



DAANA NEWSLETTER



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INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Meet Our Alumni

A Child's Experience of Virtual Times during COVID-19

Our Pets

Medical Mission 2020



click names near logo for extras



Contact info:
daananewsletter@gmail.com



Raza Ali Khan

Born in Hyderabad, and named by the Nizam as Raza Ali Khan, I can be called a Pacca-Hydrabadi. I did my school education at Brothers of Monford-established St Paul's High School, which is a Catholic School and then a breakaway Catholic St. Alphonse's Junior college.

When Deccan College of Medical Sciences started, I belonged to the very first batch. Departments were started during our time and I remember my very close friends, Abdul Wase Qawi and Gulam Hussain Dashti, being instrumental in making the Anatomy specimen exhibits. Initially the college had a lot of adversities, until a case by students of the college's first two batches refusing to go to Osmania, Gandhi or Kakatia Medical colleges, resolved the matter. Clinical medicine was interesting to me, especially Medicine and Surgery, thanks to great teachers like Dr Azam, Dr SS Hussain and Dr Jain. I spent a few of my internship days at NIMS and later at Mediciti, where I was a Resident and was able to work with a great teacher - Dr Soma Raju, from whom I got a glimpse of what hard work really looks like. I was a resident when Owaisi Hospital ICU was started.



In 1992 I got married to my wife, who was visiting Hyderabad from California, then came as an immigrant to the US. The time between graduating and getting into Residency was a tough one; teaching me new things. The most important of which was how to remain focused, establish relationships and practice patience. I taught myself to be entrepreneurial and to be a cheerful person who focuses on positives. I really wish people like Dr. Moizuddin were there in those days, to advise as Mentors, to help and give us realistic expectations. I did do an observership and realized how evidence based practice is implemented on a day-to-day basis in US medicine. Unlike in India, earning and pursuing a career had to be done simultaneously in the US. So I worked a \$10/hr job while doing observership, making sure that pursuing career was the most important objective and earning was just a supplemental activity.

Then by the grace of God I got into Internal Medicine Residency at University of North Dakota SoM, Fargo. It was one of the happiest days in my life! There I learned the practice of contemporary medicine the hard way and will remain forever grateful to my teachers, especially my program Director and Chairman Dept. of Medicine, Dr. Hanley. Since graduating from the university I have been a Hospitalist, where I practice medicine in the hospital- admitting, taking care in hospital and discharging patients. I continued to engage my intellectual curiosity and was the director of educational activities, designed a Randomized Control Trial, participated in quality improvement projects and attended the Physician Leadership College at St Thomas University, MN. I was also the president of DAANA for 4 years, that was started in 2014 with the hard work of a lot of people especially Dr Taruj Ali.

I have 3 kids (2 girls and a boy), who went through the schooling system here. I am guilty of not having spent more time with them as I would now have wanted to. Though now, I am trying to make it up by spending time with my two grandchildren. It is fun interacting with them and catching up to their spontaneity. It is fun sitting in the passenger seat again in a car & it is fun to learn new concepts, from children, that I did not know. Of late, taking care of one's health has been of utmost importance. Spending time maintaining the ties of kinship has never been so tranquil. And helping wife in household work, never more satisfying. Get-together with friends has been both rejuvenating and last but not the least, helping others making me more happy.....

Ghoom phirr kar aagaya na ussi natije par tu

Kehte thay tajurbekaar buzurgg par tu

Banani thi magar tujhko teri he Imtiaz kahaani

Tajurbekaar magar kahan kehelwata nahee karta gar tu

Raza Ali Khan

A Child's Experience of Virtual Times during COVID-19

My School Years 2019-2021 : Experience of an Elementary School Student

by Nuha Muneer (5th grade)

