

November 2015

RECENT EVENTS

**MICROSCOPY WORKSHOP, LIFE SCIENCES IMAGING CENTRE,
FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES, 25-26 August 2015**



The aim/mission of the Life Science Imaging Centre is to develop a teaching and learning facility, to provide current and emerging technologies involving microscopy and imaging in Life Sciences. The Imaging Centre organises different courses through the year to encourage researchers to use microscopy tools for their work. The recent workshop, in partnership with Karl Zeiss South Africa, focused on the basics of microscopy, principles of fluorescence, sample preparation, confocal microscopy and a presentation of the new equipment platform for 2016: the Airyscan for high resolution images.

Ten students from Wits and the University of Johannesburg attended the two day course. Ms Soné Hendricks from Zeiss provided the theoretical background, with a very useful introduction to microscopy for students and staff members, who lack any knowledge in microscopy. The practical sessions, directed by Dr Deroubaix, allowed the students to prepare microscopy slides by immunostaining. They could observe stained cells with the confocal microscope and learn the techniques of wide-field epifluorescence microscopy, bright field microscopy and phase contrast microscopy.

The Centre is supported by the University's Research Office, through Mr Iain Burns, the Office of the Assistant Dean of Research and Postgraduate Support, Professor Beverley Kramer, and the Director of the Microscopy and Microanalysis Unit (MMU), Professor Alexander Ziegler. Manager Academics: Professor Stefan Weiss (Science) and Dr Clem Penny (Health Sciences). Head of the Unit: Dr Aurelie Deroubaix (PhD, University of Bordeaux, France).

PHASA CONFERENCE

Wits School of Public Health had a high profile at the annual conference of PHASA (Public Health Association of South Africa), held in Durban from 7-9 October 2015 around the theme: "Health and sustainable development – the future". This included 15 students, who presented 16 posters and oral presentations – Soter Ameh gave two oral presentations – on topics that reflected their research interests in health policy, health systems, occupational health, demography, epidemiology and anthropology.



Gbenga Olorunfemi, an MSc candidate in epidemiology and biostatistics working with Zodwa Ndlovu, won an award for the best poster, for his work on trends and determinants of cervical cancer mortality in South Africa. The other student participants were: PhD candidates Sipiwe Thwala, Wells Utembe (one poster, one oral presentation), Soter Ameh (two oral presentations), Juliet Nyasulu, Pascalia Munyewende; MPH and MSc students Shehnaz Munshi, Asnake Y Dumicho, Farisai Kuonza, Samson Setumo, Julian Mthombeni, and Celeste Sauls; Public Health Medicine Registrar Moushumi Ann Mathews; and Postdoctoral Research Fellow Rachel Ceasar. All presentations were of universally high quality, reflecting the time that participants spent at Wits and at the conference together, commenting on each other's work, providing advice, and rehearsing to ensure their work was presented in ways that were strong, clear and engaging.

Photograph: Professors Lenore Manderson (extreme left) and Laetitia Rispel (extreme right) with the SPH delegation

HEALTH PROFESSIONALS ARTS GROUP EXHIBITION

The Health Professions Art Group (HPAG) held their annual art exhibition in October. The opening, held on 14 October, was attended by many of the exhibiting artists, their friends and guests. MC, Dr Chris Hammond, welcomed everyone and in particular the student art group which once again participated in the exhibition. Jenny Marcus, the out-going Chairman, was thanked for her huge contribution, and young people were urged to come forward to lead the group into the future.



The group has been exhibiting in various venues every year for the past 40 years. The Adler Museum and its staff were thanked for providing a home for the display for over ten years. It was hoped to continue this arrangement as several of the exhibitors are from the academic faculty and exposure to the students is desired.

Dr Bernard Levinson, one of the original people who started the group 40 years ago, gave a talk on the "magic" in medicine and art and urged the group not to lose that "magic" and carry these exhibitions forward. He then officially opened the exhibition.

Over 100 works were on display and the quality of this year's exhibits was excellent. Every medium from watercolour to sculpture was showcased, including drawings, acrylic and mixed media works, beadwork and ceramics: a varied output from many talented people whose connections are to art and medicine in some way. The opening was followed by drinks and snacks, after which the student group took over and enjoyed their evening of other art form presentations. We look forward to the 2016 exhibition!

