New Dean: FHS the ‘crown jewel of health sciences schools’ in RSA

In an interview, new Dean Prof Wim de Villiers speaks about his new role and priorities (p4), and gives some personal insights

Lentegeur Spring project

FIRST Public Health research day a success

Challenging violence against women

UCT students pioneer surgical societies
Welcome to our latest Faculty News!

This is a special edition for me, it being the first time I pen this ‘corner’ of the newsletter. Spring, our theme for this issue, is a time of birth and growth, and what better symbolism as we begin our new journey together.

The past month has given me wonderful insights into the workings of our Faculty. I have been to several events, meetings and off-campus sites, some of which are featured here. As I familiarise myself with the UCT and Faculty community, I am constantly impressed by the calibre of our work, staff and students. We can rightfully be proud - and we must use whatever platforms we can to share this among ourselves and the world.

As a clinician I firmly believe that our patients’ interests should be the central tenet of our academic endeavours; our education and research activities will then progress naturally. There are countless opportunities, but our work must ultimately impact positively on people’s lives. While we celebrate our achievements, we remain aware of the many challenges that still lie ahead. The contrasting emphases in two events covered here are a stark reminder - the tremendous show of goodwill for Mandela Day, against the focus on violence against women and children to mark National Women’s Day.

This newsletter cannot cover all of our activities and achievements, but we hope to provide a snapshot of some highlights across the Faculty.

We rely on our departments to keep us informed of special moments you wish to share, so please continue sending these through. Enjoy the newsletter, and please feel free to share your comments for improving your reading experience and the Faculty of Health Sciences at UCT!

Wim de Villiers

SPRING has arrived, and with it the annual Casual Day celebrated on the first Friday in September to raise awareness of people with disabilities. The Postgraduate Student Administration team heralded the day with larger than life bowties!

NEW CEOs for Red Cross and GSH

Red Cross Hospital

Dr Matodzi Mukosi has been appointed as the new Chief Executive Officer of the Red Cross War Memorial Children’s Hospital, beginning 1 September 2013.

Dr Mukosi was a Senior Medical Superintendent / Manager of Medical Services at Tygerberg Hospital (with main responsibility for paediatric and child health services) for seven years. He brings a wealth of experience to his position, including in child health issues.

Groote Schuur Hospital

Dr Bhavna Patel has been appointed Chief Executive Officer of the Groote Schuur Hospital. She has a long association with the hospital, having done her internship here in 1991, returning in May 2004 as a Senior Manager for Medical Services, and being appointed as Chief Operations Officer in January 2011.

Dr Patel completed her MBChB at UCT in 1990. Her vision for the hospital is to maintain its excellence in clinical service, training and research, and to encourage innovation and technological advancement.
The Lentegeur Spring Project is aimed at building dignity, hope and community spirit among patients at Lentegeur Hospital in Mitchell’s Plain, where they receive psychiatric and mental health treatment. Serious mental disorders are poorly understood in society. Conditions such as schizophrenia and bipolar disorder are sometimes taboo subjects spoken about ‘in whispers’, and individuals with these conditions face many challenges, including being marginalised and stigmatised. Treatment resources are scarce, and this ultimately impacts on their healing and recovery.

The Lentegeur Spring Project is a partnership between the Hospital, Department of Health, the UCT Department of Psychiatry and Mental Health and its Division of Public Mental Health. With support from others like the Department of Agriculture, it aims to reinvent what a psychiatric hospital means: a place of emotional and mental healing and recovery. This is suggested by the metaphor inherent in the name Lentegeur, which directly translated, means the “Essence/Aroma of Spring”.

Conceptualised by psychiatrist Dr John Parker, the project is based on the philosophy of recovery in mental health, which has become a rapidly growing international movement.

“Essentially, we believe that people with mental health problems can reclaim their lives again if they can experience a real sense of connection, a meaningful role in life and hope in their environment,” explains Dr Parker. “Spring is about getting in touch with our roots as we reach for the sun - so spring is about rebirth, growth, healing etc but also about connection, with one another, with our roots in Africa and with our environment,” he adds. “Linking this to sustaining the very environment which feeds us is key to health and recovery, and the term ‘environ-mental health’ cannot be more appropriate.”

Project activities include a hospital greening project involving the minimisation of carbon and water footprints, a radical transformation of the hospital’s landscape into a place of beauty, the development of psychosocial rehabilitation and outreach programmes that develop food growing and recycling skills and a programme of cultural revival that re-establishes a sense of community and of connection to the soil. Young children, for instance, are taught food gardening skills, and farming co-operatives have been formed for long-term patients so that they can also earn an income.

