



FHS turns 99



Listening intently: Prof Marian Jacobs, Dean of the Faculty, addresses the attendees of the launch of the Faculty's centenary celebrations.

The Faculty of Health Sciences at the University of Cape Town launched its centenary celebrations at a function held on campus on 6 June 2011. The Faculty was born on 6 June 1912, with the opening of the Anatomy and Physiological Laboratories. The centenary theme, *Building the Future*, plays on the spirit of the original launch, when the new buildings were opened to students for the first time.

At the launch function, various speakers took the opportunity to reflect on the Faculty's activities with a view to *Building the Future*. Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Prof Danie Visser, described the Faculty as the jewel in the crown of UCT. Vuyane Mhlomi, chairperson of the Health Sciences Students Council and Luke Kannemeyer, chairman of the Postgraduate Society spoke to the achievements and challenges of the Faculty thus far. Prof Lyn Denny, an alumna and now head of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology spoke of her experiences since 1976, from student to senior academic clinician.

Emeritus Professor David Beatty provided a personal reflection on the successes and

challenges. He celebrated the partnership of the Faculty with the Provincial Department of Health, the Medical Research Council, University of Stellenbosch and other stakeholders in achieving outstanding research, evidence-based teaching and dedicated and committed clinical service that have been responsive to the needs of the nation.

He acknowledged that over the last 20 years, the relationship between the Faculty and Provincial Department of Health was more challenging than in the past. He however reiterated that in order for the Faculty and the Province to sustain the achievements of the past, both parties need to, as a matter of urgency, cement their relationship by concluding a new agreement.

The Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences, Prof Marian Jacobs, spoke about taking the opportunity of the centenary celebrations not only to look back, but also to look forward and, expanding the theme of 'Building the Future', she explained what the Faculty is planning to build. She pointed out that the Faculty's greatest investment is its people, both students and staff, and resources

will be channeled here. There are also plans to build the Faculty's already impressive research repertoire and on a more practical note, there is a need for a new building to house all of these expanded activities. Building the nation forms part of the plan, and finally, perhaps most importantly, building partnerships.

The Dean said that the Faculty of Health Sciences, the Provincial Department of Health and other partners are building a new relationship based on trust and mutual respect and the good relationship that the Faculty currently enjoys with the Provincial Health Department is fundamental to its success.

She assured the audience that the leadership of the Faculty, the Province, other universities and health services stakeholders are working together to establish a new framework in *Building the Future*. It is a tribute to the Faculty and its partners that we can celebrate all of the success in our long shared history. The Faculty's successful partnership with the Department of Health in ensuring the health of our population will continue to grow and develop in the coming years.

Marching to the beat of a winning drum

On a wet and cold Monday afternoon in May, a group of people gathered in the Faculty of Health Sciences around a drum ... but not just any drum, it was the 2011 Pan South African Language Board (PANSALB) award, given to Prof Derek Hellenberg and his team for their sterling efforts in developing a language programme for health sciences students.

Prof Marian Jacobs, Dean of the Faculty, said that she was very proud of the partnership between the Faculty of Health Sciences and the Faculty of Humanities, who came together to implement a languages programme as part of the undergraduate health sciences curriculum. "I am so proud that UCT won the award," she said. "It was an occasion to celebrate excellence."

In March, UCT was named the winner in the education category of the PanSALB Awards, a category that looks at the use and promotion of multilingualism in institutions of learning, including policies and tuition material. The award was presented jointly to the Faculties of Health Sciences and Humanities at UCT for the training programmes in Afrikaans and isiXhosa that have been incorporated into the formal MBChB curriculum of the Faculty of Health Sciences.

The faculty started with the Becoming a Doctor course in 2003 (Phase 1), part and parcel of its new curriculum. That was followed by Phase 2, a semester-long intensive grammar course in isiXhosa in 2008 and Afrikaans in 2011; then Phase 3 (funded by MEP), started in 2009, a four-week special study module in languages and family medicine, where some students actually live with host families in either Afrikaans- or isiXhosa-



Admiring the PanSALB award jointly presented to the Faculties of Health Sciences and Humanities for their work in developing a languages component of the undergraduate health sciences curriculum.

speaking communities for two and a half weeks. Last year saw the launch of Phase 4, the integration of languages in bedside teaching in year four (the start of the clinical years) of the MBChB programme. Over the next few years there are also plans to include language learning and assessment into the final two years of the degree.

