Introducing Professor David Gray

We warmly congratulate and welcome the new Head of the School of Physiology, Professor David Gray. Dave holds a PhD from UPE and has been Associate Professor and Head of the Endocrine Physiology Research Laboratory in the School since 1996. His primary interest is the integrative and regulatory physiology of birds, specifically the regulation of salt and fluid balance. In the past his research also included the physiology of calcium regulating hormones.

We were delighted to claim his time for this first interview.

Tell us a bit about your background:

I was born a couple of years ago in Newcastle upon Tyne within smelling distance of the river Tyne in the north-east of England and am therefore a very proud Geordie. I was educated in England and my first job was at the National Institute for Medical Research at Mill Hill, London. In 1981 I moved to Germany to work at one of the Max Planck Institutes and eventually came to SA in 1992.

How did you end up in Port Elizabeth?

I wanted to do some work in wild birds and in 1986 got the chance to do so at the University of Port Elizabeth. Nothing was known about the endocrine control of salt and water balance in penguins and I initially wanted to work with that species. However, I soon found out that penguins are not good experimental models mainly due to their razor sharp beaks and strong flippers and moved to working with seagulls. I was there for two years during which time I graduated with a PhD.

Is there life after Port Elizabeth?

Yes, but not as intense. After Port Elizabeth I returned to Germany but in 1989 when the Berlin Wall fell, luckily not on me, all soft money positions with the Max Planck Society were terminated and so I decided to return to South Africa and initially went to Rhodes University, Grahamstown, before coming to Wits in 1994.

Your work has been very research orientated, but as Head of School your focus will obviously have to change.

Yes, however I still expect to do some research because I am lucky enough to collaborate with some excellent researchers who I hope will continue to allow me to contribute, even at a slightly reduced rate.

What do you think is the biggest challenge for you in taking over Head of School?

To maintain the excellent reputation of the School of Physiology as a strong teaching and research orientated entity both within South Africa and internationally.

How will you do this?
By providing an environment that will accommodate the extremely heavy teaching load of the academic and support staff and at the same time maintain their enthusiasm to produce high quality research outputs.

How do you relax?
I relax by doing non-academic things such as gardening, walking the dog and watching Newcastle United being beaten every week. I also try to spend at least some free time with my wife Linda and two daughters Samantha and Rachel.
ANNUAL RESEARCH PRIZE COMPETITION: 2006
The Faculty of Health Sciences invites you to apply for the Annual Research Prize Competition: 2006. A certificate and a prize of R10 000 will be awarded for research purposes based on research excellence in publication. Put in your application now! The closing date is 6 November 2006. For more information visit the Wits Intranet or http://www.wits.ac.za/depts/wcs/hspostgrad/ and click on Research Office and then Research Prizes or contact the Research Office 011 717 2023 or email research@health.wits.ac.za.

Eligibility for the award
- Any full-time or part-time member of staff who has NOT reached the age of 40 years by the closing date.
- Any postgraduate student under the age of 40 years registered in the Faculty of Health Sciences.
- The work eligible for the award must have formed part of the work for the higher degree for which the student was registered.
- Normally, only research carried out in South Africa will be considered eligible.
- An eligible applicant may submit an application in successive years, for publication during the current review period. No person may receive the prize more than once in a three-year period.

Criteria for a successful application
- The award will be made for the research publication, normally a full paper, considered to be of high quality within the discipline and judged substantially on the Impact Factor and rank in the discipline of the journal in which the article was published, listed in the most recent available Science Citation Index rankings of journals.
- The applicant must be the first author or acknowledged the principal author of the publication.

Method of application/nomination
- An applicant should submit six reprints (copies) of the publication he/she wishes to have considered for the award, to Carlette at the Research Office, 5th floor Medical School
- Applications should be accompanied by a declaration by the candidate that he/she fulfils the eligibility criteria (as above).
- The declaration must be signed by the Head of Department, in case of postgraduate students, also by the candidate’s supervisor.
- The application should be accompanied by a declaration, signed by each co-author of the article, where possible, that the publication is being submitted for the Prize with their acquiescence.
- Heads of Schools or Departments, or any other member of the Faculty, may submit nominations for the award, along the lines above.

