

Hoffenberg honoured at launch of centre for chronic diseases

The recognition of a struggle stalwart who has long been associated with the University of Cape Town took centre stage at the launch of the Sub-Saharan African Centre for Chronic Disease Control, which was held in the Groote Schuur Old Main Building on Wednesday, 4 November 2009.

The launch of the Centre coincided with the naming of the Bill Hoffenberg Conference Room, which was the venue for the launch. Prof Bongani Mayosi, Head of the Department of Medicine and one of the founders of the Centre, welcomed guests to the opening and said "It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to this unique celebration tonight. We are celebrating our triumph over the history of apartheid by honouring the life and work of Bill Hoffenberg and at the same time we are making history through the establishment of the new Sub-Saharan African Centre for Chronic Disease Control."

Prof Mayosi went on to welcome Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, the current Minister of Home Affairs, former minister of Health and Foreign Affairs, who spoke warmly of her personal experience of Sir Raymond "Bill" Hoffenberg, as a medical student in exile in Birmingham in the United Kingdom.

"I had the privilege of being in his ward every day. He was a very kind professor and was an excellent clinician and excellent teacher," she said.

She praised his dedication to the struggle against apartheid and pointed out that Bill Hoffenberg's anti-apartheid efforts had been acknowledged by the then Acting President of the ANC, Oliver Tambo, when he addressed the United Nations in 1967.

Bill Hoffenberg, a graduate of the University of Cape Town, who had also served on the academic staff of the Faculty, was described as an endocrinologist of international repute, who was forced to leave South Africa in 1968 as he had received a banning order issued by the apartheid government. He went on to an illustrious professional career in the United Kingdom, which included being appointed president of the Royal College of Clinicians, and culminated in a knighthood in 1984.

He retired in 1993 and emigrated to Queensland, Australia, where he served as professor of Medical Ethics at the University of Queensland from 1993 to 1995. He died in April 2007 and in 2008 was posthumously awarded the Order of the Baobab in Silver by then-president Thabo Mbeki.

The refurbishment of the conference room was made possible by funding received by the Centre and the decision was taken to name it for



Above: The people who made it happen—the founders of the Centre for Chronic Diseases, who are photographed with Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma.

Left: Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, former Minister of Health, and Foreign Affairs, and current Minister of Home Affairs, reflects on the life and work of Bill Hoffenberg, who was a mentor to her as a young medical student in exile in the United Kingdom.

Bill Hoffenberg in recognition of his work, both in the medical profession and in the anti-apartheid struggle and because of his strong ties to the University of Cape Town. Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma unveiled a photograph of Bill Hoffenberg during the evening's proceedings that has pride of place in the conference room.

Prof Dinky Levitt explained the events leading to the establishment of the Centre for Chronic Diseases, and the institutions that form part of the collaboration, which include: the universities of Cape Town, Western Cape and Stellenbosch, Harvard, the Western Cape Government, and the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (Mwanza Regional Health) Authority and Shree Hindu Mandal Hospital of Tanzania. The mission of the Centre is to "bring together experts in public health, clinical medicine, epidemiology, lifestyle modification, economics, health behaviour, implementation research and health service management. The collaboration across and between institutions and sectors will individually and institutionally help to develop access."

Prof Levitt also made reference to the need to develop, evaluate and disseminate programmes and

methods, with the aim of preventing chronic diseases and improving the quality of care for patients.

Prof Craig Househam, the Head of the Department of Health in the Western Cape, also paid tribute to Bill Hoffenberg and went on to give health statistics about the Western Cape that added weight to the motivation for the establishment of the Sub-Saharan African Centre for Chronic Disease Control UCT.

"There is little doubt that the burden of disease from non-communicable [illnesses] on the African continent and in South Africa in particular, has shown and has continued to demonstrate the potential for a sustained rise. On this basis, a significant investment in the healthcare system and in particular the primary healthcare system is justified. Further innovative strategies and plans are needed to address the determinants of this disease burden.

He concluded by saying: "It is clear the work envisaged by the Sub-Saharan African Centre for Chronic Disease Control will be of great importance to the Western Cape Province, Southern Africa and the broader continent."