THE BODIES AND MINDS OF BABIES IN RELATIONSHIPS CONFERENCE

On 30 and 31 October 2015 the Gauteng Association of Infant Mental Health, in association with the Wits School of Human and Community Development and the Centre of Excellence in Human Development hosted a conference entitled "The Bodies and Minds of Babies in Relationship: Dialogues in a Multidisciplinary Context". This inter-professional congress brought a wide variety of professionals with an interest in infant mental health and development together. The Faculty of Health Sciences was well represented with plenary papers by Professors Peter Cooper (paediatrics) and Cora Smith (psychiatry) as well as presentations by Professor Joanne Potterton and Ms Samantha Rosie (physiotherapy).

The conference highlighted the need for early detection and intervention in infant mental health and developmental issues as well, and a holistic and coordinated inter-professional approach.

SENIOR APPOINTMENTS

HEAD OF DIVISION OF HUMAN GENETICS: ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR AMANDA KRAUSE



Professor Amanda Krause began her illustrious academic and medical career in 1981 when she embarked on a medical degree at Wits. After two years of studying, Professor Krause changed tracks to a BSc degree in Anatomy and Physiology, which she obtained with distinction. This was promptly followed by a BSc honours degree, also completed with distinction, in Human Genetics. Clearly, not being able to choose between her passions for both medicine and science, she completed her MBBCh degree and began part-time PhD work in Human Genetics simultaneously in 1985. Her PhD focused on an examination of the globin genes in the South African Indian population. Over the years, Amanda has received multiple awards for academic merit in fields such as physics, medicine, virology and many other medical sciences.

After several years spent both in the laboratories as well as in clinics, Professor Krause was appointed to the Head of the Clinical Section in the Division of Human Genetics, a position which she has occupied with grace and aplomb. Her training in medical genetics and her laboratory-based PhD

work has allowed her to serve as a useful interface between the clinic and the lab, constantly ensuring clinically appropriate laboratory testing and reporting.

Professor Krause has also dedicated a significant portion of her time to research, both in her personal capacity and as a supervisor to over 40 students ranging from honours to post-doctoral levels. She is known for her intellectual generosity when it comes to her many students. Her primary research focus has been in understanding the molecular basis of genetic disease in South Africa, always with the aim of providing a better and more holistic medical genetics service to South Africans. She has also been intrinsically involved in the conception and implementation of both the MMed Medical Genetics and MSc (Med) Genetic Counselling programmes at Wits.

Her service to the Human Genetics community at large is also of note, having served on the Southern African Society for Human Genetics (SASHG) in various capacities over the years; most recently as Chairperson for the 2013 to 2015 term. She has also served on various committees within the Faculty of Health Sciences at Wits and is the current President of the College of Medical Genetics of South Africa. Given all of this, it is not surprising that the name Amanda Krause has become synonymous with excellence in the fields of Human and Medical Genetics in South Africa.

Congratulations! We wish her well for her term of office!

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT OF VIROLOGY: DR JOHANNES VILJOEN

Dr Johannes Viljoen, born March 1965, attended school at Grey College, Bloemfontein, and matriculated in 1982, having received the Franklin Dux medal. He studied medicine at the University of Stellenbosch and qualified as medical doctor in November 1989.

For the next decade he practised in a variety of clinical disciplines both in South Africa and abroad, including working as general medical practitioner on the island of Tristan da Cunha, South Atlantic Ocean, known for being the most remote inhabited place on earth. Around the turn of the century, he developed an interest in clinical laboratory medicine, and subsequently more specifically in clinical virology.

In May 2005 he obtained the Fellowship of the College of Pathologists (Virology) through the Colleges of Medicine of South Africa, whilst at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, and Inkosi Albert Luthuli Central Hospital, Durban.

In October 2006 he was appointed as head of the Africa Centre Virology Research Laboratory, based at the Doris Duke Medical Research Institute, Nelson R Mandela School of Medicine, University of KwaZulu-Natal, in Durban. In addition to directing the laboratory, his research work included the use of dried blood spots as diagnostic tools for adult and infant diagnosis of HIV-1 infection, and the role of breast milk in transmission of HIV from mother-to-child via breastfeeding.

In August 2015 he obtained a PhD from the University of Montpellier (France), based on his work on immuno-virological determinants of HIV-1 transmission from mother-to-child via breastfeeding, with a particular focus on coviral breast milk infections by the herpesviruses, CMV and EBV. To date, he has authored or co-authored more than 35 international peer reviewed publications.