Prof Jacobs added that when the National Minister of Higher Education singled out this programme at a recent meeting to discuss multilingualism in education, she was exceptionally proud that the Faculty is leading the way in this important initiative.

Prof Hellenberg explained that it has taken

more than nine years to reach this point, and he took the opportunity to thank Associate Professor Mbulungeni Madiba of CHED's Multilingualism Education Project (MEP) for its support, both intellectual and financial.

The gathering would not have been complete without a student voice, and this was provided by Vuyane Mhlomi, the chairman of the Health Sciences Students' Council, who added the congratulations of the FHS student body, but more importantly, the thanks of the patients. He added that when a doctor is able to speak comfortably to a patient in their mother tongue "hidden areas open up and we are able to go the extra mile."

PRIME awarded £6-million by DFID

It was time to celebrate on Monday, 27 June, as The Programme for Improving Mental Health Care (PRIME), was officially launched in Cape Town.

PRIME is an international research consortium working in five low and middle-income countries: Ethiopia, India, Nepal, South Africa and Uganda. Its purpose? To develop, implement and evaluate models of primary mental care in low resource settings. The funding grant received from DFID will fund the programme for the next six years and the intention is to assess the impact of packages of care on mental health, social functioning and poverty. These outcomes will be used to shape the scaling up of mental health interventions in low resource settings across the world.

Prof Marian Jacobs, Dean of the Faculty, expanded on these goals in her speech: "There are three main outcomes for this project, namely, the building of capacity for frontline healthcare workers, promoting quality of life, not just lowering mortality and focusing on the global South." She added that "this fabulous initiative" has the potential to hugely impact on global mental health efforts.

Prof Danie Visser, Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Research added his congratulations and encouraged the project to "go on with the blessing and congratulations of UCT".



At the launch (from left): Prof Vikram Patel, PRIME Research Director, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and Sangath, Goa India, Prof Crick Lund, PRIME CEO, Prof Marian Jacobs, Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences, Dr Shekhar Sasena, Director of Mental Health and Substance abuse, WHO and Prof Danie Visser, UCT DVC for Research.

Did you know?



UKaid
from the Department for
International Development

DFID's UK aid logo has been introduced to help make it easier for people to see where Britain's aid budget is being spent and how it is being used to tackle global poverty. The organization remains the Department for International Development, however the UK aid logo is used to demonstrate where they are providing funding.

Inaugural lectures

Fishy causes of occupational allergies

Development of vaccines is the answer

The rise of occupational asthma, particularly in the fisheries industries, took centre stage at Professor Mohamed Fareed Jeebhay's inaugural lecture, *From Farm to Fork - A Fishy Story of Allergy and Asthma*, to a packed theatre on 20 April.

Over the past decade, Jeebhay, who is based in the Centre for Occupational and Environmental Health Research (COEHR) in the School of Public Health & Family Medicine, has focused his research on the relationship between airborne food allergens and allergy and asthma. He paid special attention to identifying the occupational risk factors for disease, in order to develop strategies for prevention.

While the vast majority of published reports focus on allergic symptoms following ingestion or skin contact, it's the lesser spotted route - the inhalation of aerosols - that Jeebhay addressed in his presentation.

"Aside from the commonly encountered oral route in domestic settings, seafood also finds its way into the human body through inhalation in domestic, recreational and work settings," he said.

In both shellfish and fish factories, airborne wet and dry particles are produced during processes like boiling, bagging, degutting and mincing. And it's these particles, containing aerosolised allergens, that are inhaled by workers and that, much like household allergens that feed off a genetic predisposition, cause allergy and inflammation of the bronchial tract, resulting in rhinitis and asthma.

Enter occupational asthma.

The first case report of seafood allergy was reported in 1937 by the Norwegian bacteriologist Arent de Besche, who wrote of a fisherman who developed allergic symptoms and asthma when handling codfish. This report sparked Jeebhay's interest in occupational asthma.

"The increased demand and consumption for seafood and its by-products has been associated with a concomitant rise in fishing and aquaculture activities. Aside from the potential depletion of marine stocks if not managed in a sustainable manner, recent studies suggest more frequent reporting of allergic health problems among consumers as well as processors of seafood."

