. India might have been known as the 'brightest jewel in the crown', but for a majority of Indians, life was a miserable existence: famines, epidemics, plagues, and droughts were rife. That one in five babies died in the first year of life was a telling statistic. Ida began her mission with women and children - the former largely marginalised to a nondescript existence, their lives circumscribed by zenanas, childbirth, and childrearing. It was not just disease Ida had to battle with, but superstition, ignorance, apathy, and indifference. She had to contend with contexts, conditions and circumstances that were beyond her control, and she had to make inroads into aspects of health, life, and faith very different from her own.

But she started to make a difference. A one bed clinic soon became two beds and then the 40 bed Mary Taber Schell Hospital. By 1902, she had seen over 12,000 patients. Frustrated at the thought of so many outside the ambit of medical care, she began her 'roadside clinics' - taking services to villages and hamlets outside Vellore. By the mid-1910s, the roadsides had graduated from an experiment to an institution and are the precursors of today's outreach programmes, namely, CHAD, RUHSA, CONCH and LCECU.

As the Schell Hospital grew, it became clear that more staff were required. And what better way to counter the prevailing social norms than by empowering women through education. That was her second epiphany. Despite the lack of trained staff and resources, Ida started training programmes for compounders (1903), nurses (1909) and, much to the surprise of the colonial Government, the licentiate programme in medicine (1918). The growing years of development nurtured Ida's vision, as the Hospital expanded to its present site (1928) and the medical school found a home in a beautiful campus (1932).

Probably Ida's biggest challenge was upgrading the Medical School to a Medical College as per the Government's directive in 1937. She grappled with several possibilities - an end to her dream because of a paucity of every kind of resource, or a paradigm expansion to include men students. After much thought and prayer, Ida realised that she did not answer God's call to make a point, but to make a difference, a difference to the India of tomorrow, and opening the college to men students was doing just that. As she drew a wider circle, it was not just students, men and women who came to CMC, but staff from all over India and the world, who made Ida's tryst their own.

'Aunt Ida' continued to provide inspiration and support to those who assumed leadership after her retirement in 1945. She encouraged the emergence of a cadre of Indian professionals who were committed to the highest standards of medical practice and education. She passed away on May 24, 1960, and her funeral brought the town of Vellore to a standstill.

Her obedience to God's call transformed her and continues to transform the many who have inherited her legacy '*not to be ministered unto but to minister*'.



**A**zim Premji was born in 1945. His mother, Gulbanoo Premji, was a doctor and her example shaped the family's philanthropic ideals. In the year of his birth, his father, M.H. Hasham Premji, started a cooking oil company. While Azim was at the Stanford University, aged 21, he was called to take over the family business at the sudden demise of his father. Over the next half century, his business acumen and courageous diversification into the field of information technology and services led Wipro to the forefront of the global IT sector. The businesses of the Wipro group have now grown to about \$10 billion in annual revenue, spanning many other sectors as well. The mantra, the foundational formula, for Mr. Premji's success has been threefold: an unwavering focus on the client, confidence in the power of ordinary people to do extraordinary things and unflinching adherence to ethical principles and moral values.

This towering business magnate is known for his simplicity, humility and respect for environmental resources. He is guided by the Gandhian teaching of wealth as trusteeship and not as ownership. He has donated over 90% of his wealth to the Azim Premji Foundation – which today amounts to about ₹307,000 crores (\$41 Billion), making it one of the largest Foundations in the world. On his retirement from the chairmanship of Wipro, he immersed himself in the philanthropic work of the Foundation. With a broad goal of contributing towards a just, equitable, humane and sustainable society, the Foundation's work spans across education and other critical fields of human development and justice. Their generous commitment of ₹2,125 crores towards addressing the Covid-19 pandemic benefitted about 15 crore people in different regions of the country. CMC's COVID-19 response and distance education programmes have also been supported by grants from the Azim Premji Foundation.

The Foundation contributes to bringing our constitutional values to life through its work across many dimensions. This includes efforts at national transformation of public school education. The Azim Premji University, in Bengaluru, along with a second university being established in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh, contribute through their research and teaching to the same purpose. The Foundation has its own massive and constantly upscaling organization in education, to help improve the quality and equity of the public education system in India, with field operations across seven states. With its assured resources and focused commitment, the Azim Premji Foundation may well become the agent of an egalitarian national resurgence through transformative school education, available equally to all, at the most basic and formative stage of each generation. In addition, the Foundation also supports over 400 other not-for-profit organizations – working across the country towards justice, equity, and a life of dignity for the most disadvantaged of our country.

