

## Faculty Graduates Bumper Crop of PhDs

Our Faculty has just produced its largest ever number of PhD graduates this winter, generating more students at one ceremony than 13 of the 23 universities in South Africa produce in a whole year.

The 26 graduates represent a significant contribution towards the country's overall output. In its recently published strategic plan, the National Research Foundation has stated that by 2015 it would like to double the number of PhD graduates. In its Ten-Year Innovation Plan, the Department of Science and Technology has set even more ambitious targets.

From a financial point of view, each PhD graduate is worth approximately R0.25 million to the Faculty in government subsidy, meaning that this graduating class has a monetary value to UCT of more than R6 million.

Earning a PhD, of course, has far greater ramifications than merely the financial. For many the degree may be considered as the next step, albeit an important one, along the path towards a successful career in academia.

## Discovery Foundation Awards

Realizing that South Africa's healthcare sector is facing some significant challenges, not least in the area of human resources and the training of healthcare professionals, the Discovery Foundation launched a series of awards in 2007. The second round of awards for 2008 were recently announced in Johannesburg.



**Drs Rannakoe Lehloenya, Jonathan Peter, Liesl Zühlke, Shahieda Adams, Vineshree Moodley, Kathleen Bateman and Max Price at the Discovery Foundation Awards.**

The most prestigious of these awards, worth up to R750,000 each, aim to address training shortfalls in the field of Academic Medicine. The Discovery Foundation Academic Fellowship Awards will enable recipients the opportunity to undertake a 12- to 18-month period of full-time study and research for an advanced degree (either master's or PhD), to undertake research leading to one or more publications, and to enhance his or her training in a chosen field of specialisation.

During this period, the recipient may choose to spend up to six months at a leading research centre abroad. Candidates are expected to work full time on research, they may perform limited clinical work in an academic setting but may not undertake other employ-

ment or private practice during the fellowship.

Out of nine Academic Fellowship Awards for the whole country, UCT's young specialists garnered six awards (see photo at left). They will be conducting research in diverse fields such as tuberculosis diagnostic techniques, neurodegenerative disorders, drug surveillance and adverse drug reactions, pulmonology, and rheumatic heart disease. The key note address at the awards ceremony was delivered by Dr Max Price.

## Farewell to Ndebele

The University of Cape Town bade farewell to outgoing Vice-Chancellor Njabulo Ndebele at the end of June. The Faculty of Health Sciences, led by Dean Marian Jacobs, presented Professor Ndebele with an award and two gifts (see below).



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## DEAN'S CORNER

Today Dr Max Price takes office as our new Vice-Chancellor. We welcome him warmly and extend our best wishes for a stimulating and successful term.

This change in the University executive provides us with an opportunity to reflect on leadership in the Faculty. The University-wide discussions on headship of departments has led to the Moran Report, which makes a series of recommendations which are being considered by a central committee. While we await the outcome of their deliberations, our own discussions on leadership development are under way, and will be considered at a heads of department retreat at the end of July.

But we also need to give attention to student leadership, as this recent quote reflects: "As a young medical student, doing my 5th year elective in a rural hospital, I quickly learn how privileged I am to be a product in the making of this faculty, I learn of the respect that is afforded to UCT medical graduates on their level on knowledge and application thereof. I watch in awe as our interns walk with their heads held high as they answer questions about what it was like to study in the mother city. Thus as a HSF, it is brilliant. It does what it is supposed to, with distinction. It produces great academics. My only worry is in the leadership side of life. Leadership development is a necessary part of our

education as future leaders and key role players in our country."

In response to this insightful suggestion, the Faculty has been awarded a grant from Atlantic Philanthropies as a component of their larger interest in, and support for, production of excellent health professionals in South Africa, for which we are highly appreciative. In the coming months, we will engage with representatives from student affairs and support structures and with student leadership to plan how best to strengthen our students' capacity for leadership – not just now, but especially in their future careers.

## Publications of the Month

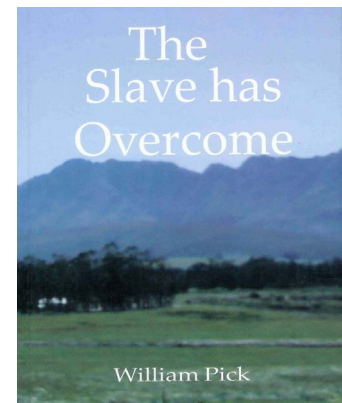
There are two choices for this month. The first publication is a special edition:

*South African Journal of Occupational Therapy*, Volume 38, Number 1, March 2008.

