

## Mixing medicine with anthropology

The School of Public Health and Family Medicine will host a public lecture by visiting Professor and UCT alumnus Cecil Helman on 4 October 2007.

Helman will talk about his award winning book 'Suburban Shaman: Tales from Medicine's Frontline', published in 2004.

The book reflects on health and illness within the bounds of community, tradition and history and draws on Helman's rare twin interests in medicine and anthropology.

Helman's textbook 'Culture, Health and Illness' (5th edition, 2007) is the standard international textbook on the subject and has been used in over 40 countries since 1984.

Venue: 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Barnard Fuller Building, Conference Room 4, Faculty of Health Sciences  
Time: 13h00-14h00

## Ehrlich on-line

Professor Rodney Ehrlich's inaugural lecture entitled "The body as history: On looking at the lungs of miners" is now available at <http://www.news.uct.ac.za/lectures/misc/>



From left: Dr Marc Combrinck, Mr Mosibudi Mangena, Minister of Science and Technology and Professor Mzamo Mangaliso, President of the National Research Foundation.

## Improving research capacity

Mosibudi Mangena, Minister of Science and Technology announced 51 national research chairs of the South African Research Chairs Initiative (SARChI) designed to improve research capacity and scientific enquiry at institutions of higher education.

Six of the candidates are from the Faculty of Health Sciences. They are:

- Prof Jonathan Blackburn (functional proteomics)
- Prof Frank Brombacher (immunology and infectious diseases in Africa)
- Dr Marc Combrinck (clinical neurosciences)
- Dr Keertan Dheda (lung infection and immunity)
- Prof Diane McIntyre (health and wealth)
- Prof Anna-Lise Williamson (vaccinology)

The Department of Science and Technology plans to establish 210 research chairs by 2010. UCT now hosts approximately 35% of the 72 SARChI chairs.

## Local technology to improve global health

Kit Vaughan, Deputy Dean in the Faculty has won a Technology and Human Resource for Industry Programme (THRIP) award for the "Most Advanced Technology" for his pioneering work in digital imaging of medical conditions.

Vaughan's research team has developed a low dose X-ray system which uses slot scanning X-ray technology to create high resolution images.

The technology can image fine detail and detect changes in airway diameter which could indicate TB or HIV. This can speed up diagnosis and treatment. The technology is currently used at the Red Cross Children's Hospital.

Another application of the technology is a mammography machine with low dose radiation exposure, improved image quality and the elimination of painful compression associated with conventional mammograms.

Three dimensional imaging technology is also being developed for more accurate presentation of the X-ray images to improve early detection and treatment of medical conditions, especially TB.

The Lodox System is developed under patent and is marketed in the US, Middle East, Europe and Africa where low dose digital image processors do not exist.

## Award for young blood

Nthato Chirwa, PhD student in the Surgical Research Laboratory of the Division of General Surgery was awarded the Bunny Angorn Prize at the annual Southern African Surgical Research Society meeting in Bloemfontein in June 2007 for the best presentation by a

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## DEAN'S CORNER

The past few months have been witness to intense discussions on leadership – in the country, in our city and in the university. In the next week, we will select our new vice-chancellor who will lead the university for the next five years. We look forward to engaging with a leader to navigate a course for securing UCT's unique place in the world and in Africa; be willing to engage with the national development environment; and will have the insight and skills to manage the university and engage with its community of staff and students.

But these are not only the requirements of academic leadership for our new vice-chancellor. On a smaller scale, defining a course

of action, and engaging with both external and internal forces are also the challenges for leadership at all other levels at UCT – for deans, for heads of departments and divisions, and of research groups. While most academic heads grapple with these challenges in relation to research and to teaching and learning and their resource requirements and management, our Faculty has the additional complexities of our responsibilities to health care. This has implications for various aspects of management and concerns for academic leadership such as defining the academic project in expanded terms of social responsiveness; recognition and reward which are aligned to these roles; financial and human re-

source management; and accountability, among others. The responsibility for managing these complexities rests with heads of department.

There will be a university-wide meeting in October to address issues related to departments and their leadership. In preparation, it would be helpful for all of us to consider the special challenges which our Faculty's heads of department face. This process should not only focus on addressing the responsibility of current academic leadership, but should also define steps to ensure a future cadre of effective academic leaders.

Current national debates emphasise the centrality of succession planning. Our Faculty can not afford to be found napping.

## Publication of the Month

This month's publication focuses on disability, and in particular the difficulties faced by isi-Xhosa speakers in the Eastern and Western Cape: Maart S, Eide AH, Jelsma J, Loeb ME, Ka Toni M "Environmental barriers experienced by urban and rural disabled people in South Africa", *Disability and Society*, 22(4): 357 – 369, 2007.

