

# AKU-NAMA

Aga Khan University Alumni Newsletter

Spring 2008, Vol. 1, Issue 1



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*Renewing the vows: Tazeen Jafar, Rahila Zakir and Adeel Butt discussing ways to revive the alumni association in the lobby of Sheraton Hotel, Karachi in March 2007*

AKU-NAMA is a newsletter and magazine for *all* alumni of Aga Khan University (AKU). It is our vision that this publication will serve as a communication tool for alumni from all constituencies and campuses of AKU, and keep us informed with their news, views, personal or professional accomplishments, and happenings

in East Africa and the Institute for the Study of Muslim Civilisations (AKU-ISMC) in the United Kingdom. Please send nominations to any current member. You are welcome to nominate yourself. All we ask for is a commitment to work towards the shared vision and mission of AKU-NAMA and all alumni.

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**It is our vision that this publication will serve as a communication tool for alumni from all constituencies and campuses of AKU**

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in life. It will also provide an opportunity to share old memories and new developments at AKU. We invite contributions from alumni of all AKU programmes. We also expect and hope that the representation on the Editorial Board will enlarge reflecting expansion of AKU in the various fields of study as well as in geographic location. At this time, the Editorial Board is seeking members from the Advanced Nursing Programme (AKU-ANS)

To request regular delivery of an electronic version or printed copy of the Alumni Newsletter or AKU Newsletter, kindly register at the following website:  
[http://www.aku.edu/alumni/alumni\\_contact.asp](http://www.aku.edu/alumni/alumni_contact.asp)

The views expressed in this publication are those of the authors, and do not necessarily reflect the views or the official position of the University, the Alumni Association, or the editors.



“Who You Gonna Call?”

If there's something strange  
in your neighbourhood  
Who you gonna call?

If there's something weird  
and it don't look good  
Who you gonna call?

In the wake of 9/11, US embassy in Pakistan denies visas to many graduates who have secured residency spots in the US. Security clearances delay a multitude of others, some of whom lose their residency spots. Numerous applicants look for a place to stay for a night or two during their interview trail across the United States. Others ask for advice about programmes, cities, visa processing, commuting to interview cities, licensing requirements and many other issues. Students are looking for elective and research positions. Others have questions for ECFMG and their processing. A Duke professor makes derogatory remarks about medical graduates from Pakistan.

What is the common theme in all this, you ask? Well, these are all actual scenarios and events faced by AKU students and graduates, and indeed from other medical colleges in Pakistan. And when you are going through one of these scenarios, who do you call? Or many a time, who helps you out even before you have asked for help?

And unlike the theme song I quoted above, it is not Ghostbusters. Well, may be – of a different kind. Your fellow alumni have been working on these and many other issues faced by the younger graduates for years. Due to the strong advocacy of Association of Physicians of Pakistani – Descent in North America (APPNA), the visa refusals have all but disappeared. The security clearances are taking much less time. Students and young graduates seek advice on the email group on ‘topica’ and get most of their questions answered. The vice president of ECFMG recently visited Pakistan and made a special trip to AKU, and now we can send our queries right up to the vice president and president of ECFMG and get them answered in near real-time.

There is a lot of work and effort that a few individuals, a few fellow alumni and organisations like APPNA have put into helping us all. And we have all benefited from those directly, or indirectly. The question is, what have we, as individuals, done to help? There are over 950 AKU Medical College alumni in the US at this time, but only a few of them are members of the alumni association or APPNA. I keep getting asked “what has AKU Alumni Association or APPNA done for me?” And uniformly, those who ask have never made an effort to find out how much advocacy has been done on their behalf over the years.

Our strength is in numbers. We have to use our numbers to advocate for ourselves. No one else will. Make a pledge to yourself today that you will become a member of your Alumni Association. And for Medical College alumni in North America, become a member of APPNA. For those in Pakistan and Europe and other countries, join your local chapter of the Alumni Association. And my appeal is to *all* alumni, from all schools, to join and strengthen the Alumni

Association. Together, we shall prevail.

*Adeel A. Butt, MBBS '90*  
*Editor-in-Chief*

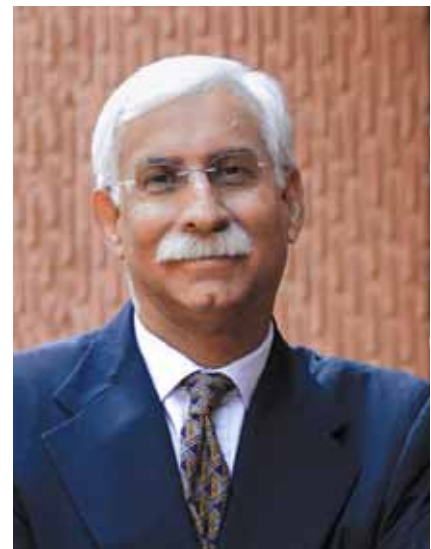
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Dear Alumni,

I am delighted at the initiative of AKU Alumni Newsletter and hope that this will provide a new forum for communication and connectivity amongst you all.

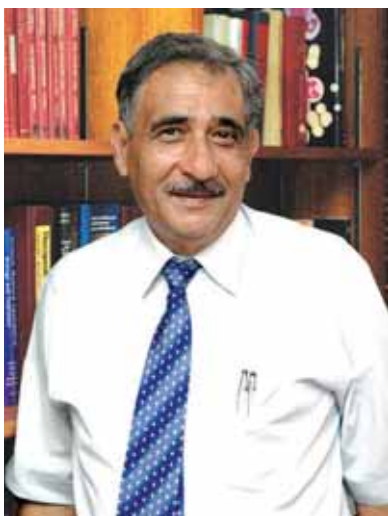
As AKU's programmes and presence rapidly spread over eight countries, the alumni pool will grow not only in number but also in disciplines and countries of origin. This geographic and programmatic breadth will add much strength to the University. A University dedicated to empowering people of the developing world to guide their own destinies, and to make their rightful contributions as members of a global community.

These times offer many exciting opportunities for your alma mater. New and standardised systems of science, education, globalisation, and health care services in a variety of settings will need to be established. I invite the alumni community to work with me on these. You can bring expertise, experience and creative intelligence.



Your alma mater values your contribution to society. My sincere hope for the coming years is that AKU family devotes active effort towards improving the quality of life of our constituents. We all have a stake in the University's overall direction and well being. I have no doubt that our alumni will not only uphold the name of the institution, but take it to new heights.

*Firoz Rasul  
President,  
Aga Khan University*



Dear AKU Alumni,

It is a pleasure to be communicating to you through AKU Alumni Newsletter, which I am sure will serve as an important tool for sharing ideas between AKU and its alumni as well as within the alumni community. I congratulate all those involved in this initiative and look forward to continued contributions from alumni from all AKU programmes in future issues.

As many of you already know, Aga Khan University and the Medical College celebrate their 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary this year. Over these past 25 years, your University has grown from a fledgling institution to one of national and international repute. The success of our outstanding alumni in their chosen fields of

endeavour continues to contribute significantly to Aga Khan University's ascent to such respectable standing. We are proud of you and continue to wish you well in your careers.

While taking stock and reflecting on past accomplishments is important, it is also vital to chart the course for the next quarter century and beyond as we set our aims on even greater heights. Needless to say, your involvement in helping your University meet these new challenges will be of paramount importance.

A number of activities are particularly being designed around alumni as part of the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations, which will be held in conjunction with the Grand Alumni Reunion being organised from December 15 to 21, 2008. A seminar titled, "AKU-MC – Its Journey into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century" is already planned for December 18 and the Annual Health Sciences Research Assembly will be held on the following day. Other events will be finalised and communicated in the coming weeks through AKU website. I invite all our Medical College alumni to actively participate in these events, and please do mark your diaries accordingly.

On behalf of AKU Medical College faculty, I wish you and your families the very best, and look forward to seeing you later this year!

Warm regards,

*Dr Mohammad Khurshid  
Dean, Medical College*

It is a great pleasure for me to write a message for the Alumni Newsletter. I am delighted to see that the alumni of Aga Khan University are making efforts to come together and remain in touch with their alma mater as well as with each other. Only a strong and enduring Alumni Association can steadfastly support the cause of



its alma mater and the careers of their fellow graduates.

The Institute for Educational Development maintains regular communication with its alumni who are spread in many parts of the globe. Indeed, I frequently have the pleasure to spend time with a number of our alumni. On behalf of AKU-IED faculty, I would like to convey our appreciation to alumni for sharing their ideas and achievements with us. Our graduates are impressive and are making a remarkable difference in a diverse and ever evolving global society.

I would urge all alumni to increase their involvement with the University through various means to facilitate research and scholarship activities. Your participation in AKU's programmes and activities are crucial to the University's goal of remaining a world-class academic and research institution. I would also encourage you to use this distinguished network as a valuable resource throughout your career, and to become an active member of AKU Alumni Association.

I wish the Alumni Newsletter Editorial Board the very best in their efforts to make this publication possible.

*Dr Mohammad Memon  
Director, Institute for  
Educational Development*



Dear Alumni,

Congratulations to each one of you on the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of AKU.

I appreciate the initiative of the Medical College alumni, particularly those belonging to the North American Chapter, aimed at reviving the Alumni Newsletter. This is a great opportunity for the alumni of School of Nursing, Institute for Educational Development, Medical College and Institute for the Study of Muslim Civilisations to participate and contribute to future issues.

I am very happy to see that many of you are working in various locations throughout the world. I am proud of your achievements and contributions globally and wish you further success. The University's programmes are expanding and we look forward to your active involvement in any way possible (your ideas, feedback, time, etc), as you are our ambassadors and important stakeholders.

I would particularly like to appreciate the nursing alumni who have pledged towards the professorship at AKU as a gift towards the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations of AKU-SON.

Wishing you and your family a happy, peaceful and prosperous 2008.

Warm regards,

*Dr Yasmin Amarsi*  
*Dean, School of Nursing*

Dear Friends,

Alumni are the yardstick to measure the success of any institution. Aga Khan University alumni, with the Grace of the Almighty, have excelled in every medical and surgical specialty. They have trained from reputed programmes and many serve as faculty in top-notch universities in North America. They are on the forefront of research, academia and clinical care. Successful alumni need a vibrant Alumni Association. An association that keeps them in touch with their colleagues, a forum that provides them the opportunity to share ideas and an organisation that links them to their alma mater. However, it has been felt that the Alumni Association was not up to par and there was a dire need for revitalisation of AKU Alumni Association. With this mind, my team and I took over this responsibility last year. I am thankful to Atif Jalees Khan and Talha Aziz Malik, Secretary and Treasurer of our organisation respectively, in assisting me in all day-to-day matters. I have received invaluable guidance from previous office bearers and other senior members including Adeel Butt, Faiz Bhora, Nayyar Iqbal, Aniq Shaikh, Asad Ansari, Tahseen Mozaffar, Munir Abidi, Saud Anwar, Faisal Cheema, and many others.

One of the first steps we took was to engage in a meaningful discussion with the University. We received a positive response from President Firoz Rasul and have developed an encouraging working relationship with the alumni office at AKU, under the leadership of Mr Asif Fancy. Among the priorities is the alumni website, which we intend to integrate with AKU website with the understanding that the alumni would have control of the content on this website. Ultimately, it would serve as the main portal for alumni networking and disseminating important information. We have also

embarked on a major update of our alumni database. We feel that this is the cornerstone for any further implementation of our plans. I request you to help us in updating your information.

