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Our Centenary - almost 'year'!



“**T**his faculty is on the cusp of a very important year,” says an excited Prof Marian Jacobs, Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences. “In 2012 we celebrate our centenary year - the 100th anniversary of the birth of academic health sciences in South Africa!”

And we have so much to celebrate, she adds proudly. She talks about the remarkable results the faculty has achieved, educating some of the finest minds in the country and producing some of the greatest medical advances to come out of Africa.

“And when we look back in time, it’s exciting to see how the faculty has changed over the years - we’ve modernised our curriculum, transformed our demographics, and, most importantly, continue to reach out to potential students and communities that would not have had access to the faculty and its opportunities before,” says the Dean. The Faculty now educates around 4 000 students each year across multiple disciplines, and boasts a strong reputation for research excellence, producing an average of more than one new research publication every day. It plays a vital role in supporting the country’s future health practitioners and medical researchers.

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CENTENARY BRANDING

The branding draws on the colours of the faculty (blue, gold and red) to illustrate the three themes of the centenary (reflecting on the past, celebrating the present, building the future). We have linked them as follows:

Blue - reflecting on the past. It is also the UCT corporate colour. The text in the logo is in this colour.

Gold - celebrating the present, linking ‘gold’ to our achievements.

Red - building the future. Red is the faculty’s colour. We have linked this with building the future of the faculty.

Branding will be displayed on all faculty communications. Staff, students and academics are encouraged to use the branding on their presentations and in their communication material during 2012. Electronic versions will be distributed by the end of the year.



Prof Jacobs, who is spear-heading the centenary project while on sabbatical leave, believes the centenary is an ideal opportunity to reflect on the impact and the challenges of the faculty’s past, celebrate its impressive achievements, and most importantly, build its future. These in fact form the key themes around which the centenary will be celebrated, she adds - *reflecting on the past, celebrating the present, and building the future.*

A major focus for the centenary campaign will be to fundraise in support of our efforts to build the future. “This platform will be used to take our faculty to new heights and with renewed vigour,” she explains.

The Dean is very excited about the opportunity created through the centenary to build the faculty’s future. She rattles off a range of projects, including increasing our student intake, expanding our teaching platform to district and rural sites, upgrading our physical infrastructure and accommodating our ever-increasing post-graduate pool.

“But this will require strong leadership and strategic planning, and we will also need to mobilise sufficient resources to make this happen. So we are engaging with our partners to support our efforts. And of



Prof Marian Jacobs and Project Manager, Yolande Harley at work.

course, to join us in celebrating this wonderful achievement”, she says.

And on the subject of centenary activities scheduled to run from January to December 2012, the Dean is upbeat about the planning, being driven by Dr Yolande Harley who is project managing the centenary campaign. Harley says that the plans are taking shape, but the challenge has been to co-ordinate the involvement of a number of internal and external partners, who themselves have busy schedules! The priority has been to finalise the branding for the campaign, and this is now being concluded.

“We want the centenary celebrations to be inclusive, and invite all staff, academics, students and alumni to participate in the range of activities , so keep an eye open for our centenary info updates,” says Prof Jacobs.

CONFIRMED ACTIVITIES

- Special SAMJ Centenary Issue JUNE 2012
- Departmental activities to be announced on an ongoing basis, such as essay and art competitions
- Library display
- Photographic exhibition
- Film piece
- Inter-faculty events, like a concert
- Renaming of seminar

REFLECTING ON THE PAST

CELEBRATING THE PRESENT

BUILDING THE FUTURE

Dean’s Corner

There has been a flurry of activity in the faculty. We’ve had much to celebrate as our faculty continues to garner accolades for excellence. As always, awards and successful completion of courses have dominated this period, and we are so proud of the achievements of many of our colleagues and students. To all those who have been recognised for their excellence in their fields, we salute you!

Recognition of achievement is also evident in other ways – visits by Ministers to our research groups to engage with them on their insights, sharing platforms at international events with eminent peers are examples in this newsletter.