The Lentegeur Spring Project started in 2010 and is destined to become a model for psychiatric institutions.

Watch an inspiring video, Finding the Spring, featuring Dr John Parker, a Psychiatrist, on the project: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qaeTq7ne0Pw
The new Dean, Prof Wim de Villiers, feels privileged to be at the helm of ‘the crown jewel of medical schools in South Africa’. Interviewed on his second day in office, he cites the Faculty’s world-class status and the role of excellent research in driving its rating towards the top 50 medical schools worldwide. He is also upbeat about its sound administration, complimenting the current Deanery team and his predecessors as Dean.

Returning from 18 years in gastroenterology in the USA to start his new role on 1 August, he has hit the ground running. He had already spent July assessing nine top health sciences faculties in the USA to compare their medical education systems with that of UCT.

“The Faculty’s MBChB’s curriculum compares well with those of universities like Harvard and Stanford,” says Prof de Villiers. “Improvements can, however, be made by developing a more integrated clinical education curriculum and clinical simulation programmes. Different ways of curriculum content delivery, such as podcasts, are increasingly used to address the needs of a new generation of learners.”

He wants to ensure that the Faculty utilises and builds on the strong UCT brand. This will be particularly important for marketing and fundraising in a climate where financial sustainability in higher education is critical.

De Villiers is also considering new strategies for the future. Referring to the UCT Private Academic Hospital, he says his aim is for UCT to be a preferred service-provider for tertiary and quaternary clinical services. The Faculty offers cutting-edge expertise in numerous specialised areas of clinical need.

Another area he wants to strengthen is the FHS’s relationship with its alumni. Encouraged by the recent Centenary gala dinner in
New York, he was impressed by the tremendous amount of goodwill and expertise among our alumni, and he wants to find ways to harness this for the good of the Faculty. He has already started work on promoting an alumni network of experts in education and research in the USA.

Originating from Stellenbosch University ‘from across the Liesbeek’, he has had a varied academic career. He started in internal medicine, then moved to gastroenterology, medical biochemistry, a four year stint at Oxford in macrophage biology, and then - what started as an 18 month adventure that became an 18 year stay - in inflammatory bowel diseases at the University of Kentucky. He ultimately headed the Division of Digestive Diseases and Nutrition, topping it off with an MBA in health management.

Still a strong Stormers supporter after all these years, he has kept abreast of changes in South Africa. He has been struck by the enormous human capital and potential in the country, and the diversity and enthusiasm of students, citing the open dialogue and discussion he has observed.

But it isn’t all work and no play. What keeps him grounded is his passion for his family – he and his wife Catherine left behind their three children and two grandchildren in America – as well as his love of running. He can boast completing the ‘big 5’ of marathons, including the Boston, New York and London, and is now gravitating towards triathlons which are ‘easier on the knees’.

For now, his priorities are to find his feet with regard to Faculty business. His schedule consists of a whirlwind of meetings to discuss strengthening the research enterprise, assessing the education model, increasing medical student admissions, fundraising, strengthening support for students, and bolstering postgraduate training to nurture our next generation of health scientists.

He quotes six words that are key elements in a successful enterprise - curiosity, energy, courage, persistence, focus and discipline – pretty much to what his personal career can bear testimony.
Associate Professor Lillian Artz recently received the 2nd runner up award in the 2013 Women in Science Award from the Department of Science and Technology for her groundbreaking work on gender violence.

Prior to establishing the Gender Health & Justice Research Unit in 2004, Prof Artz spent 10 years as a chief researcher and lecturer at the Centre for Criminology (Faculty of Law, UCT). Artz has published extensively on domestic violence, sexual offences, sex work, feminist theory and women’s rights to freedom and security in Africa and has worked on criminal justice and health care reform in South and East Africa over the past 17 years. This includes partnering with local and regional NGOs to improve research, monitoring and advocacy strategies to effect policy change, legal reform and access to justice. Her current project work includes research on female offenders in prisons and psychiatric settings, domestic homicide, the epidemiology of child sexual abuse, political ex-prisoners, as well as the medico-legal management of domestic violence and sexual offences. Current regional projects include the prevention of torture and ill treatment in South Africa, Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Mozambique and Uganda, as well as pre-trial detention in Zambia, Mozambique and Kenya. She is currently working on a model for the development of medico-legal services for victims of sexual and domestic violence in South Sudan. Artz is the Vice President of the Criminological and Victimological Society of Southern Africa, a consulting member on two policing oversight structures in South Africa, and has worked as a technical consultant to a wide range of parliamentary structures, law commissions, criminal justice institutions and international donors in Southern and East Africa. She is on the editorial boards of Agenda and Acta Criminologica, is co-editor of Should we Consent?: Rape Law Reform in South Africa and co-author of Hard Time(s): Women’s Pathways to Crime and Incarceration (2012). Her latest books Why Doesn’t She Just Leave? and Women and Crime are due for publication in 2013.

