AU Chairperson honours UCT ‘medicine giant’

African Union Commission Chairperson Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma was guest speaker at the inaugural Ralph Kirsch Golden Pen Award of the South African Medical Journal (SAMJ), at a gala dinner hosted by the Department of Medicine.

Some of our highlights

4 Undergraduate Research Day
7 Faculty rake in top honours and awards
6 ‘Senior’ Alumni have tea with the Dean
13 First Paediatric Centre for Infectious Disease Centre opened
Welcome to our final Faculty Newsletter for 2013!

The year is coming to an end in a flurry of activities, annual announcements and events.

Final examinations are dominating campus now. Some of our students have already completed their examinations, while others are still burning the midnight oil. Along with all my colleagues, we wish our students success for their hard work during 2013. For our final year students, I look forward to 26 November, when I will announce, for the first time as new Dean, the results of the undergraduate final year classes from the Barad Fuller balcony over the plaza, in keeping with tradition.

Over the past few weeks the Faculty has been buoyed by announcements of several awards and achievements, of both local and international standing. Congratulations to all the recipients on these inspiring accomplishments. This is a source of tremendous pride for us. I specifically want to pay tribute to the outgoing Heads of Department, Profs Laurie Kellaway (Human Biology) and Lorna Martin (Clinical Laboratory Sciences). We are very grateful for their leadership contributions to the Faculty.

A highlight has been the inaugural Ralph Kirsch Golden Pen Award sponsored by the South African Medical Journal (SAMJ), at which the African Union Commission Chairperson Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma was guest speaker. Other highlights include the opening of the Centre for Paediatric Infectious Disease at Red Cross War Memorial Children’s Hospital, the UCT Surgical Society receiving the ‘Most Outstanding Society Executive’ award, two break-through studies that can impact health here and globally, and my delightful meeting over tea with our Cape-based ‘senior’ alumni.

Last, but not least, we want to add our support for the Breast and Prostate cancer awareness months in October and November. We encourage you, your colleagues, friends and loved ones to learn about these diseases and appropriate prevention and early detection strategies.

Enjoy reading some of the Faculty’s highlights over the past two months, and please continue providing suggestions for improving on future Faculty newsletters.

Wim de Villiers

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New HODs for Faculty from January 2014

**HUMAN BIOLOGY**

Prof Malcolm Collins has been appointed as the HOD for the Department of Human Biology. He succeeds retiring HOD, Prof Laurie Kellaway.

**CLINICAL LABORATORY SCIENCES**

Prof Carolyn Williamson has been appointed as the Head of the Department of Clinical Laboratory Sciences. She succeeds Prof Lorna Martin who returns full-time to her forensic pathology work.
The inaugural Ralph Kirsch Golden Pen Award, honouring the former University of Cape Town Head of the Department of Medicine after whom it is named, was presented at a dinner with Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, South Africa’s former health minister and current African Union Chairperson, as guest-speaker.

“The late Professor Kirsch was a ‘giant in the field of medicine’,” says Head of Department of Medicine Professor Bongani Mayosi fondly of his predecessor, “and this award is a celebration of his exceptional contributions to the field of medicine in South Africa.” During his colourful career, Professor Kirsch edited six books, wrote chapters in 47 other books and authored 174 abstracts and 32 listed publications; his work also contributed to the formation of the South African Medical Association (SAMA), of which he was president at the time of his passing.

Dr Dlamini-Zuma concluded her keynote address on the status of health on the continent by speaking about Professor Kirsch’s contribution to medicine, referring to him as not only a doctor, but a researcher, a scientist, and above all, a mentor. Dr Dlamini-Zuma was among the first ministers of health from developing countries to introduce routine Hepatitis B vaccinations, based on advice from Professor Kirsch and other liver specialists in South Africa.

The South African Medical Journal (SAMJ) Ralph Kirsch Golden Pen Award, introduced by SAMJ Editor, Prof Janet Seggie, was established to recognise the journal’s most cited publication in the preceding three years. The first recipient is Prof Mike Sathekge of the University of Pretoria, who had the most cited article from 2009 to 2012 published in the SAMJ.

The event, held at the Marimba Restaurant, Cape Town International Convention Centre, was attended by the leadership of both Groote Schuur Hospital and UCT, as well as family, friends and colleagues of Prof Kirsch.
Our undergraduates once again shone at the Faculty’s 7th Undergraduate Research Day (URD) held in October, showing promise of a new cohort of young researchers in-the-making. The annual event showcases undergraduate student research over the past year, either as self-initiated research or as part of the course work for Health and Rehabilitation Science students or from MBChB students in years two to six.

The URD promotes the importance of research amongst undergraduate students and is designed to nurture an enthusiasm for scientific enquiry and formal evidence-based research. This fits in well with UCT’s ethos of being a research-driven university and the Faculty’s intention of producing world-class professionals who are life-long learners.

A record 12 oral presentations and 25 poster presentations were featured, having been selected from 44 entries by a panel of senior scientific staff members in the Faculty – an increase of 29% in entries compared with those of 2012. The quality of presentations was very impressive, as was remarked by the judges, who were drawn from senior clinical, basic sciences, health and rehabilitation sciences and public health academics. A visiting judge was no other than former UCT colleague, Emeritus Professor Janet Seggie, editor of the South African Medical Journal. Prizes were awarded for the best three presentations in both the oral and poster categories.

The Undergraduate Research Day Committee was chaired by Dr Virginia Zweigenthal. The event was organised by Carlette Hlungwani of the Research Office.