Critical to our success has been the incredible work of all our support staff who are indeed the backbone of the faculty. This often unseen work keeps the faculty running like a well-oiled machine. Your hard work is acknowledged through our recent

final performance assessments, and we thank each and everyone of you for continuing to contribute to the valuable work of the faculty.

We also welcome back to their Alma Mater our alumni from 1961, 1971, 1981, 1986, and 1996, many of whom have travelled from overseas especially to attend their class reunions. This is always a highlight on the faculty’s calendar, as it helps us to maintain ongoing links with our past students, many of whom give generously to the faculty to support our work.

These achievements highlight why we have every reason to galvanise as much support for our continued growth through our centenary celebrations next year. I call on all in the faculty community to join in the many activities being organised to celebrate this momentous occasion.

Regards

Sue Kidson, Acting Dean

World AIDS Day, 1 December

experts say mental health care is important

People living with mental illness may act in ways that increase their risk of HIV infection. Equally, persons living with HIV/AIDS, and more so, pregnant mothers, are highly vulnerable to developing depression and other mental illnesses. A number of projects led by the University of Cape Town are working on integrating mental health services into HIV, primary and maternal health care.

As we mark World AIDS Day and the international community consolidates its fight against the epidemic, recent research points to a hidden public health problem that plays a key role in perpetuating HIV: that of mental illness.

So what has mental illness got to do with HIV/AIDS?

The answer lies in the fact that people living with mental illness may act in ways that increases their risk of HIV infection. For example, a person with a substance abuse condition would be more likely to indulge in risky sexual behaviour, thereby increasing his or her risk of HIV infection. Equally, those who already have HIV/AIDS can suffer from mental illness as a result of their HIV status. This is due to various factors, including the effect of HIV on the brain, the psychological effects of being diagnosed with HIV, and the associated stigma and discrimination. This effect is particularly strong for pregnant mothers. Research indicates that many women only find out about their HIV infection (the incidence of which is high amongst women of child bearing age) after being screened for antenatal care. As a result of both pregnancy and HIV independently rendering women vulnerable to mental health problems, this makes them "doubly vulnerable" to developing depression and other mental illnesses, according to clinical psychologist and Research Coordinator for the Perinatal Mental Health Project, Thandi van Heyningen.

"The link between being diagnosed with HIV and depression is quite logical," says A/Prof Crick Lund of the UCT Centre for Public Mental Health. "If you have just found out that you have a life-threatening illness, particularly if it is an illness that is likely to affect your unborn child, you are likely to feel down and despondent. If you combine that with

living in circumstances of poverty and having few social supports, this can rapidly lead to depression, which may have a series of negative consequences for the mother and her infant. A brief screening tool and supportive counselling intervention, integrated into routine care, can carry multiple benefits for the mother and her infant, including improved mother-infant bonding and better ARV adherence. Such interventions need not be costly, but the return on investment for population health is potentially enormous."

In South Africa, up to now, many of the resources of the Department of Health have been allocated to the HIV/AIDS epidemic as a key priority, according to Professor Melvyn Freeman, the Chief Director of Non-Communicable Diseases. Referring to the competition for resources with HIV/AIDS, one mental health activist and person living with mental illness added that it was ironic that such competition for public health resources existed, as 'many people with HIV/AIDS develop mental health problems, and at some point, will access mental health services'.

There are a number of projects within the University of Cape Town, which are addressing mental health within the context of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. These focus on the integration of mental health into HIV care, as well as, looking more broadly at the integration of mental health care into maternal and primary health care systems.

One project, known as the Groote Schuur Hospital-HIV Mental Health Group (<http://www.hivmentalhealth.co.za>), aims to increase the provision of mental health services to people living with HIV/AIDS.

