

# Health Science Matters

Faculty of Health Sciences

DECEMBER 2015

## First African Conference on the Health Effects of Endocrine Disruptors successfully hosted by Faculty



The Environmental Chemical Pollution and Health (ECPH) Research Unit successfully hosted the first African Conference on the Health Effects of Endocrine Disruptors at the Skukuza Conference Centre in the Kruger National Park from 2–6 November. The conference was attended by local and international academics, scientists, key opinion leaders and other stakeholders with an interest in the preservation of the environment, especially with regards to endocrine disrupting elements impacting on wildlife, human health, economics and policy.

Dr Natalie Aneck-Hahn, Director of the ECPH Research Unit, explains that endocrine disrupting chemicals (EDCs) are a threat worldwide and that Africa has not escaped the effects of EDC exposure. She says that the Faculty of Health Sciences at UP is

currently leading research on the occurrence, health effects and projected future health impacts of EDCs on the continent. Within the EDC research focus area, the ECPH Research Unit conducts research on environmental exposure (including through the use of pesticides and plasticisers), and studies its effects on the health of humans and wildlife.

'The conference addressed the knowledge gaps that exist in this area, as only a fraction of the potential EDCs in the environment are currently understood. This enabled those who attended the conference to assist Africa to help itself and to address research questions that examine not only global issues, but also those that are specific to Africa. The scientific programme featured a range of topics that addressed the current state, as well as new information on human, animal and environmental exposures to EDCs, related health effects and biological screening for endocrine disruption,' said Dr Aneck-Hahn.

A successful mini-symposium aimed at junior scientists and postgraduate students took place the morning and afternoon before the main conference programme started. The mini-symposium was well attended and included a student mentor session, chaired by Prof Andreas Kortenkamp from Brunel University in the United Kingdom, which allowed participants the opportunity to discuss their thoughts and ideas with the experts.

Highlights of the conference programme included presentations by Prof Riana Bornman (UP), Prof Tiaan de Jager (UP), Prof Laura Vandenberg (University of Massachusetts, USA), Dr Jerry Heindel (National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, USA) and Dr Jacques Auger (Hospital University Paris Centre, France).

Local and international delegates all had a positive experience as the conference provided an excellent setting for intellectual development. The conference provided a platform for delegates to learn from one another to find ways to work together to limit exposures to EDCs in developing countries, both now and in years to come.



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Faculty of Health Sciences

# Faculty academics receive PHILA

Emeritus Professor of Public Health Medicine, Maila John Matjila from the School of Health Systems and Public Health and Professor Eric Buch, Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences and Professor of Health Policy and Management, were both awarded PHILA



*Prof Maila John Matjila and Prof Eric Buch flanked by the PHASA leadership and members of the Awards Committee (from left to right): Dr Saiendhra Moodley, Dr Julia Moorman,*

Lifetime Achievement awards at the Public Health Association of South Africa (PHASA)'s annual gala dinner.

The PHILA Award takes its name from the Zulu word for 'lead'. PHASA specifies a number of criteria for awarding the PHILA Lifetime Achievement Award including 'a lifetime of commitment to public health, an exceptional contribution to public health research, education or service, demonstrable accomplishments as a public health practitioner and a track record of building public health capacity of younger individuals.' The recipient must also have a history of outstanding leadership and professionalism. The PHILA award testifies to PHASA's recognition of an individual's role in influencing health policy and services, and fundamentally advancing public health in South Africa.

Profs Matjila and Buch join a select group of three previous recipients of the prestigious award, which is considered one of the highest honours in the discipline of public health in South Africa. The School of Health Systems and Public Health says the awards reflect its contribution to the University's vision 'to be a leading research-intensive university in Africa, recognised

internationally for its quality, relevance and impact, developing people, creating knowledge and making a difference locally and globally'.

Dr Saiendhra Moodley, a senior lecturer at UP, gave the citation for Prof Matjila on behalf of PHASA. The citation portrayed a true

gentleman who rose from the dusty streets of Hammanskraal to become a leader in public health in South Africa. It reflected on the many national and community health initiatives to which he contributed in the course of a career that spanned more than thirty years. His role in the training of public health medicine specialists was highlighted.