Parents : Jabeen Taj '97 & Aiman Muneer '96 batch



My 2019-2020 school year started after my brother Solaiman's Aqeeqa and my sister Anora's Bismillah. We had the Bismillah and the Aqeeqa together in July 2019. A few days later, it was time to start the school year. The school I was going to start 4th grade at was a school that had just recently been built. It is called Talley Street Upper Elementary School. Some of the teachers were new, but some of the teachers had been working at schools nearby. For example, my 3rd grade teacher was now working at the new school. Most of the kids were from schools that the teachers were from. We had school for a while, and then, 2 month later, it was Halloween. Our whole family dressed up as characters from "Aladdin." I was Aladdin, Anora was Jasmine, my mom was Jasmine's maid, my dad was The Genie, and Solaiman was Aladdin's pet monkey. After Halloween, my mom bought two tickets for my dad and I to go to New York, and watch the Broadway play, "Hamilton." We stayed in Philadelphia with my aunt Samu Khala, and drove to New York for the show. After watching the show, we stayed one more day in Philadelphia to see things, like the Liberty Bell. After coming back to Georgia, we decided to spend Thanksgiving in Florida, with my cousins. Their names were: Sophie, Yasmin, and Noor. We made fake turkeys, and went to the movie theater to watch "Frozen 2." In Florida, we also went to SeaWorld. We got to go on big roller-coasters, and fed stingrays. When Thanksgiving break was over, we came back to Georgia. After a month of school, our class had a spelling bee. I won, and moved on to the school spelling bee. In the school spelling bee, the top two students got to go to the district spelling bee. I came second, tied with

Our Pets!

Maryam and Selma
Raheem '91 batch

Pets name Frannie and Lulu..generic / short hair and long hair..both are females and I think they are 4 years old..got them from animal shelter as children wanted to adopt not shop..Fannie was the name given by the shelter and Lulu was named plush..which sounded like a pillow or a blanket name and it was changed to lulu

Lulu is like a dog that follows owner around & wags it's tail and likes to sleep cuddling you..while Fannie does not like to give eye contact, is very reserved and comes to you when she wants to.

Lulu



Frannie



a boy in 5th grade. The girl who won 1st place, the boy I tied with, and I, went to the district spelling bee. We went up against 8th graders, and all of us lost to an 8th grade boy. In February, it was my birthday, so we invited a bunch of my friends for a sleepover. After the sleepover, I had my Aameen.

The Aameen was the last event before everything closed down due to the corona virus outbreak, in March 2020. We started virtual learning, and had to pick up our laptops from school to work at home. During fourth grade virtual school, I had to adjust to a new schedule, which was a little bit harder to do than normal since everything was online. My classmates and I had to learn to use the different buttons on our virtual school meetings, such as the mute, end call, chat, and raise hand buttons. It was even more difficult for my younger sister & her friends as they were just in Kindergarten. I couldn't meet my friends anymore because of practising social distancing to stop corona. However, we got to wake up later in the mornings, because virtual school didn't start until 8:00am. We got to have some virtual playdates, and even a virtual graduation from school!

Once school was over, we had summer break. We were planning on a trip to Colorado, but because of COVID-19, we had to stay at home. Instead of going anywhere, we stayed at our house, and played in the backyard with our neighbors. We played all summer, and even did some water play. I hoped that the new school year in fall would be better. However, things did not get better. We prepared for the following virtual year (2020-2021) by setting up our dining room as a small classroom. We built & decorated shelves to store work, books and supplies. I was looking forward to starting virtual school on a better schedule and better prepared.

5th grade school started virtually, and I got new teachers and classmates. I had a new schedule, and some new subjects. I did 5th grade virtual school until winter break. During winter break, we stayed home a lot of the time. After winter break ended, some students started going back to regular school, not virtual. Some students, including me, decided to stay virtual. Since some students wanted to go back to real school, and some wanted to stay online, the school board had to reshuffle classes and teachers. I lost my teacher, and got a new teacher. Some of the friends I had in my old class were in the same new class with me.

I hope we can all get the vaccines soon & go back to regular school soon. Right now, my sister and I are doing our best during the virtual school year.