Another project, the PRogramme for Improving Mental health carE (PRIME, <http://www.prime.uct.ac.za>), has the goal of developing evidence for the scaling-up of

getting to zero

treatment programmes for priority mental disorders, such as alcohol abuse, depression (including maternal depression), psychosis and epilepsy, in low resource settings. The study countries in which PRIME is working to develop research evidence include three in Africa (Ethiopia, India & South Africa) and two in Asia (India & Nepal). PRIME is also collaborating with policy-makers in the Ministries of Health in study countries. In countries where the HIV prevalence is high, PRIME will be tailoring their interventions to suit the local context.

The aim of these projects is to decrease the impact of mental illness on those living with HIV/AIDS (including pregnant mothers); and through the scaling-up of mental health care, minimise the risk of people with mental illnesses contracting HIV/AIDS. Practically, this might include routine screening for depression among people who test HIV positive, or routine antenatal screening for mental health problems among pregnant women. One partner of PRIME is the Perinatal Mental Health Project (<http://www.pmhp.za.org>), which is working hard to ensure the integration of maternal mental health care in PRIME countries.

Amit Makan

World AIDS Day 2011

Getting To Zero

The theme for World AIDS Day 2011 is "Getting to Zero."

After 30 years of the global fight against HIV/AIDS, this year the focus is on achieving 3 targets:

Zero new HIV infections, Zero discrimination, Zero AIDS-related deaths

our alumni

Class Reunions 2011

You may have noticed a large group of 'tourists' walking the passages of the Faculty over the past few weekends. The first of five Faculty Alumni reunions for 2011 (classes of 1961, 1971, 1981, 1986 and 1996) got underway on 11 November and will continue until 11 December.

Alumni from across the globe come together each year for a three-day weekend of fun to reconnect with their Alma Mater and classmates. An average of 50 class members attend per reunion, with approximately 40% of this number travelling from overseas for the event (mainly Germany, Canada, USA, Australia, New Zealand and the UK).

Alumni are welcomed to the Faculty at a cocktail party on a Friday evening. The cocktail is normally hosted by the Dean, one of her deputies or a Head of Department. Other events staged over the weekend include a tour of the Faculty and the Heart of Cape Town Museum, lunch in the MAC Club and an academic meeting held in the Wolfson Pavilion on the Saturday morning. The highlight of the weekend is the Gala Dinner in Smuts Hall dining room on the Saturday evening. Guest speakers this year include Prof Tim Noakes, Em Prof Arderne Forder and Prof Maurice Kibel.

The weekend culminates in a mountain walk and/or picnic in Kirstenbosch Gardens.

Many alumni play a significant role in supporting initiatives of the faculty, such as funding student studies and infrastructural projects. Reunion events are important for strengthening our connection with alumni. These have been organised with super-efficiency by Alumni and Bequest Officer, Joan Tuff ('Auntie Joan' to many) for the past 11 years. She has a database of approximately 15000 alumni that she keeps in touch with, updating them on faculty activities and developments, as well as connecting classmates with one another.



‘ I may have been here over 40 years ago, but now I feel like I’m 20 again!

Unidentified 1971 alumnus at her class reunion



our academics 2011

UCT hails distinguished academics

The faculty's Prof Ed Rybicki and Dr Thomas Scriba were named among four new fellows, and three up-and-coming scholars who received the College of Fellows' Young Researcher Award, respectively.

The awards were handed out at the university's annual College of Fellows' Dinner on 18 October. Fellows are academics singled out for their original and distinguished academic work. UCT fellows now number 49. The Young Researcher Awards are made to young academics, recognising their already significant contributions to research in their fields.



New on the block: VC Dr Max Price (second from left) and Prof Danie Visser (second from right) congratulate new fellows. Prof Ed Rybicki, from the IIDMM is third from the left.

Acknowledgements: Monday Paper



Rising stars: VC Dr Max Price and Prof Danie Visser (back) with winners of the Young Researcher Awards. Dr Thomas Scriba of SATVI is on the front left.

faculty fact!

IN 2010, RESEARCHERS IN THE FACULTY BROUGHT IN ALMOST R280-MILLION IN RESEARCH CONTRACT FUNDING.

NRF-rated researchers in the faculty

Did you know that 9 of UCT's 29 National research Foundation (NRF) A-rated researchers hail from the Faculty of Health Sciences?