Deputy Dean of Undergraduate Student Affairs, Assoc Professor Gonda Perez, with the UG Research Day oral presentation winner Rachelle Gietzen

**AWARDS FOR ORAL PRESENTATIONS**

First prize – R4 000
Gietzen, Rachelle. Dilated cardiomyopathy in Duchenne muscular dystrophy at Red Cross Children’s Hospital

Joint 2nd prizes – R3 000
Scott, Alex. Assessment and management of pain in primary care
Kuttschreuter, Luke. Risk factors for peptic ulcer rebleeding

**AWARDS FOR POSTERS**

First Prize – R3 000
Stein, Gabriella. Pathological gambling and suicidality

Second Prize – R2 000
Dhlomo, Gugu; Kodua-Agyekum, Augusta. Biotensegrity Skeleton

Third prize – R1 000
Sebopa, Karabo; Wilson, Kendra. Understanding patient flow from presentation to admission in a district hospital emergency centre

Prize-winners of the day
A moving ‘Dedication Ceremony’ by second year students recently honoured those who had donated their bodies to science. Held annually at the end of the year, it is the final mark of respect before the bodies are laid to rest.

Medical students work with these bodies, or cadavers, to study human anatomy; this method of study acquaints students with what they usually only see in textbooks. Bodies are received by families of the deceased, or from a state donation of unclaimed bodies of prisoners or paupers.

Students’ tributes and thank you messages comprised live performances, including poetry recitals, a capella and group singing, as well as classical performances and a video montage. Audience members often joined in or clapped along as groups performed, making it a wonderful and heartfelt experience for all those in attendance.

The underlying message was the enormous privilege of having the opportunity to learn from ‘their’ cadavers, whom students name when they first ‘meet’.

A highlight was the emotional speech of former Dean Professor Marian Jacobs, when she spoke of how the policy on working with bodies had changed. In her days as a medical student of colour, she was only allowed to work on black females.

Families of loved ones whose bodies had been donated spoke with fondness of their late family members and gave students insight into their lives before their passing.

‘(My family) had no idea what to expect, it is difficult to put into words how deeply we were touched by the empathy and compassion the students showed in their wonderful ‘presentations’ (...) The personal way in which we, and indeed everyone, were all greeted and the sensitivity shown, contributed to this embracing atmosphere. If I, or we, had had any doubts (which we didn’t) about our decision, then that morning would have immediately dispelled them.’

STUDENTS

Students honour cadavers in moving ceremony

In the photographs above, students share the appreciation towards the families; representatives of two families share anecdotes about family members whose bodies were donated; and the family members pose with Department of Human Biology staff.
‘Senior’ alumni have tea with the Dean

The Dean recently hosted a delightful tea gathering for over 40 ‘senior’ alumni – those who graduated more than 50 years ago – to introduce himself as well as share his vision for the Faculty. Held in the MAC Club, the event turned out to be a very fruitful question-and-answer session.

“Themed Meet the Dean, this was the first in what we hope will be an annual get-together of our senior alumni,” says Joan Tuff, Alumni and Bequest Officer for the Faculty, and who organised the event. Joan organises four reunions a year for MBChB classes that graduated 15, 25, 40 and 50 years ago. She explained that, as the Faculty had not organised reunions after 50 years of graduation, it was felt that we should have an annual on-campus event for all senior alumni to keep them updated on developments in the Faculty.

Prior to introducing the Dean, former HOD of Medicine and UCT Vice-Chancellor Professor Stuart Saunders welcomed the alumni and thanked them for their excellent contributions to medicine in our country. Also present were our Deputy Deans. Alumni asked questions about transformation, the admissions policy, gender equity/women in medicine, and health professionals leaving the country.

The event was well attended and very positive feedback has been received, not only about the Faculty’s leadership, but also about the opportunity to come back to campus.

As one alumnus commented, “It was such a privilege to be enlightened by the very people who strive to maintain the excellent standard”.

Reunions 2013 are here!

The Dean, Prof Wim de Villiers, will welcome our alumni back to their alma mater at a cocktail reception every Friday night from 22 November to 13 December - our annual medical class reunions for those who graduated 15, 25, 40 and 50 years ago. A highlight on the Faculty’s calendar, the reunions this year will see over 200 alumni from the classes of 1963, 1973, 1988 and 1998 travel from around the globe to attend. The reunions run over three days from Friday to Sunday, so if you see ‘strangers’ walking around campus, needing directions to the MAC Club or IDM, your kind assistance will be most appreciated!
Emeritus Professor Sid Cywes recently received the “Lifetime Achievement in Paediatric Surgery” award, the highest award given by the World Federation of Associations of Paediatric Surgeons (WOFAPS) at their 4th World Congress in Berlin in October. WOFAPS was founded in 1974 and has grown to be the world representative body of National Paediatric Surgical Associations with a current membership of more than 100 countries. An inspiring role model and leader, Professor Cywes was First Charles FM Saint Professor of Paediatric Surgery and Head of Department of Paediatric Surgery at the University of Cape Town and Red Cross War Memorial Children’s Hospital (1975-1998).

Life-time Achievement honours: Emeritus Prof Cywes

Prof Tim Noakes is to be awarded a Lifetime Achievement Award at the National Business Awards on 15 November 2013 in acknowledgement of his expertise in the field of exercise research. Judges have unanimously voted that his commitment to, and involvement in, bringing awareness and change within the areas of empowerment and transformation within our broader business landscape since South Africa’s first democratic elections, makes his award nomination well-merited. He is one of the six recipients of the 2013 award.
Life-time Achievement honours: Prof Eric Batemen

PROFESSOR ERIC BATEMAN

Emeritus Professor Bateman is Director: UCT Lung Institute, and honorary consultant at the Division of Pulmonology at UCT. He has an outstanding record as a clinician scientist in South Africa in the field of pulmonology and related topics. He is highly regarded internationally and is in great demand as a speaker, collaborator and consultant in working groups. Prof Bateman is an international leader in research areas of asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease in developing countries, and in research and implementing methods for improving primary health care for chronic and infectious diseases in resource-poor settings.

