

**EISENHOWER FELLOWSHIPS – 2009 Multi Nation Program**  
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**Dr. Subroto Das**  
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**Baroda, Gujarat, INDIA**

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After surviving a serious highway accident, Dr. Subroto Das and his wife Sushmita Das founded the Lifeline Foundation, an NGO whose goal is to reduce the 100,000 annual highway deaths in India. Their internationally recognized efforts began with the Highway Rescue Project, which leverages existing utilities, working in synergy with public offices to provide rescue and transport to accident victims across 3,500 Km of national highway in six Indian states. Dr. Das' efforts have subsequently expanded to strengthen national capacity to provide evacuation and pre-hospital care, and led to the development of India's first comprehensive Emergency Medical Services (EMS) for people injured in highway accidents. While on fellowship, he studied best practices exemplified by American EMS systems (including all steps from injury to police notification, ambulance dispatch, victim transport and stabilization, and clinical services), advocacy and legislation supporting EMS, standardization of EMS practices, and latest methods of training for EMS providers.

Beginning his travels in Washington, DC, Dr. Das found that meetings with directors of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's Office of Emergency Medical Services and the National Emergency Number Association afforded good insights into the history of EMS and the development of our 911 system. In-depth visits to Boston EMS and to several academic institutions, including the Medical College of Wisconsin in Milwaukee, the University of Maryland, and George Washington University afforded substantial exposure to emergency medicine training programs. Dr. Das particularly enjoyed having the opportunity to share his experiences with large audiences at Drexel University's School of Public Health and with medical students of Indian heritage studying in Boston.

Dr. Das appreciated discussions of controversial issues in EMS, including challenges to the 'Golden Hour,' which holds that the first hour after an accident is the time in which the lives of a majority of critically injured trauma patients can be saved through rapid intervention and medical care. A theme that emerged throughout his travels is the paucity of research in EMS care and outcomes measurement, and the urgency of developing a culture of evidence-based EMS service delivery utilizing the latest scientific and technological information. Dr. Das will return to India committed to finding solutions to the challenges, shared with U.S. colleagues, of few EMS researchers, scarce financial resources, minimal investment on the part of EMS professionals in translational research, and a lack of data linking EMS with patient outcomes.

Complementing his topical meetings, Dr. Das visited various corporations and organizations including Miller Brewery in Milwaukee, where he gained "an eye-opening understanding of how bonding is of importance in leading a team, how decisions can be made not in meeting rooms but through sharing and networking, and even over beer drinking tables in an 'employee pub'." Some of the most important leadership examples Dr. Das carries back from this fellowship are of "leadership that allows innovation, in which each EMS is different, flexible enough to develop its own best practices yet confined by a voluntary acceptance of standards. Leadership has meant being at a crossroads and being courageous enough to choose one of the ways and own responsibility. Leadership in EMS has meant being ready to accept changes before they have been forced, and to upgrade technology and influence your team to accept it. This is the clear-cut message I carry back home as I set out to find the best way forward for India. Leadership is not of making a difference; it is of influencing others to make a decision."