OPEN LETTER TO AMU ALUMNI AROUND THE WORLD

Dear Fellow AMU Alumni,

It is my privilege to have the trust of my peers, the Alig community, the Govt. of India and the Honourable AMU Visitor to be appointed as the Vice Chancellor of AMU. It is an honour of highest order for me to serve and head this great institution we all call our alma mater. I assure you my full commitment and utmost best to uphold the values of this institution and carry out the mission of AMU.

I appreciate the work done by my predecessors to bring our University to a level that it is recognized as one of the leading institutions in the country - I thank them for their hard work and commitment. I believe we have a great opportunity to continue with the progress that we have made and take our University to the next level.

Blessed with the twin distinction of being a graduate and a faculty member for many years, I feel I am uniquely positioned to make an appeal to my fellow alumni to step forward and help in this mission to make AMU excel in academic, research and co-curricular activities.

The strength of the AMU alumni globally is a testament to the vision of our founder who imagined AMU graduates spread all over the world and preach the gospel of free enquiry, pure morality and knowledge. The global spread of our alumni is vast, and they have excelled and hold key positions in various fields in India and abroad, which is matter of pride for us. It is imperative we harness this rich resource and have our alumni actively and systematically participate in the growth and development of AMU - together we can do some great work.

At the helm of affairs at Jawaharlal Nehru Medical College & Hospital for 4 years, I had the privilege of leading active alumni engagement that yielded significant results in infrastructure state of the art Medical College Auditorium; competence building and skill development of our students and faculty members through international collaborations and exchange programs with University of Massachusetts Medical School (USA), Fellowship Exchange Programme for Hospital Training of Doctors of JNMC in Queen Elizabeth Hospital (UK). Efforts are at an advanced stage in finalizing International Fellowship Programme for Doctors of JNMC with Great Western Hospital, Swindon (UK). Needless to say, this would not have been possible without the unwavering support of my alumni friends abroad, and colleagues in JNMC and AMU.

As Vice-Chancellor, I assure you the resources in the form of administrative and logistics support and more importantly, partners in various AMU faculty and departments to work with the alumni in coordinating the academic programs on campus or through online programs and webinars. The active involvement of AMU faculty and students is critical for these programs to succeed and if we use our collective strengths, I am positive the results will be promising.

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If we were not able to use this alumni talent pool in an effective manner we would miss a great opportunity. So it is my hope to find ways to increase collaboration between the AMU alumni and the University in the field of academics, career counseling and job placements. If we help a generation the hope is that they will guide and help the generations to follow. As Winston Churchill said “We make a living by what we get, we make a life by what we give”.

To set the ball rolling, some of the ideas I have started working in my first few days and would like to explore further, include the following:

1. Expand the scope of the Aligarh Open University program, which is the continuation of the Aligarh Summer University by encouraging more regular participation and having a calendar of events in multiple specialties throughout the year.

2. Presently, most of our alumni activities are coordinated through a central alumni office. I have proposed strengthening of institutional framework through decentralized offices in every faculty of AMU. A faculty member in each AMU faculty appointed as a coordinator of alumni affairs who will work under the Dean and oversee the coordination with the alumni to run these programs. They will be assisted by a faculty member in each department as a point person to facilitate department specific activities. The faculty coordinator will report to the central AMU Alumni Affairs Office, who will work under the supervision of Vice-Chancellor. Faculty coordinators will have institutional email ids dedicated to alumni affairs.

3. I have proposed every department prepare/update a list of alumni who can contribute to its programs. Every faculty will have their separate alumni events in addition to the AMU alumni meet. These events may coincide with the annual AMU alumni meet, or may be organized at different periods in the academic session.

4. I have proposed setting up a career counseling cell in every department of the University (as of now we only have a central career counseling center at the University level). This cell will also include alumni of respective fields as members. The departmental career counseling cell, faculty alumni office, and training and placement cells in every department will synergize their activities. They will be supported by their respective central offices.

5. Through progress made in the Internet based mode of communication, the opportunities that beckon us are immense, and we do not want to miss out. Leveraging ICT to evolve methods of imparting education at AMU will be a priority in alumni engagement. Online learning will be an integral part of this. To prepare for the future, I would like the AMU faculty to explore the possibility of collaborating with the alumni to design and develop a catalogue of online courses along the lines of coursera (https://www.coursera.org) and EdX (https://www.edx.org) that can be given to AMU students and students from other Universities and colleges. I would like to appoint a task force to explore the scope and content of online learning programs at AMU.

6. Finally as you all know, best universities are very well endowed and their alumni play a very significant role in building this endowment fund. We have initiated a fund and would appeal to all alumni to generously contribute to the fund, any amount that fits your budget will be greatly appreciated and no amount is small. We will have a development office and make the process of giving simple that can be done through the internet from anywhere in the world to a central bank account with proper documentation and the appropriate receipts.

I welcome suggestions to improve the above proposals, and also other ideas and suggestions that we can explore and look forward to working with the alumni in making our alma mater a world-class educational institution.

Thank you

Sincerely

Prof. Tariq Mansoor 1/6/17