An A-rating is given to researchers who are unequivocally recognised by their peers as leading international scholars in their field for the high quality and impact of their recent research outputs.

The most recent to be added to this list is Prof Ed Rybicki, from the Institute of Infectious Disease and Molecular Medicine.

Ad hominem promotions and awards

The Dean is proud to announce the awarding of the following promotions and awards for 2011:

Professor

photo not available

Gail Todd



Keertan Dheda



Anthony Figaji

Associate Professor



Pat Mayers



Brenda Morrow



Elelwani Ramugondo



Virna Leaner



Bruce Spottiswoode



Cynthia Sikakana



Sharon Prince



Roshan Galvaan

photo not available

David Coetzee



John Joska



Thomas Franz

Senior Lecturer



Gillian Ferguson



Geney Gunston

Senior Clinical Educators

Liesl Peters

Susan Landman

Excellence Awards

Professor Heather Zar Excellence 1
Professor Tim Noakes Excellence 2

Merit Awards

A/Prof Tania Douglas
Ms Lorna Olckers

No Woman, No Cry - a voice for the dead through forensic pathology



Professor Lorna Martin's inaugural lecture on 26 October, entitled 'No woman, no cry - A journey into forensic pathology services and violence against women', will be remembered for its gruesome images, graphic stories and statistics to illustrate the nature of her work. Underlying this all is her passion for social justice, particularly with respect to the violence perpetrated against women in this country.

Her forensic work links integrally to her research and advocacy on violent crime against women, and particularly to giving those that are dead a voice, by making sure that evidence can be used to convict perpetrators. Prof Martin has made a significant impact on how rape victims are managed. She was responsible for the first research on rape-homicide trends in South Africa.

Prof Martin was drawn to addressing the clinical management of rape victims in South Africa through her first job as a district surgeon in Gauteng. "Every Monday from 2pm was the scheduled time for examining weekend rape victims - and this was done at the local mortuary," she recalled to a stunned audience. This was to change when she established the country's first medico-legal clinic for rape survivors in Hillbrow in 1992, and developed examination and management protocols for rape survivors, and a training programme for staff of that and other clinics. Many years later, she has successfully advocated, in partnership with government and civil society, for new policies on the clinical management of rape victims in South Africa, which have given back some dignity to millions of traumatised victims as well as providing for appropriate facilities to take samples required for the successful conviction of perpetrators.

Prof Martin's work has linked her groundbreaking research to this work, and has published extensively. Sought after locally and globally for her expertise, she often appears in court in high-profile murder cases.

Personal insight into Prof Martin the per-

son, the professional, and work colleague was provided by Prof Marian Jacobs, the faculty's Dean, in a message read out by Prof Gonda Perez on her behalf:

"I deeply regret not being there tonight. Now I am missing a fantastic 'Lorna Martin' presentation. I know that the presentation would have been equal to that delivered by Agatha Christie, John Le Carre and even Jessica Fletcher. But there would have been a difference. The Prof Martin lecture would have been evidence-based rooted in a sound knowledge of the field of forensic medicine and equal to the best in the world.

On one occasion when I asked Lorna how she managed to deal with what to me is the scary gory aspect of forensic medicine she replied: "This is my contribution to advancing social justice."

We are truly privileged to have Lorna Martin in our Faculty. She is a brilliant forensic medicine specialist and academic, as she has demonstrated this evening. But she is also a committed and significant member of the University and Faculty leadership, a superb clinician and a great team member who is ready to join an academic team in the postgraduate students quiz in the Mac Club, to join a four ball at the Dept of Surgery's annual golf day and is also so generous in highlighting the achievements of her team, her department and division as she will do again tonight when she has the after party in the new pathology teaching laboratory. Congrats Lorna. You are the best. Marian"

As head of Forensic Medicine at UCT, Prof Martin is working towards a digital-age Pathology Learning Centre, and a UCT Forensic Medicine Institute, which would be a first for Africa. This, amongst other initiatives to grow the capacity and impact of the department. In an interview with UCT's Monday Paper, Prof Martin explained that all of this was in aid of a single objective. "Basically our core business is providing a voice for the dead. And we are the only ones able to do it."

faculty fact!

