



## PPS lends a hand

PPS is a long-standing supporter of the Faculty of Health Sciences, and their latest gifts have taken the form of two cheques for facility upgrades in the student organization meeting rooms and venues in the Department of Anaesthesia. From left: Carl-Peter Lehmann (PPS), Prof Mike James, Prof Rob Dyer, Dr Adalbert Ernst, Dr Jim McNamara (Development and Alumni Department), John Marsden (PPS), Wendy Lewin (SHAWCO), Prof Marian Jacobs, Reece Brooks and Lizette Gerber from PPS.

## HEU 20 years on

Health economics is more about saving and improving lives than about Rands and cents, Dr Susan Cleary said at the Health Economics Unit's 20th anniversary celebration last week.

Cleary is the head of the HEU, which is widely recognised as the leading health economics institution in Africa and one of the most well-established and respected medical units in low- and middle-income countries.

Initiated in 1990, the HEU used its research powers to advocate against apartheid in health care, and as a result, the ANC government welcomes HEU's research, Cleary said.

Its concern for equity in health and health care has continued, for example, resulting in research findings on HIV/AIDS being used to influence and even form the basis of government policy. Right now, key research by the HEU is playing an important role in the current debate on the National Health Insurance.

The health economists' slogan is 'health economics saves lives', said Cleary.

"While many think that health economics is only concerned with costs, it's really about finding ways to save more lives and improve health through the better use of the health care budget. The longevity of the HEU presents a unique opportunity to demonstrate the importance of health economics to health systems."

Professor Di McIntyre, one of the founders of



*At the opening: Dr Susan Cleary, Prof William Pick, Prof Di McIntyre, and Dr Steve Taylor.*

the unit, added: "Without a shadow of a doubt, the HEU has contributed extensively to the development of health economics in South Africa and in Africa more generally."

Vice-chancellor Dr Max Price said he felt privileged to have seen the unit grow since its inception.

"Social responsibility is something UCT aims to instil in its students, academics and researchers alike," he said. "The HEU was founded on a commitment to social justice in health care in South Africa, and has affected millions of lives over the past 20 years. I am proud to congratulate the HEU on its many notable milestones, and I hope to see you grow for another 20 years at least."

**Join us for an evening of fun, music and laughter, as we ask that all-important question:**

## What's under your white coat?

**When? Tuesday, 1 June 2010**  
**Where? Nico Malan Hall, Anzio Road**

**Time? 6.30pm**  
**Tickets? R50 for Staff, R10 for students**

**Tickets available at the Dean's Suite, from class representatives and the HSSC**

**Snacks for sale on the night**

**Proceeds to Sixth-year Dinner and Students in Distress Fund**

**For more information, email: [Melanie.Jackson@uct.ac.za](mailto:Melanie.Jackson@uct.ac.za)**

# Scene and heard at FHS



Above: Prof Marian Jacobs, Dr Reno Morar, Prof Jake Krige, Prof Bongani Mayosi and Dr Adrian Hatfield at an informal ceremony to recognize the donation of R3-million for an endoscopic ultrasound system.

Right: Dr Hatfield with donor, Rhona Beck.

Below: (From left, back) Assoc Prof Derek Hellenberg, Ziyanda Cele of the South Africa Norway Tertiary Education Development Programme (SANTED), Assoc Prof Clive Chandler, Ayanda Mpemnyama (SANTED), and Prof Madiba Mbulungeni. (Front) Zukile Jama and Ian van Rooyen. See article on right of page.



## DEAN'S CORNER

The 25th of May is Africa Day and it gives us the opportunity to reflect on our links to the rest of Africa and the partnerships that have grown over the years.

It's also an ideal opportunity to take up the university-wide challenge to wear your most eye-catching African attire! You and the photographer who snaps your natty outfit could each win R1 000!

In addition to your garb being suitably African, there should also be evidence that the picture was taken on 25 May, between 08h30 and 21h00. Entries must be sent to Nan Warner at the International Academic Programmes Office.