Inevitably, such a leader is bound to be crowned with honours and accolades. Characteristically he describes these as recognitions for the teams of Wipro and the Foundation. The Financial Times, Time, Fortune, Forbes and Business Week have named him as one of the world's most influential leaders, entrepreneurs and philanthropists. He has been awarded the Padma Vibhushan, the second highest civilian award in India, the 'Legion of Honour' by the Republic of France, the Faraday Medal and the Carnegie Medal of Philanthropy.

Mrs. Yasmeen Premji, like her husband, also breaks the usual stereotypes associated with material success. She studied psychology at the University of Bombay and attended Smith College, USA on a full scholarship. She is a sportswoman who represented her college and state in hockey. Her passion for design led her to work as an editor at architecture and design magazine Inside Outside and to design Wipro's offices. She is deeply committed to philanthropy and serves on the board of the Azim Premji Foundation and University. Her first book, Days of Gold and Sepia, was published in 2012.



# Christian Medical College Vellore

**D**r. Ida Sophia Scudder's legacy lives on through the Christian Medical College Vellore. With nearly 3,000 beds spread across several campuses, CMC, on an average day, caters to around 10,000 outpatients from all over India and neighbouring countries. The mission continues - to serve the nation through education, clinical service, and research. Outreach and services to the community, pioneered by Dr. Ida Scudder, remain at its core, even as the hospital embraces ever-increasing levels of specialization.

CMC's coveted training programmes aim to creatively mould together professional competency, social relevance and evidence based, ethical practice in the spirit of Jesus Christ. There are several distance education courses that enable doctors, many from the public sector, to upgrade their skills. The clinical training in a large and busy multi-specialty hospital is complemented by placements in villages, mission hospitals and secondary care settings. Sophisticated learning resources are integrated with the teaching of ethics, teamwork, communication, and an awareness of the needs of the vulnerable. In 2021, CMC was ranked third in the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) of the Government's Ministry of Human Resource Development.

Research is integral to CMC's vision. Over the past century, CMC has contributed significantly to generating and advancing knowledge and improving curative and preventive medical services, throughout India and internationally. CMC is involved in basic, clinical, and translational research in many areas, including virology, diabetes, hepatitis, gastro-enteric diseases, malnutrition, stem cells, the early detection and treatment of cancer and more.

CMC runs extensive community-based health services around Vellore, resourced by the secondary level hospitals, CHAD and RUHSA, which have led to major improvements in health indicators in their focus areas. In addition, the Low Cost Effective Care Unit (LCECU), and the College of Nursing Community Health (CONCH) service and outreach clinics provide localized care to people living in the urban slums of Vellore.

The CMC Vellore Chittoor Campus has been offering medical services since 2011. The campus is now a rapidly growing, broad-specialty 120 bed hospital, with operation theatres, diagnostic facilities, and outreach programmes for primary health centres and schools in Chittoor district. The College of Nursing on the Chittoor campus has just admitted the third batch of B.Sc. Nursing students. The institution also looks forward to the inauguration of the Kannigapuram Campus, with a dedicated Trauma Centre and the Phase I facility for specialty services.

As for much of the world, the COVID-19 pandemic has cast a shadow on CMC. The institution's response at many levels reflects the grace of God and the support of the staff, students, well-wishers, and numerous partner organizations. At the peak, we were able to set aside 1,150 beds for COVID-19, including 200 ICU beds. Oxygen supplies were ramped up. We managed over 4,000 patients in a monitored home isolation program and ran 'Udhavi', a 24/7 COVID-19 helpline. We tested more than 102,600 samples and admitted over 16,600 patients. Companies and individuals reached out to provide PPE and equipment. Donors contributed generously to support poor patients. This enabled us to subsidise ₹49.8 crores of patient care costs for COVID alone, reducing the tremendous financial burden on our patients. We are now focusing on the "Vaccinate Vellore" campaign.

These unprecedented times have asked much of CMC Vellore. The challenge is to continue to speak the language of the poor and marginalised; to continue in the pursuit of professional excellence, compassionate care, inclusive and holistic health, and education of the highest order.