In an article ‘Gender Justice with Open Eyes’ in the latest Monday Monthly, Prof Artz argues that science and advocacy need not be mutually exclusive. Click here to access the online version:
http://www.uct.ac.za/mondaypaper/?id=9633

Women experience violence across the world - leading Women’s Rights Academic

At a Faculty-hosted event “Violence Against Women” to mark National Women’s Day, Assoc Prof Rashida Manjoo spoke about gender violence not only here in South Africa, but also across the rest of the world. Her role as the UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women has given her significant insight into the hardships experienced by women - especially those in countries at war, in transition and post-transition – as well as those experiencing peace times. She spoke of the gains made, and the setbacks experienced, in addressing women’s rights issues globally. She shared moving anecdotes of women’s suffering and the hope given to many vulnerable groups across the world. She also reinforced the need for ongoing commitment and sustained advocacy on women’s rights globally, not only in South Africa.

Rashida Manjoo is one of the world’s top experts and combatants of violence against women. She holds a part-time post as a Professor in the Department of Public Law. She is the former Parliamentary commissioner of the Commission on Gender Equality (CGE), a constitutional body mandated to oversee the promotion and protection of gender equality. Prior to being appointed to the CGE, she was involved in social context training for judges and lawyers, where she has designed both content and methodology during her time at UCT’s Law, Race, and Gender Research Unit and at the University of Natal, Durban.
**FHS mobilises for MADIBA**

**IIDMM**

“When the Medical Virology Division asked for suggestions for a Mandela Day activity this year, Kristy Offerman, a PhD student, suggested that we collect clothes and food for homeless people. It was decided to ask both the IIDMM and CLS to join the initiative. A SUV load of donated material was collected and taken to the headquarters of the Haven Night Shelter where it was very gratefully received.”

Debbie Stewart

**MICROBIOLOGY**

“The Division of Medical Microbiology realised how fortunate we all are and we decided to “pay it forward” by giving to those less fortunate. We had a pot of bean curry made and bought bread. We then parked at the corner of Station Road and Lower Main Road and sent staff and students on a hunt to find people in need. We were overwhelmed with the great response and managed to serve quite a number of people with a warm plate of food. We played with kids, chatted to the less fortunate and made some beautiful friends. The bread we had left over, was donated to the sandwich-making effort in the MAC Club. We also had quite a bit of money left over and decided that we would like to make this a monthly event.”

Widaad Zemanay

**OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY**

“An OT research team is involved in designing and testing a caregiver-focused intervention for caregivers of children affected by HIV. We provided the intervention at three clinic sites and one research site, all linked to the KIDZPOSITIVE Family Fund which is headed by Dr Paul Roux at GSH. To conduct the intervention we needed to pack almost 400 take-home toolkits - which as you can imagine, is quite some feat. On 18 July for Mandela Day from 12pm to 3pm and invited colleagues to assist us. We thought this would be a wonderful drive to involve busy academics in a worthwhile cause. The packing tasks were fun and also built on fine motor skills, concentration and memory!”

Shajila Singh

**DISABILITY STUDIES**

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**DISABILITY STUDIES**

“Each team member donated R67 to buy trees for the Green Campus Initiative [on upper campus] in which volunteers planted trees at the School for Skills in Khayelitsha. This is where two colleagues have been working as part of the DIRECT project funded by the VC Strategic Fund.”

Theresa Lorenzo

**NURSING AND MIDWIFERY**

“The Division was engaged with strategic planning on 17 & 18 July. We broke for 67 minutes and visited GSH wards in pairs to bring good cheer to in-patients - chatting to those who do not get visitors and lending a listening ear; making them comfortable (as nurses are good at doing in the old fashioned way), propping them up properly, straightening bed clothes and bedding; offering a drink of water, or a cool drink if they were allowed this. A smiling nurse does wonders!”