Prof Laetitia Rispel, Chair of the School of Public Health at the University of Witwatersrand and a former president of PHASA, gave the citation for Prof Buch. She reflected on his passion, his commitment and his role as a public health activist. Prof Rispel spoke about Prof Buch's contribution to anti-apartheid health organisations, his role in government in the 1990s and the work he has done since joining UP in 2000, including his term as Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences.

Both citations included anecdotes that reflected on the character of the recipients, suggesting that the awards not only celebrated the achievements reflected in their CVs but also the way in which they practised their discipline and their role as leaders.

# New HOD Appointed in the Department of Pharmacology



We would like to congratulate Professor Vanessa Steenkamp with her appointment as the Head of the Department of Pharmacology from 1 November 2015. Prof Steenkamp did her undergraduate and postgraduate studies up to Masters level at the University of Pretoria. She took up a position at the South African Institute for Medical Research, now the National Health Laboratory Services in the Department of Endocrinology. She was appointed Lecturer in the Department of Chemical Pathology, University of the Witwatersrand and obtained her PhD in Clinical Toxicology. She returned to the University of Pretoria as Senior Lecturer in the Department of Urology and transferred to the Department of Pharmacology, where she has been heading the Phytopharmacology Unit.

Throughout her career she has been active in promoting professional activities, especially with regards to developing county needs. She is President of the Federation of South African Society of Pathology, Immediate Past-President of the South African Association of Clinical Biochemistry, Vice-President of the Toxicology Society of South Africa and Vice-President of the South African Association of Basic and Clinical Pharmacology. Internationally, her activities include serving as Director of Education and Chair of the Clinical Toxicology Committee, of the International Association of Therapeutic Drug Monitoring and Clinical Toxicology. Prof Steenkamp is also a member of the Executive Committee of the International Federation of Clinical Chemistry and Founding and Past-President of the African Federation of Clinical Chemistry.

## REUNION OF THE 1975 DENTAL GRADUATES

The dental graduates of 1975 recently held their 40 year class reunion. The function took place at the roof garden function area of the Oral & Dental Hospital. On this joyous occasion 23 of the 66 original class attend the reunion. Sadly, ten of the class members have already passed on, and approximately 20 have immigrated. Attendants came from as far afield as Australia, Hong Kong and England.

Two of the class members who attended the function are affiliated to our Dental School of U.P. i.e. Prof Francois de Wet (Head of the



Department of Odontology and Deputy chairperson of the School of Dentistry) and Prof Flip van Wyk (Recently retired Head of the Department of Community Dentistry).

The dean of the School of Dentistry, Prof AJ Ligthelm was the guest speaker. He talked about the class of 1975, and about all the changes and improvements that occurred in the School of Dentistry since then. The group had a wonderful time, and many stories were exchanged. There are already plans for the next reunion in 5 years' time – when they will be 50 years out of Dental School.

# Faculty Awards Ceremony 2015

The Faculty Awards Ceremony took place on 20 November. This year two new awards were added, namely the Community Engagement Award (nominated by each School Executive based on contributions to community service) and Education Award (nominated by each School Executive based on contributions to the development of education or curriculum innovation). Well done to all of the winners!

## *Education & Community Engagement Awards*

School of Dentistry

**Dr Corne Postma**

For his contribution to innovations in instructional design of a patient care curriculum



School of Health Care Sciences

**Dr Carin Maree**

For her contribution to inter-professional teaching in Health Care Sciences



School of Health Systems and Public Health

**Dr Astrid Turner**

For her contribution to Education innovation in undergraduate teaching



School of Medicine

**Dr Sumaiya Adam**

For her contribution to under- and postgraduate teaching in obstetrics and gynaecology



School of Medicine

**Prof Madisa Kakaza**

For her contribution to undergraduate teaching in neurology



**Dr Johan Potgieter**

For contributions to training in Haematology

School of Dentistry

Dept of Community Dentistry

For their dedication to community outreach projects of the School of Dentistry  
School of Health Care Sciences



**Ms Heila van Wyk**

For her contribution to service learning and engagement in Mamelodi



**Dr Roinah Ngunyulu**

For her contribution to service learning and engagement in Hammanskraal and the School