Introducing Palliative Care: Report of Seminar held on 20 September 2006
Compassion without wisdom is inefficient – Euripides 485-406BC

Student Matsediso Gule, a GEMP IV student with the Dean, Professor Helen Laburn

Dr Natalya Dinat with Gauteng MEC for Health Mr Brian Hlongwa
By acknowledging that pain and symptom relief for people with terminal illnesses is a basic human and patient right, the Wits Faculty of Health Sciences is leading by example and has established the academic base for palliative care in South Africa. Palliative care at Wits will provide evidence based medicine and hard science to a field that has long been on the periphery of medical services and regarded as a ‘touchy-feely’ topic.

The seminar was well organised, well attended, topical and interesting. The keynote address, entitled: Clinical notes on palliative care, was delivered by one of the pioneers of palliative care and global expert, Dr Robert Twycross, Emeritus Reader in Palliative Medicine at the University of Oxford and Head of the WHO Collaborating Centre on Palliative Care. This was particularly exciting for the medical students, who could meet the author of their prescribed palliative text.

The Dean opened this auspicious occasion and the Gauteng MEC for Health, Mr Brian Hlongwa reiterated the importance of palliative care in the public health setting.

There were few people unmoved by medical student Matsediso Gule’s poem, which she wrote after caring for a patient on the palliative clinical block. A patient spoke of his experiences as a recipient of palliative care and the difference the care made to him. Dr Natalya Dinat provided an overview of the service at the Chris Hani Baragwanath Hospital.

World class speakers, an excellent research display and attendance from as far as North West Province, Western Cape really showed that palliative care at Wits has indeed arrived.

Further information and the Twycross presentation is available by emailing: training@witspalliative.co.za or call 011 933 4031.

NEWS: SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

In an interview with the previous Dean, Professor Max Price (Health Sciences Review 30 June 2006), he mentioned that when he applied for the post of Dean ‘he was not a clinician but came from a “Cinderella discipline” (Public Health) not regarded very highly by a conservative hospital based Faculty staff or by basic scientists’. We have puzzled over this remark and trust that this remark referred to the situation in 1996 and not 2006!

Along with the DVC (Research), Professor Belinda Bozzoli, we doff our hats to the School of Public Health which was the University’s top producer of research publications for 2004. Professor Bozzoli congratulated Professor Sharon Fonn, Head of School, and said: ‘Please convey my congratulations to the School. I know that measuring research output is simply a proxy for real research, but it can be quite a good proxy and I think it says a great deal about SPH. Well done to all of you!’

School of Public Health: Awards and Prizes: September 2006

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| 2006 | GEMP III students/Group 2C  | Awarded 3rd prize for their presentation in the Academic Research category at the Annual GPG Prakash Vallabh Research Conference which is an annual conference run by the Gauteng Health Department. The topic presented was: ‘Determination of the average queuing time of patients attending outpatient pharmacies at the Chris Hani Baragwanath Hospital’.
| 2006 | Professor Mary Edginton    | Received a ‘Service Excellence’ award for the work done in establishing and managing the TB Care Centre and in promoting better management of TB at Chris Hani Baragwanath Hospital. The award was a framed certificate and a book. |
A fascinating display on the History of Tuberculosis, research and conceived by Professor Mary Edginton, is currently on display in the Adler Museum of Medicine. It is well worth a visit, particularly as tuberculosis is so much in the news today.

Did you know that South Africa has the highest rate of TB of all 22 high-burden countries (713 per 100 000 population)? (Source: WHO TB Report 2006)

‘Imagining IMAGE’: Rural Sekhukhuneland, Limpopo Province 2006

RADAR (Rural AIDS & Development Action Research Programme), Wits School of Public Health, Acornhoek, and SEF (Small Enterprise Foundation), Tzaneen

A series of photographs were taken by women in Sekhukhuneland. They are from the poorest households in their villages, in one of the poorest regions of our country.

These women were participants in a research study called IMAGE – which stands for the Intervention with Microfinance for AIDS & Gender Equity. The programme provides rural women with small loans to develop income-generating projects. Groups of 40 women form a loan centre, coming together fortnightly to repay loans and discuss new business ideas. During these meetings, women engaged with HIV facilitators to explore issues relating to gender, culture and sexuality – in the hopes of addressing violence in the home, and reducing the risk of HIV in their families. After 2 years, rates of domestic violence were reduced by half.