Prof. Bateman showed his remarkable leadership qualities in raising funds for and building the UCT Lung Institute on the Faculty of Health Sciences Campus, and has run it for the last 13 years funded entirely from research. Even more remarkable has been its growth and research output under his directorship and research leadership. The motivation behind his development of the Lung Institute was to engage in population-wide interventions to improve respiratory care in South Africa. Over the past 13 years, what began as an intervention for assisting frontline clinicians in the integrated care of chronic respiratory diseases has developed into Primary Care 101. Developed over the past three years, this has now been accepted by the Minister of Health as the centre piece of his rejuvenation project for primary care clinics and is being rolled out country-wide.

Prof. Bateman’s full research record confirms Professor Bateman’s status as a clinician-researcher whose lifetime contribution to medical research both nationally and globally has been remarkable in its breadth and depth.

PROFESSOR KEERTAN DHEDA

Prof. Dheda is a professor of respiratory medicine, and Head of Division of Pulmonology, Department of Medicine at UCT and at Groote Schuur Hospital. During his research career, Prof. Dheda has made substantial contributions to the management and control of drug-resistant TB in South Africa. He has been internationally recognised for this by being awarded the 2010 International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease Scientific Award.

XDR-TB threatens to destabilise TB control in South Africa and several other regions of the world. However, there is hardly any data on which to base policy recommendations. The work that Prof. Dheda has published in the Lancet, together which other research results have shaped clinical definitions for treatment failure in XDR-TB, provided specific guidelines on how XDR-TB patients should be managed, and provided valuable data that informs and guides management decisions by the national TB programmes from resource-limited settings.

His work that demonstrated an increased risk for health-care workers developing drug-resistant TB makes it imperative that governments now take immediate measures to provide the resources required to enable all hospitals and clinics to implement the recommended WHO infection control procedures, which will go a long way to protect health-care workers and their patients from acquiring MDR/XDR-TB. Prof. Dheda’s report also heightens the urgency for all health facilities and laboratories to be equipped with the newer diagnostic testing platforms, so that all patients and health-care workers can be rapidly identified and appropriately isolated to minimise the risk of transmission within hospitals and the community.

This week he led a team, which published their findings in The Lancet showing that placing new rapid TB diagnostic technology (Gene Xpert) in a clinic was feasible when testing is performed by a nurse and this approach led to rapid diagnosis of drug-resistant TB and more patients being placed on treatment. The findings suggest that a health care worker-led diagnostic strategy could be useful to fight the disease in TB hotspots in the country.
The UCT Surgical Society executive has been awarded the "Most Outstanding Society Executive award" for 2013 at the recent UCT Student leadership awards held in October. Not bad for a society founded 7 years ago to generate undergraduate interest in surgery! Major successes of 2013 included co-founding the Southern African Student Surgical Society (SASSS), winning the bid to host the 2014 SASSS conference, the establishment of an innovative surgical skills partnership with the UCT Clinical Skills Department and the Laparoscopic skills training centre at Red Cross Hospital. This is a tribute to the entire 2013 society executive led by Ms Astrid Leusink (6th year MBChB).

The society's newly appointed president, Mr Tinashe Chandauka (5th year MBChB), has a bold vision, with a goal for the society to become a world-class African student surgical society at the frontier of 21st century undergraduate surgical skills and professional education.

"We want to make UCT proud," he says, "and our team has the explosive creativity, perseverance and support required to place UCT and our region at the fore of global surgery and undergraduate skills training." He adds that he is excited to be guiding this unique team under a mentor like Professor Delawir Kahn. The society is already gearing up for 2014; it will be launching a global surgical society, the International Association of Student Surgical Societies (IASSS) by hosting an international student symposium with the support and partnership of the surgical societies from University of Toronto, Lund University (Sweden), University of Witwatersrand, University of Botswana and University of Namibia, Lithuania, and as far afield as Romania.
**Inaugurals**

Prof Keertan Dedha

‘Back to the Future: Advances in Pulmonary Medicine and TB Control’

[link to article](#)

Prof Trevor Sewell

‘A Journey into Inner Space: A view of Biology from the Atomic Perspective’

[link to article](#)

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**UCT study wins prize at world critical care conference**

UCT researchers’ efforts to determine the role of vitamin C in septic shock patients were rewarded when their poster presentation not only won the research prize from the Critical Care Society of Southern Africa, but also the equivalent prize from the worldwide federation.

This means the research presented by Dr Lauren Hill from UCT’s Division of Critical Care was deemed the most important scientific work at this year’s critical care conference. This 11th congress of the World Federation of Societies of Intensive and Critical Care Medicine took place in Durban from 28 August to 1 September.

The winning poster was scored on presentation and scientific value and received the overall prize for best research presentation at the world congress. It contained the findings of a baseline study in which Hill and fellow UCT researchers found that oxidative stress is associated with dysfunction of the vascular system in a way that is linked to illness severity. Oxidative stress is the overproduction of cell-damaging molecules under conditions of, for example, low vitamin C status.

“The low vitamin C status is not necessarily a nutritional indicator, but is a consequence of septic shock,” says Hill. During septic shock the body becomes overwhelmed by infection, which leads to an inability to maintain blood pressure. Patients with septic shock have a high mortality rate with one in two or three patients dying as a result of it.