An average of more than one paper is published every day in the faculty

Congratulations!

Prof Mohammed Jeebhay who was recently elected to the Collegium Ramazzini.

The Collegium is an independent, international academy founded in 1982 whose mission is to advance the study of occupational and environmental health issues and to be a bridge between the world of scientific discovery and the social and political centers which must act on the discoveries of science to protect public health.

The Centre is named after Bernardo Ramazzini, regarded as the founder of Occupational Medicine, whose quote about the importance of identifying hazards at work affecting health is contained on the chalkboard artwork mounted on the landing at level 4. Ramazzini lived in Modena, Italy, and the Collegium meets annually at a town nearby called Carpi and has its offices in nearby Bologna. The Collegium is comprised of about 180 fellows from around the world, elected in recognition of their expertise in the fields of occupational and environmental health. There are a growing number of fellows from developing countries on the Collegium.

Prof Jeebhay joins Colleagues Leslie London, Jonny Myers and Rodney Ehrlich as fellows.

Prof Leslie London, Head, Department of Public Health and Family Medicine, says that this award reflects both Prof Jeebhay's international standing and the considerable international esteem in which the Centre for Occupational and Environmental Health Research (COEHR) is held. The COEHR is a URC-recognised centre and a World Health Organisation Collaborating Centre.

our students



Prof Heather Zar (far left) poses proudly with the successful College exam candidates

Celebratory lunch for College exam candidates

A celebratory lunch was held at Red Cross Children's Hospital for successful College exams candidates. According to Professor Heather Zar, Head of Department of Paediatrics & Child Health, the results were superb with 100% pass rate in the FCP II and sub-specialty exams, and record numbers of successful candidates. 14 candidates passed DCH, 6_FCPaed I, 8 FCPaed II, 5 in Sub-Specialities Pulmonology, Infectious Disease, Endocrinology, Nephrology and Neurology, and 3 in FC Paed Surgery.

UCT Physiotherapy students win Regional Intersarsity Research prizes

At the Regional Intersarsity Research Evening hosted by the South African Physiotherapy Society, Western Cape Branch, the two UCT entrants were awarded first and third prizes.

The top spot was awarded to Sinead Booth, Neeshal Jogie, Adrian Kusambiza-Kiingi, Ayesha Gabriels, Lee-Roy Thomas and Rowan Thorpe, supervised by Jennifer Jelsma, for their work on the feasibility of using the Nintendo Wii virtual reality game to improve upper limb function in patients who had recently suffered a stroke. They presented a series of case studies and concluded that all participants enjoyed using the Wii. They detailed which games were the most useful (bowling) and which games were the most challenging (tennis and boxing). The team concluded that it would be possible and worthwhile to develop random experimental trials to test the efficacy of the computer game in improving arm function.

Acknowledgements: Monday Paper



HSF student leaders excel at UCT awards ceremony



Three students from the Faculty of Health Sciences received acknowledgement for their leadership at the annual UCT Student Leadership Awards Ceremony on 20 October. Simon Mendelsohn received the Vice-Chancellor's Student Leader Award. Vuyane Mhlomi, received three awards - the Most Outstanding Student Leader in an Undergraduate Faculty Council, the Ackerman Family Foundation Award, and the Kerry Capstick-Dale Memorial Scholarship. Jessica Price and Vuyane shared the Kerry Capstick-Dale Memorial Scholarship. Their résumés made for impressive reading at the event, hosted by the Department: Student Affairs (DSA).

