

Dr. Venkat Rao dedicated his life to helping others. From his early years in India to his time in Flint, Venkat anonymously helped others, giving back to the communities in which he lived. Unfortunately, he passed away in June 2023, so his wife, Dr. Rama Rao, graciously helped tell his story.

Above and beyond helping patients with his pulmonary, critical care, and sleep study expertise, Venkat's contributions to the Flint community are innumerable. He was passionately involved in the Foundation for Mott Community College because he believed education is the future of the community; he was confident that "If children are successful, then our future will be successful," said Rama. He knew the profound impact that education can have on a person's life and wanted to make education attainable for everyone in the community. Venkat realized many Mott Community College students need assistance while in school and wanted to help eliminate any obstacles keeping those students from completing their education; he created a student emergency fund to support MCC students so they can stay in college amid unforeseen crises.

Venkat was very humble and never wanted recognition for his contributions, typically making donations under other names. Rama said, "He is my mentor in everything—in ethics and in how we should treat others in the community. He lived the Ten Commandments and didn't expect anything in return." Rama is currently exploring ways to honor her husband's legacy at the Lenore Croudy Family Life Center, which they feel is a "welcome beacon and safe haven" for MCC students and staff. Because her husband always gave silently, she wants him to be recognized in the community through this center.

Dr. Venkat Rao also included FMCC in his estate planning. He believed MCC is an important pillar of the community and helping sustain it is critical. His gift will help generations of future students obtain an MCC education. His hope was that others would follow his lead because "today's students are tomorrow's citizens."

## Leaving a Legacy

RAMA RAO



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