“We’re particularly interested in the potential of high doses of vitamin C as an adjunct to treatment for patients suffering from septic shock because it’s a relatively cheap intervention, is easy to administer, and seems relatively safe even at high dosage,” adds Hill.

Commenting on the accolades, Hill said: “Of course it is good to have one’s work acknowledged by one’s peers like this, as we always try to do research that is relevant.” Collaborators in this study included a Malawian master’s student, Kondwani Katundu, as well as several consultants, namely Professor Lance Michell, Dr Malcolm Miller and Dr Jenna Piercy, from UCT/Groote Schuur's multidisciplinary Intensive Care Unit. Hill also acknowledges the support of Dr Ivan Joubert and her scientific collaborator, Dr Lester Davids from Department of Human Biology, whose antioxidant lab provides technical support for the scientific assays necessary to perform research of this kind.

Story by Abigail Calata. Image by Raymond Botha.
Two new Members of the Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSA)

Deputy Dean Prof Tania Douglas and Director of SATVI Prof Willem Hanekom have been elected Members of the Academy of Science of South Africa. This is an honour reserved for the country’s most outstanding scientists.

PRIME CEO wins Alan Pifer Award

PRIME CEO Associate Professor Crick Lund is the winner of the Alan Pifer Award for 2013. The award is one of the most prestigious awards of the university; it is the Vice-Chancellor’s annual prize in recognition of outstanding welfare-related research. The award winner must have shown a contribution via research to the advancement and welfare of South Africa’s disadvantaged people.

Associate Professor Lund’s work on MHaPP, PRIME, AFFIRM, EMERALD and other multi-national projects is at the cutting edge of global mental health research, as well as his influential contributions to mental health policy in South Africa and other African countries make him an excellent choice. Associate Professor Lund follows in the footsteps of his mentor, Prof Alan Flisher, in winning this award.

Distinguished Service Award

Prof Astrid Berg has been awarded the Distinguished Service Award by the Western Cape branch of the Society of Psychiatrists of South Africa (SASOP). This is a prestigious award, intended to pay tribute to a member or non-member of SASOP for a lifetime of service and achievement in mental health.

Karl Storz Fellow wins SAPSTA award

Dr Stanley Machoki Mugambi, a Karl Storz Fellow attached to the Department of Paediatrics and Child Health, has won the best research project presentation at the South African Paediatric Surgery Trainees Association (SAPSTA) meeting which was held in Stellenbosch in September.

SATVI’s Dr Thomas Scriba wins prestigious award

Dr Thomas Scriba of the South African Tuberculosis Vaccine Initiative (SATVI) has been awarded The Royal Society of South Africa’s Meiring Naude Medal for 2014.

This medal, presented to exceptional young scientists under the age of 35, is awarded for Tom’s contribution to science in South Africa in the field of tuberculosis immunology and TB vaccines.

Foundation for Alcohol Research (ABMRF) Grant

Dr Samantha Brooks has received an ABMRF grant that will support her addictions-related imaging research going forwards. This award is typically given to outstanding post-doctoral fellows to help them bridge the gap until they are able to get NIH or Wellcome funding.

Dr Henderson passes M Phil with distinction

Dr Terri Henderson has passed her certificate examination in child & adolescent psychiatry, as well as passed her M Phil thesis with distinction. This speaks not only to her exceptional abilities, but also to the high quality of training and research in the Division of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry.

Best registrar research award for 2013

Dr Shaheen Kader, will receive the best registrar research award for 2013 at the SASOP awards ceremony. Bearing in mind the huge clinical workload of registrars, it is wonderful to see the high quality of their M Med research over the past few years.

Patent awarded for brain imaging device

Dr Fleur Howells, a lecturer in neuroscience, has won a patent for a device that minimises head movement during brain imaging. Dr Fleur’s discovery holds potential advances for both research and clinical work.

World Design Cape Town 2014 Capital Project for Lentegeur Spring Project

The Lentegeur Spring Project (featured in our August newsletter) has been awarded World Design Cape Town 2014 Capital Project status – see page 18.
Dr Tolu Oni was recently elected into membership of the South African Young Academy of Science. Dr Oni is a physician and epidemiologist and is currently working as a Senior Research Medical Officer within the Clinical Infectious Disease Research Initiative.

As a SAYAS member, she aims to work to encourage public engagement and a cross-disciplinary discourse on the determinants of health; and to engage public, private, academic, governmental and non-governmental sectors in the translation of research findings into policy and practice.

Dr Oni strives to actively promote a coordinated approach to engagement with other scientific communities, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa and the Global South, to identify creative strategies to address complex population health issues.

PhD candidate Ms Shareefa Dalvie is the winner of a competition to sequence the first full human genome on African soil. The competition, run by Stellenbosch University’s (SU) DNA Sequencing Unit, enabled Shareefa to do a free sequence run on its SOLiD 5500xl Next Generation Sequencer.

Shareefa’s research focuses on understanding the genetic factors underlying bipolar disorder. This study involved sequencing the genome of a single individual whose family members’ genomes had previously been sequenced in the United States.

Her project is being supervised by Prof Raj Ramesar at the Division of Human Genetics and Prof Dan Stein at the Department of Psychiatry and Mental Health at the University of Cape Town. According to Prof Ramesar, technology like this adds great value to larger scale continental efforts on studying human diseases. Prof Stein noted that the fact that this work was done on a psychiatric disorder sends out an important message about the public health relevance and neurobiological complexity of these conditions.
New Paediatric Centre a first for infectious diseases in South Africa

Infectious diseases account for more than 65% of all under-five mortality counts in the country—statistics the newly launched Centre for Childhood Infectious Diseases and the Research Centre for Adolescent Health will tackle head-on. Attached to the Red Cross War Memorial Children’s Hospital, the new centre is the first paediatric clinical research centre in a South African (and African) children's hospital, clustering research and clinical practice under one roof. It was built at a cost of just under R21 million with funds raised by the Children’s Hospital Trust.