Global Health Initiative Seminar Series launches with NHI panel discussion

According to experts at the inaugural Global Health Initiative Seminar, hosted by the Faculty of Health Sciences at UCT on 28 October 2009, focusing on the National Health Insurance (NHI), it's not a question of whether this system should be implemented, but rather – how.

Following a welcome from Dr Max Price, Vice-Chancellor of UCT and an introduction by Professor Marian Jacobs, the Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences, Tebogo Phadu, an ANC Policy Research Coordinator involved in the NHI policy development process, opened the panel discussion with a presentation on government's progress towards unveiling a proposal for a national health insurance plan in South Africa.

He outlined the current state of play in the South African health sector, making mention of issues within both the public and private arenas of health, which he summed up in the following way: "Of all the inequalities, I think that in the health sector, we have the most inhuman and shocking inequalities you can imagine."

Phadu went on to say that the majority of funding is channeled through the private health sector, with 15% of the country's population having 60% of the available resources for health, while 85% of the population accesses only 40% of the available resources for healthcare, through the public health system. He said that it was envisioned that funding for the National Health Insurance would be obtained through two streams of funding, namely through the taxation system, and the other by means of payroll deduction, with exemption from payment being provided for the lowest income earners and the unemployed.

He emphasized the need for "major radical reform on healthcare as a whole", rather than a piecemeal or gradualist model of change. This was in marked contrast to the presentation by Dr.



Dr. Viroj Tangcharoensathien, Director: International Health Policy Programmes, Thailand, Prof Di McIntyre, Prof Marian Jacobs, Tebogo Phadu, ANC Policy Research Coordinator and Dr Reno Morar at the inaugural Global Health Initiative Seminar.

Viroj Tangcharoensathien, Director: International Health Policy Programmes, Thailand, who pointed out that the rollout of national health insurance in Thailand took 27 years to fully implement and it has an enviable record of service delivery in that country.

Prof Di McIntyre, from the UCT Health Economics Unit, spoke about community involvement in health and emphasized the need for constructive and open public debates about the ways in which universal coverage can be achieved in healthcare. She also pointed out that South Africa has an "incredible window of opportunity" to make positive changes within the public health sector, with one of the major positive factors being that SA's current minister of health is open to change and willing to engage with stakeholders within the healthcare sector, as well as civil society in order to improve service delivery in healthcare.

Dr Nkaki Matlala represented the interests of

the Hospital Association of South Africa and he pointed out that the public health systems in South Africa are not actually under-resourced when benchmarked against international standards, and that due attention should be paid to the allocation and stewardship of resources in the health sector. He raised a further concern in terms of being able to provide universal coverage: "If we say that at the point of service, it must be free, this will result in an increase in usage as more people will access health services."

The panel discussion engendered much comment and debate that lasted well into the post-seminar refreshments and one of the closing comments sums the NHI debate up well: "In order to make it work, we need to plan carefully, and take one step at a time, a phase at a time, so that the health sector can handle it. Once failed, it is very hard to fix. The responsibility is on everyone in the health care sector – we can achieve it."

German delegation learns about TB vaccines at SATVI

Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Prof Crain Soudien was on hand to welcome a delegation from Lower Saxony (Niedersachsen), Germany, consisting of politicians and businessmen. The visit was hosted by the South African Tuberculosis Vaccine Initiative (SATVI) and took place in the IIDMM.

The visit was led by the Niedersachsen Minister of Economics, Labour and Transport, Jorg Bode and was part of a broader visit to strengthen ties and explore areas of potential collaboration in South Africa.

Deputy Dean of Research, Prof Greg Hussey, led the discussion and interactive presentation session and this was followed by a tour of the SATVI laboratories.

The vital contribution of private sector investment in research at the University of Cape Town was highlighted and the programme included presentations by SATVI co-director, Dr Hassan Mahomed and Prof Frank Brombacher, head of the Immunology Unit



Tom Scriba, Senior Laboratory Researcher at SATVI gives an overview of the extensive work undertaken by SATVI in the area of vaccine development.

Red Cross launches new theatres

Red Cross War Memorial Children's Hospital unveils its new state-of-the-art operating suites

On Wednesday, 16 September 2009, the doors of the new Operating Theatre Complex at the Red Cross War Memorial Children's Hospital were opened for business, heralding a new chapter in the lifesaving history of this acclaimed paediatric facility.