A study of some 600 workers by Jeebhay and his co-investigators along the west coast of St Helena Bay, the epicentre of fish harvesting and processing in South Africa, showed that symptoms of work-related asthma may develop either after only a few months or after several years of commencing work.

In addition to treating asthma and rhinitis symptoms, Jeebhay's research calls for a change in food processing practice, better exposure control, mandatory product labelling, and regular medical surveillance of workers to reduce the incidence of allergic reactions to inhaled seafood allergens.



There could be few better placed than Professor Willem Hanekom to present the new and unpublished data on the work of the South African Tuberculosis Vaccine Initiative (SATVI).

Described as an "entrepreneurial clinician" and "an outstanding role model for SATVI and UCT", Hanekom, an internationally-recognised immunology expert, gave up a relatively promising career in the US to work in South Africa, which has the second highest rate of TB cases in the world.

Now a co-director at SATVI, he is playing a

leading role in developing TB vaccines, the basis for his inaugural lecture, *Vaccines to Prevent TB*, delivered on 4 May.

For Hanekom, TB deaths can well be compared to the recent earthquakes and tsunami in Japan that killed about 10 000 people. Every year 1.7 million people around the world die of TB.

"I don't think TB deaths are any less devastating or have any less impact on the economy of a community or households," Hanekom said. "So really, we should do something."

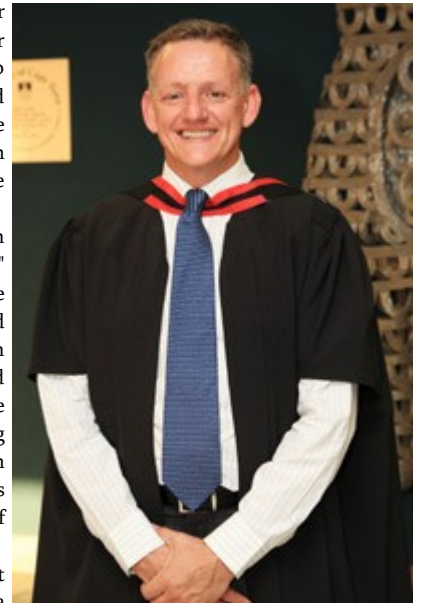
Vaccines, he believes, have the best chance of making an impact on the disease. To this end, SATVI is in the process of clinical development of new vaccines, and is conducting numerous studies to address critical questions in TB vaccine development. Hanekom and his team are working on everything from new ways to test potential vaccines and how safe they are, to assess whether the vaccines will work and how our genetic make-up will determine vaccine success.

The four vaccines SATVI has developed over the years have shown incredible results, he reported. "All vaccines tested so far are very safe."

But will they protect people against *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*, the bacterium that causes TB?

One problem, Hanekom said, is that they still do not know what to measure in the blood, after a person has received a vaccine, to tell whether they will be protected against TB. This is a major focus of his research group's effort. "In studies of vaccinated babies, we were surprised to see that the currently used tests may not measure the right things to show whether they are protected or not," he said.

The SATVI group has already discovered new markers that are likely to show whether a vaccine will work. This information is also exploited to better understand how people protect themselves against TB, which, in turn, should lead to the development of even better vaccines.



US\$7.5-million research grant to track lung health of children

A multi-million rand research grant will underpin a four-year longitudinal study on the causes and results of respiratory illnesses among children in the Drakenstein area of the Western Cape.

Professor Heather Zar, head of UCT's Department of Paediatrics and Child Health, has been awarded a \$7.56 million (R52.9 million) research grant by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation for a study that will track the lung health of children in the Drakenstein region in the Western Cape.

Aptly titled *The Drakenstein Child Lung Health Study*, the longitudinal study will follow 500 mother-child pairs over four years to investigate the incidence, patterns and causes of respiratory illnesses, specifically pneumonia, or infection of the lung, in early life.

Researchers will track children until they're about two years old. That extended time frame, they hope, will give them insights into the many factors associated with respiratory illnesses in young children, and what impact early-childhood pneumonia will have on later life and on child health.