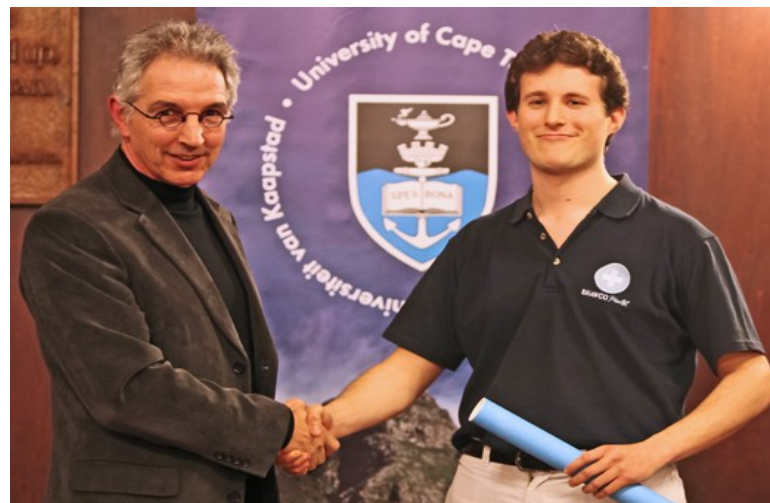
Caption right photo : Prof Marian Jacobs, Dean, is flanked by Health Sciences Faculty Student Leader winners Jessica Price, Vuyane Mhlomi, Simon Mendelsohn, and Deputy Dean, Prof Reno Morar

Acknowledgements: Monday Paper

learn beyond the lecture, says UCT's top student leader

Simon Mendelsohn, 2011 president of the Students' Health and Welfare Centres Organisation (SHAWCO), is honoured to have received the prestigious Vice-Chancellor's Student Leader Award, but attributes his success to the SHAWCO team, saying that he was lucky to have such a good team. "This year we had over 800 students volunteering on over 250 of our student-run free clinics, providing free primary healthcare services to over 5000 patients in the Cape Town area. You can't be a good leader without a super team," he says.

The award recognises not only his leadership of SHAWCO, but his passion and commitment to making a difference to the health of vulnerable communities. The award synopsis says that 'In addition to a superior academic record, invitations to and awards from a clutch of conferences, and his work with SHAWCO, Mendelsohn is also a member of the organising committee for the 2012 People's Health Movement's People's Health Assembly, and started the Faculty of Health Sciences' Inter-societies Forum. And somehow he's made time for the Mountain and Ski Club, the UCT Surgical Society, and the Faculty of Health Sciences Student Mentoring Programme'.



Simon feels proud to follow in the footsteps of two remarkable role models : his late grandmother, Enid Mendelsohn, also a doctor, devoted in excess of 30 years of her life to working with intellectually disabled people, and his mother, who volunteered for the Black Sash many years ago, co-founded the Sunflower Fund (Friends of the South African Bone Marrow Registry), taught at a night school for many years, and is currently a counselor. She has managed all of this while concurrently being a high school teacher and mother. They are both

truly remarkable role models, and he adds, "I come from a family where community service is valued."

As Simon prepares to leave for Mpumalanga to begin his internship, the best advice he can give to students is that most of the learning takes place outside the lecture theatres. He says they should get involved with student societies and development agencies. "I have gained as much knowledge and developed as many skills from SHAWCO over the past 6 years as I have from my medical degree," he says.

our faculty activities

Five-year affiliation agreement signed with University of Texas

A five-year affiliation agreement was recently signed between UCT and the University of Texas (UT), Southwestern to collaborate on faculty and student exchanges, joint research and training activities and other educational opportunities. Dr. Daniel K. Podolsky, president of UT Southwestern, signed the agreement with Dr. Bongani Mayosi, head of the Department of Medicine, on behalf of Prof. Marian Jacobs, Dean of the faculty. Dr. Mayosi said, "We face numerous challenges in global health and it is imperative that more emphasis be placed on development and implementation of practical solutions, from the basic sciences, to the bedside and clinical medicine, to policy and community application. This agreement is well suited to the global health initiative we also designed to generate innovation in the social and technological dimensions in health."



Prof. Bongani Mayosi signs a five-year affiliation agreement between UCT and the University of Texas (UT), Southwestern.