On a more serious note, there's also a VC's open lecture on 25 May, entitled "**African origins and the evolution of human diversity**"

in Leslie Social Science Building Lecture Theatre 2, followed by the opening of an exhibition showcasing UCT's linkages and collaboration on the African Continent.

The timing couldn't be better to show your commitment to South Africa—football fans are counting down the days to the FIFA Soccer World Cup! The University has also arranged accommodation for visitors, and facilities to watch the games in the Graça Machel Residence dining hall. At every turn, we are being exhorted to show our support for Bafana Bafana, from wearing supporters' gear on Fridays, to SA flags on cars' rear view mirrors. So if you can't beat them, join them and blow your vuvuzela!

There is a long break for students at all levels of education, and it's likely that staff are going to take time off to be with their families.

We at the Faculty wish you a safe and fun holiday ... and may your best team win!

Reno Morar—Deputy Dean

# Breaking down language barriers

The Clinical Skills team launched their new Afrikaans and isiXhosa translated Languages CD-ROM's at the IIDMM on Thursday, 22 April 2010.

This unique collaboration between the Faculty of Health Sciences and the Faculty of Humanities, resulted in a set of CD-ROM's to compliment the *Becoming a Doctor* course, teaching medical students to improve their ability to speak to their patients in their mother tongue.

Guests were given the opportunity to have a look and to listen to the CD-ROM's that were played at each of the computer stations situated about the room. With no required IT knowledge or computer software, the CD-ROM's, in a multimedia Microsoft PowerPoint format, made easy for an average person to follow and understand. Students can click on the texts and will be able to hear an audio version explain the meaning of the terms.

In his opening speech, Associate Professor Derek Hellenberg, quoted Foucault, "If doctors cannot communicate with patients, the clinical gaze fails to penetrate the depth and range of symptoms and they can uncover only those aspects of the patient's illness which have measurable physical manifestations". This project is an attempt to create more interaction with patients and eliminate misunderstandings and poor treatment. The BaDr team, who have been involved in the work in translating the CD-ROM's, are optimistic that the course will assist future practitioners to give the best possible service to their patients.

With no required IT knowledge or computer software, the CD-ROM's, in a multimedia Microsoft PowerPoint format, are made easy for the average person to follow and understand.

Amongst several speakers and, like a proud mother, was the Dean, Professor Marian Jacobs, who commended the team for doing a great job. She mentioned this project eloquently meets the Vice-Chancellor, Dr. Max Price's goal of social responsibility and expands on the notion of transformation, through having respect for diversity.

As a result of Apartheid, the majority of the indigenous languages of South Africa have been suppressed; with the success of the evening's event the BaDr team looks forward to applying the same format to languages such as isiZulu and Sesotho as well expanding out to other faculties and departments within the university.

The coordinating team thanked the South African Norway Tertiary Education Development Program (SANTED) for funding the project.

- Wesaal Tambay



From left: Prof Thandabantu Nhlapo, Prof Marian Jacobs, Prof Graham Louw, Assoc Prof Gonda Perez, Dr Rachel Alexander and Prof Greg Hussey.



VC, Dr Max Price, with Professor Mary Robertson.

## Sponsor meets "her" students

On the weekend of 30 April, Professor Mary Robertson, jetted in from the UK to hold an educational and bonding weekend with all the recipients – past and present – of her undergraduate sponsorships. Apart from getting to know them better and having a jolly good time, the purpose of the weekend was to find out how her eight “delightful young ladies”, as she described them, were progressing and what they were currently up to.

They were doctors Chwayita Luwaca, Sibsi Mondlana and Azwe Takalani, all winners of the Professor Mary Robertson Progress Prize for a graduated female medical student who made the most progress over the six years of study; Drs Jacquie Cirola, Nevadna Singh, Tricia Pickard and Debbie Rencken, the recipients of the Professor Mary Robertson Prize for Excellence for a top female medical graduate; as well as Gabaza Machele, a 4<sup>th</sup> year medical student, who was awarded the Professor Mary Robertson Scholarship, a full-cost bursary for a historically disadvantaged female medical student from second to final year.