The research team will be made up of seven sub-groups. The groups will look at the associations between pneumonia and seven risk factors, - the immunological, environmental, infectious, maternal, nutritional, genetic and psychosocial - and, revealingly, the interactions between those risk factors.

"It's often not *one* thing," says Zar. "It's malnutrition and exposure to tobacco smoke and germs; all of which may come together in a child who may already be vulnerable."

The study will take place in the Drakenstein sub-district of the Cape Winelands, and researchers will work closely with Paarl Hospital, where the majority of births in the area take place,

and with local clinics.

The project is the first of its kind - the longitudinal element - for South Africa and Africa, where pneumonia remains a leading cause of death among children, explains Zar. It is also of particular use because it will measure just how effective current health measures are, as the Drakenstein is a low- to middle-income area where vaccines against pneumococcus and H influenzae, bacteria responsible for pneumonia and other respiratory conditions, are readily available.



Prof Heather Zar.

Zar will work with an expert group of collaborators from UCT, Stellenbosch University and the Drakenstein authorities. They will include co-investigators Professor Gregory Hussey, Professor Mark Nicol, Professor Dan Stein, Professor Colleen Adnams, Professor Raj Ramesar, Professor Willem Hanekom, Associate Professor Landon Myer and Anna Grimsrud of UCT, as well as Stellenbosch's

Professor Robert Gie, and Dr Eckart von Delft, head of paediatrics at Paarl Hospital.

A local operational advisory committee has been established, comprising leading members of the management team of the Provincial Government of the Western Cape, and local health-care providers. This committee will advise on the operational aspects of the study and ensure the smooth collaboration between service providers and the study team.

In addition, an international scientific advisory group of leading experts in specific areas relevant to the project will advise the study team.

The Drakenstein Child Lung Health Study and the Gates funding, says Zar, offers the chance to do the kind of detailed research on respiratory health that has not been possible up to now.

"It really is a wonderful opportunity to look comprehensively at the determinants of child health in the long term."

PhD student wins international OER award

Matumo Ramafikeng, a PhD student in the Division of Occupational Therapy (OT), recently scooped an award for the teaching material she created and published under the Open Educational Resources (OER) project (<http://opencontent.uct.ac.za/Health-Sciences/Occupational-Therapy/Occupation-Focused-Conceptual-Frameworks>).

The award was one of the "Awards for Open Courseware Excellence" (ACE) in the courseware category at the 2011 global ACE conference in Cambridge, Massachusetts hosted by the Open Courseware (OCW) Consortium. The award recognized Matumo's work as being outstanding course material in the "text and illustrations" category.

Matumo, whose role is to provide support to OT students who face challenges in their coursework, says that she became involved in the project, because her Head of Department believed that technology plays a vital role in OT teaching.

"At first my main interest was how technology could make teaching and learning conceptual frameworks more interactive and accessible. Then, we thought publishing it as an OER would make it available to more students and best of all, market our profession".

In addition, although daunting at the time, the idea of having other people comment on work was appealing as it would give an opportunity to receive feedback from people other than departmental staff at UCT.

Congrats to

... Prof Alastair Millar, who received the British Association of Paediatric Surgeons's (BAPS) Denis Browne Medal for Outstanding Services to Paediatric Surgery.

There has only been one other South African to receive the award in its , and that was our own Prof Jannie Louw in 1980.

Prof Millar will receive the award at the 58th Annual BAPS International Conference in Belfast, Northern Ireland.

... Prof Sebastian van As, who delivered the prestigious Michael van Vloten Lecture to the Annual Conference of the Dutch Society of Surgeons.

It is with sadness and pride that we report that Prof Cas Motala was posthumously awarded the World Allergy Organisation Distinguished Service Award for 2011.

The award will be dedicated to him at the December 2011 World Allergy Congress in Mexico.

Keeping it in the family



Fourth-year MBChB student Nicola Sienaert cleaned up at the recent health sciences undergraduate prize giving, with a haul of eight medals and prizes.

Sienaert follows in the footsteps of her late grandfather, who was a physician. She also has UCT ties; her mother, Dr Marilet Sienaert, is director of the Research Office.

Sienaert took the long route to medicine, first completing a BA (*cum laude*) at UCT and then doing a gap year in France before coming home to start a MBChB.

