OUR GIVING PLEDGE

I am humbled by the generosity of those with whom I share this pledge and am honored to share in this endeavor with them. I am also humbled by the work of Bill and Melinda Gates, and Warren Buffett, themselves wonderful champions of education. They have inspired us to commit to the Giving Pledge and we hope in our own small way we will encourage others to do so also.

I have been fortunate that I grew up in a family where charity was ingrained in us from a very early age. We were immigrants to a new country, Dubai, United Arab Emirates. Even, when my father earned a small amount, a large percentage was shared with the community we lived in, sometimes at the cost of our own comfort. To this day, our underlying philosophy remains that good giving 'pinches', meaning that the sacrifice you make, has to be felt, else, the act remains just another financial transaction in our lives; and therein lies the appeal of the Giving Pledge to us.

I was also lucky that my parents were school-teachers. They always placed a great emphasis on the value of education. While perhaps I didn't live up to their expectations as a student, I saw the impact they had on people's lives. I have always believed that education is key to fixing so many of the world's greatest problems: violence, poverty and health. It all starts with education.

These two pillars of charity and education have always guided me, and out of them came the Varkey Foundation, to change lives through education around the world. We, particularly, focus on capacity building interventions for teachers and school leaders, and championing their work through initiatives such as the Global Teacher Prize. Everyone deserves a great teacher. Through the Giving Pledge we hope to take these efforts to a greater level.

Yours sincerely,

Sunny & Sherly Varkey
Dubai, United Arab Emirates