Dr Viljoen says: "It is an honour to be affiliated with Wits University, and to have this opportunity to establish a Department of Clinical Virology befitting this centre of excellence"

Welcome and congratulations! We wish him well for his term of office!



CONGRATULATIONS!

PROFESSOR KEITH KLUGMAN ELECTED MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL ACADEMY OF MEDICINE

On 19 October 2015 the National Academy of Medicine (NAM) named 80 new members, including ten international members, at its 45th annual meeting in Washington, DC. Professor Keith Klugman, Director for Pneumonia, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation; Emeritus William H Foege Professor of Global Health, Emory University, Atlanta; and Honorary Professor, Wits Centre for Respiratory Diseases and Meningitis (CRDM), School of Pathology, Wits/ National Institute for Communicable Diseases (NICD) of the National Health Laboratory Service (NHLS), was named as one of the international members.

Election to the NAM is one of the highest honours in the fields of health, science and medicine and recognises distinguished individuals who have demonstrated outstanding professional achievement and commitment to service. New members are elected by current active members through a process which recognises those who have made major contributions to the advancement of the medical sciences, health care and public health. Established originally as the Institute of Medicine in 1970 by the National Academy of Sciences, NAM addresses critical issues in health, science, medicine, and related policy and inspires positive actions across sectors.



Professor Klugman is one of the world's leading experts on antibiotic resistance in pneumonia. He helped develop the pneumonia vaccine that is now part of the immunization regimen for children in the United States. As a result of his research findings, invasive pneumococcal disease among young American children has decreased by nearly 80%.

He has also focused his research on ways to reduce deaths from pneumonia among children specifically in developing countries. Pneumonia claims 900 000 lives annually—more than any other childhood disease, and his work has led to tremendous strides in reversing that trend through vaccinations. His research now focuses on the evaluation of vaccine effectiveness in rural South Africa by looking at the ecology of the pneumococcal bacteria pre- and post-vaccine. Ultimately, he expects the results to show that the vaccine protects children up to age five and interrupts disease transmission to unvaccinated children and adults.

He and his collaborators have embarked on a project to sequence the 20 000 pneumococcal genomes. Through genetic sequencing of these strains, they hope to identify the genomic changes associated with bacterial escape from the vaccine. He is advisor to the five-year study, funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, in collaboration with the CDC, the University of Cambridge, the National Institute for Communicable Diseases at Wits, the Wellcome Trust Sanger Institute unit in Malawi, the Medical Research Council in Gambia and the Kenya Medical Research Institute.

SWEDISH UNIVERSITY HONORS PROFESSOR SHARON FONN



Professor Sharon Fonn, School of Public Health, received an honorary doctorate from the Sahlgrenska Academy, University of Gothenburg, Sweden. It was conferred at a ceremony on 16 October 2015.

Professor Fonn initiated and co-directs the Consortium for Advanced Research Training in Africa, which is building the next generation of African researchers and research-supportive environments at African universities and affords faculty members from Sahlgrenska Academy a prominent role. She is also the President of the Association of Schools of Public Health in Africa. She is internationally recognised for her research on the public healthcare system, specialising in women's health, integrated care and high burden diseases.

Honorary doctorates are awarded to those who have played a key role in research or education at Sahlgrenska Academy or who have otherwise promoted progress in the fields that it addresses.

NEWS FROM ALUMNI

AFTERNOON OF REMEMBRANCE: LATE PROFESSOR MERVYN SUSSER (MBBCh 1950)



Professor Louise Kuhn writes: 'On 25 September, 2015, the Mailman School of Public Health, Columbia University, New York, hosted an Afternoon of Remembrance to honour Mervyn W Susser (26 September 1921 – 14 August 2014). The event was graced with the sounds of Nonceba Lubanga singing Miriam Makeba classics and Peter Measroch on jazz piano providing a soundtrack to recall a life well-lived. We heard inspiring stories of Mervyn's early days as a health activist in Alexandra township. Fresh from the air battle fields of World War II, Mervyn charged ahead in his chosen medical field, documenting health afflictions among the disadvantaged, treating the sick and implementing community health programs. But his vision did not stop at the gates of the clinic. Recognising that health is fundamentally linked to the social environment and to human rights, in his personal and professional capacity he worked tirelessly with the growing popular movement adamantly opposed the tightening noose of the then toddler-stage apartheid state. This activism necessitated trading the Drakensberg for the hills of north England and, later, for the rivers and ridges of New York. So began the career of one of the founding figures in the field we now call epidemiology. As the luminaries who addressed the event attested, Mervyn inspired several generations to think (and write) clearly about how disease is caused and how to ameliorate it. As articulated by Dr Mary-Claire King, Mervyn's work reminded us that: "the most righteous