Sine Duma

**POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION**

“The PGSA invited staff and students to join them in making sandwiches throughout the day, for distribution to the homeless. It was so well-supported that we ran out of sandwiches.”

Damian Hacking
AWARDS

NRF AWARDS 2012

Congratulations to Faculty colleagues, Emeritus Professor Lionel Opie (Department of Medicine) and Professors Dan Stein and Jack van Honk (both from the Department of Psychiatry and Mental Health), who were honoured at the National Research Foundation 2013 Awards Ceremony in Port Elizabeth recently.

The annual awards function acknowledges South African scientists who are unequivocally recognised by their peers as leading international scholars in their field for the high quality and impact of their research outputs.

A total of 12 UCT NRF A-rated scientists were acknowledged. A-ratings were reconfirmed for Professors Opie and Stein, while Professor Jack van Honk received an A-rating for the first time.

INTERNATIONAL ABSTRACT AWARD FOR THE BEST ABSTRACT FROM OUTSIDE THE USA

Dr David Roytowski, Division of Neurosurgery, received a very prestigious award at the 81st Annual Meeting of the American Association of Neurological Surgeons- the International Abstract Award for the best abstract from outside the USA. This high quality research was facilitated by the DoHET grant a few years ago.

WOMEN IN SCIENCE AWARDS

The scourge of violence against women: what is the role of science and research?

Associate Professor, Lillian Artz was awarded second runner-up in the annual Department of Science and Technology’s ‘Women in Science’ Awards

AFRICAN UNION – THIRD WORLD ACADEMY OF SCIENCE (AU-TWAS) Young Scientist AWARD

Associate Professor Landon Myers has received the prestigious AU-TWAS National Award for Young Scientists in South Africa, in the Life and Earth Sciences category.

The award is supported by the Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAF) and the Department of Science and Technology (DST). The award recognises Myers’ excellence in research and the impact his research has on society. Additionally, he was acknowledged for his contribution to the training and development of students, along with his involvement in broadening the public understanding of science and technology.

HONORARY PROFESSORSHIPS

Department of Psychiatry and Mental Health

Honorary Professorships have been accepted by Prof Christer Allgulander, Prof Mary Robertson, Prof Olive Shisana, and (again) Prof Julian Leff. Head of Department Prof Dan Stein says that they will strengthen the department’s expertise in a number of areas.

INTERNATIONAL REPRESENTATION

WHO AFRICAN TASK FORCE ON IMMUNIZATION

The World Health Organization (WHO) Regional Director for Africa has appointed Dr Charles Wiysonge as a member of the The WHO African Task Force on Immunization. The Task Force is charged with advising WHO on overall regional policies and strategies, ranging from vaccine and technology research and development, to delivery of immunisation services and linkages between immunisation and other health interventions in Africa. The mandate of the Task Force is not restricted to childhood vaccines and immunisation but extends to the control of all vaccine-preventable diseases in the context of health systems strengthening. Dr Wiysonge is the Programme Manager of the Vaccines for Africa Initiative (VACFA).

GRANTS

The South African Tuberculosis Vaccine Initiative has received two prestigious grants: Firstly an NIH planning grant, for a double-blind randomized controlled Phase IIb trial of safety and immunogenicity of a TB vaccine, given as an adjunctive TB vaccine for prevention of recurrent TB disease, in HIV uninfected South African adults. Second, a Wellcome Trust (WT) grant, for Clinical Development of a Therapeutic Vaccine for Tuberculosis.
Professor Malcolm Collins
MRC/UCT Research Unit for Exercise, Science and Sports Medicine, Department of Human Biology
Wednesday, 07 August 2013

Understanding Biological Mechanisms of Sports Medicine: An unexpected journey

Professor Jonathan Blackburn
Institute of Infectious Disease and Molecular Medicine
Wednesday, 21 August 2013

Discovery and Innovation in Chemical Biology: Biosynthesis, microarrays, mechanisms and diagnostics

Professor Mike Lambert
MRC/UCT Research Unit for Exercise, Science and Sports Medicine, Department of Human Biology
Wednesday, 28 August, 2013

The Science of Exercise Performance – Translation into Practice: Novo prospect
NOTE this....

WW HOWELLS BOOK PRIZE IN BIOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY:

**Missing and Murdered, A Personal Adventure in Forensic Anthropology**, by PROF ALAN MORRIS, forensic anthropologist, Department of Human Biology

“a fascinating narrative of Alan’s career as a forensic anthropologist in South Africa that seamlessly illustrates the importance of anthropological, medical, legal, political, and social issues in forensic anthropology”.

