Highlights from Washington University’s Forum for India

*Personalized Medicine and the Future of Health Care*

February 22, 2019
Mumbai
OVERVIEW

Washington University in St. Louis’ annual Forum for India sought to further strengthen the university’s impact in India and showcase its world-leading, collaborative research. The annual forums highlight the work of top Washington University faculty members and address global issues in ways that are accessible to a broad audience. This year’s event focused on a vitally important theme: personalized medicine and the future of health care.

The meeting in Mumbai on February 22, 2019, brought together leading researchers from Washington University, business executives from several industries, as well as academic and research leaders from India to discuss the enormous opportunity and promise for personalized medicine in the region.

The forum featured remarks from Gerard Baker, editor at large at the Wall Street Journal; keynote addresses from leading researchers at Washington University’s top-ranked School of Medicine—Dr. Rajendra Apte and Dr. Philip Payne; and panel discussions that addressed business strategies for the future of health care and trends in the practice of personalized medicine.

Nearly 100 people—including business leaders, academic experts, alumni and prospective students—were in attendance for this exciting event, which further deepened the university’s close corporate, academic and research collaborations in the region.

“The Forum for India showcased Washington University’s leadership role in advancing personalized medicine,” Chancellor Mark S. Wrighton said. “The university has been at the forefront of discovery and research when it comes to sequencing the genetic code, having played an integral role in the Human Genome Project. We continue to push forward this important work with new diagnostic and therapeutic breakthroughs, and we discussed collaborative approaches with our partners in India.”
FEATURED SPEAKER

Washington University in St. Louis was pleased to welcome Gerard Baker, editor at large at the *Wall Street Journal*, to the Forum for India. Baker kicked off the event with remarks on the economics of the health care industry. Baker writes columns and commentary for the *Journal*, and he is also the host of “WSJ at Large with Gerry Baker,” a weekly news and current affairs interview show on the Fox Business Network.

KEYNOTES

Two top researchers from Washington University’s School of Medicine discussed their research as it pertains to personalized medicine and the promise such breakthroughs hold for India.

AGING AND TRANSITION TO DISEASE:
BEYOND DISCOVERY AND DEVELOPMENT

**Dr. Rajendra Apte, MD, PhD**

Paul A. Cibis Distinguished Professor and Director of Translational Research, Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences; Professor, Developmental Biology and Medicine, Washington University School of Medicine

Dr. Apte is a vitreoretinal surgeon and clinician scientist whose basic research is focused on inflammation, aging and neurodegeneration. During his keynote, he explored the pathways and processes from drug discovery and development through to clinical trials.

Dr. Apte talked about how the eye can often serve as a window to health, indicating other risks such as diabetes and heart disease; discussed the need to address age-related diseases in India and globally; and explained why it's important to adopt and implement a bench-to-bedside approach when it comes to medical discoveries. Dr. Apte explored how to best translate basic scientific discovery into concrete treatments—including those with a precision medicine component—for as many people as possible, including patients in India. He also talked about the need to work collaboratively by engaging with corporate partners as well as sharing information with colleagues on campus and around the world.
Dr. Payne is an internationally recognized leader in the field of translational bioinformatics and clinical research informatics. These applications harness and manage big data from a variety of sources—including DNA sequences and electronic medical records—leading to a number of benefits, including an accelerated rate of scientific discovery, improved clinical decision-making and the ability to promote healthy behaviors at a population level.

Dr. Payne explained the promise of big data when it comes to health care and treatments, and how it can be used not only to treat people when they are sick, but also to ensure they do not get sick in the first place. He discussed the need to be inclusive when it comes to informatics in medicine, to improve the quality, safety and cost of health care for all patients, no matter where in the world they live. He also discussed the legal and ethical ramifications that need to be considered when implementing big data medical approaches.
PANELS

Two separate sessions tackled broader trends and challenges for health care and medicine in India.

INNOVATIONS AND TRENDS IN THE SCIENCE AND PRACTICE OF HEALTH CARE IN INDIA

Moderated by Ashley Thomas Jacob, MD, medical director of Mulamoottil Eye Hospital and vice chairman and CEO of Mulamoottil Group, this discussion explored the ever-changing landscape of health care in India—including the associated opportunities, challenges and how collaborative research and projects can help push ahead personalized medicine initiatives.

Panelists included:

Rajendra Badwe, MD
Director, Tata Memorial Centre

Rahul Purwar, PhD
Associate Professor, IIT-Bombay

Anil Raghavan
CEO, SunPharma Advanced Research Company

BUSINESS STRATEGIES FOR THE FUTURE OF HEALTH CARE

Composed of Washington University alumni and friends who currently hold c-suite positions at pharmaceutical firms in India, this panel discussed the shifting business landscape for the health care industry in the region.

Panelists included:

Hari Buggana
Managing Director, InvAscent

Ramesh Hariharan
CEO and Co-Founder, Strand Life Sciences

Adarsh Natarajan
CEO, Aindra

Shriram Nene, MD
Co-Founder and Managing Director, RnM Moving Pictures

Business strategies for health care in India were discussed at the Forum for India, held February 22 in Mumbai by Washington University. Panelists included (from left) Kurt Dirks, vice chancellor for international affairs at Washington University; Hari Buggana, managing director, InvAscent; Ramesh Hariharan, CEO and co-founder, Strand Life Sciences; Adarsh Natarajan, CEO, Aindra; and Dr. Shriram Nene, MD, co-founder and managing director, RnM Moving Pictures.
IMPACT IN INDIA: EDUCATING LEADERS OF BUSINESS AND GOVERNMENT

IIT-BOMBAY/WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY EMBA PROGRAM

Our Executive MBA program—the result of a special partnership between Shailesh J. Mehta School of Management at the Indian Institute of Technology in Bombay and Washington University—is the only program in the world to confer a degree from both an Indian and a U.S. university. Taught by world-class professors, it is one of the few programs in India designed for executives to earn a degree while they work.

The third batch of Washington University/IITB EMBA students received their degrees in Mumbai on February 23.

Mark Taylor, dean of Washington University’s Olin Business School was in attendance at IIT–Bombay’s Convocation Ceremony on February 23. Twenty-two EMBA students received joint degrees from Washington University and IITB.
McDONNELL ACADEMY PARTNERS
Through its McDonnell International Scholars Academy, Washington University has developed close partnerships within India. These partners include:

- Indian Institute of Technology–Bombay
- Indian Institute of Technology–Delhi
- Jawaharlal Nehru University
- Tate Institute of Social Sciences

FORUM SPONSORS

Several corporate leaders took part in a panel discussion during Washington University’s Forum for India: From left: Anil Raghavan, CEO, SunPharma Advanced Research Company; Rahul Purwar, PhD, associate professor, IIT-Bombay; Rajendra Badwe, MD, director, Tata Memorial Centre; and Dr. Ashley Jacob, medical director, Mulamoottil Eye Hospital.