projects demand the most rigorous science." Throughout this remarkable journey, Mervyn was supported, encouraged, motivated, challenged, egged-on, badgered and criticised by his wife and life partner – Zena Stein – research collaborator and, most importantly, intellectual equal: intellectual giants on their own, together unstoppable. The event was wrapped up with words from Mervyn and Zena's two daughters, Ruth and Ida, and their son Ezra, demonstrating from their own personal and professional lives that the spirit of incisive and adventurous thinking lives on.'

To read selected works of Mervyn Susser see: <https://mwsusser.wordpress.com>

For an account of the importance of his work please go to the following link:

https://www.mailman.columbia.edu/sites/default/files/twobytwo_v2i1-email_0.pdf

Photographs: Professor Mervyn Susser; people attending the Afternoon of Remembrance

WITS HEALTH GRADUATES ASSOCIATION REUNION 1 TO 3 OCTOBER 2015

Over 100 alumni attended a reunion held in Johannesburg from 1 to 3 October 2015. The interesting and varied programme included a morning at Medical School where they were hosted by Mr Brendon Billings, lecturer in Morphological Anatomy and Curator of the Raymond Dart Collection of Human Skeletons in the School of Anatomical Sciences, followed by Professors Lionel Green-Thompson and Laetitia Rispel and Mrs Sandra Benn for a campus tour and discussions. Many of the alumni attended the AJ Orenstein Memorial lecture for the excellent talk given by Professor Barry Mendelow: "Drones in Health Care".



Visits to the Evolutionary Studies Institute and Centre of Excellence led by Professor Bruce Rubidge (photographed above) and to the Wits Research Site at Sterkfontein for a visit led by Dr Dominic Stratford, the Co-ordinator of Research at Sterkfontein, to see the material that Wits researchers are working on, were highlights for those who attended these tours, after which many of our guests went on to visit Maropeng to see the Homo Naledi fossils. A gala dinner, attended and addressed by the Dean, Professor Martin Veller, was much appreciated. Old friendships were renewed and new friendships were made as alumni chatted the night away!

REUNION: WITS HEALTH SCIENCES GRADUATES OF 1955



Dr Neil Schwartz, organiser of the class reunion, writes: 'On 31 October 2015, in a private room in the Tavola Restaurant in Herzliya Pituach, the sounds of: "Who did you say you were again," and "Gosh, I would never have recognised you," rang out as nine members of the 1955 Wits Medical School class met in a joyous reunion to celebrate 60 years since becoming doctors.

In my opening remarks to the assembly of sixteen people, I said that this was almost certainly a unique occasion. I doubt that there will be a gathering of 9 of our class anywhere else in the world. We were privileged to be joined by Dr David Gruebel Lee from Farnham in England. In organising the get-together I enlisted the aid of the Wits Office of Alumni Relations in Johannesburg which forwarded my invitation to as many of the alumni whose addresses they had. Unfortunately this was an incomplete list and many whose names were on it I personally knew were no longer alive. I received three replies, two of whom were unable to attend due to illness. The third response was from someone who said: "Goodness Neil, I never realised it was 60 years." He was also unable to attend.

Under the direction of Dr Les Glassman, Chairman of the Wits Alumni in Israel, each person was encouraged to share his or her personal story as to how they came to be where they are today. The proceedings were videoed and numerous photographs were taken. This was followed by an excellent dinner and the proposal that we get together annually instead of waiting for the 70th anniversary.'

Photograph: (back row): David Grubel Lee, Ivor Broer, Shmuel (Sam) Eidelman, Hymie Josman, Ernest Schneider Kuper; (front row): Eric Lebanon, Neil Schwartz, Aaron (Arthur) Malatzky, Rochelle Shorkend (Krikler). I was Assistant Chief of Internal Medicine at Barzilai Hospital, Ashkelon and then Medical Director of the Herzliya Medical Centre; Professor Eidelman was head of Gastro-enterology at Rambam Government Hospital, Haifa, and also on the Scientific Board of the Ministry of Health; Dr Lebanon was an ENT surgeon; Dr Krikler worked in child care for children with special needs, and the others were in general practice.