# Vellore Christian Medical College Foundation



The Vellore Christian Medical College Foundation, based in New York, USA, has enjoyed a unique and close partnership with CMC since 1948. The Foundation, as it exists today, evolved from the U.S. Vellore Board, which consisted of individuals and church denominations that provided early support for Dr. Ida Sophia Scudder. The Foundation's mission is to support CMC in her drive for excellence in healthcare, education, and research. The Foundation also celebrates and ensures the legacy of Dr. Ida Scudder's humanitarian work through its fundraising and friend-raising activities.

The Foundation's board and its staff members work closely with the leadership of CMC to establish its operational and charitable priorities. Since its founding, the Foundation has (1) contributed \$20 million to CMC's community outreach programs, (2) invested \$521K into a scholarship fund to support the education of medical and nursing students, (3) provided \$255K for scientific research at CMC and (4) channeled over \$11.5 million of USAID's ASHA awarded funds into capital and infrastructure improvement. Most recently, the Foundation's fundraising efforts have resulted in a contribution of more than \$2.5 million toward the support of CMC's COVID-19 relief activities.

Since 2012, the Foundation has partnered with CMC to organize its annual "Ida S. Scudder Humanitarian Oration" which celebrates individuals who embody the same set of compassionate, empathetic, and selfless values that brought Dr. Ida to Vellore so many years ago.

## Previous Recipients of the Dr. Ida S. Scudder Humanitarian Oration

Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, former President of India

Mrs. Sudha Murty, Chair, Infosys Foundation

Dr. Paul W. Brand, CBE, delivered by Philip Yancey (friend & biographer of Paul Brand)

Dr. Devi Prasad Shetty, Founder and Chair, Narayana Health

Dr. K. Srinath Reddy, President, Public Health Foundation of India

Dr. Roger Glass, Director of the Fogarty International Center at the National Institutes of Health, U.S.A

Dr. Robert Fish, D.M.D. and Philanthropist, in honor of the late Dr. Ida Belle Scudder

Dr. Harsh Mander, Director for the Center of Equity Studies, New Delhi

Dr. James H. Taylor, Oncologist, Philanthropist, Board Member, Scudder Association Foundation

## Board of Directors

Dr. Philip Ninan

Dr. Margaret Kamalini Kumar

Dr. H. David Reines

Mr. Binu Varughese

Dr. Niranjana Bose

Rev. Dr. Benjamin Chan

Bishop Sudarshana Devadhar

Dr. Anindya Dutta

Dr. Madelon Finkel

Dr. Meredith Hawkins

Ms. Usha Jesudasan

Dr. Hudson Kibuuka

Dr. Mrinalini Matcha

Dr. Vikram Mathews

Dr. Bibhuti Mishra

Mr. Prasad Palla

Dr. Vinciya Pandian

Dr. Anita Raja

Mr. William Scudder

Rev. JP Sundararajan

Dr. Cephas Swamidoss

Dr. James Taylor

Dr. Susan Taylor

Dr. Christie Thomas

Dr. Thomas Ponna Thurairatnam

Dr. Nissi Varki

Mr. George Varughese

Dr. Jane von Gaudecker

Dr. Honorine Ward

## Honorary Directors

Margaret Brand, MD (1919-2014)

Lucile S. Carman

Robert H. Carman, MD

Mani M. Mani, MD, CMC alumni '55

Rebekah Mani (1936-2020)

Anish Mathai

Edwina Scudder-Youth (1934-2021)



**Girded round by her strong and ageless mountains  
Stands the college we'll honour ever more  
We thy children shall strive to reflect thee  
Thou bright glowing gem of Vellore.  
As your banner we wave proudly o'er us  
And together we chorus your praise  
In your blue we see loyalty's emblem  
And truth in your silver's bright rays.**

**Three cheers for the silver and blue  
India's star in the sky clear and true,  
Clouds of suffering we'd banish for ever  
Three cheers for the silver and blue!**

**Not for fame not for wealth our endeavour  
Pride of race nor of creed be our boast,  
Each for all, all for each, thus forever  
United from coast unto coast.  
Strong to serve, strong to save the defenseless  
May thy spirit inspire us anew;  
Not to gain but to give be our motto  
Three cheers for the silver and blue**

**Three cheers for the silver and blue  
India's star in the sky clear and true,  
Clouds of suffering we'd banish for ever  
Three cheers for the silver and blue!**