The joint agreement calls for UT Southwestern and the University of Cape Town to collaborate in several areas, including:

- research to include joint submission of grant applications and sharing access to clinical research materials and modern techniques in basic and clinical investigations
- reciprocal exchange of postgraduate trainees or faculty in the areas of medicine, collaborative research projects, as well as exchange of publications, reports and other academic information
- joint research conferences and symposia, and
- professional development.

Currently, collaborative research exists between the University of Cape Town and UT Southwestern to study the pharmacokinetics and pharmacodynamics of anti-tuberculosis drugs in pulmonary and pericardial tuberculosis, as well as mechanisms of multidrug resistance in TB. This is UT's first such agreement with an African university.

IIDMM Advisory Board Meeting

A distinguished panel of scientists comprising the International Scientific Advisory Committee (ISAC), led by Prof Keith Klugman, met from 9 to 10 November 2011 to review and advise on the scientific and strategic direction of the Institute of Infectious Disease and Molecular Medicine (IIDMM) over the next decade.

New IIDMM Director, Prof Valerie Mizrahi, who replaced former Director Prof Gregory Hussey earlier this year, says the timing is perfect - as the panel last met in 2008, she is new in the post, and their input will assist her in directing how the IIDMM should position itself in the face of new opportunities. The IIDMM comprises 23 Full, 12 Affiliate, 17 Associate and 7 Adjunct Members, who all work in various research groupings involved in addressing the common theme of major infectious diseases such as HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria as well as non-communicable diseases including regionally prevalent cancers and genetic disorders. The output of the Institute has been significant.

"Collectively," says, Prof Mizrahi, "members of the IIDMM contribute approximately 50% of research income to the Faculty of Health Sciences' coffers, and many are internationally renowned in their fields."

The two-day programme was very successful, she adds, with the ISAC hearing presentations from Full Members and meeting with their teams to learn more about their experiences and insights. The ISAC will provide a written report to the Institute's Management Board which will provide a fresh impetus to the direction of the IIDMM.

Deputy Minister of Health learns about TB vaccine research

The Deputy Minister of Health, Dr Gwen Ramakgopa, was on the faculty's campus on 25 October 2011 to meet with South African Tuberculosis Vaccine Initiative (SATVI) Director, Professor Willem Hanekom, and his management team. The visit, the first by the Ministry of Health to SATVI, was welcomed by SATVI as an opportunity to share with the Deputy-Minister the leading role that South Africa is playing in finding a new, more effective TB vaccine, and the significant contribution that SATVI is making to TB vaccine development worldwide.

SATVI is leading ground-breaking clinical TB vaccine research in testing novel TB vaccines in communities where TB is endemic. It is also completing cutting-edge research to inform researchers globally of how our immune systems protect us against TB.

"A new, more effective TB vaccine is the answer to stopping TB," said Prof Hanekom, "and in South Africa, where the rate of TB incidence is one of the highest in the world, the impact that a new vaccine can have on public health is significant!"

The visit by the Deputy Minister highlighted the commitment of the ministry to eradicating TB. Discussions focused on the need for TB vaccine



The Deputy Minister of Health, Dr Gwen Ramakgopa, makes a point during her visit with the SATVI team.

research to be funded from within South Africa, and for government to allocate funding to this based on the country's health priorities. The Acting Dean, Prof Sue Kidson, as well as the Director of the IIDMM, Prof Valerie Mizrahi, also

participated in the meeting.

Dr Ramakgopa's visit has fostered stronger ties between SATVI and the department, seen as a key partnership for advancing TB vaccine research locally.

Clinical skills lab to boost students' confidence

UCT's School of Health & Rehabilitation Sciences has opened a new clinical skills lab, designed as a safe environment for health sciences students to sharpen their skills prior to attending to real patients.

The lab, in a refurbished and converted ward at Groote Schuur Hospital's Old Main Building, is equipped with the latest diagnostic and treatment tools, as well as a computer lab, to allow both students and tutors to test their skills.