Since January 2007, we have been involved in a number of endeavours to assist younger alumni. Many projects are being done in collaboration with the Committee for Young Physicians (YPC) of Association of Physicians of Pakistani-Descent of North America (APPNA), including our efforts during the post-match scramble to help unmatched alumni. More concerted efforts need to be made, and for this we would need the help of senior AKU alumni who serve as faculty in various residency programmes. I solicit their assistance for securing observerships and electives for medical students and recent graduates, as US clinical experience seems to be a key factor in this regard.

In collaboration with the YPC, we have held very successful mentorship and Programme Director's seminars in Chicago, New York City, Long Island and Orlando. Various AKU alumni have served as mentors and also as faculty on several of these seminars. We have also hosted successful research seminars for physicians-in-training in Houston, Chicago and Orlando. Physicians-in-training present their original research and various prizes are given by a panel of judges. AKU alumni who have excelled in these seminars include Drs Faisal Cheema, Qaisar Khan, Javaria Fatima, Hamid Bashir, Mahboob Alam and Hiba Arif. Many senior AKU alumni have served as faculty in these seminars ranging from screening and judging abstracts. These include Drs Adeel Butt, Nayyar Iqbal, Munir Abidi, Tahseen Mozaffar, Arif Sarwari, Faiz Bhora and Faisal Cheema. These physician-in-training seminars are becoming a regular feature in all major APPNA

meetings. In addition, I provide telephonic and e-guidance about visas, security clearance, residency, fellowship, waivers, jobs, electives, observerships, etc to a number of graduates from all over Pakistan, including AKU. We have also negotiated discounted rates for various immigration and visa petitions with a well known law firm based in Manhattan. The law firm has been gracious enough to provide answers to many of the queries I receive. I thank Dr Faiz Bhora for this contact.

We are working on ways to improve as an organisation with serious focus on the structure. Our future direction includes working on developing a programme of visiting professorship at AKU for alumni based overseas. This would include maximising participation of North American faculty in various Continuing Medical Education programmes at AKU. We also want to streamline various mentorship and research programmes in North America. Moreover, we would like to



partner with AKU and other NGOs in Pakistan to support welfare and charity projects. The North American Chapter intends to work with AKU in key decision-making on alumni issues. We are fully supportive of the proposed celebrations being held in December 2008 at AKU on the auspicious occasion of 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the University. We recognise that membership to the Alumni Association has to be encouraged and with better communication and when the alumni observe solid work being done on this forum, we are hopeful

that we would see an increase in both membership and alumni participation.

In the end, I feel privileged to serve as President of AKU Alumni Association, North American Chapter, and am glad that I am a part of the renaissance of the Association and am looking forward to implementing our plans throughout this year and in the future. Thank you for all your support.

*M. Rizwan Khalid, MBBS '99  
President, AKU Alumni  
Association, North American  
Chapter*

### Secretary's Report

Dear Friends and colleagues,

It is with great pleasure and honour that I share my thoughts with my esteemed and accomplished AKU alumni family.

Our efforts for the short-term include organisation and outreach to strengthen the network of AKU alumni in North America and revivification of alumni ties with the University.

In the medium-term, we hope to renew our commitment, as AKU graduates, to activism in the cause of physicians of Pakistani-descent in the US.

In the areas of organisation and outreach, our primary goals are to collect an accurate listing of AKU alumni in North America, increase the active membership of AKU Alumni Association, publish a regular newsletter, and to participate as a large, unified and integrated contingent at the annual APPNA meeting.

Our long-term goals include an AKU Alumni Association that will actively contribute to the continued academic excellence of AKU, the pre-eminence of AKUH as an institution of distinction for clinical services and community

health, and to the development of clinical delivery systems in the underprivileged areas of Pakistan. Clearly, the success of this highly ambitious endeavour is conditional on the support and participation of AKU alumni community in North America. And so with much humility, we ask for your continued support and prayers.

*Atif Jalees Khan, MBBS '99  
North American Chapter*

### Treasurer's Report

Dear Fellow Alumni,

I would like to extend my gratitude to all active members within AKU alumni community for their sincere and selfless efforts; at the same time, I would like to encourage everybody else who is not active for one reason or another, to please come forward and present any and every concern of yours as well as your ideas and advice, so that we can all get together, pool in our resources and work for the greater good of the whole community.

AKU Alumni North American Chapter account has \$10,074.53 right now, which does not include further contributions of \$750.00 that have yet to be deposited.

*Talha Malik, MBBS '99  
North American Chapter*

### AKU Alumni Association Funds

As of December 31, 2007, the Alumni Association account stood at PKR 30,100. These funds were collected as Alumni Association membership fees through 2007 and the account was rolled over to 2008 with the same amount as credit. No debits were recorded in this account for the entire year as all alumni-related expenses, such as for Alumni Reunion, etc, were borne by the University.

*Office of Alumni Affairs  
AKU Karachi, Pakistan*

# International Initiatives of AKU's School of Nursing

When most of us think of Aga Khan University School of Nursing (AKU-SON), we think of its sprawling pink campus with lakes and gardens in the midst of a bustling Karachi. However, AKU-SON's scope has expanded far beyond the Stadium Road campus, and even beyond the borders of Pakistan. The alumni of AKU-SON have played an important role in this expansion. In this first issue of AKU-NAMA, AKU-SON alumni salute our fellow alumni for their contributions to AKU-SON programmes in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Syria, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Tajikistan and Egypt.

The nurses who have supported AKU programmes in and outside Pakistan have performed multiple roles as managers, clinicians, educators, friends, administrators, policy makers, grant writers, report writers, budget writers, trainers and mentors. Our alumni have gone beyond their assigned roles and engaged in government-level policy dialogue to advocate for important nursing related policies, donor-level dialogue to raise funds for AKU programmes and dialogue with nurses and communities in different countries in order to raise the status of nursing profession in the developing world.



## Afghanistan

In Afghanistan, AKU-SON has now been supporting the government Institute of Health Sciences in Kabul since 2002. Our alumni – mostly women, have supported this programme from the first day despite the armed conflict in Afghanistan. Rukhsana Rahmetullah, RN '91, Karimah Alidina, BScN '02, Ramzia Ashrafee, RN '03, and Mukhtar Ali Khan, BScN '04 have served as full-time staff for AKU-SON project in Afghanistan. They have shared stories of witnessing buildings being bombed, roads without traffic, living in Kabul amidst news of suicide bomb explosions, kidnappings of international staff, and 7 PM

curfews. Security threats and lack of lodging facilities even forced some to spend nights sleeping under their desks in offices. One alumna tells a particularly interesting story of the thick layer of cobwebs that covered every surface in the 'skills lab' at the Kabul Institute of Health Sciences. All alumni have worked in Kabul at great personal risk. Their efforts have taken forward the work of AKU-SON and has impacted the lives of people in Afghanistan. So far 196 nurses and 269 midwives have graduated from Kabul Institute of Health Sciences under the new general nursing diploma curriculum.

AKU-SON alumni have struggled to have more women included in the general nursing diploma programme in Afghanistan. They have provided technical support necessary to develop a new general nursing diploma curriculum for Afghanistan. To fulfil the requirements of the programme, alumni were involved in developing standards against which nursing education programmes could be evaluated and tools with which the quality of the programme being implemented in Afghanistan could be assessed. In addition, they have reached out to the community by visiting high schools in Afghan villages to convince young girls that nursing is indeed a worthy profession.





## Syria

In Syria, AKU-SON has worked on nursing quality assurance and curriculum development in partnership with the Nursing Services Division at AKUH, Karachi. Muhammad Altaf, Post RN BScN '99, was based in Syria for a two-year period to support quality assurance in nursing services at five hospitals. In addition, several alumni from AKU-SON visited the Syria programme at intervals to provide technical assistance, for example, to conduct needs curriculum development. As a result of AKU-SON's efforts which were made possible through the work of alumni, the Syrian government has requested AKU-SON to support Post RN BScN programmes, BScN programmes, and MScN programmes in different Syrian institutions as well as Total Quality Assurance at Al-Mujtahed Hospital in Damascus.

## Egypt

The Om-Habibeh Foundation in Egypt was established by the late grandmother of His Highness the Aga Khan, the Chancellor of AKU. This foundation supports the development of the people in the Aswan Governorate of Egypt. Om-Habibeh Foundation, now a part of the Aga Khan Foundation, Egypt, has partnered with AKU-SON in capacity-building for nurses in Aswan. Farida Khaled, RN '86, served AKU-SON programme as full-time staff and took up the challenge of setting up an in-service training programme for Aswan nurses. Other alumni have supported this programme by providing technical assistance to conduct needs assessments and make future strategies.

## Pakistan

In the beginning, AKU-SON required technical assistance from international universities for its various programmes. With time, the School has turned into a valuable partner providing

technical assistance to institutions in and outside Pakistan. At its inception, AKU-SON only offered a General Nursing Diploma programme. Today, in addition to the RN programme, the School offers a two-year Post RN BScN, a four-year generic BScN, and a two-year MScN course. AKU-SON attracts a diverse student body from different parts of Pakistan, as well as the countries in which AKU-SON works, for example, Tajikistan, Syria, and Afghanistan.



Karmaliani, Post RN BScN '91 Associate Professor and Director, Masters of Science in Nursing programme; and Dr Khurshid Khowaja, RN '84, Director, Nursing Services Division, AKUH, Karachi. We hope that these stories of our alumni who are engaged in leadership and technical roles will motivate their peers to contribute to AKU-SON initiatives in Pakistan and other countries and thus are able to have a positive impact on people's lives.

A number of alumni have lent their efforts to make AKU-SON programmes and services accessible and relevant for people in developing countries. Four alumnae who are currently providing strategic leadership to our Pakistan initiatives are Salma Rattani, MScN '06, Senior Instructor and Director, General Nursing Diploma Programme; Dr Fauziya Sumar Ali, BScN '93, Assistant Professor and Director Bachelors of Science in Nursing programmes; Dr Rozina

## East Africa

Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania were the first international programmes of AKU-SON and Khairunissa Dhamani, Samina Verteji, Zeenat Sulaiman and Dilshad Pirani have been seconded from Karachi to implement Advanced Nursing Studies programme in East Africa.

*This report was prepared for AKU-NAMA by AKU-SON Alumni Standing Committee*

### **Aga Khan University School of Nursing Alumni Standing Committee**

Wishes to thank all those alumni and faculty who have contributed generously towards

**AKU-SON 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gift**  
of an endowed Professorship to AKU School of Nursing

For those who have not yet had a chance to pledge can still do so!

Please contact  
Ms Rubina Barolia at [rubina.barolia@aku.edu](mailto:rubina.barolia@aku.edu)  
or Ms Sharifa Lalani at [sharif.lalani@aku.edu](mailto:sharif.lalani@aku.edu)  
Co-chairs, AKU-SON Alumni Standing Committee

# Second Generation of AKU Alumni



*Ms Samira A. Karim Kabani (left), RN Diploma '06, AKU's first second-generation of alumni pictured at Alumni Reunion 2006 with her mother, Ms Roshanara Kabani (Dayani), RN Diploma '83, who was part of AKU's first graduating batch*

## AKU-SON Alumnae Honoured

Dr Khurshid Khowaja, '84, was invited at a meeting hosted by International Council of Nurses and World Health Organization (ICN/WHO) in Geneva on Nov 24-25, 2007 to reflect on her experience on 'Education Service Gap'

Salma Jaffer, '85 has been selected as International Surveyor for Joint Commission International Accreditation (JCIA).

Yasmin Mithani and Zohra Kurji, alumnae '93 have been certified as International Board of Lactation Consultants (IBLCE).