The women taking these photos were ‘natural leaders’- nominated by their loan centres to receive further training in leadership and community mobilisation. To chart their journeys, they were given disposable cameras and introduced to them by South African artist/photographer Gail Neke.

This series of 12 photographs capture the lives and perspectives of these rural women. The images tell their stories – of courage, of transformation, and of hope.

The photographs are currently on display in the Adler Museum of Medicine.
OBJECTIVES: Currently, researchers and Research Ethics Committee members confront difficult moral, ethical and legal dilemmas in their work as a result of an increasingly complex research arena. Additionally, misconduct in the research arena is being reported with alarming regularity. Hence careful analysis and action has become inevitable. The objectives of this intensive workshop are to expose researchers and Research Ethics Committee members to basic current issues and critical thought in research ethics in an effort to promote their development as ethical researchers and reviewers.

OUTCOMES: Delegates will be able to demonstrate a basic awareness through action and in writing of the ethical and legal responsibilities involved in research participant protections, research conduct and reporting.

EVALUATION: This will be by means of pre-workshop and post-workshop assessments. Successful candidates will be awarded a certificate of competence at the end of the workshop.

CPD: 7 Points in Ethics

VENUE: The Auditorium, New Nurses Home, Chris Hani Baragwanath Hospital, Old Potch Road.

DATE: 8 November 2006

COST: R850

DISCOUNTED RATE: R300 - applies to students and registrars affiliated to the University of the Witwatersrand

ENQUIRIES: Anisa Keshav at 011 7171234 or email anisa.keshav@wits.ac.za
Ames Dhai at 011 7172718 or email amaboo.dhai@wits.ac.za

ORGANISING COMMITTEE: Ames Dhai
Merryl Vorster; Peter Cleaton-Jones; Chris Szabo; Martin Smith; Gayle Langley; Eleanor Ross; Shan Naidoo; Anisa Keshav

PROGRAMME

08.00 Registration plus pre-workshop evaluation
08.30 Welcome, Introduction and Overview
08.45 Requirements for Responsible Conduct of Research – Ethical and Legal Benchmarks: Ames Dhai
09.20 Informed Consent and Confidentiality in Research – Requirements and Challenges: Merryll Vorster
10.00 Tea
10.15 Vulnerabilities, Justice, Group Harms and Research: Ames Dhai
11.15 Case Scenarios (Break-out session)
12.15 LUNCH
13.15 Special Issues: Scientific Misconduct, Authorship, Plagiarism, Conflict of Interest: Chris Szabo
14.15 Practical Exercise - Protocol Review
15.20 Nightmares of an aging Research Ethics Committee Chair – Why Protocols Get Turned Down Peter Cleaton-Jones
16.00 Post-workshop evaluation
16.30 Closure
REGISTRATION FORM

Name: ____________________________________________________________________________________

Address: __________________________________________________________________________________________ __________________________________________________________________________________________

Institution: ________________________________________________________________________________

Telephone numbers: ______________________________________________________________________

Email: ____________________________________________________________________________________

Researcher: ___________________________ Research Ethics Committee Member: _____________________

Student / Registrar: _______ Degree __________________________

Year of Study: _____________________________________________________________________________

Non-student – Affiliation / Company: ____________________________________________________________

Fee Amount: ______________________________________________________________________________

Method of Payment: _________________________________________________________________________

Where payment is by:

1. Internal requisition - use account code: 001.410.8433301.8114102REWS006 TP
2. Cheque: kindly issue in the name of: The University of the Witwatersrand

(Please submit all payments to Anisa Keshav, 10th Floor, Research Office, Senate House)