Speaking at the launch, head of the hospital's and UCT's Paediatric Infectious Diseases Unit, Professor Brian Eley, described it as a milestone in both patient care and subspecialist training.

"The centre allows us to expand our outpatient clinical service, increase support for children with drug-resistant HIV infection and complicated tuberculosis, and conduct on-site training for health professionals from level-1 clinics. It will support the province’s entire network of primary and secondary level facilities managing children with infectious diseases."

Importantly, the centre will train the country’s next generation of paediatric infectious disease subspecialists. The Unit has already trained the first three paediatric infectious diseases subspecialists to qualify in South Africa, and has begun training the first non-South African paediatrician, a Nigerian national.

"We hope to make a sizeable contribution towards training paediatric infectious diseases leaders for our continent in the next few years," Eley said.

The new centre has its roots in the hospital's HIV clinic, established by Dr John Burgess and Professor Gregory Hussey in the 1990s. Over the years this has been transformed into a comprehensive, tertiary-level infectious diseases service, caring for children with complex or advanced infectious diseases and children with underlying primary immunodeficiencies and unusual infections.

Head of the Department of Paediatrics and Child Health and director of the School of Child and Adolescent Health at UCT and the Red Cross, Professor Heather Zar, said there was an inextricable link between excellent clinical care and research, particularly in developing nations.

“This centre will provide a world-class facility to enable clinical research in the most pressing issues in child health,” she added, “impacting the health of children in South Africa and beyond.”

Keynote speaker Premier Helen Zille addressed the importance of partnerships, saying that it is in health and education that people have the most power to build an enterprise in partnerships.
Chronic diseases, such as cancer, heart failure and arthritis, are the focus of huge international attention. At UCT, departments in the Faculties of Health Sciences, Science, and Engineering and the Built Environment are engaging on treating patients with chronic diseases.

Organised by Assoc Prof Thomas Franz from UCT's Chris Barnard Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery and UCT's Research Office, and funded by the British High Commission in Pretoria, the Technology Innovation Agency and UCT's Research Office, the event aimed to enhance international collaborations and enable South Africa and the UK to access high-value multilateral funding for interdisciplinary research and innovation to advance understanding, prevention and treatment of chronic diseases.

The workshop showcased the importance and impact of interdisciplinarity, with topics ranging from fundamental mechanics and physics of cells’ migration in cancer, advanced computational modelling in heart diseases, and a new generation of arthroscopic medical devices using atomic force microscopy for early diagnosis of arthritis to the potential of mechanics in fighting HIV/aids and malaria.

The speaker consortium hailed from the United Kingdom (University of Southampton, University College London, Simpleware Ltd, Continuum Blue Ltd), Germany (Friedrich-Alexander University Erlangen-Nuremberg), Spain (Institute of Bioengineering of Catalonia) and South Africa (University of Cape Town).

The workshop was opened by Professor Danie Visser, UCT’s Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Research, and Mr Chris Trott, the British Consul-General, and attracted fifty delegates, including established academics and clinicians, junior researchers and students from health sciences, to science and engineering.

In subsequent meetings, the consortium identified a number of research and innovation concepts to advance research in cell mechanics and mechanobiology and accelerate the translation into the clinic for treatment, management and prevention of chronic diseases.

A highlight of the event was the discussion of the outcomes of workshop and meetings with the UK Minister of Science and Universities, Rt. Hon. David Willetts, MP, and a UK delegation from UK Research Councils.

Story by Thomas Franz and Robert Morrell
INCLUSIVE HEALTHCARE INNOVATION

SUMMIT ’14
DESIGNING SOLUTIONS, ADDRESSING NEEDS

AN INITIATIVE OF THE BERTHA CENTRE

Igniting Healthcare Innovation In Africa

29-30 January 2014
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Healthcare in South Africa and Africa is facing a myriad of challenges in delivering care to those who need it most. Now more than ever, innovation is required to develop solutions that can improve the delivery of healthcare in Africa in an inclusive, effective and affordable manner. These solutions must transcend current challenges in the system to improve health outcomes for patients and also to change the routines, responsibility and values of our healthworkers responsible for delivering the care.

How can we ignite inclusive innovation in Africa?

On 29 & 30 January 2014, local and international healthcare leaders, practitioners and innovators will gather in Cape Town for the first Inclusive Healthcare Innovation Summit.

Are you an innovator or influencer in the government, private health industry, academia, not for profit or in the community?

This gathering will be a platform inviting the active participation of the whole health community to share, learn about needs-based innovations in different dimensions and to co-create new solutions that can bring about health systems transformation.

Don’t miss this dynamic and stimulating event to connect with strategic partners and thought leaders in this field.

Together we can pioneer new solutions for a healthier African future.

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A patient at Groote Schuur Hospital has become the first in the Western Cape to undergo surgery for a brain tumour using intra-operative fluorescence, a new technique that lights up the affected area of the brain.

Dr Sally Röthemeyer, a consultant Neurosurgeon at Groote Schuur Hospital (GSH), conducted the six-hour operation on a 52-year old patient who was later discharged. He is due to return to the Hospital soon to commence radiotherapy under the management of Dr Jeanette Parkes of UCT’s and GSH’s Division of Radiation Oncology.