For future issues, please keep us informed of your achievements on the following email addresses: [rubina.barolia@aku.edu](mailto:rubina.barolia@aku.edu) or [sharifa.lalani@aku.edu](mailto:sharifa.lalani@aku.edu)

## AKU-SON Class of '92 Alumni Reunion, Toronto



*A number of AKU-SON Alumni from the Class of '92 living in UK, US and Canada reunited in Toronto in May 2007 to celebrate 15 years of their graduation*

## A million residents of Nairobi, including an AKU alumna, have been coping with the trauma of the recent unrest

*Lucia Buyanza grew up in Kibera and is an alumna of Aga Khan University's Advanced Nursing Programme in Nairobi. The full story was written by Rob Remington and first published on February 8, 2008 in The Calgary Herald. This edited article is printed with permission of the author and The Calgary Herald.*

One week after he was treated for a machete wound to the head, Zuberi Mije sits in an unlit room in his tin-roofed shack in the Kibera slum and smiles.

"I am feeling much better," he says to nurse Lucia Buyanza, who treated his cut. "I am so thankful."

After checking on her patient, Buyanza steps outside into the sunlight, where a small garden manages to grow alongside Mije's mud hut in Kibera, the second-largest slum in Africa behind Soweto in Johannesburg.

"You see this," she says, touching a small shrub. "Even in a place like this, it is possible to grow flowers."

The sprawling Kibera slum, home to more than one million people, saw neighbour turn against neighbour, and more than 1,000 have been killed in ethnic and tribal clashes.

Buyanza, 34, grew up in Kibera and is an alumna of Aga Khan University's Advanced Nursing Programme (ANS) in Nairobi. Like Buyanza, many working nurses in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda have been able to continue higher education up to BScN level, allowing them to remain at their workplaces as they pursue professional development. The programme focuses on issues relevant to the indigenous environment – conducting, for example, courses for HIV prevention, treatment and care.

Buyanza, who works in a clinic on the edge of the slum, treated people like Mije for machete cuts to the head and legs. Others came in with poison-tipped arrows in their abdomens. "It was very bad," says Buyanza, who even at the height of the crisis walked to the clinic every day from her home inside Kibera.

While most people cowered inside their tiny shacks, Buyanza walked the deserted street to the clinic, sticking close to the roadside ditch so she could dive into it for cover should violence erupt.

"I was very scared."

Buyanza says people are weary of the violence.

On a regular week day, Kiberians had refused to heed another call for demonstrations, opting instead to return to work and send their children to school.

If there is hope for Kibera, which means "full of joy", and for Kenya, it lies with people like Buyanza and others like her.

"It would be good to show the nation that not all the slum area is bad."

"We, the youth, are having serious prayer meetings in the evening to seek God's forgiveness and see each other as children of one mother Kenya. There are banners of peace that have been prepared and so on Sunday we shall walk with them around the villages to show solidarity and peace in Kibera."

Although Buyanza is Catholic, she credits her peace activism to a non-denominational Ismaili Muslim organisation.

Lucia Buyanza is indeed a living embodiment of a great tradition: true nursing leadership. We salute her spirit and wish all communities peace.

*"I took my nurse's training at Aga Khan University School of Nursing. It is unlike other nursing schools because they teach you that you can be things like a nurse leader, or a nurse politician, or a nurse journalist. I have chosen to be a nurse leader."*



# How AKU-IED Helped Shape My Career

Having done my Bachelors of Science in Chemistry, I was determined to become a professional in pharmaceutical sales. Instead, I found myself teaching science subjects at a secondary school. My career began in 1992 at Government High School, Nokkundi, a far flung area in Balochistan. Though I was known as one of the few good teachers, my teaching practices were didactic. I considered my students as blank slates, according to the orthodox concepts of learning, and laid too much emphasis on traditional methods of teaching. However, my struggle for professional development continued, as I availed a scholarship for Bachelors of Education and simultaneously did my Masters in Urdu (Language) in 1995.

In 1997, I began reflecting on the developments taking place in the field of education worldwide and sought to reconceptualise the educational processes. Fortunately, I got selected for another scholarship for the Masters in Education (Teacher Education) programme through a World Bank funded project offered by Primary Education Directorate in Quetta. My real personal and professional growth started at Aga Khan University Institute for Educational Development (AKU-IED) which nurtured me in a 25-month long intensive and inclusive professional development programme especially tailored for in-service teachers. The Institute played a pivotal role in honing my personal and professional attributes; and improving my knowledge of concepts and professional practice.

After graduation in 1999, I returned to Balochistan and began teaching at a school in Chagai. The difference in my approach was stark. I had become more enthusiastic and skilful than before, trying to understand first and be understood later. The year following that, equipped with renewed spirit I was back at AKU-



*A view of the destruction after the 2005 earthquake that hit Pakistan's northern areas where Mr Zulfiqar Ali Shah and his colleagues assisted in rebuilding educational institutions*

IED as academic staff for a USAID project titled 'Enhancing Capacity of NGOs/CBOs in the Education Sector of Sindh.'

As a member of AKU-IED's instructional teams, I had the opportunity to contribute in developing programmes, planning and organising teaching-learning material, facilitating sessions and monitoring and evaluating programme participants' needs and achievements.

My Chagai experience had helped hone my professional skills, attributes; and relevance to the context placed me in an advantageous position for serving this area from AKU-IED's platform. The Institute sent me as the District Coordinator in districts Chagai and Noshki of Balochistan.

In this dynamic position, I coordinated with district administration, education managers, officials, teacher associations and others for successful implementation of AKU-IED's programmatic activities. I looked after the areas of academics, administration and finance. It is of vital importance that the graduate students should be supported in the field to help them effectively apply the knowledge they have gained at the Institute.

So, AKU-IED's work goes beyond its own classrooms and beyond the programme duration.

I have discovered it to be a life-long commitment.

Revitalizing, Innovating, Strengthening Education (RISE) is a partnership of national and international bodies. This project is facilitating the education sector in the earthquake affected areas, i.e. Bagh, Muzaffarabad and Rawlakot districts of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJ&K) and Mansehra in the North Western Frontier Province (NWFP) of Pakistan. Its target is to enhance capacity of education managers for effective and efficient decision making, teacher education and ensuring community mobilisation and participation in education.

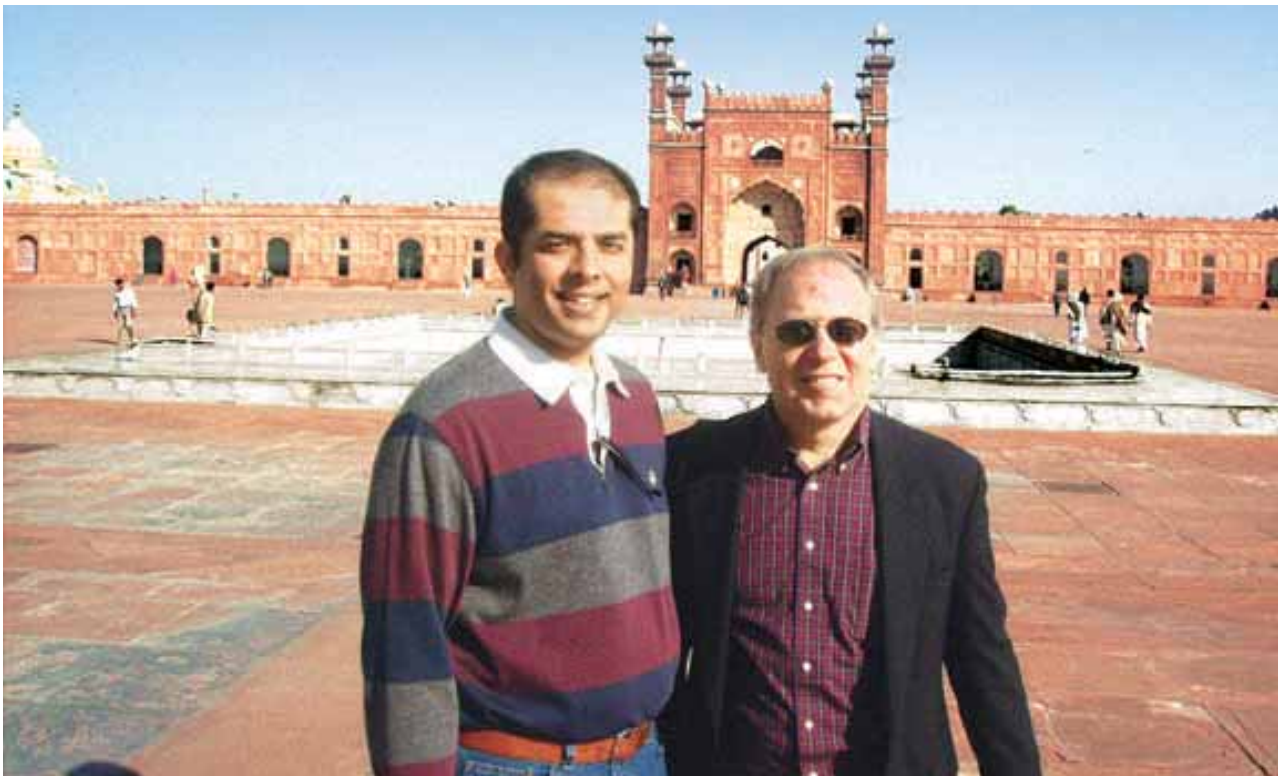
I work as Education Management Specialist and I contribute towards the rebuilding process of earthquake affected areas as we organise and facilitate professional development opportunities in each target district.

As I look back, I feel my career with AKU-IED has contributed immensely to my personal and professional growth, while allowing me the opportunity to serve at local and national levels. My approach towards teaching and my students has undergone a significant change. It is also a source of great satisfaction to find myself contributing to the development of remote and disadvantaged areas where I have worked.

*Zulfiqar Ali Shah, MEd '99*

# Reflections on My Visit to AKU and Pakistan

*Stephen Seeling is the Vice President for Operations for the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG). He visited Pakistan in December 2006 as a guest of Dr Adeel Butt and the Association of Physicians of Pakistani-descent in North America (APPNA). Since his visit to Pakistan and AKU, and even before that, he has been a tremendous resource for information regarding ECFMG, its credentialing process, and J-1 visas that are sponsored by ECFMG. AKU Alumni Association, North American Chapter is grateful to him for his time and efforts in helping our graduates.*



*Dr Adeel Butt shows Mr Stephen Seeling around Badshahi Mosque, Lahore, December 2006*

Beyond the wonderful food and the spectacular sites, it is the students and young physicians I will never forget.

I was invited by Dr Adeel Butt on behalf of the Association of Physicians of Pakistani-descent of North America (APPNA) to participate in a series of seminars for medical students and young physicians at several medical schools in Pakistan. I left Philadelphia for Pakistan on December 14, 2006, excited but unsure of what would come. I knew that I would be speaking at medical schools in Lahore, Karachi, and Islamabad, and had a good sense of what the audiences would want to know. I had done the obligatory research on the geography, politics, and culture of Pakistan. And, of course, I had heard the admonitions to “be safe and be careful.” But I was not prepared for the overwhelming graciousness and hospitality of the people I met during my week long stay.

And of all the people I met, it is the medical students and young physicians who will always stay with me.

I had been in Pakistan for only a few days when Dr Adeel Butt, Dr Piracha (President of APPNA) and myself flew from Lahore to Karachi and visited AKU. A year after the trip, my memories are still vivid: a gorgeous campus, a tour of the very impressive hospital, a meeting with the senior leadership of the medical school, and one lasting impression – a 5:30 PM visit to the medical school library where a number of enterprising AKU students were diligently reviewing preparation materials for USMLE.