- Judging panel

Antarctica trip will generate data on physiology

Dr Ross Hofmeyer, a Registrar in the Department of Anaesthesia, will be part of an expedition to walk 130 km across Antarctica pulling their own sleds. There are eight members of this group and Dr Hofmeyer is supported by a UCT research grant to investigate extreme human physiology in the cold. For more information on the expedition go to

**Studentship**
(Masters, PhD, Postdoctoral)
H3Africa RHD Gen Health Scholars Programme, Department of Medicine

Studentships (Masters, PhD, Postdoctoral) [Ref: I-2796]
http://www.uct.ac.za/about/intro/vacancies/external.

Enquiries: Ms Galiema Parker

Faculty of Health Sciences’ Unplugged Series

Let’s welcome our new Dean with MUSIC, POETRY & THE ARTS

Thursday 26 September 2013
13:00 to 14:00
Mac Club

If you are interested in participating please contact Cha Johnston
021 406 6031 or cha.johnston@uct.ac.za

Closing date 15 Sept. 2013

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Many will remember the years when the only place where Neurosurgery could meet was a small space aptly named the ‘Cockpit’ in Radiology, which could not fit more than five chairs. When the team outgrew this, we would meet in a room in the Trauma Unit, but were soon pushed out of there and moved to a ghastly little corridor of a room on the other side, where we baked in summer and froze in winter. I realised we needed to make a plan!

I had identified a potential meeting area which was a rabbit-warren of disused toilets, storerooms and a sluice room which served as the F floor smoking den, and worst of all, layout room… all with a beautiful view of Devil’s Peak!

GSH is remarkably well built, also very versatile. Architect Brett Robinson’s plans very quickly turned this wild idea into a possibility once it was approved by hospital management. There was only one problem - we had no idea how to pay for it!

As luck would have it, Dr Shafik Parker and his wife Gabby wanted to make a donation to the Division. Shaf had joined us in 1982; Prof de Villiers recalls being approached by Jonnie Louw with the question, “Do you want to employ a communist?” After completing his training Shafik stayed on as a consultant and after going into private practice, remained a very loyal supporter, attending every meeting. He is hugely committed to teaching, and the breadth and depth of his contributions not only to the hospital and University but also to his community are just unmatched.

One day when I remarked on this, Shaf reassured me that he had had a good start in earning his BSc degree before the age of 10. I was pretty astonished, thinking we had another Hofmeyer in our midst - then he explained the BSc was “behind the shop counter” where he learned all about life, its challenges and how to succeed at an early age!

We were also fortunate to receive additional funds from the Mauerberger Foundation Fund and I want to really pay tribute to Mrs Estelle Yach, who has been a tireless supporter of our neurosurgery Division since the establishment of the Chair in 1976. She has always taken an active interest in everything we do, has had an uncanny knack of keeping up to date and is now Honorary Life President of the MFF.

This gathering is to show our appreciation to the Parker family, Mrs Estelle Yach, Ms Dianna Yach and Mr Peter Bigelo of the Mauerburger Foundation, Baroque Medical, SH Hospital Facilities Board, Dr Belinda Jacobs, Dr Ria Kirsten and Professor Del Kahn.

We work in an environment defined by three of South Africa’s great institutions - UCT, Groote Schuur Hospital and the Red Cross War Memorial Children’s Hospital - which makes for a stimulating and creative working environment.

"Neurosurgery is a tough job. We work long hours and deal with many stressful situations. We are privileged to now have such a warm and welcoming space in which to meet. Everytime I come in here I am delighted to find registrars studying, but, even better, is the fact that this new space has significantly enhanced our patient care."

Announcements made:

1. Dianna Yach, President of The Mauerburger Foundation, announced that the organisation would be sponsoring the Estelle Yach Award for Neurosurgery.

2. Dr Bhavna Patel announced the promotion of Associate Professor Allan Taylor to Head of Clinical Unit in Neurosurgery.
The School of Public Health and Family Medicine recently hosted a seminar, “Knowledge, Equity and Health in post-Apartheid South Africa...What's Race got to do with it?”, at which guest speaker, Professor Lundy Braun from Brown’s University, USA, spoke.

Prof Mohamed Jeebhay, Head of Department, opened the programme, explaining that transformation and equity is one of the six key goals of the Faculty of Health Sciences. This is reflected in the Faculty’s Mission Statement, which commits the Faculty to “ensuring that transformation promotes the development of a Faculty of equity, reflecting the diversity of society.”