Dietary Preference: Vegetarian_________Halaal_________Other__________

CLOSING DATE FOR REGISTRATION: FRIDAY 20TH OCTOBER 2006

NB: AS SEATS ARE LIMITED REGISTRATION WILL BE ON A FIRST COME FIRST SERVE BASIS

MAJOR DONATION OF THE ASHER DUBB MEDICAL HISTORY STAMP COLLECTION TO THE ADLER MUSEUM OF MEDICINE

Many of us will remember the marvellous lectures delivered by the late Professor Asher Dubb, illustrated with stamps from his fascinating and comprehensive collection. His collection of stamps relating to the history of medicine, some 20 albums in all, were officially received at a function at the Adler Museum on 20 September 2006. The Dean, Professor Helen Laburn, on behalf of the Faculty and the Board of Control of the Adler Museum, accepted the collection and spoke warmly and eloquently about Asher Dubb and his immense contribution as a clinician, teacher and mentor to generations of students, particularly at the Chris Hani Baragwanath Hospital where he worked for over 40 years.

The collection is a significant resource for the Museum and the Faculty and colleagues are urged to use it to its maximum potential. The stamps cover a huge range of subjects from famous personalities, including doctors and patients, to specialist subjects in the history of medicine, to diseases and eradication campaigns, to important congresses in the health sciences field and a host of others and will make unusual illustrations for lectures and presentations.

The Museum is very grateful to Professor Vivian Fritz for donating this special and valuable collection to the Museum, as well as a custom-made cabinet which houses the collection. The collection will form part of the Museum’s permanent displays and will be used to complement temporary exhibitions which are held on an ongoing basis.
A new African voice for *Rural and Remote Health*

The e-journal *Rural and Remote Health* (RRH) is pleased to announce the launch of an African section of the journal, under the section editorship of Ian Couper, Professor of Rural Health at Wits.

Professor Couper says: ‘This is a landmark for rural health in Africa. We trust it will become an important forum for health workers and researchers in Africa, and those concerned with its immense challenges’.

The journal provides free access to readers after registration, as well as free publication for authors. It is committed both to maintaining its standards as a Medline-listed journal and to supporting aspirant and more experienced authors from Africa to publish their work. It is committed to innovative approaches to enhance information sharing amongst the health care community in rural Africa.

This new section of RRH can be accessed at [www.rrh.org.au](http://www.rrh.org.au) - and select ‘African section’ from the main menu.

Since 2001, under the editorship of Professor Paul Worley, RRH has brought readers worldwide an easily accessible, peer-reviewed, international evidence-base to inform improvement in health service delivery and health status in rural communities.

RRH is a joint publication of the Australian Rural Health Education Network (ARHEN) and the Federation of Rural Australian Medical Educators (FRAME). The African section has been endorsed by the Rural Doctors Association of Southern Africa (RuDASA).

In a recent editorial entitled ‘Health and information in Africa: the role of the journal *Rural and Remote Health*’, Professors Couper and Worley said: ‘The issues of rural and remote health – such as access to care, workforce difficulties, communication challenges, skills sets, teamwork, multidisciplinary functioning, the need for creative solutions and appropriate technology – are the issues of health care in most of Africa, outside of major urban centres’. Read the entire editorial at: [http://rrh.deakin.edu.au/articles/subviewnew.asp?ArticleID=644](http://rrh.deakin.edu.au/articles/subviewnew.asp?ArticleID=644)

And a new voice for ARI

The AIDS Research Initiative has just launched a new website: [http://hermes.wits.ac.za/www/Academic/Research/ARI/](http://hermes.wits.ac.za/www/Academic/Research/ARI/). ARI, co-ordinated by Professor Tracy McLellan, promotes multi-disciplinary research at Wits to develop an effective response to HIV/AIDS. You can join the discussion group on the website.