There were other memories. Seeing a Philadelphia cheese steak “with Philadelphia cheese” on the menu of the restaurant in my Lahore hotel; driving to the Pakistani-Indian border at dusk to view the choreographed lowering of the Pakistani and Indian flags;

eating at a KFC in Lahore (chicken and fries both decent) staffed by individuals with speaking/hearing disabilities; visiting the Faisal Mosque in Islamabad, which accommodates 100,000 worshippers; attending and being very impressed by a meeting of the Disciplinary Committee of the Pakistani Medical and Dental Council.

But for me, a year after the visit, I still remember the students and their hunger for information about ECFMG and entry into postgraduate training in the United States. I still receive emails from students I met during my visit – questions about USMLE, inquiries about how to get a residency, anxious questions about the process of getting a visa.

The students that I met at AKU and throughout Pakistan look to us for accurate, objective information. They rely on us. That is something we should all pledge never to forget.



International Medical Graduates (IMGs) face a complex scheme of US immigration laws. This article will provide an overview of options available to IMGs who wish to remain in the US after completing their training.

Most IMGs come to the US on J-1 visas for graduate medical training. J-1 visas are sponsored by the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG). Through its certification programme, ECFMG assesses the readiness of IMGs to enter residency or fellowship programmes.

Spouses and children may accompany the J-1 physician to the US on J-2 visas. Unlike most other dependent visas, J-2s entitle their holders to work authorisation. Once a physician and accompanying family members enter the US on the J visas, they are all required to return to their home country for two years before they can obtain an H or L visa, or permanent residency. It is also possible to become subject to this two-year home residence requirement by pursuing research sponsored by US or foreign government agencies or by obtaining training in the US that is included in the State Department's "Skills List". It is important to note that J-1 visitors who subsequently acquire citizenship in another country must still fulfil the requirement in the original country of nationality or last permanent residence that is listed on Form DS-2019.

The simplest solution is to fulfil the requirement by returning to one's country of citizenship or last permanent residence. This may be done in increments and over a span of several years. Depending upon eligibility, one can also postpone the requirement by acquiring an alternative temporary visa such as J-2, O-1, TN, F-1, E-1, E-2 or E-3. But if the long-term goal is to become a permanent resident, then the IMG should consider several waiver options.

Federal agencies and state departments of health collectively known as 'interested government agencies' (IGAs) grant the most common waivers. These waivers include the Conrad State 30 Program; Veterans Administration (VA); Appalachian Regional Commission; Delta Regional Authority; and Department of Health & Human Services (HHS).

Generally, all IGA waiver requests must be filed by an employer and the place of employment must be in a Health Professional Shortage Area; a Medically Underserved Area; or a VA Hospital. The State Departments of Health may grant five of the 30 annual Conrad slots to non-underserved locations. Most States favour issuing waivers to primary care physicians (e.g. internal medicine, family practice, OB/GYN, psychiatry or paediatrics), although some may sponsor sub-specialists. Once the waiver is granted, the physician must work on a full-time basis in the designated underserved area for at least 3 years on H-1B status.

Physicians who are academic researchers may apply for the HHS Research Waiver. The physician must be engaged in research of national priority and interest to the HHS. Accordingly, performing NIH-funded research is important. The IMG must show how s/he is essential to the programme, and the employer must show that no replacement can be found. Alternatively, the physician may file a waiver based on exceptional hardship or fear of persecution. While no employer

sponsorship is required to qualify for a hardship waiver, the IMG must have a qualifying "anchor" relative – a US citizen or permanent resident spouse or child. For the hardship waiver, the IMG must explain how the anchor relative(s) will suffer unusual and/or extreme hardship. The IMG must prove hardship to the anchor relatives if they were to remain in the US without the J-1 physician and also if they were to accompany the J-1 physician to the home country. It is important to explain how a combination of hardships will make the suffering worse than that borne by an average American separated from his/her family. In other words, the degree of hardship must be greater than loneliness, anxiety and altered financial circumstances. For a persecution waiver, the IMG must demonstrate that he or she *would* be subjected to persecution in the home country. This is a higher standard than the "well-founded fear" of persecution within the asylum context.

Both hardship and persecution waivers may be filed at any time. The initial application is filed with the US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). If the USCIS determines that hardship or persecution exists, the State Department will then balance the hardship or persecution against the J-1 programme and policy. The benefit of one of these two waivers over the IGA waivers is that the IMG is not required to complete an additional three-year period of employment. Lastly, it is important to note that a waiver application is the first hurdle to permanent residency. The physician must still apply for an immigrant visa through an employment or family-based petition. For immigrant visa options please visit [www.wolfsdorf.com](http://www.wolfsdorf.com) or contact Naveen at [nbhora@wolfsdorf.com](mailto:nbhora@wolfsdorf.com) or (212) 899-5040.

*Naveen R. Bhora has conducted many seminars for IMGs.*

# AKU Alumni North-East Dinner



An AKU alumni dinner involving alumni residing in the north-eastern US was held on August 11, 2007 in Manhattan. Adeel Butt, Faiz Bhora and Rizwan Khalid helped organise the event; however, most of the credit for this event's success must be given to Hiba Arif and Naveen Bhora for working out all the arrangements that made this a truly memorable event.

The dinner meeting was held at Dervish, a fine Turkish restaurant in NYC. Despite the short notice, about 50 alumni were able to attend. These included alumni in training programmes as well as alumni in faculty positions in New York, Rhode Island, Connecticut,

Pennsylvania, Washington DC and even the UK. The highlight of the attendance was the presence of several AKU students doing electives in the United States.

The event highlights the tremendous enthusiasm for social gatherings such as this and it helps advance one of the most important goals of the Alumni Association; that of mentoring current AKU students and introducing them at an early stage to the Alumni Association, an organisation we hope they will be a part of for the rest of their lives.

*Faiz Bhora, MBBS '92 and Adeel A. Butt, MBBS '90*

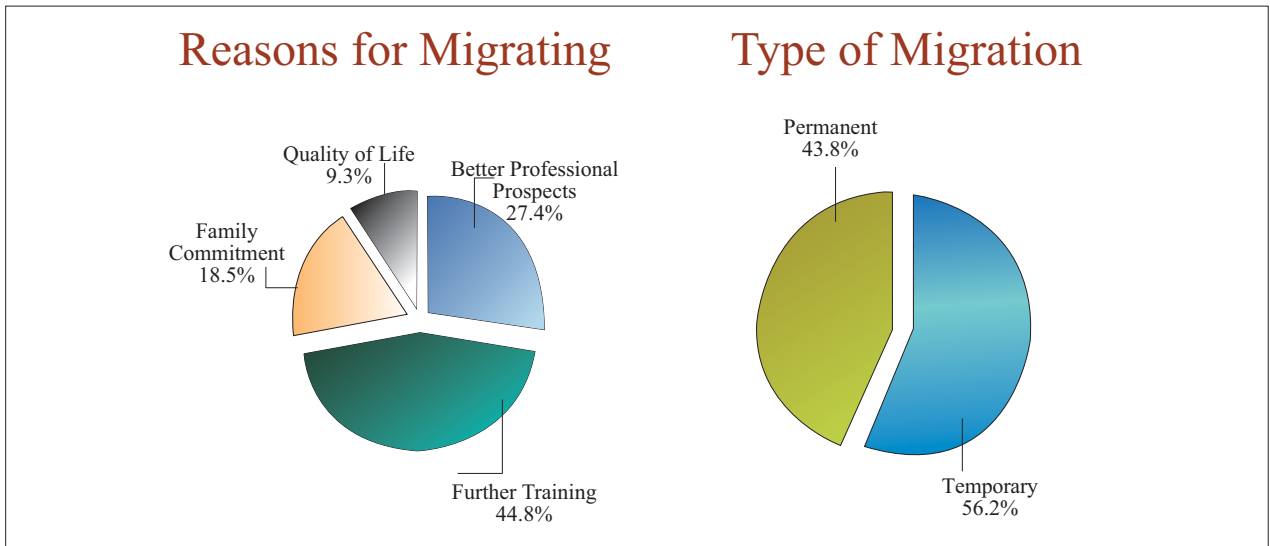
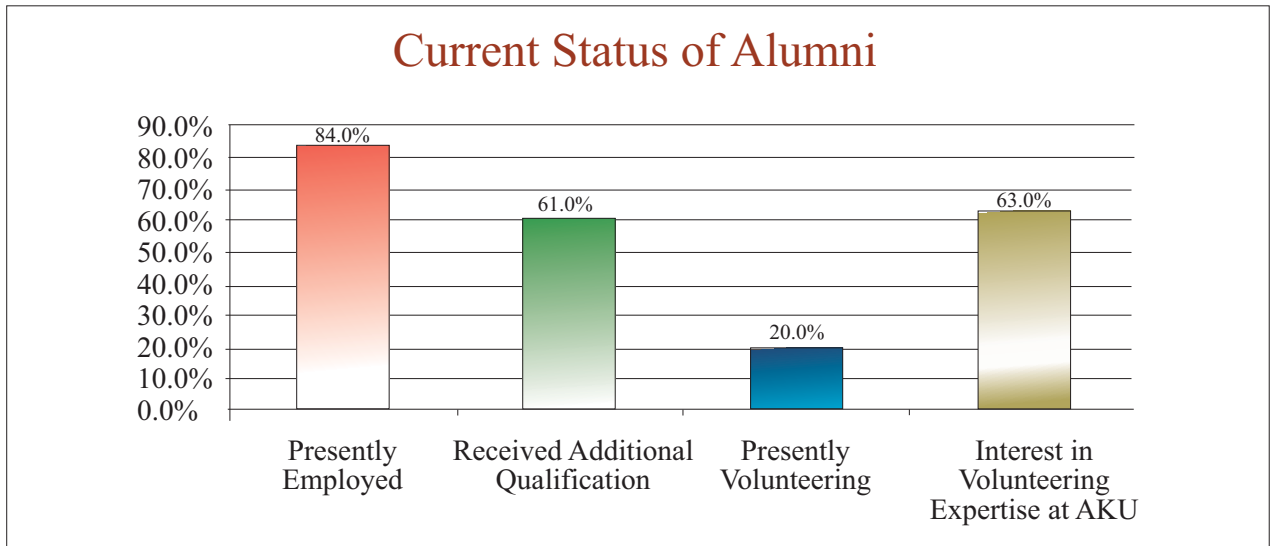
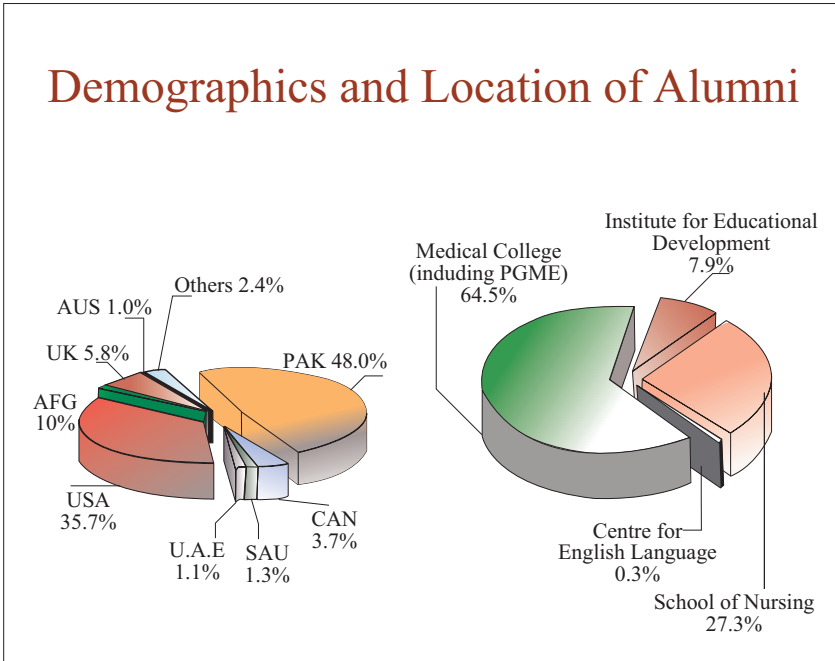


# What Alumni Want

Many of you may have recently filled out a web-based survey conducted by the University. The purpose of the survey was to get the latest alumni contact and career information, to invite feedback regarding their AKU experience, to provide alumni with an opportunity to list their achievements, postgraduation, and to inquire as to how they would like their relationship with their alma mater to develop further.