According to a spokesman for the Children's Hospital Trust, the fundraising arm of the hospital: "The new state-of-the-art facility includes eight fully equipped operating theatres; three fully digitalised. The new digital installation is the first of its kind and sophistication in sub-Saharan Africa and is technically on par with the most advanced installations in the US, Europe, Asia, Middle East and Australia."

The Complex was built and equipped at a cost of R125-million and the new digital operating theatres together with a modern digital lecture facility will form part of a multidisciplinary training hub that will assist other African nations to develop and improve their paediatric surgical skills. The potential provision of a new Clinical Skills Training Centre is under investigation. The new Complex also includes a new dedicated Cardiac Catheterisation Laboratory, a Central Processing Department, an Anaesthetic Suite and a Pain Management Unit.

For the first time since the Hospital was built in 1956, each operating theatre is designated to a sub-speciality; Emergency & Septic Orthopaedics, Burns, Neurosurgery & Spinal Orthopaedics (digitalised), General Endoscopy (digitalised), Urology & Plastics

Left: the official opening ceremony, complete with red ribbon to cut!



Below: a demonstration of one of the new operating theatres in action.



that we can share what we do with our colleagues in South Africa, Africa and around the world. We are able to both teach and learn so that we can improve care for children requiring surgery," says Professor Alastair Millar, Charles FM Saint Professor of Paediatric Surgery: The Red Cross War Memorial Children's Hospital.

The fundraising campaign kicked off in 2005 with a R4-million pledge from an international philanthropic organisation, The ELMA Foundation.

This was followed by funding from donors including Raymond Ackerman, Adcock Ingram Holdings Ltd, Engen Petroleum, The Harry Crossley Foundation, The Atlantic Philanthropies, Dutch Postcode Lotteries, the Walton Leycester Family Trust, Knorr-Bremse Global Care, Netcare and Edcon.

(digitalised), Cardiac, Ophthalmology (Eye) and an Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT) & Scopes Theatre.

"Surgeons are now positioned at the forefront of new developments in the surgery of children, particularly with respect to minimally invasive or 'keyhole' surgery. Every speciality has the privilege and responsibility to be leaders in their respective fields.

"The superb audio visual equipment installed in three of the new theatres will mean

Undergraduate researchers take top honours

A very successful Undergraduate Research Day was held in the Faculty on Thursday, 15 October, with 11 presentations by students, and seven posters.

Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Prof Danie Visser was the Faculty's special guest and he presided over the prizegiving at the end of the session. Judges were: Prof Gregory Hussey, Prof Eric Bateman, Prof Mohamed Jeebhay, Dr Virna Leaner, Prof Anwar Mall, and Assoc. Prof Lana van Niekerk.

The winning presentations:

First Prize - Jeremy Allen, Lorinda Bezuidenhout, Michael Elliot, Liewze Karelse, Mounisha Ramdin, Robyn Scholtz and Samantha Sheppard. Title: *The effect of cryotherapy on recovery following exercise-induced muscle damage*

Second Prize - Jacques de Wet, Ayanda Gina, Ladine Louw, Musa Makhoba, Lee Tacon. Title: *The translation of Vertigo Symptom Scale into Afrikaans and its ability*



The Undergraduate Research Day winners.

to differentiate between patients with vertigo or without

Third Prize - Ross Hoffman, S Sobnach, M Borkhum, H Nathire, E Muller, and F McCrude. Title: *Transplantation: A last hope, or righteous quandary—A medical student's perspective*

The winning poster presentations:

First Prize - Angidi Mauree. Title: *Quantitation of ischaemia-modified albumin (IMA) and evaluation as a marker in different conditions.*

Second Prize - Mlekeleli Gambu. Title: *Gross morphology and history of the human aortic arch.*

Third Prize - Patricia Leighton. Title: *The use of family history and pedigree.*

Congratulations!!!