As part of its ongoing programme on transformation, the School of Public Health and Family Medicine invited Professor Braun to draw on her own research in reflecting on the topic. This was followed by a panel discussion drawing on inputs from academics in the Faculty of Health Sciences and other departments within the University, and also included critical questioning from students and staff.

Link to online article on the event: http://www.health.uct.ac.za/news/?id=8512&t=dn
From 31 August to 3 September, UCT’s Clinical Infectious Diseases Research Initiative (CIDRI) hosted the annual scientific meeting of the Southern Africa Consortium for Research Excellence (SACORE). The consortium comprises three African universities and affiliated institutions that have an emerging research environment (in Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe), three other African institutions with established research environments (in South Africa and Botswana) and four UK universities with high quality research environments. The meeting included plenary lectures from leading speakers, presentations by SACORE students and a day of workshops, including a symposium ‘Understanding and intervening in tuberculosis in Southern Africa’, organised by Professor Robert Wilkinson of CIDRI.

“This is a large meeting convened with our longstanding, well-established and synoptic Southern African Research partners,” says Prof Wilkinson. The main role of UCT has been to facilitate the development of young African SACORE scholars and the depth of generosity should be apparent from presentations given at the meeting, he adds.

New clinic rooms on the premises of the Khayelitsha Day Hospital were recently opened by IIDMM Director, Prof Valerie Mizrahi. Named ‘HUBB - Home of Ubuntu-Based Studies’, the new rooms add much-needed space at the clinic. It is at this facility that the Clinical Infectious Diseases Research Initiative (CIDRI), who sponsored the building, works in partnership with international group MSF (Doctors without Borders), City Health and the provincial Health Department in addressing major health problems like HIV-TB in a high incidence setting.

CIDRI’s research in HIV-TB has influenced national and international policy. Under the leadership of Director Professor Robert Wilkinson, CIDRI has been conducting operational and translational research at site B, Khayelitsha. Research outputs have exceeded 100 peer-reviewed publications.

A very good example of this was a randomised pragmatic controlled trial of IPT plus ART for the prevention of TB that showed the combined therapy was associated with a 37% reduction in TB. Over the years, collaboration has deepened to encompass the need for greater space at the Ubuntu clinic (a vanguard in the provision of services for HIV-TB co-infected persons). In 2008 the Wellcome Trust provided funding via CIDRI to extend clinic provision by five rooms that are now used for data entry and document storage. In 2011 the establishment of the site as fully ICH-GCP compliant led to the addition of the eKhayavac building with a dedicated pharmacy, UCT network and other facilities including digital radiography. Use of this building for the purpose of tuberculosis vaccine trials is also shared with partners from Stellenbosch University.

“The existence of a vaccine trial on site has deepened community relations and also improved the provision of services available to HIV-infected people not yet eligible for ART,” says Prof Wilkinson.
IST YEAR ACHIEVERS have tea with the Dean

The Interim Dean, Prof Susan Kidson, hosted a luncheon reception to congratulate first-year students who excelled in their June exams. This was the first time so many students achieved such high results in the June exams.

BENEFACTOR pays the Faculty a visit

Dr Bill Gild’s generous donation to our Students in Distress Fund is assisting some of our undergraduate students in need of financial support. Dr Gild, an alumnus (MBChB 1972), paid a visit to Joan Tuff in our Alumni office and had tea with Deputy Dean of Undergraduate Affairs, Assoc Prof Gonda Perez.

DONOR receives Chancellor’s Circle

Postgraduate nursing studies at UCT received a major boost with a bursary fund worth R1 million established by alumnus Noel McIntosh.

McIntosh and his family were honoured with the Chancellor’s certificate of award and the Chancellor’s Gold Circle Giving Pin – bestowed on UCT’s biggest donors – on 7 July. The Marjorie McIntosh Postgraduate Bursary in Child Nursing and Midwifery will support two postgraduate students per year.

DEAN’S FORUM elicits enthusiastic discussion

At the last Dean’s Forum the restructuring of Divisions and Departments elicited strong points of view from many attendees. It was felt that the location of many groupings in Divisions and Departments was not practical. The discussion is ongoing, and is one of many Faculty-wide issues to be tackled during future Dean’s Forums.
The cast of ‘Carina’s Choice’ share concern that one of the taxi passengers may have spread his TB germs while coughing.