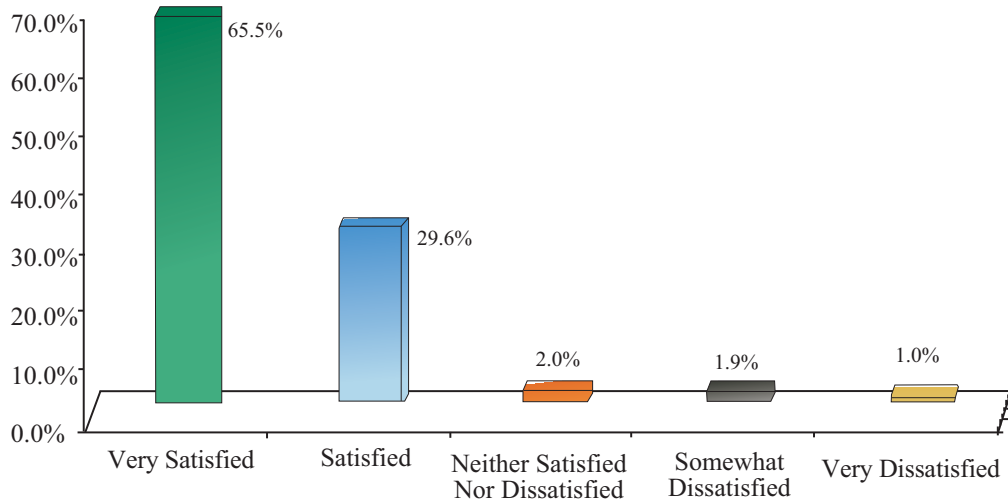
A total of 965 alumni responses were recorded during the survey.

Below are the highlights from the survey results.

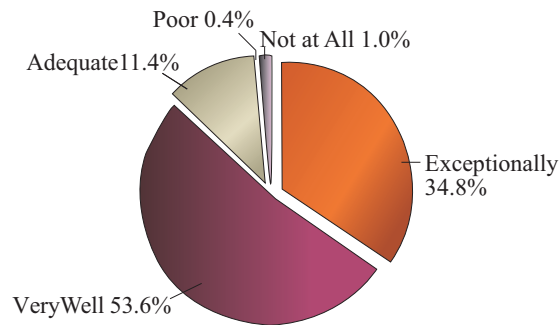




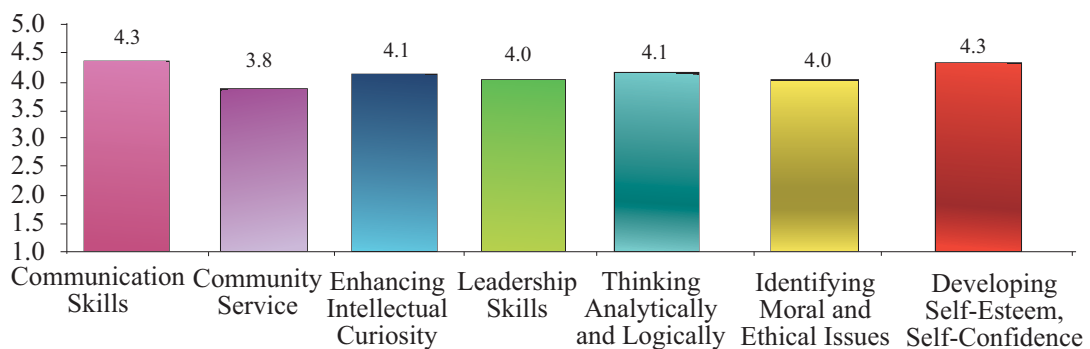
## Level of Satisfaction with AKU Experience



## How Well Did AKU Prepare You for Further Training/Work?

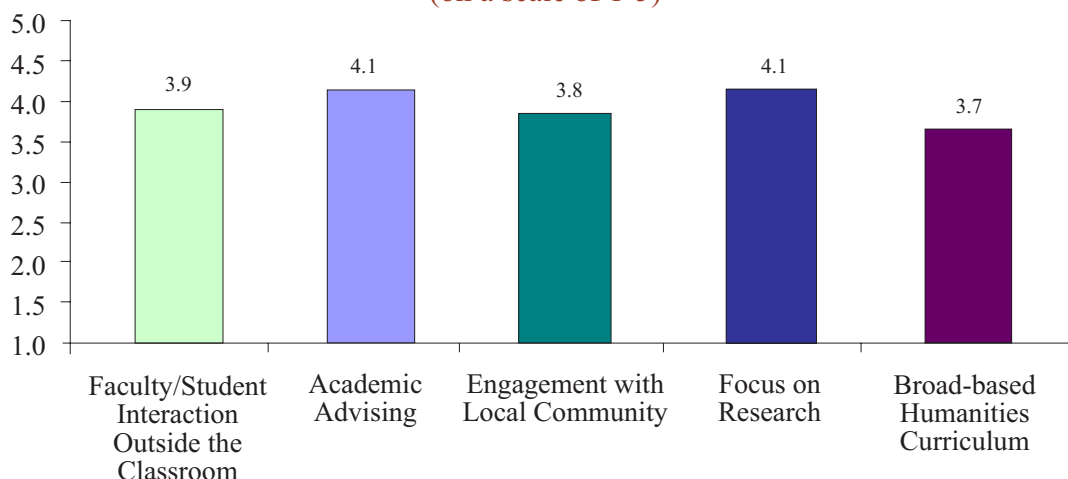


## Contribution of AKU Education to Knowledge, Skills and Personal Development (on a scale of 1-5)



## Areas to be Focused on in Future

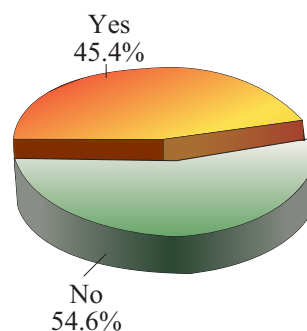
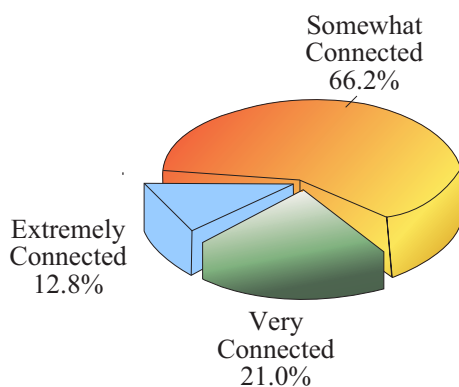
(on a scale of 1-5)



## Alumni Connection and Participation

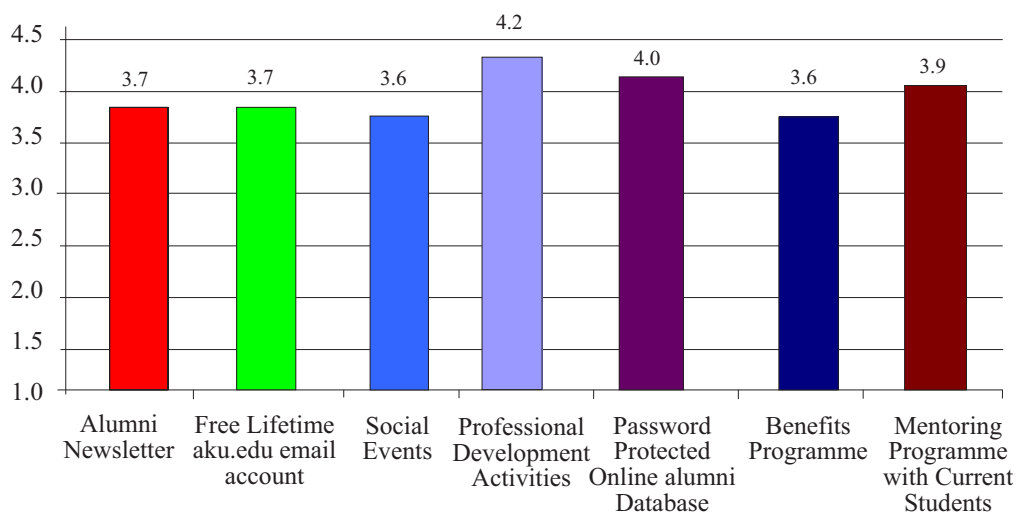
Sense of Connection with AKU

Attended AKU Events after Graduating  
(Reunions/Special Lectures, etc)



## Preferred Programmes and Services

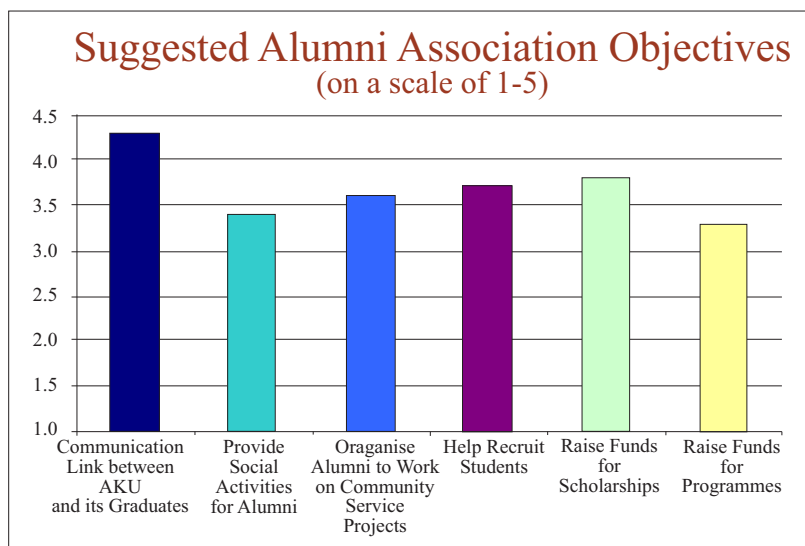
(on a scale of 1-5)



## Summary of Survey Findings

AKU alumni responded to the survey from 19 countries spread over five continents, the majority of whom were from Pakistan (48%) and United States (35.7%). The Medical College alumni were responsible for 65% of all responses, the School of Nursing alumni added a further 27%, while the Institute for Educational Development alumni contributed almost 8% to the survey response.

Alumni were quite pleased with their overall AKU experience with over 95% reporting “Very Satisfied” or “Satisfied”. In terms of future focus, alumni felt that “Focusing on Research” and “Academic Advising” were most important to them, followed by “Faculty/Student Interaction outside the Classroom”, “Engagement with Local Community”, and “Broad-based Humanities Curriculum”.



When asked how connected alumni presently feel with the University, 12.8% felt “Extremely Connected”, 21% felt “Very Connected”, while 66.2% felt only “Somewhat Connected”. Less than half of alumni responding (45.4%) reported ever attending a reunion or any other University event after graduating. Over all, 93.5% of alumni requested either a printed or electronic version of AKU Newsletter and the Alumni Newsletter while 82.9% asked

to receive email notification of Special Lectures, Seminars and Symposia organised at AKU’s campuses.

The alumni have spoken. While an overwhelming majority felt that AKU has trained them well, they are not very well connected and would like to see more activity on the alumni front. They would like to stay connected, and as per the wishes of the majority, this magazine is an attempt to bring the alumni family closer together.