First International Congress of Respiratory Biology

Professor John Maina writes: ‘The First International Congress of Respiratory Biology was held in the romantic Rhine Valley near Bonn, Germany, in the small spa town of Bad Honnef from 13 to 16 August 2006. Alexander v. Humboldt called Bad Honnef the ‘Venice on the Rhine’. The meeting was organised by Professor SF Perry and hosted by the Department of Zoology, University of Bonn. Altogether, there were 216 registered participants. By today’s standards, it was a very small meeting. Most delegates knew each other or knew each other’s work. The discussions were intimate and very fruitful. Every day, starting with a keynote speech at 09:00, four parallel symposia ran up to mid-afternoon. The rest of the day was reserved to discussions/debates on topical issues, garden parties, and boat rides along the Rhine. The field of respiration was covered from its broadest perspective. The discussions ranged from evolution of the respiratory processes, metabolic demands of molecular oxygen, survey of CO₂, H⁺ and O₂ receptors and pathways, gas binding proteins, coping with hypoxia, respiratory plasticity, free radicals, surfactant, and lung growth. What was most exciting was the high degree of convergence that has occurred between the different areas of respiratory biology. Molecular biology techniques in particular are now widely applied to answer many of the questions ranging from evolutionary novelties to the pathophysiology of the surfactant. The next meeting will be held in 3 years time at the Monterey Peninsula, California (USA).’
FOR THE ARTISTS AMONG US!

ADCO HEALTH PROFESSIONS ART SOCIETY

Dear Colleague

In 1975 a small group of doctors and dentists formed a medical arts society to cater for their medical colleagues who, like themselves, engaged in creating visual art during their recreation time and ‘The Artsculapian Society’ was established. The first exhibition was held at the Wits Medical School Library, Esselen Street, Hillbrow on 31 August 1976.

Each year, an exhibition has been held enabling doctors to demonstrate their creativity. The society caters for artists, sculptors, ceramicists and photographers. Gradually the membership was broadened to involve members of all the health professions.

The Society’s name has evolved over the years from ‘The Artsculapian Society’ to ‘The South African Medical Arts Society’ to ‘The Health Profession Art Society’ which reflects its broad base. We have been very fortunate in finding a sponsor in Adcock Ingram, not only to ensure our own growth, but to link us to the active Western Cape Medical Art Society. We are therefore pleased to announce our new name: ‘Adco Health Professions Art Society (AHPAS)’. We will also, for the first time, be including works of art by students who won prizes at the Adcock Ingram Expressions of Art Competition in our exhibition. We are excited about this as they are our exhibitors of the future!

We cordially extend an invitation to all health professionals to exhibit at our 30th exhibition which will open on 8 November 2006 at the Adler Museum of Medicine at 18:00.

Kindest regards

Geoff Melman: Chairperson AHPAS

- The Society is open to all doctors, dentists, pharmacists, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, nurses and all other members of the health profession. If there is any doubt about your eligibility, please contact Geoff Melman at 011 802 4913.
- The exhibition will be held in the Adler Museum of Medicine.
- The exhibition will be opened on Wednesday 8 November 2006 at 18:00 and will run until Friday 24 November 2006.
- Each member may exhibit up to three works of art (space permitting).
- An entrance fee of R20.00 per item is payable when delivering your work(s) of art. This money will be donated to a charity.
- Exhibitors will be able to sell their works of art. The Museum will arrange to have a catalogue of the prices for interested parties. A 20% commission will be levied on all sales and this will also be donated to charity.
- Works of art should be delivered to the Adler Museum by Monday 6 November 2006 and collected from the Museum by Monday 27 November 2006.
- The Museum’s contact details are: telephone number is 011 717 2081; email curator@health.wits.ac.za for any enquiries.
APPLICATION FORM

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Dates to diarise: October/November/December 2006

20 October: Registration closes for the workshop: Conducting Research Responsibly

25 October: Lecture by Dr Hillel D Brause entitled: ‘Reflections on South African Medical Ethics’. 13:00 to 14:00 in Lecture Theatre 2, 5th Floor, Medical School.

3 November: Deadline for entry forms for the ADCO Health Professions Art Society Exhibition

6 November: Applications close for the 2006 Research Prize Competition

8 November: Workshop: Conducting research responsibly

22 November: AJ Orenstein Memorial lecture to be delivered by Professor Michael Kew entitled: ‘Cancer of the liver can be prevented: the first anti-cancer vaccine’ (1 CPD point): invitation will appear in November issue

1 December: Faculty Honours celebration: invitation will appear in November issue

How to contact the editors: Telephone and fax: 717 2081

Email: curator@health.wits.ac.za

Please email us anything you would like us to include and we will help you publicise it. We will publish in the middle of each month where possible. Please let us have your news as soon as it is available. Your participation will ensure the success of this newsletter.

Next issue: November 2006