“That’s why I chose to enrol my baby in a trial to prevent TB in our community”, explains the lead character in the play, Carina’s Choice, to her family and friends. The play, a partnership between UCT’s South African Tuberculosis Vaccine Initiative (SATVI), UCT Drama school, the Welcome Trust and Worcester Senior Secondary School, is based on a comic, Carina’s Choice, developed in 2010 by SATVI to build an understanding of the TB vaccine clinical research it is conducting in the community.

The play is part of a project to evaluate the use of drama to improve adolescents’ insight into tuberculosis (TB) and TB vaccine development, clinical research and their rights and responsibilities as a trial participant. Dr Michele Tameris of SATVI received a grant from the Wellcome Trust for this project.

Dr Tameris explains that the idea for the project stemmed from work done on the comic to inform the community of the Worcester region about TB vaccine clinical research in an entertaining and understandable way. The comic, made possible though a WHO Global Partnership to Stop TB grant, was developed with input from the Community Advisory Board, staff members and trial participants to ensure that the language used was acceptable and understandable and that the scientific facts were correct.

Back in 2011, a local school, Worcester Senior Secondary, dramatised the comic and performed it once to a small audience with very positive feedback. The new project builds on this.

Since May 2013, Dr Veronica Baxter and senior students from UCT Drama School spent weekends, public holidays and their vacation time in Worcester enthusiastically working with Mrs Natasha Africa of Worcester Senior Secondary (WSS) and a group of her drama learners. The UCT students, with much input from the increasingly motivated and inspired group of learners, developed the script, composed songs and raps, designed costumes and sets and worked with the young performers to improve their acting skills and knowledge.

Carina’s Choice has been performed to at least eight high schools in the Worcester area, reaching a possible 10 000 adolescents. The effectiveness of drama as a tool will be evaluated by using a pre- and post-intervention knowledge survey completed by all learners attending the performances. This evaluation will be led by an experienced social scientist, Amber Abrams.

DR MICHELE TAMERIS

Prof. Valerie Mizrahi, IIDMM Director, Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Research, Prof Danie Visser, Vice Chancellor Dr Max Price, and Prof Wim de Villiers, listen to SATVI Lab Manager, Simba Mabwe.
The rapid growth of public health research at UCT culminated in the first research day for the Department of Public Health & Family Medicine in August 2013.

“This is the first research day that was organised to showcase the high calibre of research being done by staff and students in our four URC accredited research units/centres and eight divisions, which we intend organising as an annual event,” said Head of Department Professor Mohamed Jeebhay.

“Over the last decade”, he explains, “there has been a dramatic increase in the breadth and depth of public health research taking place at UCT, paralleling the growing focus on healthy populations, primary health care re-engineering and health systems development in provincial and national health strategies. The Department of Public Health and Family Medicine is at the epicentre of teaching and research on major public health issues impacting on population health at the University.”

The Department has grown tremendously in the past 10 years. Today it is one of the leading research and teaching departments in the Faculty of Health Sciences, contributing to the research output of the Faculty. The event was organised by Associate Professor Landon Myers. The highlight of the programme was the conclusion of the programme with guest of honour Emeritus Professor Jonny Myers’ giving his valedictory address.

Mohamed Jeebhay paid a special tribute to Professor Myers by highlighting his contribution in promoting socially engaged scholarship and scientific rigour in the conduct of research to strengthen and advance the discipline of public health in general and occupational and environmental health in particular.

The UCT Surgical Society team at the symposium Left to right: Lumart Weichers (4th year), Danielle Ferrar (4th year), Tinashe Chandauka (5th year), Larissa Hemraj (5th year), Luke Kuttschreuter (5th year), Luke Fletcher (3rd year)

“Our own” UCT student society featured very strongly as the pioneers of student surgical societies in South Africa and have also made significant contributions internationally,” says Head of the Department of Surgery and official patron of the UCT Surgical Society, Professor Delawir Kahn.

He is proudly referring to UCT Surgical Society’s substantive role in the inaugural Southern African Student Surgical Symposium from 5-6 July 2013. The first event of this kind on the continent, the symposium brought together Southern Africa’s eight surgical societies.

The UCT Surgical Society was instrumental in providing assistance in the establishment of five of these surgical societies, and spearheading the founding of the Southern African Student Surgical Society (SASSS) and regional launch of the International Associational Student Surgical Societies (IASSS) founded by members of the UCT Surgical Society.

Hosted by the University of Witwatersrand, the symposium was entitled, ‘What they didn’t tell me before I became a surgical intern’. Six UCT medical students with a passion for surgery attended. The students took part in an advanced surgical skills workshops and various seminars to prepare them for practice during their internship years.

