



## *From the President's Desk . . .*

**“Considerate la vostra semenza:**

**Fatti non foste a viver come brute**

**Ma per seguir virtute e conoscenza.”**

(Consider the stock from which you came. You were not created to live the lives of animals, but to strive for virtue and the attainment of knowledge.)

-Dante, Inferno, XXVI, 118-120.

It has been a little over five years since I founded the Harlem Children Society. And, I must say that as the organization has grown, so have I – in every sense of the word! It has indeed been a tremendous opportunity to serve our future potential and resource to best (serve) our communities and societies. This keenly reminds me of the thought expressed by Kierkegaard – **“Life can only be understood backwards, but unfortunately has to be lived forwards.”** And this future can be molded by all of us if we work jointly and single-mindedly toward our common goal of universal hood. These five years have been some of the best – as I participated with so many of my colleagues and acquaintances in helping our youth – who themselves in return have become so inspirational to myself! Even though I have personally selected all the students – and having put them through some of the most intensive programs anywhere, I must say that these young minds and hearts have surpassed even my dreams! We have all participated in this wonderful venture called ‘change’. As Mahatma Gandhi once said, **“If you want to change the world, be that change.”**

Now after five years, so many of our students who have gone through our program, are at leading universities across the country – mostly pursuing science, engineering, math and medicine. Not only that, but what is very heartening, and one that is very close to my heart and one of my original aims – is that a few students have approached me with ideas and suggestions how they themselves can help their communities even further. This has indeed even further solidified my initial contention that – at least some of our hearts and minds that have trained with us, go back and help their own communities. My dream is indeed fulfilled! – But, I must rush and say that it in so many ways is just beginning!

The other observation that I have noticed is that, many of our students feel that our program is not just an educational (vocational training) experience. But, they feel that the HCS experience has been a socio-cultural learning experience that they would cherish for rest of their lives. Many of the students have never interacted with so many from different backgrounds – spanning across a plethora of high schools, and cultural backgrounds. This personally, I see is even more important - as students from different backgrounds learn to observe, respect and develop an understanding toward each other (at such an early stage of their development and formative years) – that it becomes a fertile ground for understanding, peace and harmony.

The other main objective is our experiment with science and society – where we celebrate our participation in a ‘real’ city neighborhood. Our main showcase – ‘Science Street Fair and Festivals’ is our vehicle, which lays down our resolve to communicate and interact with our society – so that we can participate in creating an awareness and establishing a dialogue with our communities - not only issues important in a particular neighborhood, but also transcending eventually into a unique weave and rubric of socio-cultural and scientific amalgamation. This has been a marvelous rendering of our unique resolve at introducing our students to be able to interact and convey their ideas and where they themselves can serve as role models for others in their own communities.

Every year is a steppingstone to another – as our horizons increase, we define new areas and explore into the realm of making some of those a reality! – by fine tuning some of our past experiences and to be able to apply it to larger settings and increase our resolve to serve our community. Failure for us is not a deterrent, but is the first step towards success. We start with celebrating our failures, so as to reap our successes! At every step I pray – pray not to deter from our resolve and keep our focus on our objectives; never to be afraid of trying new and develop novel ideas and put them in practice – so that it becomes a learning venture for us all – as we all are students of life in our universe of eternal learning! I am thankful to my situations and the wonderful people who I constantly come across and interact with - these include folks who have served as mentors, advisors, volunteers and all the generous supporters of our programs - without whom our dreams would only remain just a dream! For that I feel that I feel very privileged and honored. Thank you. Thank you all for making this possible.

We have time and again inculcated in our students – that Science and studies in various related fields have given us a fascinating insight into our world. They have shown us technologies that can and may change who we are. But these changes may come about because of the desires of human beings. *“Science is a perpetual creative process.”*

It would be worth mentioning that we always have to be conscious of the **great unknown**. ***“What gets us into trouble is not what we don’t know. Its what we know for sure that just ain’t so,”*** as according to *Jogi Berra*. This fact cannot be more emphasized than how *Sir Francis Bacon* put it – ***“Nature is often hidden, sometimes overcome, sometimes extinguished.”*** In this pious pursuit of human endeavor we have to be conscious and enduring as ***‘The little Engine that could’ – “I think I can, I think I can.”*** We have to ponder and meditate on the aspects of the enduring process and be in constant touch of the *“present”*. We have to be aware – ***“I think, therefore I am”*** (*Rene Descartes*).

***A new era in the sciences - medicine, engineering and other technologies is emerging. A new horizon looms, that will lead to better understanding of ourselves and therefore lead better lives. Ignorance is the parent of fear. Therefore, we do have to train ourselves to tread on these paths single-mindedly, and fearlessly and with utmost resolve to be sensitive of our environs and all beings concerned.***

We are the Creation and Destruction – both in the eyes of God. Of the Future, we never know; of the Past, we know who we are. At least, we in the present can be responsible, to carry our Past and Present into the Future. It is that Present, that our future generations can look upon us with pride, humility and understanding, that will make our lives in the Present worth living! Let us not forget, ***when looking into the Future, we are the eyes of the Future.*** Thus, let us develop that clarity of vision and

the develop the ability to look. ***Let there be Light!*** And there is no higher light than true knowledge, awareness and devotion!

***'May I reach the light, on reaching which, One attains freedom from fear'***  
***– Rg Veda, ii 27***

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