The 2009 *Ad Hominem* promotions

Ad Hominem promotions – Professor



Wayne Derman



Mohamed Jeebhay



Jake Krige



Michael Lambert



Carolyn Williamson

Ad Hominem promotions – Associate Professor



Robert Dunn



Anthony Figaji



Denver Hendricks



John Hewitson



Muazzam Jacobs



Athol Kent



Nonhlanhla Khumalo



Sandrine Lecour



Crick Lund



Marc Mendelson



Helen Wainwright

Ad Hominem promotions – Senior lecturer



Dr Theresa Burgess



Dr Chelsea Morroni



Ms Lucretia Petersen

Fogarty funding for talented trio

Three specialists at UCT's Lung Infection and Immunity Unit have won substantial US fellowships for their doctoral studies on tuberculosis.

Recently, Drs Shahieda Adams, Jonny Peter and Richard van Zyl-Smit received Fogarty International Clinical Research Fellowships, awarded by the US National Institutes of Health's (NIH) Fogarty International Centre. In addition to the funding that comes with the fellowship, Adams, Peter and Van Zyl-Smit travelled to the US for orientation and training at the NIH in Bethesda, Maryland.

The trio's research focuses on various aspects of TB diagnosis and infection.

Adams, 44, an occupational medicine specialist, is running a screening programme - the first of its kind - for healthcare workers at

primary-care clinics in high-burden settings in the Western Cape, including Delft, Nyanga and Khayelitsha.

In turn, Peter, 32, works on sputum induction, a technique used to get a sputum sample for diagnosis when the patient is unable to produce spit naturally. He is seeing how sputum induction - it usually involves vaporised salt-water - stands up to other techniques, such as the more expensive and uncomfortable bronchoscopy. Peter is also trying to see if sputum induction, used commonly in hospitals, can be applied at primary-care clinics.

Finally, Van Zyl-Smit, 36, is trying to provide some laboratory evidence for the strongly-assumed but never conclusively-proved link between smoking and TB. The three researchers are supervised by Associate Professor Keertan Dheda.



Professor Gregory Hussey, Dr Danie Theron and MEC for Health, Theuns Botha.

A pat on the back for SATVI from the MEC

"I wouldn't be surprised if a new TB vaccine is found right here in Worcester," said Provincial Minister (MEC) for Health, Theuns Botha, during a visit to SATVI's field site in Worcester on 18 September. The MEC was most impressed with SATVI's contribution to the fight against TB, specifically mentioning SATVI's TB vaccine research and the new digital x-ray machine it helped to get for Brewelskloof regional TB hospital.

He visited the site following his address to Primary Health Care nurses at a TB symposium sponsored by SATVI at Brewelskloof Hospital. Former SATVI Director Professor Gregory Hussey, who chaired the symposium, and Elmarie Simon, SATVI site manager, hosted the MEC. The MEC was accompanied by the Boland Regional District Head, Dr Lizette Philips, and the Medical Superintendent of Brewelskloof Hospital in Worcester, Dr Danie Theron.

International anatomists hold conference in Cape Town



Prof Graham Louw, new president of the ASSA.

The Anatomical Society of Southern Africa (ASSA) hosted the 17th Congress of the International Federation of Associations of Anatomists at the Cape Town International Convention Centre from 16 to 19 August, 2009. This was the culmination of four years of hard work by the local Organising Committee.

At this Congress, a wide

selection of very diverse topics was presented and debated. These topics covered such areas of research interest as the structure and function of the human and animal body, biological anthropology, cell biology, development of the human from embryo to adolescence, methods of teaching and learning anatomy, the history of

anatomy, forensic anthropology, and more. Delegates were very satisfied with the congress arrangements and thoroughly enjoyed their stay in Cape Town.

Professor Graham Louw of the Department of Human Biology was the chairman of the Organising Committee.

The term of office of the president of ASSA came to an

end recently, and at this congress, Prof Louw was elected the new Society president. In appreciation of the work done in chairing the Organising Committee, Prof Louw received a return air ticket to Hawaii, where he will represent ASSA at a meeting with the American Association of Anatomists (AAA) in July, 2010.

- Lameez Mohd

Publication of the Month – By Susan Cleary

A recent special edition of *The Lancet* focussed exclusively on “Health in South Africa”.

The series of six papers and six commentaries included authorship from a number of members of the Faculty of Health Sciences, including Gavin Mooney, Lucy Gilson, Di McIntyre, Stephen Lawn, Bongani Mayosi and Alan Flisher.