This paper was the basis for a presentation by Soraya Maart, Senior Lecturer in Physiotherapy at the recent South African Society of Physiotherapy Congress in September 2007, and

was awarded a cash prize and certificate from Discovery for the best presentation. The theme of the congress was "Making Waves in Education" and the award provides well-deserved recognition to an often neglected component of health care, namely disability and rehabilitation.

The collaboration between Maart and her departmental colleague Jennifer Jelsma, together with their partners from Disabled People (South Africa) and SINTEF (Norway), is just the kind of partnership that needs to be encouraged so that we can take our research to the next level.



Soraya Maart

## Raising awareness of mental health

Members of the Cross-University Brain-Behaviour Initiative (CUBBI) and Glaxo Smith Kline have initiated a newsletter for practitioners to raise awareness of HIV/AIDS and mental health in patients.

It is well known that HIV/AIDS is the largest contributor to South Africa's burden of disease. Less well known is that neuropsychiatric disorders comprise the second largest component of the burden of disease.

The first issue of the newsletter included an article by Dr John Joska of UCT's Department of Psychiatry and Mental Health, an article by Professor Soraya Seedat of the University of Stellenbosch, and an editorial by Professor Dan Stein, Head of the Department of Psychiatry in the Faculty.

## Monthly Quiz

This month's question is a follow-up to the World Cup Rugby match between the Springboks and the USA Eagles. What is the name of the winger who left Bryan Habana in his wake and, when he's not playing rugby, what does he do for a living? Send your answers to: [kit.vaughan@uct.ac.za](mailto:kit.vaughan@uct.ac.za)

Answer to last month's quiz: the Father of Medicine who came from Egypt was Imhotep and he pre-dated Hippocrates by approximately 2 500 years. Jacquie Greenberg was first with the correct answer (out of five people who responded) and wins the book voucher.

Congratulations.

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Jamie Smith (left) and Nthato Chirwa both won prizes for the best presentation at a conference.

young researcher at their annual meeting.

The award is named in honour of Bunny Angorn, a leading academic surgeon in South Africa who died prematurely of cancer.

Chirwa's presentation was entitled "A polyclonal antibody to a 55-65kDa gastric mucin fragment in gastric adenocarcinoma and ulceration. A clinical marker for gastric disease?"

In this project a polyclonal antibody was raised to a previously described gastric mucin fragment, isolated from the crude mucus secretions of patients with gastric disease. Its role in the pathogenesis of gastric cancer is now being investigated, and an attempt is being made to identify it in collaboration with Dr Bongani Ndimba, the head of the Proteomics Research Group in the Department of Biotechnology at UWC.

Chirwa will present his research findings at a plenary session at the Society of Academic and Research Surgery (SARS) in Birmingham, UK in January 2008.

Being the generous soul he is, Chirwa said, "The award is personal but I would also like to share it with my supervisor and colleagues who have supported me".

## Award for young blood: the sequel

Jamie Smith, PhD student in Exercise Science in the Department of Human Biology scooped the R1 500 Wyndham Prize for the best presentation by a young researcher at a conference of the Physiological Society of Southern Africa in September 2007.

Smith also stands a chance to be sponsored to attend the next conference of the International Union of Physiological Sciences.

The Wyndham Prize is named in honour of the late Professor Cyril Wyndham, internationally renowned South African exercise and heat stress physiologist.

The title of the presentation was "The synthesis of glucose transport proteins in skeletal muscle during exercise". Smith studied how exercise increases the abundance of a protein that transports glucose from the blood into skeletal muscle. Understanding these mechanisms at a molecular level may reveal targets for drugs to treat insulin resistance diseases such as Type II Diabetes.

Smith said, "I just concentrated on making my talk interesting and understandable so that people would remember what I had to say. I'm absolutely ecstatic".



Moses Matlhadisa

## Naki scholarship announced

Moses Matlhadisa, second year medical student, is the first recipient of the Hamilton Naki-MESAB-United Therapeutics Scholarship.

The award was presented to Matlhadisa by Dr Louis Sullivan, Executive Board Member of United Therapeutics, a US based bio-technology company who sponsor the award. The scholarship is awarded to a first or second year student to cover the full-cost of an MBChB for six years.

Matlhadisa plans to work in his home town, Bochum in Limpopo to serve his community and to be a role model for scholars in his province.

The scholarship is named in honor of Hamilton Naki, who assisted Dr Christiaan Barnard to conduct the world's first heart transplant operation at Groote Schuur Hospital in 1967. His roles as a teacher, trainer, and surgical assistant went unrecognised during the apartheid years. Naki was the recipient of the Order of Mapungubwe in 2002 and was awarded an honorary Master of Science in Medicine by UCT in 2003.

## New students council for Faculty

The Health Sciences Students' Council (HSSC) is in the process of voting in new members for 2007/8. The nomination process is complete with 13 candidates standing for the new council. Elections will be held in the first week of October and the results will be announced by 12 October 2007.