

Monday Paper

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Cast of a thousand (and three hundred) to graduate this week

COMMERCE

June 2012

Diplomas & certificates	237
Bachelors	131
Honours	49
Master's	57
MBA	182
Doctoral	5
TOTAL	661

ENGINEERING & THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

June 2012

Diplomas	3
Bachelors	25
Honours	4
Master's	77
Doctoral	3
TOTAL	112

HEALTH SCIENCES

June 2012

Diplomas	34
Bachelors	6
Honours	0
Master's	56
Doctoral	10
TOTAL	106

HUMANITIES

June 2012

Diplomas & certificates	20
Bachelors	53
Honours	40
Master's	116
Doctoral	12
TOTAL	241

SCIENCE

June 2012

Diplomas	0
Bachelors	39
Honours	3
Master's	59
Doctoral	12
TOTAL	113

LAW

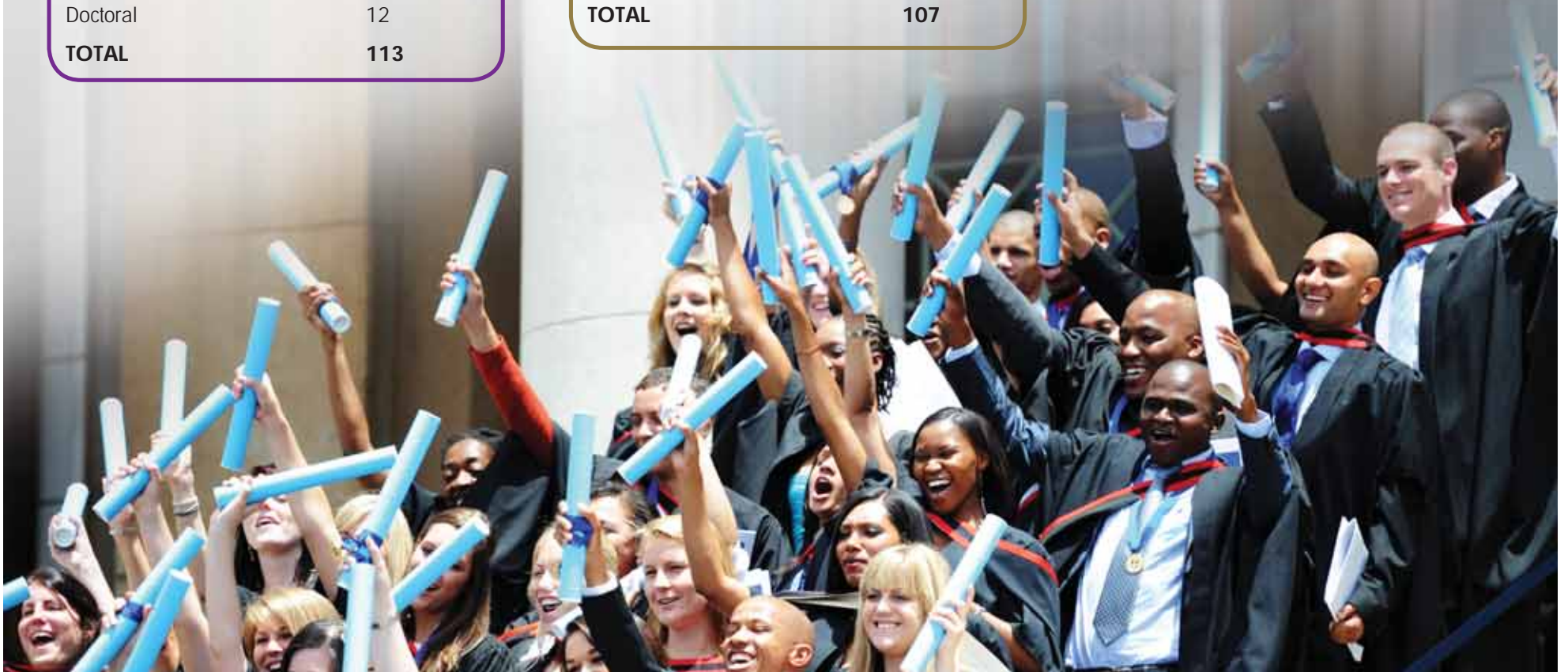
June 2012

Diplomas	10
Bachelors	22
Master's	73
Doctoral	2
TOTAL	107

It may not have the epic scale of its bigger December sibling, but the June graduation is no less momentous and memorable for the many students who have wrapped up their studies and will now glide, scamper or ascend gingerly up the steps to the platform in Jameson Hall. Some 1,340* students will receive their diplomas, certificates or degrees over a total of three graduation ceremonies to be held on 7 and 8 June. This is slightly up from the 1,336 students who graduated in June 2011 and the 1,293 of June 2010. Here's a breakdown of graduates per faculty. Monday Paper extends its congratulations to all.

*The latest number we had available on going to print. (And we thank, again, the often unsung heroes of the Academic Administration section of the Office of the Registrar, who so patiently take our calls; and labour, amid many more pressing pressures, to provide us with these numbers.)

Read the fascinating stories of some of our graduates - just a handful - on pages 5 to 8.



Into the stream

Can't make it to grad? Well, why not watch it all online? For the first time, UCT will stream – live – the three June graduation ceremonies, at www.uct.ac.za/students/graduation/. Viewers will need the latest version of Adobe Flash (<http://get.adobe.com/flashplayer/>) to view the live feed.



Right or wrong: Prof Bernhard Weiss suggested that a little humility is not always a bad thing when deciding which view is correct and which is not. (Download the podcast on <http://www.uct.ac.za/news/lectures/inaugural/2012/>)

‘Humble Chauvinism’ helps

“It is unwise to be too sure of one’s own wisdom” is one of those useful Mahatma Gandhi-isms quickly dug up after a half-decent Google search.