Robertson is an eleventh-generation South African who was the fourth generation in her family to graduate from UCT. She graduated MBChB from UCT in 1971 and received a Doctor of Medicine (MD) in 1983. She was the first woman to receive a Doctor of Science in Medicine (DSc [Med]) at UCT in 2006, and only the ninth recipient. In recognition of her DSc (Med) and her family’s enduring relationship with UCT, she instituted her suit of awards. The DSc [Med] is the Faculty of Health Sciences’ most senior doctorate, rarely awarded and only to persons of “exceptional academic merit” on the basis of original published work.

The 3-day programme included dinners with their host as well as trips to Robben Island and Cape Point. Speaking at a cocktail function held in the MAC Club at the Faculty, UCT vice-chancellor, Dr Max Price, presented Robertson with a gold pin in recognition of her “generous” donations as a member of the Chancellor’s Circle, a society of donors who have given R50000 and more to the university.

## From mummies...to mummified cats and bulls...and on to dissection

Professor Graham Louw is no ordinary teacher, so it would stand to reason that his inaugural lecture would be something to talk about. Breaking the traditional inaugural lecture mould, Louw gave a fascinating insight to mummification as it relates to dissection for medical science.

In a lecture titled *Mummy, the cat has gone missing, does she have a microchip? Mummification - a glimpse into the socio-cultural practice of preserving the bodies of animals*, Prof Louw began by explaining how students are introduced to the science of dissection, and its importance in teaching medicine.

Dissection is described as a “rite of passage” for medical students, said Prof Louw. So much so that many anatomy professors refer to cadavers as students’ “first patients”.

Prof Louw explained that, culturally, it is sometimes difficult for students to reconcile their studies with their beliefs, especially those centred around death and burial. For that reason, his introductory course is titled *Reflections on death, dying and dissection*. Areas covered include where cadavers come from and how human tissue is preserved, and no discussion on preservation would be complete without a lecture on the ancient Egyptian practice of ritual mummification of the dead.

But for Prof Louw personally, no lecture is complete without a mention of animals. Inspired by his volunteer work at a local veterinary practice while still in high school, he originally completed a degree in veterinary science. He went on to do national service, working as a state veterinarian in centres around the country, as well as in the then South West Africa.

He eventually returned to Onderstepoort to do his doctoral degree, which was in developmental neuroanatomy, and went on to

teach at Onderstepoort, before making the move back to Cape Town and UCT in 1987.

So it was no surprise to discover that animals featured prominently in Louw’s lecture, as he explained their importance in ancient Egyptian culture, from representing gods to their mummified remains being “given or dedicated in fulfilment of a wish, vow or pledge”. These votive mummies of ibises, dogs, cats, falcons, rams and even bulls have been found in tombs and temples across Egypt, and many appear to have been treated with as much care and reverence as the bodies of their owners.

“Hundreds of thousands of mummified cats were found at a particular site in Egypt in the 1880s and ‘90s, and 180 000 were shipped to Liverpool to be used as fertiliser. “Now I want you to remember when you buy cereal that was produced in the UK - the carbon in it comes from mummified cats,” said Prof Louw.

He went on to explain that there was much that could be learned from studying these animal mummies - from the degree of domestication of the animals to veterinary practices and the international trade in animals at the time, because several of the mummified animals were either not indigenous to the country, or have since become extinct in Egypt.

Prof Louw closed the loop in his lecture by examining modern rituals relating to animals and death, from animal sacrifice through to taxidermy and having Fido bronzed after he passes on and keeping the remains in the living room.

At the core of Prof Louw’s inaugural lecture was the understanding of the need for respect for the dead, both human and animal, and how this forms the cornerstone of the teaching of anatomy.

He ended his talk with the words: “A mind, stretched by new ideas, never regains its original dimensions.”