Malignant brain tumours are one of the greatest challenges in modern medicine and limited progress has been made in the field over the past decades. Although tumours like germinomas and medulloblastomas can be cured with aggressive treatment, this is not the case for gliomas, the commonest form of brain tumour.

Treatment usually entails surgical resection followed by radiotherapy and chemotherapy and while surgery alone is never curative, the extent of removal plays an important role in determining duration - and quality - of survival.

The greatest challenge in removing such tumours is to protect and preserve normal brain function. This is particularly difficult when neurosurgeons aren’t able to distinguish between normal brain and tumour-infiltrated brain.

But the new technique gives the neurosurgeon a colour-coded map to help locate the tumour.

The technique uses a drug called 5-ALA, which has only recently become available in South Africa. This is administered just before surgery and is preferentially taken up by the tumour, which literally lights up under the operating microscope.

Röthemeyer was instructed in the use of this technique by Professor Walter Stummer, chairperson of neurosurgery at Muenster in Germany.

Head of UCT’s and GSH’s Division of Neurosurgery Professor Graham Fieggen has hailed this as a major breakthrough in the care offered to South African patients with malignant brain tumours and paid tribute to Röthemeyer’s skill in successfully tackling such challenging cases.

“These tumours are known as glioblastoma multiforme as they come in various shapes and sizes, are often highly invasive and terribly vascular, making surgery extremely demanding.”

Fieggen was first convinced of the value of this approach in 1998 while a visiting fellow in epilepsy surgery in Munich, where Stummer pioneered the technique.

Röthemeyer is no stranger to innovation. She recently became the first neurosurgeon in the public sector to implant a motor cortex stimulator for intractable pain. She has risen through the ranks to head one of the neurosurgical firms at Groote Schuur. Her chief interests are brain tumour surgery and functional neurosurgery, especially the management of epilepsy and pain. She intends to continue her innovative ways in developing the first deep brain stimulation programme in the public sector.

Source: UCT CMD
Laughter indeed the best medicine

It is not every day that you see staff members being caajoled into laughing with gusto during work hours, but this was the case during the Laugh Therapy session on ‘Stress-Free Day’ for the Health Sciences Faculty on 10 October 2013. An initiative of UCT’s Human Resources Department, the Laugh Therapy session was one of its activities as part of the range of services throughout the year to help staff members cope with stress and challenging situations.

“What do you lose in not laughing? Absolutely nothing”, explains facilitator Natalie Mercer to her new group of converts. Billed as an opportunity to “unwind and relax” attendees of the Laugh Therapy session must have been surprised to leave the event with aching muscles; but unlike conventional muscle aches, this pain was the attendees’ gain.

Research on the subject of laughter therapy shows that it aids in stress relief and that even 20 seconds of laughter could be as good for the lungs as three minutes spent on a rowing machine. Laughter therapy is suitable for everyone, although most therapists work within the healthcare profession or in the workplace, where laughter is used as a means of relieving stress.

SA health deans convene on campus

The Dean, Prof Wim de Villiers, recently hosted a meeting of the deans of faculties of health sciences at universities in South Africa. The deans meet quarterly to discuss matters of mutual interest.

From left: Dr Reno Morar (UCT), Prof Eric Buch (Pretoria), Prof Jimmy Volmink (Stellenbosch), Prof Errol Holland (Limpopo), Prof Wim de Villiers (UCT), Prof Sharon Fonn (Wits), Prof Gert van Zyl (Free State), Prof Mac Lukhele (Wits), Prof Khaya Mfenyana (Walter Sisulu), Prof Wezile Chitha (Walter Sisulu).
The Programme for Improving Mental Health (PRIME) partnered with Parliament for a symposium on World Mental Health Day to take stock of the progress made in terms of improving mental health services and integrating it into the public health system.

Participants included persons living with mental illness, researchers and academics, policy makers from government, MP’s across the political spectrum and civil society organisations.

The national mental health policy which was adopted by the National Health Council in July 2013 was presented. The policy is a culmination of a broad and participatory policy making process, including provincial summits, and consultation with more than 4000 stakeholders countrywide. The policy outlines time specific goals and which role players are responsible for the implementation of different parts of the plan.

NGOs, including the South African Depression and Anxiety Group (SADAG) and the South African Federation for Mental Health (SAFMH), highlighted the role that they perform in terms of providing mental health care, health promotion, prevention and communication for South Africans.

Three mental health care patients, Oscar January, Elsabe Brits and Samantha Hanslo, shared with participants their personal experiences, and urged decision makers not to turn a blind eye to mental health, and persons living with mental illness.

The Principal Investigator for PRIME South Africa, Prof Inge Petersen, shared with participants how PRIME was piloting and evaluating packages of care at a National Health Insurance (NHI) pilot site in the Dr Kenneth Kaunda District of the North West Province, with a view to rolling this out nationally.

“Mental health is one of the fundamental building blocks of social and economic development,” says Assoc Prof Crick Lund, CEO of PRIME. “Several studies have shown that improved mental health and social functioning go hand-in-hand with improved individual and household economic status in low and middle-income countries. So if we are truly going to develop sustainably, we need to pay attention to the mental health and well-being of our communities, particularly poor and marginalised communities.”

Story by Amit Makan

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EVENTS

UCT’s PRIME hosts World Mental Health Day at Parliament

‘Several studies have shown that improved mental health and social functioning go hand-in-hand with improved individual and household economic status in low and middle-income countries’

Breaking news!

The Lentegeur Spring Project - A Project of the Lentegeur Hospital Facilities Board, is to be recognised in the official programme of World Design Capital Cape Town 2014 (WDC 2014). Exceptional projects that demonstrate scale, impact and/or a contribution to the WDC 2014 vision have been selected to form part of the programme. With approximately 450 projects being recognised, this is a great achievement.
Women from Hanover Park, Delft and Athlone photographed health conditions in their areas as part of a photo-voice project to have community members identify health rights challenges in their community, and then through reflection on the photos and opportunities for action.