Ghazal Corner ~ Nayi Lehar

Dr Zareena Shaheen '90 batch

Nayi ek lehar ab dilon me jagi hai
Naya kuch karenge, tamanna yahi hai

Ajab si hawa ye jo chalne lagi hai
Pareshan haiN sab, imtehaaN ki ghadi hai

Kahin dhoop chauN, kahin dard o gham hai
GhamoN se bhari ab yahaaN zindegi hai

ZameeN aasmaaN honge mutthi me apne
Agar ThaaN le ham to mushkil nahi hai

Andhera jahaaN ho wahiN raushni hai
Isee hausle par to dunia tikii hai

Karenge ada haq tabibi ka hum sab
Ke khidmat-e-bande khuda bandegi hai

~Zaara



GUATEMALA MEDICAL MISSION FOR YOUTH DEC 2020

by Qutub Khan

I had intended to start a Medical Mission, under the DCMS alumni association's auspices, to mentor our youth. The timing was such that not many people could participate and most destinations were closed due to the pandemic. So, a fully DCMS alumni-partnered or sponsored mission could not materialize. Nevertheless, I was able to organize a trip to Guatemala with four university students from our DCMS family; two of them my own kids (Omar and Osman) and two other students Sidra and Iram. (daughter and niece respectively, of Amer/Farheena '92 batch)

****About the country and Maximo Nivel***

Guatemala is a Central American country with a population of 17 million. Although the most populous, it is still one of the poorest countries there. It has seen its share of civil wars, dictators, western colonialization, (United Fruit Company UFCO sabotaged the Guatemalans, same way British East India did to India). It's a majority Christian country, 40 percent of people are indigenous Mayans with minimal access to health care. I researched many non-profits that work there and chose Maximo Nivel, to be our host/organizer.



The International airport is in Guatemala City, (all travelers were required a negative Covid test before boarding). Our base would be in Antigua, about 45 minutes southeast. We had the option of staying with a host family for a true Spanish immersion experience, but we chose a private hotel due to the pandemic.

Rosa Mejia is the country director and Jorge the medical camp coordinator. A lot of paperwork and protocols are involved for foreigners to go into the midst of indigenous community and see them as patients and give medicine. They took care of all that before our arrival. We also had with us Dr Alvarez, a Guatemalan Orthopedic surgeon who doubles up as Pediatrician and Family doctor.

****Daily routine and the actual camp***

We left the hotel everyday by 7:30 am. Comfortable vans were arranged & we went to various underprivileged communities. Travel times varied from 20 min easy paved road, to a 90 min bumpy jungle ride thru rivers. The modus operandi was pretty standard. Stations are set up, one for handwash education, one for distribution of dental kits, a third one for anti-parasite administration (albendazole), and two tables set up for doctor consultations, last station was dispensing medications out of the boxes. Since there is no designated clinic space or pharmacy space, all the stuff has to be packed and unpacked each day.

Although they have translators, a basic working knowledge of Spanish, goes a long way and makes you more efficient. Age demographic varied from 3 yrs to 80 yrs, conditions seen were Diabetes, HTN, skin infections, Gastritis, aches and pains. We had basic medications, metformin, enalapril, multivitamins, acetaminophen, ibuprofen, amoxicillin, cipro, antacids, omeprazole, prenats, some eye drops etc.

A teaching stethoscope was used to demonstrate heart sounds, lungs sounds, take manual blood pressure, glucometer use. The students also got to observe collagen injections into the knee, saw a bakers cyst for which we did a compression wrap.

****Non- medical work***

One of the communities we served were the workers of a large coffee plantation that caters to many clients including Starbucks. These are seasonal workers who come to Antigua, to live and labor for a few months, so everyone in the family ends up working in the fields, they get paid by the pound of beans they gather. In addition to usual consultations and We arranged snacks for them and some new clothes for children, as well as candy (yes, dental kits then candy)

We also visited an orphanage, privately owned. My four students had brought stationery from USA and we purchased school bags locally, they packed up all the bags with the goodies and we handed them out at the Orphanage, it was much appreciated by kids as well as the admins. We also donated funds to buy an e-tablet.

There was another group with Maximo Nivel at the same time, three ladies from USA, who were organizing activities with children, our students also joined in. They did parties, goodie bags, storytelling, piñatas, etc.