This month, we focus on Coovadia H, Jewkes R, Barron P, Sanders D and McIntyre D, “The health and health system of South Africa: historical roots of current public health challenges”, *Lancet*, published online August 25: DOI: 10.1016/S0140-6736(09)60951-X, 2009.

The article provides a wealth of information about the history of South Africa, arguing ultimately that the roots of a dysfunctional

health system and the concurrent epidemics of communicable and non-communicable diseases can be found in policies from periods of the country’s history. The consequences of some of these policies include racial and gender discrimination, inequalities in income, migrant labour, the destruction of family life and persistent violence.

Some of the key messages from the article include the need to focus on programmes affecting the social determinants of health and development; the importance of good leadership, stewardship and management of health services for achieving health for all people; and that the economic architecture should allow for the development of programmes that reduce poverty, unemployment and inequities.



Saadiq Moolla, Max Rabkin and Keegan Carruthers-Smith, winners of the regional ACM International Collegiate Programming Contest.

Medical student computer boffin on winning programming team

The 2009 regional contest of the ACM International Collegiate Programming Contest on Sunday 10 October 2009 was won by Keegan Carruthers-Smith, Max Rabkin and Saadiq Moolla. This premier programming competition also drew teams from Benin in West Africa and Mauritius. UCT took the top three positions of the 56 teams with the winners solving all 6 problems. The Faculty of Health Sciences can proudly celebrate this victory in the computer sciences division as Saadiq is a second year medical student.

The same team represented South Africa this year in the most prestigious programming contest in the world in Stockholm Sweden, the ACM ICPC World Finals and will be jetting off to the 2010 ACM-ICPC World Finals to be held in Harbin, China. The host is Harbin Engineering University. The competition was open to any university student born after 1986 and who had started studying in 2005 or later. The final event is the culmination of the efforts of several tens of thousands of the finest students in computing disciplines.

Monthly Quiz—Win an Exclusive Books voucher

The whole world has an opinion about the Caster Semenya saga. According to popular media, what is the modern term used to describe a person with both male and female reproductive organs? Send your answers to: Melanie.jackson@uct.ac.za.

Answer to last month’s quiz:

According to media reports, Sepp Blatter gave SA a score of 7.5 out of 10 in terms of SA’s readiness to host the FIFA 2010. Nobody got the correct answer, but Melanie Alperstein was first in with the closest—7, so she wins a voucher. Congratulations!

News snippets

Mendelson gets top spot at FIDSSA

Not only has he been recently promoted to associate professor, but Marc Mendelson of UCT’s Institute of Infectious Disease and Molecular Medicine has also been elected president of the influential Federation of Infectious Disease Societies of South Africa (FIDSSA).

As an umbrella organisation for a number of societies and associations dealing with infectious diseases, the FIDSSA claims a membership of just under 1500 healthcare and related workers, and is aimed at contributing to a more integrated approach towards infectious diseases in Southern Africa. Mendelson is also the founder and head of UCT’s new Division of Infectious Diseases and HIV Medicine, one of the first tertiary level divisions of infectious diseases in South Africa. FIDSSA’s responsibilities include guiding appropriate treatment of infectious diseases, by publishing guidelines which include infection control practices.

SATVI nominated by Aeras for TB award

SATVI has been nominated for the Stop TB Kochon Prize! This prize is awarded every year to recognise persons, or organisations who have made a significant contribution to fighting TB. The Aeras Global Tuberculosis Foundation nominated SATVI, because of its ‘outstanding record of TB vaccine development’. The winner will be announced in December.

Crime on the increase around campus

There has been a reported increase in crime in the public areas around the Faculty of Health Sciences and staff and students are urged to be alert when walking in public areas around the campus.

According to SAPS Woodstock, more vehicles and manpower have been allocated to Observatory Sector 1, where the campus is located, following an increase in muggings, robbery and theft.

Of particular concern is theft of and out of motor vehicles and staff and students are reminded not to leave valuables in their vehicles, especially when parking in Falmouth and Penzance Roads.

UCT is increasing security in the area, and this includes installing a security camera on the corner of George and Falmouth Roads and increased security patrols.