The theme is "Disability: a Human Rights Perspective" and among the UCT authors are Theresa Lorenzo, Leslie London and Lana van Niekerk. The topics explored include: participation in work for people with psychiatric disabilities; the vital role that OT's have to play in promoting respect for vulnerable groups; and barriers that limit children with disabilities.

The second publication is an autobiography by one of our distinguished graduates, Professor William Pick. The Faculty launched his book as part of our commitment to transformation.

*The Slave has Overcome* tells the story of Pick's schooling on the Cape Flats, his encounters with apartheid, running a family practice in Ravensmead, his ultimate success as an academic at Wits when he rose to the headship of the School of Public Health, and finally his leadership as interim President of the MRC. It is truly an uplifting story!



## Congratulations to Sine Duma

The Faculty is delighted to report that Dr Sinegugu Duma of the Division of Nursing and Midwifery has been appointed to the South African Nursing Council (SANC). SANC is the statutory body entrusted to set and maintain standards of nursing education and practice.



## Monthly Quiz

By the time you read this, Dr Max Price will have begun his first day as the new Vice-Chancellor of UCT. His previous position was Dean of Health Sciences at the University of the Witwatersrand. Once before in our institution's history, a Vice-Chancellor has been appointed from the position of Dean of Medicine. Who was he and what medical school did he join us from? Send your answers to: [kit.vaughan@uct.ac.za](mailto:kit.vaughan@uct.ac.za).

Answer to last month's quiz: two famous Americans who contributed to Denis Diderot's *Encyclopédie* were Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin, both of whom spent time in France in the late 18th century. Berry Neumann was the winner of the R100 book voucher. Well done Berry!

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Deputy Dean Gonda Perez drafted and read the citation: "Professor Ndebele, well known author and academic, bravely waged a struggle to fight for equity and justice in the field of Health Sciences Education. In this struggle he joined in battle with academic clinicians (to be seen protesting under palm trees) in their engagements with the MEC and DG of Health in the Western Cape and survived to tell the tale of demanding clinicians, intransigent public officials and the numerous attempts to reach consensus in the joint agreement (maybe a book from this will come?)."

"When he joined UCT in the year 2000, little did he expect that he would need patience and fortitude to slice through, with clinical precision, the decades of agreements between the health authorities and the universities in the region and to negotiate new agreements for a platform for the practical teaching of health sciences' students and equitable funding for clinical training".

"Professor Ndebele continues to be a passionate advocate for the cause of health sciences and for these heroic deeds, we award Professor Njabulo Simakahle Ndebele the degree of MBChB (*honoris causa*)".

In addition to the degree certificate, Professor Jacobs also presented him with a 6 GigaByte memory stick (for backing up all those books he will be writing while on sabbatical), together with a T-shirt, imprinted on the front, "I Survived the Faculty of Health Sciences", and on the back, "And the Joint Agreement!"

## Teachers Become Students

Three UCT academics swapped their teaching roles to become students, and learnt the hard way of the difficulties encountered by their own students. Lecturers Dr Geney Gunston, Dr Charles Slater and Elmi Badenhorst (L to R, below), of the Department of Human Biology all graduated with master's degrees in education.



"I am very pleased to be graduating," says Gunston. "The whole process of being a student again has deepened my empathy for the students I teach: the challenges they face related to academic reading and writing, and time management, combined with the joy of learning and the elation of success."

Badenhorst added that in her eight years in the academic development programme she has encountered many disheartened first-year students who experienced learning difficulties during that telling first semester.

Slater, who graduated with distinction, says the introduction of a problem-based learning curriculum in the faculty has been challenging, and a valuable way of engaging with the change has been to study further.

"The challenge now is to use this knowledge to enhance the learning experience of our students," he says. All three agree: their studies were demanding but fulfilling.

[Monday Paper]

## MPhil in Disability Studies

A record number of five disabled students graduated this year with a Master of Philosophy in Disability Studies. Seen below is Ndileka Portia Loyilane being capped by the Vice-Chancellor.



The postgraduate programme in disability studies is aimed at increasing the awareness of disability issues, especially in teaching, research and at a community-based level. On completing the course, students are able to apply their new knowledge and skills in development and research.

One of this year's graduates, Mzolisi ka Toni, secretary general for the Disabled People of South Africa, says that the course has helped him with his organisation's policy and research work.