Aga Khan University Medical College  
Welcomes its Alumni to

## 25th Anniversary Celebrations and Grand Alumni Reunion

- December 18, 2008 ! **AKU-MC – Its Journey into the 21st Century**  
Seminar focusing on advancing education, research and health care at AKU  
(For details and suggestions: [perwaiz.iqbal@aku.edu](mailto:perwaiz.iqbal@aku.edu))
- December 19, 2008 **Health Sciences Research Assembly**  
Poster Display (AKU will assist with production of posters)  
Documentary evidence of participation will be provided  
Deans Forum; discussion panel including former Medical College Deans  
(For more information: [masim.beg@aku.edu](mailto:masim.beg@aku.edu))
- December 20, 2008 **Medical College Beach Party**  
(For more information: [nadir.syed@aku.edu](mailto:nadir.syed@aku.edu))

**with more events being planned!**

*Your suggestions are welcome at [alumni@aku.edu](mailto:alumni@aku.edu)*



AKU-IED alumni reunion was held on Friday, December 7, 2007. The alumni organising committee at AKU-IED organised the reunion into four concurrent sessions:

1. Mini Maths
2. Mela
3. Educating for Active Citizenship in your Schools/Institutions, and
4. Creating a Digital Story and Life After AKU-IED.

In addition, two selected videos related to His Highness' important contributions were shown to alumni with the purpose of updating them with His Highness' vision of the Aga Khan Development Network.

One of the significant elements of the reunion was the election of new AKU-IED alumni representatives. Through a very transparent process, the following alumni representatives have been elected for two years from December 2007 to November 2009:

- Member, Central Executive Committee, AKU Alumni Association:  
Muhammad Nadim Farooqui  
MEd '99  
Instructor, AKU-IED!!!!

- Members, AKU-IED Unit Working Committee  
Rakhshinda Meher!!  
MEd '95!!  
Instructor, AKU-IED

Zakia Elahi !!!  
MEd '07 !!  
Lecturer, Elementary College of Education, F.B. Area, Karachi

Manzoor Naz Vindhani!!  
ADISM '01!!!  
Premier Public School,  
Sharifabad, F.B.Area, Karachi

Wahid Yar Khan!!  
ADISM '02 Ex. DOE Sec. and  
Higher Sec.(Male), Karachi

Towards the end of the unit-level activities, Ms Rana Hussain,  
Acting Director, AKU-IED,

addressed the alumni gathering and highlighted the purpose of the reunion and also shared a message from Dr Muhammad Memon, Director, AKU-IED. Over tea and refreshments, there was a gallery tour of alumni photographs, messages from out-of-town alumni, display of alumni contributions in their fields, and a report on the results of the first electronic survey of AKU alumni. Thus concluded AKU-IED session of the Alumni Reunion, after which alumni left for the Stadium Road campus for a joint alumni gathering.

During the joint evening session, AKU-IED alumni played an active role with Ms Sultana Ali Norozi delivering the opening remarks, and Ms Tasneem Shabbar sharing her post MEd experiences.

Alumni Reunion 2007, in addition to providing the ideal opportunity for alumni to meet old friends and colleagues, also served an important purpose with alumni and the University renewing their important bond.

*Muhammad Nadim Farooqui,  
MEd '99*



# Alumni Reunion 2007



*Dr Mumtaz Khan, MBBS '92, hosting the Joint Session*



*Dr Umer Darr, MBBS '92, asks a question during Medical College Session*



*Alumni attending the Joint Session at AKU Auditorium*



*AKU-SON alumni at Alumni Reunion 2007 dinner*



*Nursing alumni at AKU-SON Session*

# Alumni Reunion 2007



*Q&A Panel at the Joint Session*



*Mr Justice Sarmad J. Osmany, Member, AKU Board of Trustees, and Mr Firoz Rasul, President, Aga Khan University, sharing a lighter moment with alumni, Dr Rozina Karmaliani and Ms Fauzia Pesnani over dinner*

# MBBS Class of 1997 Reunion



The Class of 1997 held a ten year reunion in Chicago, IL on the weekend of August 10, 2007. Of the 58 graduates from the class, there were 29 alumni present at the reunion. With spouses and children, there were well in excess of 80 people present. The reunion was highlighted by a lakeside family picnic and a

formal dinner reception with a slide show. The guests were all staying at the same hotel, allowing for plenty of time for friends to catch up with each other in smaller groups as well. Groups of alumni were found to be shooting the breeze at all hours of night throughout the weekend in the hotel lobby.

All alumni received a keepsake bookmark to commemorate the occasion, as well as a yearbook with profiles and pictures, which included input from many alumni who were unable to personally attend the event. Keepsake quilts were also sold, and the proceeds gifted towards books for AKU Library. We also pledged to stay connected as a cohesive body, and followed through on that resolution by establishing a class database and starting class forums on Facebook and Yahoo! groups.

Overall, the decade reunion for the Class of 1997 was a resounding success, and has us all waiting eagerly for the next gathering in ten or even five years' time.

## “That Fleeting Thought is Worth Pursuing”

I have so many fleeting thoughts. In fact, I must dig out that ‘fleeting thoughts’ book I bought in which to write them down – a rich, dark leather bound volume to keep for reflections in my old age. At the moment, I’m doing well if I manage to jot them down on scraps of paper or in various notebooks. I am usually impressed, when I come across one of these notes months, or years later, that I had such a good idea, and maybe a little guilty that so much time has passed, and I have not got around to doing anything about it, even forgotten what I had intended. A flurry of inspiration and activity fills me with the desire to fulfill the idea, and then life, work, family take over and the brilliant idea is forgotten again.

And so to my recent trip to Karachi and AKU campus. I wander around, remembering when the campus opened in 1985 and we were taller than the young trees now towering above me. I feel like a stranger at first, I don’t know any of the faces; and then I meet some faculty members who had taught me, the student affairs staff who looked after us, the weather beaten and aged face of one of the guards

who moved us on when we loitered where we shouldn’t have, and the sense of belonging is suddenly overpowering. The sense of ownership, and commitment to the aims and philosophy of the university re-ignite, and I feel a surge of enthusiasm to live up to, and exceed, the best it nurtured in me.

The notice boards are a testament to the flourishing student life. There is so much going on! I make a mental note of my fleeting thoughts – to set up a fund to support a student in need, to donate a journal subscription, or to set up a travel fund for AKU women’s sports teams. When I first saw the sports facilities, the pool, the sports hall, I was filled with pride. And envy – I wish I’d had such facilities in my day.

AKU has gone on to achieve so many of the things we knew it aimed for, back when the campus opened in 1985. Not just in one country or faculty, but many countries and many faculties. But much still remains to be done.

Sometimes things come together when we work with people who



are similarly motivated and supportive – everyone does their bit, and hey presto! Success! And so it is with the future aims of AKU, a remarkable amount achieved, and still greater things to strive for. What better team to support it than us, AKU alumni, who have spread all over the world – thinkers, leaders and team players in our own fields, armed with ability, talents, and most importantly, a shared vision. Whether we contribute time, expertise, financial support or networking, AKU alumni can go with AKU on its journey into the future.

Which takes me back to my opening line – those fleeting thoughts. Worth pursuing.

*Rahila Zakir, MBBS '90*



That is the question that I believe all Pakistanis living abroad ask themselves and why not. The answer is not always in the affirmative and that is ok. However, to go through the exercise even if only in your head is worth the effort.

The path to any major life decision usually can take one of two approaches; either plan things to a tee and then embark on your chosen journey or throw caution to the wind, jump head-long first, burn-your-boats and let the chips fall where they may. I, for one, chose the latter. When you have limited options, you tend to make the one you have got, work for you.

With this simple plan I moved back to Pakistan three years ago. To make matters more interesting, when I approached AKUH for a position in cardiac surgery, I was encouraged to explore the possibility of working at a hospital called Tabba Heart Institute, a hospital that was a year away from opening its doors to patients. Despite the prospect of being clinically dormant for almost a year, I felt that the Institute was the best option for me. Since I got involved in the pre-clinical phases of planning, construction, procurement, recruitment, training and implementation – the challenges were tremendous.

I don't think that this would have been a success story had I been on my own and that is where AKU grapevine gets the credit of getting Bashir Hanif '91 and I together to get this new institution off the ground. AKU Alumni Association can make this bond even stronger

and bridge the transition for future repatriates.

I think that all AKU graduates need to know that moving back to Pakistan is a viable option. There are prospects outside AKUH and indeed it is unreasonable to expect your alma mater to absorb all its graduates.

*Umer Darr, MBBS '92.  
Chief of Cardiothoracic Surgery  
Tabba Heart Institute, Karachi  
This article was written before the  
events of December 2007*

## Research or No Research: That is the Question!



Every year I receive numerous inquiries from current AKU students and recent graduates regarding their desire to spend time in a basic sciences research laboratory setting. Most commonly, I encounter situations where the motivation behind seeking a research opportunity is solely to enhance one's CV from the perspective of presenting a more competitive residency application. I would like to stress that, in my opinion, there is nothing wrong with that – indeed that was the motivation behind my own initial foray into science. Nevertheless, it is important to emphasise that basic science is a very serious discipline requiring immense dedication and patience. As such, it is essential for students and junior alumni to approach such opportunities with a measure of introspection as it is both denigrating and disingenuous to ascribe to oneself an interest in scientific research that upon simple probing clearly turns out to be false. Soon after my transition into the world of basic

research, I discovered that I had a passion for scientific inquiry and investigation. This degree of realisation, of course, can only materialise once one has had an opportunity to be part of an active research enterprise and, as such, I am happy to counsel people who approach me towards available opportunities with a cautionary note that if they do end up getting bitten by the “research” bug, their residency plans may fade into distant memory.

For those who reach the conclusion that their career path lies in the laboratory and not the clinic, the academic maze can seem confusing and overwhelming.

However, the myth that should be dispelled is that a PhD is necessary for pursuing a successful career as an academic scientist. While it is true that pursuing education towards a doctorate is a very positive endeavour as it allows for formal schooling in the proper methodology of scientific inquiry, there are many examples of top-calibre physician-scientists who did not obtain a PhD.

Grant funding applications, faculty (and tenure) appointments, as well as general recognition by scientific peers is based upon objective criteria pertaining to the contribution of your work to the field. While having a PhD can make it easier to land that first postdoctoral research fellowship, at the end of the day it is your publications and the impact that they have on the work of other scientists that will determine your standing and success. By far the most important requirement for pursuing a scientific career is to find a good mentor who has a track-record of training successful scientists and who can take you under his or her wing as you gain the necessary experience and insight to launch yourself towards an independent scientific career.

*Moneeb Ehtesham, MBBS '99  
Asst. Professor of Neurological  
Surgery, Vanderbilt University*





We are delighted to share with you news that has been sent to us from our alumni from around the world. This section will be a permanent feature of all future editions of the newsletter and magazine. We encourage you to share news about yourselves, particularly your personal and professional accomplishments. All contributions should be sent to [fybhora@aol.com](mailto:fybhora@aol.com). Please include your full name, year of graduation and contact information.

*Faiz Bhora, MBBS '92  
Editor, AKU-NAMA*

## 1988

**Rabia Bhatti (Pirzada)** writes, "I am a general surgeon, with special interest in breast surgery and am working in a private group setting in Chicago, IL. I was recently featured for breast cancer awareness month on TV WGN Channel 9, ABC Channel 7 and Radio WLIT 93.9 FM. I am the Director of Breast Center at Our Lady of Resurrection Hospital Chicago. I have two kids, 12 and 7, and live in Glenview, IL (a suburb of Chicago). You can see one of my TV segments on YouTube."

