

Cape Times, 6 April 2018

Health specialist wins UCT award

Raphael Wolf

UCT's health specialist and executive director of the National Institute for Occupational Health, Dr Sophia Kisting-Cairncross, has been awarded the President of Convocation Medal 2017.

Conferring the award at a ceremony yesterday, president of UCT's Convocation (official alumni forum) Lorna Houston said Kisting-Cairncross had throughout her career demonstrated a deep and abiding passion for collective and inclusive efforts to protect the health, social and economic rights of the most vulnerable workers. "Dr Kisting-Cairncross is the kind of graduate UCT wishes to produce," said Houston.

She said Kisting-Cairncross had pursued her passion with integrity and courage, and showed that the pursuit of



**SOPHIA
KISTING-CAIRNCROSS**

social justice and production of epistemologies from the south were significant in creating a world free of oppression.

"Sophie indicated that she has mostly learnt about the deep dignity of work – and the importance of having a job – from humble workers who helped save lives during workplace emergencies even though they themselves had

limited educational opportunities," she added.

Kisting-Cairncross said she was humbled and surprised at receiving the award.

"A graduation ceremony such as this is about the celebration of the students, and I really want to find a way of reassuring them that they can be the very best they choose to be. Irrespective of the problems or challenges facing them, they can make their own light shine brightly," said Kisting-Cairncross.

She is chairperson of the Qubeka Trust set up to distribute funds to the 4 400 mine-workers who won a settlement against Anglo and AngloGold Ashanti.

In 2003, the Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health in the US recognised her as one of 10 influential women in occupational health and safety internationally.