Left: Nicola and her proud mom in the UCT Research Office.

A fresh look at rural clinical education



More than 50 health educators attended a day-long workshop at the UCT Sports Science Institute on 23 June 2011, exploring the training of health professionals in rural and other underserved settings in order to enhance rural healthcare. Some of the critical areas of engagement included: expanding educational opportunities to improve rural healthcare; recruiting and retaining health professionals in rural areas through the provision of healthcare education in rural areas; and innovating in education, research and service development in rural areas.

Participants included Prof Dan Ncayiyana of Benguela Health, who were the workshop convenors, Dr Robyn Hill, the Manager, Educational Development at GippsTAFE at Monash University, Australia, Dr Joey Cupido, Deputy Director General for District Health Services and Health Programmes in the Department of Health of the Western Cape and experts in rural health from universities across South Africa.

News you can use: Open Education Resources



African Health
OER Network

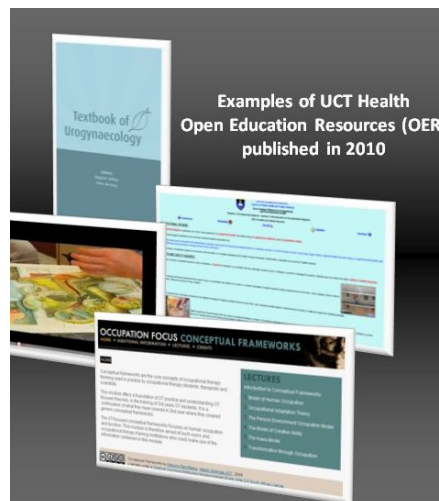
Open Education Resources (OERs) are teaching and learning materials that are freely available online, open to anyone and particularly useful to educators and learners.

What is unique about OER material is that no inherent royalties or license fees exist, making the material freely available to be shared and re-used, with accessibility to all. There are options to adapt (or 'remix') the material to make it relevant to different contexts, for example, translation into a local language.

With this increased openness and access, measures are taken to protect the authorship of the resource. The OER material distributed by UCT is under an internationally-recognised legal license called [Creative Commons](#). There are different options in the Creative Commons [license suite](#). All options state that the work has to be attributed to the author if shared elsewhere. Through the license you can specify how others can use the resource e.g. for non-commercial purposes only.

What are the benefits of OER?

- Exposure of the resource content to a local and global community which will



increase the visibility, impact and use of the resource

- Contributing to shared knowledge and community involvement (which can also serve as a motive for funding)
- Building your profile, both on an individual and departmental level
- Networking and collaboration between departments and across institutions
- Diversifying your teaching practice
- Providing a means of receiving feedback on your teaching materials

Additionally, they can be used by staff and

students to:

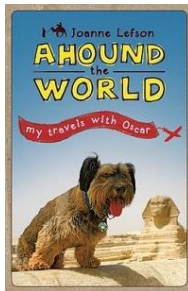
- Supplement teaching and learning material
- Encourage independent and flexible learning opportunities
- Build your own resources using OER content, and adapt for your context

Where do I find OERs?

OER content is mainly accessible through online directories. The two repositories, Health OER material from UCT directly feed into are the [UCT OpenContent](#) website and the [OER Africa](#) site. Internationally, the [OER Commons](#) and [OCW Consortium](#) are also frequently used.

We have also created a page of other repositories with Health OER content: <http://www.tinyurl.com/healthoerwiki>.

Around the world with Oscar



Oscar, the rescue dog who travelled around the world to raise awareness for abandoned and abused animals, meets the Dean of the Faculty, Prof Marian Jacobs, and a fan! Oscar and his owner, former South African professional golfer, Joanne Lefson visited the Faculty recently to promote their book – *Ahound the World – My Travels with Oscar*.



John Frankish remembered

John Gavin Frankish was born in Pietermaritzburg. He attended Merchiston Preparatory School and then Maritzburg College where he was Dux in his final year. He married his high school girl friend, Joy, in 1973, who supported him throughout his studies and his political activism.