# Community Engagement Awards

School of Health Systems and Public Health  
Health Promotion Track  
For their contribution to the Mamelodi Health Promoting Schools' research and development programme

School of Medicine  
Dr Junaid Hassim and Ms Lanel Mare  
For their contribution to the Parent Child Programme



Prof Izelle Smuts, Dr Mphele Mulaudzi and Prof Wilma de Witt  
For their contribution to child health and welfare



# Doctoral Degrees

## 2015

PhD: Human Physiology

- Priyesh Bipath
- Mia-Jeanne van Rooy
- Ilse du Preez

PhD: Family Medicine

- Bernhard Gaede

PhD: Medical Nuclear Science

- Botshelo Mokaleng

PhD: Medical Microbiology

- Nontuthuko Maningi
- Shaheed Omar

PhD: Health Ethics

- Rita Sommers

PhD: Internal Medicine

- Mahmood Ally

Doctor of Science

- Louw Roos

PhD: Anatomy

- Nanette Briers
- Anna Oettlé
- Elizabeth Swanepoel

PhD: Medical Virology

- Collins Odhiambo

PhD: Psychiatry

- Manfred Böhmer
- Jacobus Coetzee
- Pierre Joubert

PhD: Public Health

- Mmadira Shirinde
- Elsa Salvador

PhD: Epidemiology

- Goedele Louwagie

PhD: Nursing

- Lusia Pinehas
- Seepaneng Moloko-Phiri
- Mauwane Phaladi-Digamela
- Carlien van Heerden

PhD: Physiotherapy

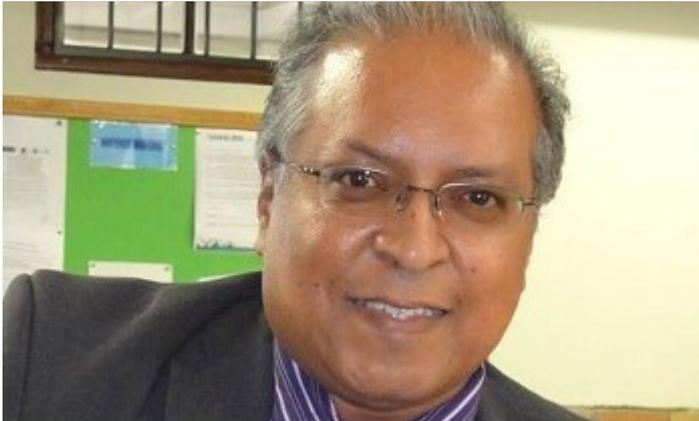
- Desmond Mathye
- Elzette Korkie

# NRF Rated Researchers

## 2015

Prof Riana Bornman	C1
Prof Vanessa Steenkamp	C1
Prof Connie Medlen	C2
Prof Tahir Pillay	C2
Dr Janine Wichmann	C3
Dr Janet Mans	Y2
Dr Kim Nolte	Y2

## New interactive textbook to take the sting out of laboratory mathematics



Any study course in the natural or health sciences is notoriously difficult and the thought of combining this subject matter with university-level mathematics is probably enough to make many students break out in a cold sweat. Professor Tahir Pillay, Head of the Department of Chemical Pathology is hoping that his new interactive mathematics textbook, which is available for use on the Apple iPad, will make life a little easier for students enrolled for the Mathematics for Laboratory Medicine course.

*Interactive Mathematics for Laboratory Medicine* is the first South African interactive mathematics textbook to make use of this platform and is a successor to Prof Pillay's previous digital interactive science textbook titled *Practical Clinical Chemistry: Core Concepts*, which was released internationally in 51 countries in December 2014. This book has since been adopted by the Royal College of Pathologists in London as a preparatory textbook for their qualifying examination for membership.

'This is a very unique and powerful book and there is no other like it on the market', says Prof Pillay. 'One can embed dynamic material such as videos, animated presentations, 3-D objects and photo galleries to allow for a richer two-way interaction of the student with the material via the touch screen interface.' According to Prof Pillay, one of the most powerful features of the platform is the ability to update the contents quickly. 'One can, for example, update a book annually or even more frequently, and the updated version will be immediately available to users via the internet or the local network.' Compared to conventional publishing, this greatly simplifies the process of updating or producing a new edition of a textbook. As the need for innovative educational approaches grows, it is clear that digital textbooks will become increasingly commonplace. This truly is the future of publishing, especially in resource- and learning-challenged environments.