Initiated by UCT-based civil society project The Learning Network for Health and Human Rights (LN), the photo project aims to explore how communities and ordinary people make sense of and use their right to health as a tool for social change in health and the conditions needed for this.

The women took photographs largely related to the underlying conditions needed for health. Images were of environmental pollution, substance abuse, nutrition, the effects of crime and a need for safe spaces to relax.

A grant from the Gordon Institute for Performing and Creative Arts (GIPCA) enabled the LN to exhibit the photos. The exhibition was opened in October at Hiddingh Campus, and coupled with a symposium to explore how the community voice can be more effective in shaping how health care is delivered and how the conditions needed for healthy lives are achieved. It was attended by 170 participants, including academics, NGO's involved in health and the Department of Health.

The exhibition was also displayed in the Central Library in Cape Town from the 07th – 16th of October and in venues in Athlone, Delft and Hanover Park in the last week of October.

NEW DEVELOPMENTS

UCT/Brown collaborate to train new cadre of HIV social scientists

UCT has teamed up with US Ivy League school Brown University to develop a new cadre of HIV social scientists who can provide sustainable, interdisciplinary solutions to HIV/AIDS in South Africa, where one in six adults has HIV. Some 6.2 million South Africans live with the disease – the world’s largest HIV-positive population. The project, named ‘Partnership for the Next Generation of HIV Social Science in South Africa’, will see the social sciences playing a greater role in the response to HIV. It will be run in UCT and Brown’s public health schools, and will be funded by the National Institutes of Health to the tune of US$1.9 million (over R19 million) over five years.

The co-principal investigator from UCT is senior researcher Dr Christopher Colvin, an anthropologist working in the Centre for Infectious Disease Epidemiology and Research (CIDER) in the School of Public Health and Family Medicine. His work integrates social science perspectives into public health research on HIV/AIDS, gender, community health workers and health activism.

"The social science and public health responses to HIV have both been tremendously important, and many at UCT are at the forefront of this research," said Colvin. He adds that these responses have often developed in parallel, rather than in close collaboration. This grant aims to integrate the social sciences into the core of our public health teaching and research on HIV in the School.

Brown’s participation will be led by South-African-born Professor Mark Lurie, who has studied the sub-Saharan Africa’s HIV epidemic for more than a decade.

"The new grant is a wonderful opportunity for Brown to contribute to training the next generation of South African social scientists, whose work is aimed at better understanding and preventing HIV infection in the country with the most severe epidemic," said Lurie.

A key platform for delivering this initiative is the Faculty’s proposed new Division of Social and Behavioural Sciences in the School of Public Health and Family Medicine, to be headed by Colvin. This new teaching division will be supported by expertise and collaboration at UCT and Brown. It will contribute to curricular development, training and professional development within the Division and the School, through collaborations with HIV-focused social and behavioural scientists at Brown. Outside of the classroom, it will also create opportunities for collaborative, interdisciplinary and innovative research in HIV social science, particularly at postgraduate and postdoctoral levels.

Acknowledgements: Helen Swingler
In September, the Division of Forensic Medicine hosted an Open Day for thirty Grade 11 learners. Over the years, the Division has received many requests from learners to job-shadow in the field of forensic medicine; this however meant that the learners would visit individually and it became time-consuming for the professionals taking on these learners. The Division thus decided to host an Open Day instead.

Learners were mostly from Cape Town schools, but some even travelled from Hermanus and Ceres to attend the event. Speakers included Pathologist Dr L Liebenberg, Biomedical Forensic Science course co-ordinator Dr M Heyns, and the SAPS Forensic Laboratory. The morning was dedicated to presentations and in the afternoon, there were interactive sessions covering crime scene scenario, fingerprinting, shoe printing, anthropology and histopathology.

The feedback received from learners was positive and the Division hopes to host the event annually as a contribution to social responsiveness.

Acknowledgements: Michelle Perrins

The Divisions of Human Genetics, Medical Biochemistry and Cell Biology hosted another successful Grade 11 Learners' Open Day - their fifth, on the 2nd September 2013.

This initiative aims to provide "career insight" and provides the opportunity for high school learners and teachers to explore basic genetic concepts as well as career opportunities in forensics, medicine and research, through a programme of workshops, discussions, hands-on experience and simulations. On the day, 133 learners and 25 teachers attended from 28 schools across the Western Cape.

Learners remarked that the successful event "gave a clear picture of what UCT has to offer", while others said it was "very informative and interactive".

Acknowledgements: Michelle Perrins
The Health Sciences Student Council (HSSC) 2014 is the representative team of undergraduate students that wants to ensure that the next generation of leaders is empowered. Empowerment can be achieved mainly by offering people knowledge as one leader once said, “My people perish because of lack of knowledge.”

HSSC 2014 aims to fulfill this vision by being visible and by enforcing collaboration with various structures, namely the deanship, the med-school societies, the physiotherapy and the postgrad student councils, other UCT faculty student councils, and the SRC. This will help achieve our goal of being visible.

Some of the signatory projects lined-up in our “five-year plan” are:

1. The health wellness week
2. A music festival to raise funds as part of outreach
3. Formulating an inter-society forum policy
4. Collaborating with the Tygerberg Student Council on social and academic events
5. And not forgetting working with RAG and the SRC in raising funds in order to expand what we can do.