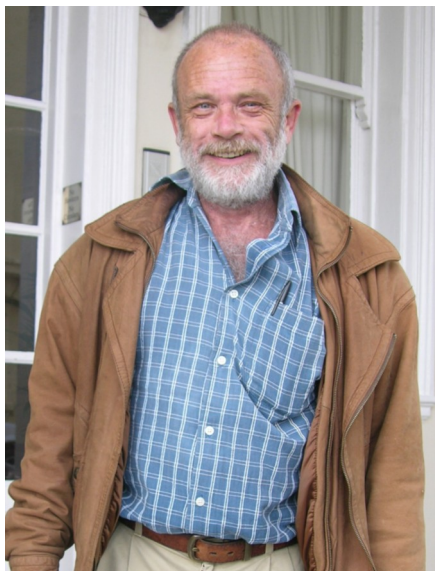
He enrolled for engineering at the University of Natal, Durban in 1968 where he was elected onto the SRC and became involved with NUSAS. After completing his engineering degree in 1971, he decided that he wanted to become a doctor. He moved to Cape Town to study medicine at UCT. He had been elected as Vice President of NUSAS with responsibility for Aquarius, the cultural wing of NUSAS, and he worked in the head office in Cape Town in a part time capacity whilst doing preparatory courses needed to progress with his medical studies.

After the Durban strikes in the late 60's, students at various campuses formed Wages Commissions to support the workers' struggles. In 1973 the Western Province Workers Advice Bureau was established. John played a vital role in building the Advice Bureau which organized political education classes for members of the Advice Bureau and provided training for worker leaders.

Whilst working in the Day Hospitals, he continued his involvement in the labour movement. He helped establish the Western Province General Workers Union which not only advanced the struggles of workers in the factories, but also played a key role in building the broad democratic movement in the Western Cape.

In November 1976, while still a student, John was banned. This meant he was severely restricted in what he could do. One of the restrictions was not belonging to a trade union. Another was not going into "townships". John defied his banning order and continued to participate in staff meetings of the WP General Workers Union and go into the townships wearing a balaclava to give political education courses.

Over the next 30 years he channeled his energies towards the transformation of health



services. In 1994 John was appointed to the Strategic Management Team of the Western Cape Provincial Health Department which was given the task of racially integrating health care in the province and expanding the health service, to more than one million people who were previously denied access.

He played a central role in crafting the Provincial Health Plan that provided an important foundation and strategic direction for health service reform and improvement over the next 15 years. The well functioning health service in the Western Cape is testimony to the leadership and management expertise of John and the many colleagues with whom he worked closely. He epitomized and lived the values of integrity, competence, caring and dedication to serving the public.

From his base at the Karl Bremer Hospital, John led a large team that laboured, year after year, to implement the Health Plan. At the community level this led to a major strengthening of the clinics and Day Hospitals on the Cape Flats. At the institutional level, it resulted in the provision of

specialist services in all regional hospitals where these did not exist before.

John was highly regarded by his senior management colleagues in the Health Department. They all looked to him for advice and wise counsel whether it was a professional or personal and he was loved by the people who worked under him. John was fearless at work and showed the highest level of integrity at all times. After resigning from the Department Dr Frankish single handedly managed the Western Cape Global Fund grant that resulted in thousands of AIDS patients receiving antiretroviral treatment. Following a stellar performance and his superb management of the grant, the Global Fund Board has awarded the Province an additional US\$1 billion over the next six years for expanding AIDS treatment and prevention services.

But John was not only a political being. He was exceptionally talented in many fields. He could paint a lovely picture, he could play a fine tune on the piano, he could cook a mean curry, arrange a charming bowl of flowers, produce beautiful wooden furniture, sew a pair of floral shorts and run a pub.

John had two children, Paul and Andrew of whom he was very proud. He was a dedicated father who adored his children. He had a relationship of twenty years with his soul mate, Doug, with whom he exchanged vows in 1999. He and Doug formalized their relationship in a civil wedding whilst he was in hospital. Together they established Bubuhle in the Hogsback, a haven of beauty, artistry and tranquility, with their extended family of dogs, cats, sheep, geese and peacocks.

John was a brave man, one who bore his illness with great dignity and fortitude. As we mourn his passing, we also celebrate the life of a loving family man, a friend and colleague whose legacy of integrity and commitment to social justice will live on in those who were privileged to know, work with, and learn from, him.

With thanks to the people who contributed to this tribute to John's life