

CITATION

OVERSEAS GOLD MEDAL Conferred

@

THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF EDINBURGH, 5TH JULY 2013
(Youngest ever recipient in the 508 years history of the College)

Mr President, Members of Council, Ladies and Gentlemen

It gives me great pleasure to present Dr Raghu Ram Pillarisetti for the award of our College Overseas Gold Medal. As the oldest surgical institution in the world, the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh has a distinguished history of over 500 years. During this time we have been able to maintain such a high standing worldwide, because of the commitment to our College, shown by our overseas Fellows and Members. Today, in Raghu Ram, we acknowledge the help and dedication of one such Fellow.

At this College, we take great pride in reaching out to our Fellows and Members all over the world by going out to their countries and holding courses, examinations and scientific meetings. Such activities would never be possible without the wholehearted commitment of Fellows like Raghu Ram. He follows a large number of luminaries who have been awarded this medal in previous years; and Raghu Ram has been the youngest of them all thus far. They have given of their time and expertise and expended a huge effort in conducting our examinations and courses abroad.

Although a Fellow of our other entire sister Surgical Royal Colleges - England, Glasgow and Ireland - Raghu Ram's primary allegiance has always been to this College, ever since he was appointed to his first training post in the Royal Infirmary here in Edinburgh. Since 2000 - whilst working in training posts in the United Kingdom - he has been single-handedly responsible, for holding ten postgraduate surgical courses for our College in the Southern Indian City of Hyderabad. His missionary zeal shone through, when every year he took his annual leave and travelled to India to organise and teach in these courses.

But it is not just for these courses that we at this College are indebted to Raghu Ram. He convened three very successful Intercollegiate MRCS examinations, the last one being in 2012. It is directly as a result of his efforts, of Himalayan proportions, that Hyderabad, the capital of the State of Andhra Pradesh, has become such an important centre for our College's activities in the Indian Subcontinent. To accomplish such tasks in that part of the world, many of you here today would appreciate, that one needs the patience of a saint, the perseverance of Robert the Bruce and the thick skin of a rhinoceros. Raghu has been blessed with all of these virtues in abundance. As an acknowledgement of these virtues, and for his unstinting help, he has been appointed as an International Surgical Advisor – one of five in India.

After completing his surgical training in the United Kingdom as a breast surgeon, he returned to his home city of Hyderabad where he is a Consultant Oncoplastic Breast Surgeon and Director of Kims Ushalakshmi Centre for Breast Diseases. Within the short period of five years, Raghu has made an extraordinary contribution to the enlightenment of people in India to the early detection of breast cancer through a number of unique initiatives and innovations. Several published papers in peer reviewed journals, chapters in surgical text books and a Chapter in Recent Advances in Surgery, now in its 34th edition, are but a few of his academic accomplishments. In 2008 he was elected as the Editorial Secretary of the Indian Association of Surgical Oncology. To cap it all, whilst being the current Vice President, he has recently been elected as the President of the Association of Breast Surgeons of India for the year 2015.

Today Raghu is accompanied by his wife Dr. Vyjayanthi, a well known Fertility Specialist and his two sons Sai and Krishna, who we hope will become the third generation Fellows of this College. This expectation may be a bit premature as they are only 14 and 9 years old! Raghu's father, Professor Chalapathi Rao, an Ad hominem Fellow of our College and his mother, Dr Ushalakshmi cannot be here today to share this joyous afternoon because of other commitments in India.

Mr President, I present to you Dr. Raghu Ram for the award of the College's Overseas Gold Medal.