Dr George Draper, director of the Clinical Skills Programme in the faculty, noted that the lab was born out of the realisation that patients are fast becoming conscious of their rights to be attended to in a professional manner. Sometimes, though, students lack confidence when going to the clinics for the first time.

"This lab provides an opportunity for students to practice and for tutors to correct mistakes beforehand," Draper says.

Professor Gonda Perez, Deputy Dean of the faculty, said there had been reports of students having a "terrible" time, with some overwhelmed and distressed by their first encounters with patients.

"This kind of environment will boost the confidence and competence of not only students, but of academics too as they can learn new skills and acquaint themselves with new equipment."

Acknowledgements: Monday Paper



New Degree in Forensic Science to fill huge need in South Africa

The first Masters in Science course in Biomedical Forensic Science, to be offered from 2012 by the Division of Forensic Medicine, will fill a huge need for advanced training, legal expertise and the creation of an opportunity for further research in the field of forensics in South Africa.

So says Dr Marise Heyns, course convener, who explains that currently, crime scene analysis and evidence gathering, as well as evidence analysis in laboratories are done by the South African Police Services (SAPS). Often the person giving evidence in court does not have any training in this, or may only have been involved in a specific part of the forensic process. Most of the staff in SAPS laboratories do not have postgraduate training, although they

do receive intensive in house training, she adds.

One of the most exciting outcomes of this MSc is that it will provide a platform for high impact research in this field from a South African perspective. There is currently almost no research done in the field of forensics apart from in the field of Forensic Medicine which usually covers Forensic Pathology. There is a strong research element to the degree. Apart from the module on Research Methodology, the participants will complete a Minor Research Dissertation where they will select a topic in which he/she has a particular interest. This will account for a third of the programme.

To qualify for acceptance into this new programme, students must hold an

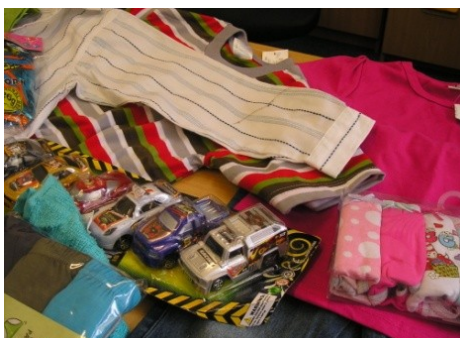
approved degree of BSc (Hons) and have completed Biochemistry, Chemistry, Microbiology, Biology, Genetics or Physical Anthropology or equivalent at Hons level; or an approved four year Bachelor of Science degree or postgraduate diploma, but there is also scope for Recognition of Prior Learning. Besides a strong stomach, the qualities that would make a participant excel would be, meticulousness, an eye for detail, ability to analyse complex problems, leadership and ability to collaborate effectively in a group, ability to withstanding rigorous cross-questioning without undue emotional stress, an inquisitive mind and a drive to generate new knowledge.

The degree will initially be offered as a full-time, two year or part-time, four year degree.

...and it's a wrap!



staff bring joy through Santa's shoe-box



Giving spirit: Staff from the faculty's Academic Admin office collected and donated gifts to underprivileged children.

Christmas came early for underprivileged children when staff from the *faculty's Academic Admin office* joined forces to collect and donate gifts for them.

The goodwill was inspired by the national Kidz2Kidz Santa Shoebox Project. As per the project request, the gifts were wrapped in large shoeboxes, and included a set of new clothes, toys, educational supplies and toiletries.

The boxes were dropped off with the project, which will distribute them over the next few weeks.

The project co-ordinates the donation, collection and distribution of personalised gifts to underprivileged children, and helps parents to teach their children the importance of giving. Participating is described as "a profound valuable and personal experience" as the donor knows the name, age and gender of the child that they choose to donate to, and the name of the organisation that cares for the child.

According to Adri Winckler, Manager of Postgraduate Administration in the faculty office, it all started when Charmaine Chalkley-Peters, administrative assistant in the department, approached managers about joining Kidz2Kidz.

Acknowledgements: *Monday Paper*

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