Among their achievements at this historic event were: UCT receiving the honour of hosting the 2014 Southern African Students Surgical Symposium; Luke Kuttschreuter winning the 2nd prize for the research presentation competition for his research in “Peptic Ulcer Re-bleeding following initial management”, demonstrating how the UCT Surgical Society’s success in creating a pioneering undergraduate research model could be replicated elsewhere; and UCT’s successful integration of the University of Stellenbosch, Botswana and Namibia into the regional community.

The UCT Surgical Society is an undergraduate student-driven society affiliated with the Department of Surgery at Groote Schuur Hospital, the South African Society of Surgeons in Training (SASSIT) and the Association of Surgeons of South Africa. It was established in 2006 and is now officially one of the largest societies at UCT, with over 600 members. The society hosts events throughout the academic year, and has pioneered the development of an undergraduate research model in 2013.
This year’s CLS photography competition follows the successful art competition held in 2012, as part of the centenary celebrations. Due to competing commitments, CLS decided to only focus on photographs this year.

We created a website for the entries (http://www.flickr.com/photos/uct_fhs_photocomp/), and 35 entries were received from students and staff. The entries were exhibited for two weeks from 19-31 August 2013, and were judged by three professional photographers (external to UCT).

Debbie Victor, Clin Lab Sciences

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1st prize - ERNA MORDEN –

‘Life is beautiful’

Judges: We all thought that the moment caught was spot on. It is technically sound, has good use of lines, exhibits a good narrative and there is a wonderful connection between the photographer and subject.

2nd prize – LAURIE KELLAWAY –

‘The Fisherman’

Judges: We all really liked the composition and use of space. There is something very nice about the conflicting narrative in the conflicting engagement in the peaceful setting. Either way it is perceived the connection between the two fishermen is lovely. We awarded it second place and not first because technically the image was a little soft with the focus.

3rd prize – LISOLETTE ANGUS –

‘Boundless’ (series of 2 pictures)

Judges: We all thought it has great creative thought. The techniques used are good. The use of lines and textures is nice. That said we thought that the two images could have exhibited closer techniques to make them stick better as a series. We also felt that a series should be a minimum number of three images.
WHY do we need WEB RENEWAL?

There are various challenges in maintaining UCT’s web presence - including active websites and applications for departments and other UCT entities. These include:

- Outdated and inadequately managed hosting environments (such as the Groa server - on which many UCT sites are hosted - which has been subject to malicious attacks because of the impossibility of upgrading the environment).
- Inadequate web content management platforms that often require knowledge of coding to update content.
- Outsourced solutions that create dependencies on suppliers when content needs to be updated.
- The need to maintain a consistent UCT brand while allowing UCT entities to retain their own branding and imagery.
- Differing needs for particular web-based applications to support advanced requirements.

Web Renewal PROJECT BENEFITS

The Web Renewal project will put in place a Web Content Management System (WCMS) that operates on a secure, standardised, supported, and well-managed platform. The platform is based on open-source software called Drupal.

The key features/benefits of the new system are as follows:

- No coding or programming skills needed to maintain web content & easy updating and maintaining of content
- Availability of customisable design templates that maintain a standard UCT look and feel, but allow for co-branding and individuality
- Easy sharing of information between sites to prevent duplication and inaccuracies
- Training for all users provided by ICTS
- Hosting and support costs carried by ICTS
- Minimal design costs for those electing to use the standard design templates.

The platform also supports good governance and complies with the new web policies UCT Web Content Policy, Web Hosting Policy, and Domain Name Policy.

What must I do if I want A NEW SITE or want to REDESIGN my site now?

Before embarking on a new site or redevelopment please familiarise yourself with the new web policies. When a call is logged for a new website the ICTS training team will set up training with the site’s web content manager.

More info on the Web Renewal project can be found here:
http://www.icts.uct.ac.za/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=6377#WCMS_provide

WEB RENEWAL AT THE FACULTY

The Faculty has appointed its own Web Content Co-ordinator, who is responsible for facilitating the Web Renewal Project for our faculty. She has already been liaising with departmental content managers and assisting them with getting their websites ready for migration. All questions or queries about the project or any Faculty website concerns can be referred to Carmen Louw on 021 406 6178 or Carmen.louw@uct.ac.za.

The FHS website has over 120 individual websites linked to it.

WEB CONTENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (WCMS)

A system that allows a web content manager to log into it and manage (edit, add, delete, upload,) web content (text, images, downloadable files, links)