Burch wins national excellence award

Congratulations are in order for Prof Vanessa Burch, who holds the chair in clinical medicine in the Department of Medicine, who recently received the 2009 National Excellence in Teaching and Learning Award from the Council for Higher Education and the Higher Education Learning and Teaching Association of Southern Africa.

The honour is bestowed on educators working in tertiary institutions, to support excellence in teaching and learning in the sector and to generate academics who are able to provide leadership in teaching in their disciplines, institutions and regions. The award is also offered as a means of generating debate and public awareness about the ingredients of teaching excellence.

New Discovery Foundation fellowships

Dr Hoosain Khalfey and Dr Greg Symons, senior registrars at UCT’s Department of Medicine and the Respiratory Clinic at Groote Schuur Hospital, have been awarded Discovery Foundation Academic Fellowships, which will enable them to continue their potentially ground-breaking studies of lung infections over the next two years.

Khalfey’s research is twofold. Firstly, he hopes to shed some light on the most common causes of lung infections among HIV-positive patients. More specifically, he will look into the use of early bronchoscopies on HIV-positive patients with lung infections in an attempt to achieve a “definitive and rapid diagnosis” of such patients. His second study will investigate the use of steroids as a parallel treatment for severe community-acquired pneumonia.

In turn, Symons’ study deals with extensively drug-resistant tuberculosis (XDR TB), in which the TB is resistant to at least four drugs. Symons will look at the extent and severity of such drug resistance, which will include running a database of identified cases in the Cape Town metropole, now totalling 220 patients.



All together, say cheese! All of the Faculty of Health Sciences Student Society representatives got together to celebrate a successful 2009. They are photographed with the Dean and several Faculty academic and administrative staff.

Student societies' governing bodies recognized at faculty event

Faculty of Health Sciences student society leaders were recognized at a function held on 29 September in the MAC Club.

In addition, the University's Student Leadership Awards function took place on 6 October, and the Executive Director: Department of Student Affairs Student Leader Award was

shared by Thandi Gondwana de Wit and Sara Reith. De Wit is president of SHAWCO Health for 2009 and, as vice-president in 2008, led SHAWCO Health's response to the xenophobic crises, implemented the first health and rehabilitation, and sign language interpretation services, for SHAWCO clinics and partnerships for HIV testing.

The following awards were also presented to Health Sciences Faculty students on the night: Most Outstanding Student Leader in a Postgraduate Student Faculty Council Award: Michael Stead and Most Outstanding Student Leader in a Society or Student Organisation Award: David Favara (Surgical Society).

Adnams gets to grips with intellectual disability issues in South Africa

There is a dearth of research relating to issues of intellectual disability in South Africa, and government must recognise it as a public health priority along with mental health, Professor Colleen Adnams said in her recent inaugural lecture.

Adnams cited a study undertaken by Dr Maureen Durkin of the University of Wisconsin-Madison which shows that although more than 90% of children and families affected by developmental disabilities are likely to live in developing countries, the majority of research and clinical services in this area takes place in wealthier, developed countries.

This is the case in South Africa, where 3.6% of children have some form of intellectual disability and public health resources are limited. Many of these cases can be attributed to Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, a cause of intellectual disability that has been at the heart of Adnams' research and clinical work since

she was appointed as Head of the Child Developmental Service in 1994.

She was instrumental in setting up Developmental Paediatrics as a national sub-speciality for this rapidly advancing clinical field.

In 2007, she was promoted to the Vera Grover Chair and Professor of Intellectual Disability in the Department of Psychiatry and Mental Health, which is the only chair of intellectual disability in Africa. Adnams has also been instrumental in initiating the MPhil in Intellectual Disability Mental Health, to commence at UCT in 2010.

In his vote of thanks, Professor Dan Stein, Head of the Department of Psychiatry and Mental Health, paid tribute to Adnams' work and described her as someone who has the means to "bring intellectual disability to the forefront". He described her as a team player, a fighter for the underdog and praised her ability to mentor other people.



STOP PRESS!

You are invited to the inaugural lecture of Prof Sebastian van As Entitled: *"Ex Africa Semper Aliquid Novum"* (There is always something new from Africa)

On Wednesday, 25 November 2009
At 5.30pm
In the New Learning Centre Lecture Theatre, Anatomy Building, Faculty of Health Sciences