INVITATIONS: REMINDERS!

PRF
Poliovirus Research Foundation

INVITATION TO ATTEND
10th James HS Gear Memorial Lecture
Date/time: Monday 16 November 2015 at 17:30 for 18:00

Venue: The Poliomyelitis Research Foundation Training Centre
National Institute for Communicable Diseases (NICD/NHLS),
1 Modderfontein Road, Sandringham

Refreshments will be served
To RSVP and any enquiries: Irma Latsky, 011 555-0395,
Fax 0867 583 326, irmal@nicd.ac.za

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR COMMUNICABLE DISEASES
Division in the National Health Laboratory Service

HIV Cure:
A formidable challenge
PUBLIC LECTURE by:
Prof. Caroline Tiemessen
Centre for HIV & STIs
National Institute for Communicable Diseases
DST/NRF Research Chair: HIV Vaccine Translational Research,
University of the Witwatersrand

The target

The road.....

The weapons...

Gene Therapy

Invitation

THE HREC (MEDICAL), STEVE BIKO CENTRE FOR BIOETHICS AND WITS HEALTH CONSORTIUM CLINICAL HIV RESEARCH UNIT INVITE YOU TO A RESEARCH ETHICS CME

Date: 19 November 2015
Venue: The Marie Curie Lecture Theatre
Time: 16h00 – 18h00
Registration and Tea: 15h30

CPD: 4 Ethics CEUs | **RSVP:** by 30th October to Samkelo.Nsibande@wits.ac.za

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND JOHANNESBURG    **Steve Biko**
 Centre for Bioethics

Programme

16h00: Welcome	Professor Ian Sanne
16h05: Some Background to Problems with Applications	Professor Peter Cleaton-Jones
16h45: Applying the Ethics Guidelines in Research	Professor Ames Dhai
17h15: Biobank Update	Professor Ames Dhai
17h30: Understanding the Wits MTA	Safia Mahomed
17h45: General Discussion	
18h00: Closure	

INVITATION

The Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences, Professor Martin Veller, cordially invites you to the

FACULTY'S HONOURS CELEBRATION

Date: **Wednesday, 2 December 2015**

Time: **14:30**

Venue: **Resources Centre
Wits School of Public Health**

It is the day when the Faculty recognises those who have been appointed to senior positions, those who have been recognised for significant **achievements** in their disciplines or within the Faculty or **the** University over the last year, those who have received awards and those who are retiring this year.

ALL STAFF ARE INVITED TO THE EVENT.

Please RSVP to Innocentia.vukeya@wits.ac.za or phone her on 011 717 2099 for further information.

National Forum on:
Surgery and Anaesthesia: an indispensable part of achieving
universal health coverage
7th - 8th December 2015

This ground-breaking conference will bring together surgical and anaesthetic specialists, health policy makers, public health and health system experts to discuss and debate:

- ▶ Essential surgical care and anaesthesia as part of universal health coverage
- ▶ Expanding access to safe, high quality, affordable surgery and anaesthesia in South Africa, particularly in rural and under-served areas
- ▶ Appropriate workforce, training, and education
- ▶ Health system strengthening including infrastructure development
- ▶ Financing essential surgical and anaesthetic care
- ▶ Building linkages across disciplines

We will also host the South African Launch of The Lancet Commission on Global Surgery

Dates: 7-8 December 2015

Time: 08h30 until 17h00 on day 1; 07H45 -14h20 on day 2

Venue: Auditorium School of Public Health, Wits Faculty of Health Sciences, Johannesburg

Registration and provisional Program: <http://www.surgeon.co.za/events/national-forum-on-surgery-and-anaesthesia-an-indispensable-part-of-achieving-universal-health-coverage/>

Please contact Martin Smith for further details: martin.smith@wits.ac.za

And finally ...

One of our favourite restaurant signs of the year:



Health Sciences Review is published mid-month every month.

The next issue will appear on 11 December 2015

Deadline for submission of information and pictures: 9 December 2015

Please send information to: rochelle.keene@wits.ac.za