However, it is necessary to point out that a nation without a vision is a stale nation, hence it is necessary for the followers to know and understand what the leader wants to do for better functionality. Taking note of that, it was imperative to us as the HSSC to know what our leader, Professor Wim De Villiers, wanted to achieve so that we can have events that are in line with his goals. This shows unity within the Faculty as all governance bodies are in sync. Collaboration is what we aim to do for better student governance in the Faculty. At the end of our term, we hope to have empowered the next generation of student leaders.

HSSC 2013/2014 Members

Chairperson: Jason Magaela
Deputy Chair: Tumiso Lenong
Secretary Gen: Zinhle Radebe
Treasurer: Tegan Effting
Academic Representatives:
MBChB: Nkosinathi Mdlalose
Health and Rehab: Snenhlanhla Ndlovu
Outreach: Bongani Nghondzweni
Safety and Health Awareness: Monwabisi Pumlomo
IT & Media: Zenzo Chakara
Marketing and Fundraising: Frederick Lekalakala
Transformation: Olo Toni
Sports & Entertainment: Sikhanyiso Pona

HSSC CONTACT DETAILS
Email: mgljab001@myuct.ac.za
Contact details: 073 496 4874

STUDENT EXCELS IN MATHS OLYMPIAD

Kira Dusterwald, a second year student in the Faculty, was recently placed 9th in the SA Tertiary Mathematics Olympiad. Kira’s rank in the competition is impressive as she competed against students from across the country, many of whom are Mathematics majors and Honours students.
Students’ storybook inspires TB messages in primary schools

A group of fourth year MBChB students have developed a story book to inform young people and children about tuberculosis and issues related to the disease. This came after students were invited by Breede River Hospice to assist with research and take part in a health promotion activity.

The story book idea came about as research showed traditional informative literature and messages about TB to be judgmental and even criminalising. Research suggested that a patient-centred friendly approach was needed to improve health outcomes.

After getting assistance from experts in storytelling and design, the students approached Grindrod Bank, who decided to sponsor the idea and print enough copies of the book for local schools. The students then went to each school, and sat in class while the teacher read the TB story.

The TB story book for children shares the following messages: Diagnosis of TB must be made at clinic; Hospice assists with TB treatment support; Children can help remind parents about treatment; General health behaviour/ lifestyle; Empowering children with knowledge of TB; Hospice does not only look after the dying.

Since the book was launched in June 2013, local teachers believe the book has improved the children’s knowledge about TB and how hospice helps people with TB treatment, care and support. Now children are giving their own TB messages: “Do not cough into someone else. Do not touch others’ spit. Otherwise you can quickly get TB.” “Watch out for the night sweat symptoms of TB.” “If you have TB, you must go to the clinic. TB is catching”. In mid-August, the Grade 3 teacher at Dagbreek Primary, Mrs Bailey, visited Breede River Hospice with a noticeboard display filled with the children’s stories under the title: “We learn about TB. Thank you hospice.”

Shawco recently held a Movember awareness day. Supporters had many options of moustache styles to be photographed with, to raise awareness of prostate cancer.

“Do not cough into someone else. Do not touch others’ spit. Otherwise you can quickly get TB.”

Primary school learner’s TB message
The Institute of Infectious Disease and Molecular Medicine has introduced a simplified acronym (IDM) and a new logo that form part of a suite of new promotional materials that are being developed to mark the tenth anniversary of the Institute, which will take place in 2014.

IDM Name Change

The Institute of Infectious Disease and Molecular Medicine has introduced a simplified acronym (IDM) and a new logo that form part of a suite of new promotional materials that are being developed to mark the tenth anniversary of the Institute, which will take place in 2014.

Note that the full name remains the same. The re-branding and marketing exercise was approved by the Management Board of the Institute. The choice of acronym and logo was made after extensive discussions with Institute Members, and following consultation with the Deaneary. The use of “IDM” as the Institute’s new acronym was approved by the URC’s Committee for Research Reviews, and endorsed by the Heads of Department Committee of the Faculty of Health Sciences, and approved by the Faculty Board.

IDM

INSTITUTE OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE AND MOLECULAR MEDICINE

26 November 2013

The results of our final year UNDERGRADUATE students are announced in the student plaza in the presence of lecturers, families and friends.

GRADUATIONS 2013: 11 DECEMBER
DOCTORATES: 17 DECEMBER

SUPPORT Riad Moosa’s new show to raise funds for teaching in the Faculty

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN
DEPARTMENT OF MEDICINE

GENERAL PHYSICIANS CONFERENCE ~ 2014
THURSDAY 20 – SUNDAY 23 FEBRUARY 2014
CAPE TOWN INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION CENTRE

A CASE-BASED APPROACH TO COMMON MEDICAL DISORDERS

- The conference will bring together a panel of expert speakers from Academic Institutions in Southern Africa & the United Kingdom

INTERNATIONAL SPEAKERS FROM THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS OF LONDON

Professor Mark McDonald is a Professor of Clinical Neurosciences at St John’s Hospital for Innsbruck, Austria. He is also an Honorary Senior Fellow at The Royal College of Physicians. He is the Chair of the International Advisory Board of the Royal College of Physicians. He is also a member of the Education and Training Committee of the Royal College of Physicians. He is also a member of the Education and Training Committee of the Royal College of Physicians of London.

Professor Anne Black is the President of the Royal College of Physicians. She is a member of the International Advisory Board of the Royal College of Physicians. She is also a member of the Education and Training Committee of the Royal College of Physicians. She is also a member of the International Advisory Board of the Royal College of Physicians. She is also a member of the Education and Training Committee of the Royal College of Physicians. She is also a member of the International Advisory Board of the Royal College of Physicians.