## Student receives award for distinguished work at IAEA conference



*Dr Kehinde Ololade with Dr Ravi Kashyap from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)*

Dr Kehinde Ololade, a second year MMed student in the Department of Nuclear Medicine at the University of Pretoria (UP), won the award for distinguished work at the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)'s conference on clinical PET/CT and molecular imaging that was held in Vienna, Austria from 5 to 9 October 2015.

The title of Dr Ololade's presentation was 'The metastatic pattern of 18 F-FDG PET/CT in HIV positive patients with recurrent cervical cancer', in which he examined the impact of utilising the hybrid study of PET and CT fused together in the early identification of the

unique pattern of spread in recurrent cervical cancer, as well as the pattern of soft tissue and nodal involvement and the identification of the uncommon sites of distribution of this disease. Dr Ololade's research for his paper was conducted under the guidance of Prof Mike Sathekge, Head of the Department of Nuclear Medicine at UP.

# MoU paves the way for collaboration towards malaria research and elimination



*Prof T de Jager, Director:  
UP CSMC*

The University of Pretoria Centre for Sustainable Malaria Control (UP CSMC) has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Chinese National Institute of Parasitic Diseases (China CDC). This MoU will pave the way for collaboration between the two centres with a view to research on and the eventual elimination of malaria.

The MoU was signed at the conclusion of the Second Ministerial Forum of China–Africa Health Development (2015–2018) Conference that was held in Cape Town on 5 and 6 October 2015. The conference, which was hosted jointly by the Chinese Minister of National Health and Family Planning Commission, Ms Li Bin, and the South African Minister of Health, Dr Aaron Motsoaledi, was attended by 200 African health ministers and senior delegates from health ministries. Senior representatives from the African Union (AU), the World Health Organization (WHO), UNAID, UNICEF, UNFPA, the World Bank, and the Global Fund to fight HIV/AIDS, TB and malaria were also in attendance. The overall aim of the conference was to deepen and expand

previous commitments to health development and to accelerate efforts to promote open resources, technology and teaching practices in education.

The MoU between the UP CSMC and China CDC was one of three MoUs signed at the conclusion of the conference. The China CDC was represented by its director, Prof Dr Zhou Xiaonong and UP CSMC by Prof Leo Braack, head of the centre’s Malaria Vector Cluster.

According to Prof Tiaan de Jager, Deputy Dean: Research of the Faculty of Health Sciences at UP and Director of the UP CSMC, the decision to collaborate with China CDC was a strategic one since it will provide access to BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) funding. The University of Pretoria was the only African institution requested to sign a MoU on collaboration in malaria research – a sure sign of the excellent international reputation of the UP CSMC.

## Department of Dermatology excels at annual congress

The Department of Dermatology scooped three registrar awards at the Annual National Dermatology Congress which were held at the Drakensburg Sports Resort. The winners were:

Dr Jabulile Makhubele (Galderma John Moch Research Award);

Dr Lebogang Mogale (Stiefel Galderma Joch Moch Research Awards);

Dr Kim Ainsley (Registrar Presentation Award)

Dr Makhule is a shining star, she completed the MMed Dermatology in two years and graduated in September 2015.

The Department is also excited about organizing the 2017 National Congress and can’t wait for the opportunity to shine as UP Dermatology.

*Dr C M Kgokolo—Head: Dermatology*



*Dr Kim Ainsley, Dr Jabu Makhubele, Dr CM Kgokolo,  
Dr Lebo Mogale*

# School of Health Care Sciences reach out to community in celebration of World AIDS Day

World AIDS Day is commemorated on 1 December every year and provides an opportunity for communities to unite in the fight against HIV/AIDS. The UNAIDS World AIDS Day theme for 2011 to 2015 is: 'Getting to zero'.

