

Animal Unit excellence



Congratulations to Hiram Arendse, the Animal Unit Manager, who received two awards at the recent South African Association for Laboratory Animal Science (SAALAS) Conference. Not only was he awarded “Technician of the Year”, he also received the Freek Potgieter Award for the best technical presentation at the congress. Another feather in the cap of the Animal Unit is that conventional animal unit manager, Tlhogi Selaledi, is spearheading national continuing education courses for SAALAS members. Well done!

FHS part of collaborative grant for health systems development

The first annual management planning meeting of the new Resilient and Responsive Health Systems (RESYST) consortium, funded by DfID (Department for International Development), was held in Cape Town from 11th to 15th April 2011.

RESYST will undertake health policy and systems research (with a focus on financing, health workers and governance) in a set of African and Asian settings, including India, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, Thailand, Tanzania and Vietnam.

“The new consortium is an exciting opportunity to interact with colleagues from various parts of the world in research areas such as how progressive financing systems can be developed and how health system leadership capabilities can be strengthened” noted Professor Lucy Gilson (Consortium Co-Research Director).

“Through coordinating these and other activities, the consortium will provide the required support and resources needed to sustain existing, and develop new, multi-country collaborations in health financing and systems research”. Professor Gilson is jointly appointed by UCT’s School of Public Health & Family Medicine and the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM).

In addition to conducting research, the consortium will strengthen efforts to support research uptake to enable policy and management changes that promote health, health equity and poverty reduction and support a range of capacity development activities.

For South Africa, UCT’s Health Economics Unit will lead work around key research questions related to financing (Professor Di McIntyre) and governance (led by Professor Lucy Gilson); Associate Professor Sue Cleary will also be a member of the consortium’s management group.

DfID awarded the consortium with £6,000,000, and overall activities will be coordinated by LSHTM until 2016.

Inaugural lectures:

Prof Mohamed Jeebhay
Wednesday, 20 April 2011
Topic: From Farm to Fork—a Fishy Story of Allergy and Asthma

Prof Willem Hanekom
Wednesday, 4 May 2011
Topic: Vaccines to Prevent TB

Both start at 5pm for 5.30pm, and light refreshments will be served after the lecture.



Wishing our Christian readers a Happy Easter!

If you are on the roads over the holiday period, please drive carefully!



UCT and FHS win PanSALB awards

There's good reason UCT's submission for the 2010/2011 Multilingualism Awards of the Pan South African Language Board (PanSALB) ran into a few hundred pages; there was a lot of ground to cover.

But the effort paid off. 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. To be precise, the award was presented jointly to the Faculties of Health Sciences and Humanities at UCT for the training programmes in Afrikaans and isiXhosa that over the past decade have slowly but surely been incorporated into the formal MBChB curriculum of the Faculty of Health Sciences.

The backbone of this programme has been the Becoming a Doctor course, which spans the second and third years of the curriculum, and which was the brainchild of the designers of the new curriculum, led by Professor Janet Seggie of the Department of Medicine and Dr Nadia Hartman of the Educational Development Unit in the faculty.

It's been a team effort throughout. The Faculty of Health Sciences worked side by side with colleagues in the Faculty of Humanities and the Multilingualism Education Project (MEP) of the Centre for Higher Education Development.

In keeping with the collaborative nature of the work, three UCT scholars travelled to Sandton on 19 March to pick up the trophy - Professor Derek Hellenberg, head of the Division of Family Medicine in the School of Public Health and Family Medicine, and Dr Ian van Rooyen and Dr Mantoa Smouse, both of the School of Languages and Literatures.

Their submission to PanSALB gives a lot of back story. In particular it highlights how things get lost in translation when patients and doctors speak to each other in South Africa.

For example, recent research by Associate Professor Ana Deumert, head of linguistics in the Department of English Language and Literature, has shown that patients whose primary language differs from that used in the health system have a poorer understanding of their diagnosis, treatment recommendations and medication than other patients do.

So concerns were bigger than just doctors' bedside manner.

"It's essential that health professionals are



able to communicate in the patients' mother tongues in order to deliver the best possible service with the best possible outcome to those patients," says Hellenberg.

So the Faculty of Health Sciences - with Hellenberg, Smouse, Van Rooyen and others at the helm - has introduced a train of initiatives to fill such gaps since 2003.

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-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.

There've been other initiatives along the way. So, for example, the faculty translated the Department of Internal Medicine's four-CD compilation on clinical skills, until then only available in English, into Afrikaans and isiXhosa. This was also funded by MEP, and the CDs are now available as an open educational resource.

Congratulations ...