But that little truth was also the premise of the inaugural lecture, delivered in May, of Professor Bernhard Weiss of the Department of Philosophy. Titled *Disagreement: Its epistemic significance*, Weiss’ lecture started off, as any good philosophy talk should, with a problem.

The problem is this: a patient goes to see two doctors – Dr X and Dr Y – about a condition, and the two come to two very different diagnoses. The patient clearly has no reason to prefer either doctor’s verdict to the other.

But why should the doctors differ? It would seem that the only reason each doctor could have to stick with her own verdict is that it is hers. But that’s “sheer chauvinism”, said Weiss.

Given that, surely the rational step for each doctor is to reserve judgement on the matter.

“However, the consequences of this concessive position – let’s call it ‘Moderation’ – are surely inadmissible,” proposed Weiss.

For one thing, no one would ever have grounds to hold an opinion in controversial areas – for example, in philosophy.

“Almost every philosophical claim will be disputed by equally able and equally well-informed enquirers,” he said.

So, in the end, said Weiss, ‘Moderation’ would only lead to “a horrible and acute intellectual cramp”.

On the other hand, sticking resolutely to one’s own view at the expense of another’s – when there is no reason to assume that that person is wrong – would not just be resolute, but “sheer bloody-mindedness”.

Weiss proposed a solution, which he termed ‘Humble Chauvinism’.

It’s a view that takes on the best of both

worlds – a little moderation, and a little chauvinism.

“So we want some way to value our own views as in some sense privileged – we want to be chauvinists,” Weiss explained. “But we want that to be tempered by the counter-evidence provided by opposing views – we want to be humble in our chauvinism.”

This middle way, he went on, involves re-evaluating one’s confidence in one’s own belief. The contrary view of Dr X should not require Dr Y to give up her view, but at least to reappraise her confidence in its truth.

“So the suggestion is this: the evidence of others’ judgements (and one’s own) is not thrown into the pot of evidence and then used from a fresh perspective; rather, that evidence is used in forming a sense of one’s own (and of others’) reliability, which is then used in re-evaluating one’s confidence in the original assessment of the original evidence.”