As their contribution, staff of the School of Health Care Sciences in collaboration with the Foundation for Professional Development (FPD), the City of Tshwane, the King's Hope Development Foundation, Future Families Mothusi Workers, the Tshwane Multisectoral AIDS Management Unit (MSAMU) and the Ward-Based Outreach Teams (WOBTs), hosted an event at Olievenhoutbosch Clinic on Friday, 27 November 2015. The theme of the event



was '90 90 90', which alludes to the realisation of the UNAIDS 2020 vision of ensuring that by the year 2020, 90% of people living with HIV should know their status, 90% of all those diagnosed with HIV infection must be on sustained anti-retroviral (ARV) therapy and 90% of people on ARV therapy must be virally suppressed.

The event served to raise awareness and educate people on HIV/AIDS, and featured an educational drama performance by the Mothusi Workers. A dance item by Future Families (a non-profit organisation rendering quality services to orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) and people infected with and affected by HIV/AIDS in South Africa). As an added service to the community, staff members and BCur students participated in a symbolic lighting of candles and conducted free screening for hypertension (68 patients were tested of which five were counselled and referred treatment for elevated blood pressure) and diabetes mellitus (43 patients' blood glucose were tested of which six were counselled and referred for treatment), while FPD did HIV counselling and testing (a total of 62 patients were tested for HIV).

## SASHG Young Researchers Forum

The Young Researchers Forum (YRF) was held in August at the University of Pretoria, Medical Campus, HW Snyman building. The YRF is connected to the Southern African Society for Human Genetics (SASHG) which hosted its 16th biennial congress in Pretoria. The day's events were centred on career development for all young researchers, including post graduate students, research fellows and young academics. It was the vision of this year's YRF organising committee to provide an environment that encouraged networking and sharing of research interests towards enabling future collaborative opportunities. Due to the generous contribution from the University of Pretoria, this vision became a reality. The organizing committee would like to extend their sincere gratitude to the research offices at the Faculty of Health Sciences for their generous support.

The forum was a great success with many young researchers in attendance comprising of post-graduate students from eight institutions across South-Africa. Support from biotech companies and institutional backing went towards planning the YRF. The organising committee received rave reviews on the professionalism of this event.

We appreciate the support of all staff members at the University of Pretoria who assisted the YRF organizing committee in hosting a successful SASHG Young Researchers Forum. *Juliet L.D Mentoer*



# Mamelodi OT Awareness Day

Friendly smiles, silly hats, extreme excitement and determination to prove that we have one of the best jobs ever; this is what greeted the bus-loads full of students arriving on the Mamelodi campus during the occupational therapy (OT) awareness day.

Several third year students from the Occupational Therapy Department of the University of Pretoria provided a few stations that briefly described the various fields that OT consists of. The first station consisted of sensory stimulation activities. This included several different textures and materials for the students to feel and explore with. The next station explained the physical side of OT. Here a few splints were set out to be tested and a universal cuff was passed around to demonstrate how we make "slim-planne". General comments heard included, "Wow, you must really be special to do this work," and "What you do is amazing!" Another station was dedicated to different activities and tasks that are performed in the paediatric field.

Surrounded by posters and some bright-eyed, dedicated OT students trying vigorously to explain the importance of OT, one cannot help but be interested in the selfless work and services that these individuals provide. As always these students are living their lives to the fullest and will never stop contagiously spreading the art of living.



## SHSPH student receives recognition for PhD Studies

Tshepo Moloto, a PhD student at the School of Health Systems & Public Health has been selected to receive the Society of Toxicology Colgate-Palmolive Award for Student Research Training in Alternative Methods. The purpose of this award is to enhance graduate student research training using *in vitro* methods or alternative techniques to reduce, replace or refine use of animals in toxicological research.

The training may include, but is not limited to, use of *in vitro* and *ex vivo* procedures, nonmammalian animal models, computer modeling, and structure-activity relationships. Graduate students may propose to develop expertise in relevant methodologies :

- At a laboratory away from their home institution;
- At a laboratory at their home institution that would not be available to them otherwise; or
- At approved workshops, symposia or continuing education programs where hands-on training will be received.



Tshepo will be travelling to New Orleans in March 2016, where he will be recognized by the Society of Toxicology at their annual awards ceremony.