****Tourism/Activities/Sight seeing***

Guatemala City, the capital, has the main airport and several big-name hotels. It also has an upscale outdoor mall called Paseo Cayala, which is built in Spanish architectural style. Antigua, where we stayed mostly, on the other hand, is a small town with quaint boutique hotels, all streets are cobblestone.



Weather is beautiful, 70s mostly, Guatemala has a lot of biodiversity and is famous for active volcanoes, we hiked to one of them in the evening, called Volcan Pacaya. It's a moderately strenuous hike of 4 km uphill, you have the option of riding horses as well, do not recommend unless you are in decent shape, because the horses will go to certain point then you dismount and walk-through rocks, but in the end its worth it as you get to see red hot molten lava and burning lava rocks on which, you toast marshmallows. The kids also had fun ATVing in the mountains, while I opted for a motorcycle. We did a walking tour of Antigua, admiring the ruins, churches, artisan shops, street vendors. We also managed to squeeze in a beach trip, 90 min south of Antigua, you hit the pacific coast, where you see beautiful black sand beaches, due to the volcanoes.

****Food, culture and shopping***

The cuisine is slightly different than Mexican, and if you request picante, be ready for some hot spice! Vegetarian and sea food options were plenty and we also found a halal restaurant called Nawal, owned by a Jordanian man by the name Mohamad. Sobremaso is an edgy ice cream shop with creative flavors inspired by multinational ingredients, it had one of the best kulfis I have ever had (Pistachio, figs, cardamom, Rose) And of course we ate at a desi restaurant too, Tikka Masala Blu Plaza. Guatemala is famous for fruits; oranges were very sweet. Surprise finding was our chikoo, or sapota, known locally as Zapota and is bigger than a papaya! Was deliciously sweet!

People are very friendly, respectful towards foreigners as seen in most developing countries, they are short statured and hardworking, not a whole lot of obesity noted. Coffee, chocolate and jade stones are famous here. We avoided any late- night activity, we felt safe walking around.

Google search revealed 3-4 masjids, (mezquitas) We went to one and were able to go and pray Jumma. Muslims here are immigrants from Palestine, Pakistan, as well as native Guatemalan reverts.

****Covid times***

Guatemala doesn't seem to be hit that bad, cases are about 7000+ per million population, same as India, if stats from either country are to be taken at face value. The country had just recently opened its borders to travelers. People do wear masks in the cities, and social distancing practiced when possible. The beach I found was crowded and no masks! Probably herd immunity or God knows!

****Overall experience***

My role here was as a physician, guide, mentor, parent, the students are the ones who I hope gained some real-life experience. Much critique has been written about “volunteer tourism” and many people point out its limited usefulness. Maybe so, but our intention, our calling and our goal is a bit deeper and esoteric. I had discussions-religious and philosophical with the students each evening, and a debriefing at the end of the mission. I was happy with their daily performance as well as their interactive responses and their outlook.



Jorge our coordinator, had an emotional farewell meeting and thanked us all on behalf on the people we served. Omar said he never knew there was so much we would learn in a week from a doctor who did not speak any English (Dr Álvarez). Iram commented about how little these people had and how grateful they were with our small help, Sidra was touched by the orphanage and how the children without families live it day by day, Osman said he had so much fun playing with kids, as if they were his friends that regardless of disparities between us, we are all one humankind under God.

Hopefully this leads our kids to be better human beings and we continue this youth missions in better non Covid times.

Editors' message:

Welcome to the inaugural DAANA Newsletter! Our goal is to provide a platform to our members, to get introduced to each other & families, to create a sense of community. There will be a dedicated “Meet Our Alumni” column to introduce us to some of our illustrious alumni as well as to learn from their experiences in life. We request our members to participate in any capacity that they feel comfortable, from assisting in editing to contributing articles, original art, poetry, advice / informational columns, etc. Family members of alumni are welcome & encouraged to contribute. We hope future issues will have further participation from the youth of our alumni, to enhance their sense of belonging to our DCMS family. Look forward to co-operation from all our colleagues in making this endeavor a success! Thank you.

Afshan Khan '96

Aiman Muneer '96

PS. send your contributions to daananewsletter@gmail.com