

## **DR STUART JOHN SAUNDERS LECTURE**

**PRESENTED BY: Dr Bernard J. Gersh, M.B., Ch.B., D.Phil, F.R.C.P., M.A.C.C., Ph.D. (Hon Causa)**

Professor Gersh, who knew Anita and Stuart Saunders well, is a Professor of Medicine at Mayo Clinic College of Medicine and a Consultant in Cardiovascular Diseases and Internal Medicine; and has an Honorary Professorship in the Department of Medicine, University of Cape Town (UCT). He received his MBChB from UCT and read for a Doctor of Philosophy degree at Oxford University where he was a Rhodes Scholar.

Professor Gersh has made important contributions to the understanding of the natural history and therapy of acute and chronic coronary artery disease, clinical electrophysiology, in particular atrial fibrillation, sudden cardiac death and syncope, cardiac stem cell therapy, and the epidemiology of cardiovascular disease in the developing world. He has approximately 1120 publications (973 manuscripts and 146 book chapters). In 2014 and 2015 he was named in the Thomson Reuters list of individuals with the greatest number of cited scientific papers 2002-2012. He is the editor of 15 books and is on the Editorial Boards of 27 journals.

### **About Stuart Saunders:**

Stuart John Saunders was born in Cape Town, South Africa, on 28th August 1931. After graduating MBChB with honours in 1953 at the University of Cape Town, he did post-graduate research at the Royal Postgraduate Medical School at Hammersmith in London and at Harvard University. He received the degree of Doctor of Medicine in 1965 (University of Cape Town). He began his administrative career as the University of Cape Town's Head of the Department of Medicine (1971-1980) and was co-founder of the university's Liver Clinic & Liver Research Unit (a field in which he wrote some two hundred articles and co-authored a study that has become a classical reference). He is the former Vice-Chancellor of UCT from January 1981 to August 1996.

He is credited for putting an end to the racially segregated training of medical registrars and for admitting students of all races to the University of Cape Town's residences; for refusing to bend to the will of the apartheid State; for initiating fund raising among South African universities so as to ensure their academic freedom and meaningful service to science and to the "rainbow nation".

The annual lecture was established through a bequest to reflect the values demonstrated by Dr Saunders during his tenure as Vice-Chancellor and/or as Professor of Medicine at the University of Cape Town.