**Omar Tirmizi** is working in private practice in Beverly Hills, California, and specialises in IM/PULM/CCM and Sleep. He is an Assistant Clinical Professor at UCLA and is Chief of Pulmonology at Century City Hospital. He is also Chairman of

Critical Care at Brotman Medical Center. He is married to Rozmin (AKU-SON alumna) and they have two children.

## 1989

**Saira Yusoof**, now known as **Saira Ahsan**, finished her paediatric residency in 1994 and has been working in rural Virginia since then. She is married to Zafar who is a psychiatrist and they have two boys Zain and Belal aged 10 and 6 years respectively.

**Arif R. Sarwari** is an Associate Professor, Section of Infectious Diseases and an Associate Program Director, Internal Medicine Residency Program at West Virginia University, Morgantown. He is married and has two children.

**Tahseen Mozaffar**, trained as neurologist with specialisation in Neuromuscular Disorders from Washington University in St. Louis. He has also served as faculty in Neurology and Pathology at AKU from 1997-2000 and since 2000 has been on full-time faculty at University of California, Irvine. Tahseen is currently an Associate Professor in Neurology and Director of the Neuromuscular programme within the Department of Neurology and the Director of the UC Irvine-MDA ALS and Neuromuscular Center. He has published over two dozen original articles, including articles in the New England Journal of Medicine and Lancet Neurology. Tahseen is married to Farah Haque Mozaffar since 1995 and they have two children, Meyhad (12 years) and Izza (9 years).

## 1990

**Mohammad Intakhab Paracha** is in private practice in Oklahoma City. He sub-specialises in Pulmonary, Critical Care and Sleep Medicine. He is married and has three children.

**Hasan B. Alam** is an Associate

Professor of Surgery at the Harvard Medical School (plus Associate Professor at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, Bethesda, MD). He is also Director of Research in the Division of Trauma, Emergency Surgery and Surgical Critical Care, Massachusetts General Hospital, and Program Director for the Surgical Critical Care Fellowship at the MGH. He is married and has two daughters.

## 1991

**Gulzar Merchant** (formerly known as **Gulzar Bhatia**) is married and living in South Carolina. She has two kids. She is a Rheumatologist and her current position is Assistant Professor at Greenville Hospital System, University Medical Center.

## 1992

**Mumtaz Jamshed Khan** is Head of Otolaryngology Head and Neck Surgery Section, Associate Professor at Aga Khan University, Karachi. He is married to **Sadaf Khan**. Sadaf trained in General Surgery, Colon and Rectal Surgery in the US. She is an Assistant Professor, Department of Surgery at Aga Khan University. She commented, "At 20, I planned to retire at 40. It ain't gonna happen!" They have three children: Ariella J Khan, 9, Aurhan J Khan, 7, and Safwan J Khan, 4. They moved back to Karachi in May 2006, which Mumtaz wrote is "a decision of the heart and not of the mind".

**Saira Asadullah** trained in Internal Medicine and sub-specialised in Geriatric Medicine. She is currently working at Barnes Jewish Saint Peters Hospital in Saint Peters, Missouri. She is married to **Faisal Ahmed**, who is also trained in Internal Medicine. Faisal is a Medical Director at Advance Correctional Health Care Company. They have three

children: Fareeha 9 years old, Zeeshan 6 years old, and Zaara 9 months old.

**Sohail Ahmed Usman** recently finished his Nephrology fellowship from Indiana University and joined a group at Methodist Hospital in Indianapolis. He is married and has two daughters, Zubia 7 and Leena 4.

**Faiz Bhora** is a Thoracic Surgeon at St. Luke's-Roosevelt Hospital Center in New York City. He is an Assistant Professor of Clinical Surgery at Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons. Faiz did a general surgery residency at George Washington University Medical Center and cardiothoracic residency and fellowships at UCLA and the University of Pennsylvania. Faiz is married to Naveen who is an immigration attorney. They recently met up with **Mubina Gaffar** and her husband Najeeb Sherwani, **Nadeem Haq** and his wife Ayesha, **Monira Kundi** (formerly Hamid) and her husband **Azam Kundi**. Faiz, **Adeel Butt** and **Hiba Arif** organised an AKU alumni reunion in New York last August, which was attended by well over 40 alumni.

**Adnan Siddiqui**, is an Assistant Professor of Neurosurgery and Radiology at University at Buffalo, New York. Adnan did a PhD in Neuroscience from University of Rochester, New York, then a Residency in Neurosurgery at Upstate Medical University in Syracuse, New York, followed by a Fellowship in Neurovascular surgery, Interventional Neuroradiology and Neurocritical Care from Thomas Jefferson University in Philadelphia, PA. Adnan has been happily married for nine years to Josephine and their children are Fatima Francesca 8 years, Mohamed Giovanni 6 years and Hasan Felice 6 weeks.

## 1993

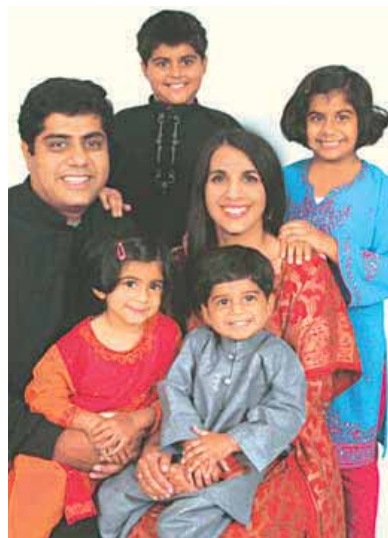
**Imran N. Chaudhary** is an Assistant Professor of Medicine



and Cardiology at the University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry. He lives in Rochester, NY with wife Faiza and two daughters, Sahar and Sarah.

## Adnan Bhutta and Iram

**Bakhtawar** are married and live in Little Rock, Arkansas with their beautiful kids. Adnan is a Paediatric Intensivist. His current positions are Assistant Professor of Paediatrics at the University of



Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS), and Director of the CVICU at Arkansas Children's Hospital. Iram is a Pulmonologist and Intensivist. She also has a Master's degree in Public Health. She is currently the Section Chief of the Tuberculosis Program-Arkansas Department of Health and an Assistant Professor of Medicine at UAMS.

**Maliha Zahid** wrote, "Just writing to give some news about myself and **Asif Khalid**, both (Class of 1993). We got married in May 1995 and have been married 12.5 years. We have two boys aged 9 and 6 years, Emmad and Aman. Asif is an academic gastroenterologist, Assistant

Professor of Medicine at the University of Pittsburgh with expertise in EUS, and is the Chief of GI division at the VA. He just published the American Gastroenterology Association's guidelines for management of pancreatic cysts. I am a non-invasive cardiologist and work in part-time private practice. The rest of the time I am working on my PhD in human genetics in the Department of Molecular Genetics and Biochemistry at the University of Pittsburgh".

**Khaver Kirmani** finished a Neonatology Fellowship from Women and Children's Hospital of Buffalo, NY. He recently joined a Neonatal group in private practice in Phoenix, AZ. He married Tazeen in 2000 and they have a three-year-old daughter named Shanze.

## 1994

**Asad Ansari** and **Adeela Alizai** (class of '95) are married and have three daughters. Asad is currently finishing a paediatric pulmonary fellowship at University of Alabama at Birmingham.

**Shema Ahmad** is an Endocrinologist and is married to an Internist named Tauqeer Yousuf. Both of them are currently working in a private hospital in Jackson, Mississippi. They have two boys named Zaed, 9, and Hasan, 4.

**Khalid Matin** writes, "ASAK classmates and alumni. I am currently a medical oncologist in private practice in Alabama. I am happily married and have two kids who keep us entertained and busy. I had the pleasure of attending the recent AKU convocation and got goose bumps when the graduates read the oath. Hope you all are doing well, keep in touch."

## 1995

**Adeela M. Alizai** married **Asad Ansari** (Class of 1994) in March of 2002. They have three young

daughters named Marium, Aida and Hala. Adeela is augmenting her neurology and neuro-ophthalmology training with an ophthalmology residency at Temple University in Philadelphia.

**Jazibeh Qureshi** is a Consultant and Rheumatologist Lecturer at AKU. She is married to Shoab Mastoor and has two sons, Yusuf, 6, and Hassaan, 5.

**Jawad F. Kirmani** is presently working in the capacity of Director of Interventional Stroke, and Neurocritical Care Unit at UMDNJ in Newark, NJ. His wife's name is Sara and they have 2 kids, Ranya, 5, and Ayman, 2.

## 1996

**Yousha Mirza** is an Assistant Professor of Psychiatry at Wayne State University School of Medicine and a Child & Adolescent Psychiatrist at the Children's Hospital of Michigan. He is married to **Farah Khan** (class of 2000) and they have a two-and-a-half year old son named Zohayr. They live in Windsor, Canada, and both Yousha and his wife commute across the border to work at Children's Hospital. Yousha is exploring working as a Child Psychiatrist in Canada like his older brother **Rida** (Class of 1993).

**Tamseel Awan** is married and has three daughters. After working in IT for a few years after graduation, he restarted his training and is now a Family Physician in the UK.

**Syed Nasim Ahmed** is an Invasive Cardiologist in a multi-specialty group in Modesto, California. He is married and has one daughter and two sons.

## 1997

**Kishwar Jamal** (formerly **Kishwar Sultana Brohi**) sends her salaams to everyone and writes, "After graduating, I completed my internship at AKU followed by a family medicine

residency. I have cleared both my FCPS and MRCP (int'l) exams and will soon be joining AKU part time as a lecturer and student health physician. Dr Shahina Abedine if you all remember is retiring and I will be coming in her place. I live in Karachi with my husband and two children, a boy and a girl and they keep me very busy and happy."

**Saira Nizami Khawaja** completed an internship and general surgery residency at AKU in 2004. She and her husband Kamran Mohiuddin Khawaja moved to southwest Wales in August 2005. She is presently specialising in breast surgery. Kamran graduated from Dow Medical College and also completed his general surgery residency from AKU in 2003. He is specialising in vascular surgery.

**Saima Perwaiz Iqbal** is living in Islamabad and working at Shifa College of Medicine as Assistant Professor of Community Medicine. She is also a mother of two sons, Ahad aged 6 and Aman aged 1•.

## 1998

**Asif Sharfuddin** is an Assistant Professor of Clinical Medicine Transplant Nephrology at Indiana University School of Medicine in Indianapolis, IN. He is married to **Hala Fatima** who is an Assistant Professor of Clinical Medicine, Division of Gastroenterology Indiana University School of Medicine. They have two children: Zoha Fatima Aziz age 4• years, and Zayaan Asif Aziz, age 4 months.

**Shoab Sheikh** specialises in Hand/Microvascular/General Surgery. He is married and has two children. They reside in Arizona.

**Faizah Bhatti** is married and has two children, Daniyal and Ayaan.

She is currently a fellow in Neonatology at Penn State University.

**Fatima Chaudhri** is currently doing part time medicine work and is in the process of establishing a franchised business. Her husband is currently doing a PhD at the University of Warwick and they live in a little village just outside of Coventry in the UK.

**Atika Faiz** is happily married to Wirasat Hasnain (Dow class of 1998). She is the mother of a three-year-old named Moosa. She lives in Boston and is doing clinical research at St. Elizabeth's Hospital. She has applied for internal medicine residency this year. She writes, "I still love to eat (especially *meetha*) and still hate to cook! I am having a lot of fun but miss Pakistan...Salam to all."

## 1999

**Zahid Afridi** writes, "Working as an outpatient-only family physician in Beaverton, Oregon. Fulfilled my J-1 waiver obligation in September this year (yeah)."