Moreover, this way of incorporating the evidence of others’ judgements was motivated as appropriate when one is an engaged enquirer rather than a mere information-seeker, said Weiss.

Finally, he used his concept of ‘Humble Chauvinism’ to reflect on academic enquiry. Typically, academics are accorded some freedom of enquiry, but only in a “context of academic structures which institute elaborate systems of authority”.

As engaged enquirers, Weiss proposed, academics should be “immune to a certain kind of deference embodied in ‘Moderate’ epistemology”.

On the other hand, he said, as part of the enterprise of enquiry they will be involved in the business of appraising the reliability of enquirers. When institutionalised, this would require exercising an authority over their disciplines and, in the process, assuming a role as custodians of an intellectual heritage.

HIV: a cocktail of challenges

There’s been talk of ‘HIV fatigue’, of a public grown tired of statistics and stories and politics around the disease.

But as Professor Carolyn Williamson (head of the Division of Medical Virology in UCT’s Institute for Infectious Diseases and Molecular Medicine and the National Health Laboratory Service) illustrated in her inaugural lecture in May, HIV still makes for gripping listening.

In her lecture, *HIV: Surviving under immense pressure*, Williamson took the audience on a journey through what she termed “the greatest viral epidemic of the current time”.

Firstly, she tracked the origins and the spread of the virus in South Africa. She also talked of the “pressures” she and her team of researchers have encountered in their 20 years of research into HIV.

These included political worries, such as when former President Thabo Mbeki’s government appointed a panel to seek “other solutions” – while the rest of the world was celebrating the discovery of new drugs that could treat HIV, and evidence was surfacing that mother-to-child transmissions could be either curbed or prevented through the use of those drugs.

Williamson was part of that presidential panel, and described the time as “one of the darkest periods of recent South African history”.

“It was a bizarre experience,” she recalled. “It was like living in an alternative universe, and one that had extreme repercussions for the country.”

She reported that it was subsequently estimated that nearly one third of a million people died as a result of delays in rolling out anti-retroviral therapy.

There were pressures in the laboratory, too, as scientists struggled to find a vaccine that everybody seemed to be expecting imminently.

Williamson described HIV as her “true

passion in life”, particularly her attempts to understand the progression from infection to full-blown disease, and using this work to help develop an effective vaccine against the virus.

Questions arose, about whether that progression was the same in HIV-positive people in Africa as it was among those in Europe; how people control the virus; and why people progress at different rates.

The findings were complicated, she said.

For instance, a study in KwaZulu-Natal by the Centre for the AIDS Programme of Research in South Africa found that roughly 25% of HIV-positive people would need therapy within a year of their infection, based on current guidelines. About 14% of the others – so-called ‘HIV controllers’ – were able to control their virus to low levels, thus extending their life expectancy.

The individual’s genes and immune system are important to the control of HIV, said Williamson.

“If the virus escapes from the immune system, it’s bad news; but if it escapes in a region that affects viral fitness, or you have a good immune response which prevents it from escaping, then the person is better off.”

But despite the many advances, there is still a vast amount to be learnt about HIV and AIDS, said Williamson.

“The truth is, despite 20 years of intense research, we don’t understand all the reasons why people are slow or fast progressors. That is an area for further study.”

To Williamson’s mind, vaccines are the best weapon to control HIV, she said in closing.

One candidate vaccine, the locally-developed DNA/MVA vaccine, made up of a prime vaccine followed by a booster vaccine, is currently on trials both in South Africa and in the US.

The story continues...