... to Dr. Digby Warner and Dr. Tom Scriba, who were named as winner and first runner-up, respectively, of the BioVision TWAS Lilly Award for 2011. This award is given in recognition of outstanding scientific achievements made by young scientists from developing countries. Digby received his award on 28 March at the BioVision 7th World Life Sciences Forum that took place in Lyons, France.



... to Prof Athol Kent (*photographed above*), who has been nominated for the SA Association of Health Educationalists (SAAHE) award for Distinguished Educator of the Year 2011.

... to Assoc Prof Shajila Singh, who has been appointed to the following HPCSA leadership positions in 2011: Chair of the Professional Board of Speech-language Hearing Professions, Chair of the CPD Committee, member of the HPCSA EXCO, member of the HPCSA management committee, member of the ETQA and she also represents the HPCSA on the Health Sciences Review Committee.



... to alumnus, Dr Michael Hayden (*photographed above*), who has been awarded the prestigious 2011 Canada Gairdner Wightman award, which recognizes and rewards the achievements of medical researchers whose work contributes significantly to improving the quality of human life. These awards are prestigious, with 79 of 298 past recipients going on to win Nobel Prizes.

Pesticides course is a Faculty first

The Faculty celebrated the launch of the inaugural Postgraduate Diploma in Pesticide Risk Management on Thursday, 31 March 2011, convened by Dr Andrea Rother, Health Risk Management Programme Leader in the Centre for Occupational and Environmental Health Research. The course brings together students from countries as diverse as Fiji and St Lucia, as well as a wide range of African countries including Botswana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Prof Thandabantu Nhlapo officially welcomed the 18 students, who will be on campus for two weeks, before returning to their home countries to complete the coursework online, making use of the University's "Vula" system. They will then return at the end of 2012 to write final examinations and graduate.

Prof Nhlapo explained that this type of programme is seen as being very important within the framework of the University's academic plan as Afropolitanism remains a University-wide strategic priority. "People who are assets in our countries don't have to go abroad to study the issues of Africa, and we are not sitting in South Africa, isolated from the rest of Africa and its issues," he said.



Participants in the inaugural Postgraduate Diploma in Pesticide Risk Management are photographed with convenor, Dr Andrea Rother (front, second left) and DVC, Prof Thandabantu Nhlapo (front, third left).

Dr Rother acknowledged the role of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations, who approached her two years ago to initiate the course around the UN Code of Conduct on the Distribution and Use of Pesticides, which covers issues around the regulation of pesticides, the health effects of pesticide use, and toxicology and ecotoxicology training. The FAO is one of the funders of the course, the other being the Swedish Chemical Agency (KemI).

Prof Mohamed Jeebhay, acting head of the School of Public Health and Family Medicine, added his good wishes to the participants, and thanked Dr Rother for her efforts in establishing this course, which he described as "another feather in our cap in terms of our outreach programmes".

Dr Rother added that all of the materials developed for this course are "open source" and will be available as a resource to both participants and the general public.



Putting their best foot forward

Below: Members of the Dean's Suite team took the World Day for Physical Activity to heart and walked to the end of the campus car park and around the Faculty to mark the occasion. Although there were some concerns about inappropriate footwear, the intrepid team completed the course! They are, from left: Ronelia Booysen, Prof Gonda Perez, Joan Tuff, Tammy McLachlan-Daniels and Eliza Hui. The editor of the FACULTYNews also participated, but she is behind the camera!

FHS thanks the Mamre community for its support

Above: Mercia Arendse (past UCT site facilitator and local government councillor for Mamre), Sr Adams (Facility manager of Mamre CHC), Dr Virginia Zweigenthal (senior lecturer School of Public Health) and Prof Margaret Hoffman (retired professor of Public Health, UCT) at the handover of a TV and DVD player for the Mamre clinic to enable them to conduct education and health promotion in the community.

The donation was made in celebration of the longstanding partnership between the Faculty and the Mamre community that included research, community based health initiatives and student learning over two decades. UCT no longer places students in the community, but in commemoration of this relationship, a bursary was established in 2010 to contribute to the upliftment of the community through funding a student to study at UCT. The bursary is awarded annually to a resident of Mamre.





Auditions!

**“What is under your
lab coat?” - 2011**

Show us there's more to you than white coats and test tubes!

**Take the spotlight for a night of glamour
for talented staff and students.**

**A dramatic and musical gala performance
on 21 July 2011 in the
Nico Malan Hall, GSH.**

**Performers in all areas of creativity (song, dance, comedy,
magic, drama and verse) are encouraged to participate.
Audition your 5-10 min routine from 12–2pm on 16 and 26
May.**

**Entry form can be download from Vula today!
Entries should be returned to the Dean's Suite by Friday 06
May 2011.**