**Babar S. Hasan** is currently doing a paediatric cardiology fellowship at Children's Hospital Boston, Harvard Medical School. Babar has an 18-month-old daughter named Zara Hasan.

**Talha Malik** is doing internal medicine waiver in Union Springs, Alabama. Talha is married.

**Maryam Naim** completed her paediatric critical care fellowship and is now a fellow in Paediatric Cardiac Intensive Care, Department of Anaesthesiology

## 2000

**Yasmin Luni** wrote, "It is very nice to know that there is an AKU alumni group in Europe as well. I have completed my OB/GYN training in AKU and I am currently working in the UK."

**Farah Khan** is married to **Yousha**

**Mirza** (Class of 1996). They have a two-and-a-half year old son Zohayr and live in Windsor, Canada. Both Farah and Yousha commute across the border to work at Children's Hospital.

**M. Adil Khan**, ST2 Plastic Surgery, Chelsea & Westminster Hospital in London.



**Kamran Javaid** is a PGY-2 Internal Medicine Resident at Weiss Memorial Hospital, University of Chicago. Kamran is selected to be the Chief Resident (June 2009). He is married and living in Chicago, IL.

**Ayesha Rashid** is currently in her second year of an Infectious Diseases Fellowship at the University of Minnesota. Her professional milestones include research investigating



the effect of co-infection and cervicovaginal fluid on HIV-1 infection in immortalised vaginal epithelial cells (bench research). In terms of personal news, she is married to Shahid Aziz, and has a two-and-a-half-year-old daughter named Safiyyah Aziz. They are expecting their second child in 2008. They live in Apple Valley, MN.

## 2002

**Shakir Ejaz** is a first year Pulmonary Critical Care fellow at University of Minnesota. He is married to **Sameea Sadiq** (Class of 2004).

**Mohammad Zeeshan Qamar** is currently doing a fellowship in Nephrology at the University of Pittsburgh. He got married in 2004 and has a daughter named Zaynah, who is now two years old. He notes that there are quite a few AKU alumni in Pittsburgh although the numbers have gone down compared to last year. He is hoping to return to Pakistan within the next three to four years.

## 2004

**Sameea Sadiq** is currently a PGYII internal medicine resident at University of Minnesota. She is applying for a nephrology fellowship for 2009. She is married to **Shakir Ejaz**, (Class of 2002).

**Muhammad Umar Jawad** wrote, "Hello, this is OJ, currently working at UMiami as a postdoc in the department of Orthopaedics. Other than that, everything else is pretty much the same as it was during my time at AKU."

## 2005

**Yureeda Qazi** has taken her "Fight For Sight" Postdoctoral Research Fellowship grant at the

John A. Moran Eye Center, University of Utah, Salt Lake City.

**Zarrish Khan** sent the following update on the class of 2005, "The best grad, **Sameen**, is matching this year. **Moiz** got engaged and is matching this year. **Asif Anwarali** is resident in West Virginia University. **IM** is now engaged to his cousin in Alabama. (Editor's note: Only in Alabama!) **Madiha Mustafa** has been blessed with a daughter and **Saba Mansoor** with a son.

**Maria Hussain** and **Amna Zaki** are both married now and are both doing residencies in Canada in Psychiatry and Emergency Medicine. **Sarosh**, **Fariha Ahsan**, **Aimen** recently got married.



**Mehru (unnisa)** finished her MPH in Australia and also got engaged. **Zarrish** (me) is doing internship in Surgery at UT Southwestern and that's the only thing going on in my life these days :)

Older updates: **Ayesha Nasrullah**, **Ayesha Sajid**, **Umara Ali**, **Uzer Sherdil**, **Rashid** and **Maleeha**, **Danish** and **Sumbul** got married.

## 2006

**Saad Siddiqui** is studying for ECFMG Certification to catch the match.

**Wajiha Javed** is currently studying for her US exams. She did an internship at Aga Khan University this year and is aiming for the match 2008-9.

# The 2007 Match Result for Medical College Alumni

Name	Class	Programme	Category	Place	Location
Mirwat Ghareeb	2002	<i>Ophthalmology</i>	Categorical		
Azam Jan	2002	<i>General Surgery</i>	Categorical	West Virginia University	Morgantown, West Virginia
Faiq Amin	2002	<i>General Surgery</i>	Preliminary	University of Pennsylvania	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Humayun Bakhtawar	2003	<i>General Surgery</i>	Categorical	West Virginia University	Morgantown, West Virginia
Ali Rana	2003	<i>General Surgery</i>	Preliminary	University of New Mexico	Albuquerque, New Mexico
Ali Safdar	2003	<i>Internal Medicine</i>	Categorical	University of Alabama	Birmingham, Alabama
Sohaib Aleem	2003	<i>Internal Medicine Preventive</i>	Categorical	SUNY Buffalo	Buffalo, New York
Syed Asad Ali	2003	<i>Internal Medicine</i>	Categorical	Louisiana State University	Shreveport, Louisiana
Naureen Munawar	2003	<i>Family Medicine</i>	Categorical	University of North Dakota	
Imad Hussain	2004	<i>Internal Medicine</i>	Categorical	Emory University	Atlanta, Georgia
Omer Aslam	2004	<i>Psychiatry</i>	Categorical	Duke University	Durham, North Carolina
Erum Azhar	2004	<i>OBGYN</i>	Categorical	Maimonides Hospital	New York
Ahsan Javed	2004	<i>General Surgery</i>	Preliminary	University of Maryland	Baltimore, Maryland
Javairiah Fatima	2004	<i>General Surgery</i>	Preliminary	Mayo Clinic	Rochester, Minnesota
Ali Kazmi	2004	<i>Internal Medicine</i>	Categorical	University of Texas Medical School At Houston	Houston, Texas
Kiran Nawaz	2004	<i>Internal Medicine</i>	Categorical	University of Texas Medical School At Houston	Houston, Texas
Fizza Naqvi	2004	<i>Internal Medicine</i>	Categorical	University of Cincinnati College of Medicine	Cincinnati, Ohio
Muneeb Puri	2004	<i>Internal Medicine</i>	Categorical	William Beaumont Hospital	Royal Oak, Michigan
Atif Jadoon	2004	<i>Internal Medicine</i>	Categorical	Louisiana State University	Shreveport, Louisiana
Shafia Khubaib	2004	<i>Paediatrics</i>	Categorical	University of Illinois	Chicago, Illinois
Salman Bin Ayub	2004	<i>Pathology</i>	Categorical	Danbury Hospital	Danbury, Connecticut
Aimen Usmani	2005	<i>Internal Medicine</i>	Categorical	William Beaumont Hospital	Royal Oak, Michigan
Sumera Ahmad	2005	<i>Internal Medicine</i>	Categorical	Caritas St. Elizabeth's Medical Center	Boston, Massachusetts
Hussain Mahmud	2005	<i>Internal Medicine</i>	Categorical	University of Pittsburgh Medical Centre ISP	Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
Aliyah Sadaf	2005	<i>Internal Medicine</i>	Categorical	University of Minnesota	Minneapolis, Minnesota
Ilyas Achakzai	2005	<i>Internal Medicine</i>	Categorical	SUNY Buffalo	Buffalo, New York
Aaref Badshah	2005	<i>Internal Medicine</i>	Categorical	St. Joseph Mercy Oakland Hospital	Pontiac, Michigan

# Match Result 2007

Name	Class	Programme	Category	Place	Location
Zarrish Saeed Khan	2005	<i>General Surgery</i>	Categorical	University of Texas Southwestern Medical Centre	Dallas, Texas
Fatima Zaheer	2005	<i>General Surgery</i>	Categorical	West Virginia University	Morgantown, West Virginia
Muhammad Ali Khan	2005	<i>General Surgery</i>	Preliminary	Mayo Clinic	Rochester, Minnesota
Romana Nabi	2005	<i>General Surgery</i>	Preliminary	Mayo Clinic	Rochester, Minnesota
Murtaza Shakir	2005	<i>General Surgery</i>	Preliminary	University of New Mexico	Albuquerque, New Mexico
Uzer Sherdil Khan	2005	<i>General Surgery</i>	Preliminary	West Virginia University	Morgantown, West Virginia
Zaraq Khan	2005	<i>OBGYN</i>	Categorical	Mayo Clinic	Rochester, Minnesota
Hafsa Memon	2005	<i>OBGYN</i>	Categorical	West Virginia University	Charleston, West Virginia
Saad Shahid Ali	2005	<i>Internal Medicine</i>	Preliminary	St. Joseph's Hospital	Chicago, Illinois
Saad Shahid Ali	2005	(2008 onwards) <i>Radiology</i>	Categorical	University of Iowa	Iowa City, Iowa
Danish Mumtaz	2005	<i>Internal Medicine</i>	Categorical	Baylor College of Medicine	Houston, Texas
Rashid Zaman Khan	2005	<i>Internal Medicine</i>	Categorical	University of Connecticut	Farmington, Connecticut
Asif Anwerali	2005	<i>Internal Medicine</i>	Categorical	West Virginia University	Morgantown, West Virginia
Awais Memon	2005	<i>Internal Medicine</i>	Categorical	University of Texas Medical School At Houston	Houston, Texas
Aamir Ahmad	2005	<i>Internal Medicine</i>	Categorical	University of Louisville	Louisville, Kentucky
Hina Ali	2005	<i>Internal Medicine</i>	Categorical	University of Louisville	Louisville, Kentucky
Junaid Ali Syed	2005	<i>Internal Medicine</i>	Categorical	Hennepin County Medical Center	Minneapolis, Minnesota
Usman T. Malik	2005	<i>Internal Medicine</i>	Categorical	Hennepin County Medical Center	Minneapolis, Minnesota
Saba Sartajuddin	2005	<i>Paediatrics</i>	Categorical	Penn State University	Hershey, Pennsylvania
Sufana J. Khan	2005	<i>Paediatrics</i>	Categorical	Penn State University	Hershey, Pennsylvania
Filza Hussain	2005	<i>Psychiatry</i>	Categorical	Mayo Clinic	Rochester, Minnesota
Umara Ali Raza	2005	<i>Internal Medicine</i>	Categorical	Methodist Hospital	Houston, Texas
Madiha Ashraf	2005	<i>Internal Medicine</i>	Categorical	Methodist Hospital	Houston, Texas
Zain-ul-Sajideen Urfy	2005	<i>Internal Medicine</i>	Preliminary	West Virginia University	Charleston, West Virginia
Zain-ul-Sajideen Urfy	2005	(2008 onwards) <i>Neurology</i>	Categorical	Baylor College of Medicine	Houston, Texas

*Note: The editors have tried to be accurate in reporting of this list. This was prepared with the help of alumni who participated in the match. We regret any errors or omissions. If you see any information that is incorrect, please let us know and we will publish a correction in the next issue.*

# Join the Family, Become a Member!

If you would like to become active in AKU's ever growing and vibrant Alumni Association, and contribute to its mission, please take a moment to become a member. Please mail the completed form (and membership dues, if applicable) to the address listed, according to your location.

## AKU Alumni Association Membership Form

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*First*

*Middle*

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Medical College

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Class

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alumni@aku.edu

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The annual dues for Medical College alumni are US\$ 50. Please make the check to AKU Alumni Association, and mail with your completed form. Please note: These dues are used *only* for activities of the North American Chapter of AKU Alumni Association, and must be approved by the elected regional officers.

**Europe:**

**Mail to: Rahila Zakir, !  
c/o 184 Friern Road, !  
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UK**

**Pakistan:**

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Alumni Affairs, Aga Khan  
University Stadium Road,  
PO Box 3500, Karachi  
74800  
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Annual Dues for Alumni in Pakistan all programmes  
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# A Graduating Class Celebrates Its Big Day



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