Epic story: The fight against HIV has taken many twists and turns, said Prof Carolyn Williamson (Download the podcast on <http://www.uct.ac.za/news/lectures/inaugural/2012/>)

Green Light for 39 projects

The Vice-Chancellor's Strategic Fund has become, in quick time, one of the most sought-after sources of research funding at UCT. Recently, 39 projects got the nod for funding for 2012. Some of these proposals received awards from the Fund for the first time, while for others it is the second or third instalment of approved funding. Here's the list:

Proposal Title	Contact	
Afropolitanism and internationalisation	Prof Ari Sitas	●
Centre for African Origins	Prof Judith Sealy	●
Citizen Scientists: Ambassadors for biodiversity	Prof Les Underhill	●
Climate change, climate justice and behavioural responses to climate risk, Environmental Policy Research Unit	Dr Martine Visser	●
Climate Smart capacity for climate services	Prof Bruce Hewitson	●
Clinical scholars programme	Prof Bongani Mayosi	●
Developing leadership for disability inclusion in social policy processes	Assoc Prof Theresa Lorenzo	●
Digital repositories project	Dr Colin Tredoux	●
Diversity literacy capping course	Assoc Prof Melissa Steyn	●
Field trip for Xhosa Intensive B students	Adjunct Prof Tessa Dowling	●
Global Citizenship, Leadership and Social Justice Project	Dr Janice McMillan	●
Institute for Comparative African Law	Prof Hanri Mostert	●
Khayelitsha 100-Up Project	Dr Jon Clark	●
Knowledge Co-Op	Prof Crain Soudien and Prof Danie Visser	●
Marine multiscale data and models	Prof John Field	●
Memories of apartheid	Renate Meyer	●
Merging sci, hum and indigenous knowledge systems in Africa w/innovative and sustainable biodiversity exploration for human health	Assoc Prof David Gammon	●
On-line version of Honours/Master's in Teaching French as a Foreign Language	Dr Vanessa Everson	●
PG Student Support	Linda Vranas	●
Physiotherapy collaboration in Rwanda	Prof Jennifer Jelsma	●
Poverty and Inequality Initiative	Emer Prof Francis Wilson	●
ProVC Climate Change	Prof Mark New	●
Raising the platform higher for research on social well-being in South African and in the rest of Africa	Assoc Prof Martin Wittenberg	●
Research on sustainable enterprise in emergent economies	Assoc Prof Ralph Hamann	●
Safety And Violence Initiative	Prof Crain Soudien	●
School of African and Gender Studies, Anthropology and Linguistics	Prof Paula Ensor	●
Schools Improvement Initiative	Dr Jonathan Clark	●
Specific Pathogen Free Unit	Prof Karen Barnes	●
Student Development Programme	Dr Ian Mackintosh	●
Studies of risk, uncertainty and the costs of waiting in the dynamics of African poverty and development (Proposal 1)	Research Unit in Behavioural Economics and Neuroeconomics (RUBEN)	●
Studies of risk, uncertainty and the costs of waiting in the dynamics of African poverty and development (Proposal 2)	RUBEN, and others	●
Summer undergraduate research experience	Assoc Prof Hussein Suleman, Assoc Prof James Gain and Dr Michelle Kuttel	●
Technology deployment for sustainable urban development	Prof Francis Petersen, Assoc Prof Harro von Blotnitz	●
Training in quant analysis, Centre for Social Science Research Summer School	Prof Jeremy Seekings	●
Training in quantitative research methods	Prof Robert Mattes	●
UCT Web Renewal Project	Sakkie Janse van Rensburg	●
Unit for Digital Forensics Research	Adrie Stander	●
University Research Committee incentive funding	Dr Marilet Sienaert	●

Amount awarded in 2012

Legend

- 0 to R499,999
- R500,000 to R999,999
- R1 million and more

It's in my DNA, Figaji says

If you'd asked a young Anthony Figaji what he wanted to be when he grew up, it's unlikely he would have said 'a paediatric neurosurgeon'. Instead, he says, he dreamed of becoming a break dancer, or a gymnast, a trapeze artist, a professional athlete – even a musician.

But what must be a loss for the big top and the world's dance floors was neurosurgery's gain, as the dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences, Professor Marian Jacobs, put it at Professor Figaji's inaugural lecture on 30 May.

Today, some career adjustments later, Figaji says that neurosurgery is in his DNA. "I'm hardwired that way."

Figaji, who lectures in the Division of Neurosurgery, is a paediatric neurosurgeon, the head of paediatric neurosurgery at the Red Cross War Memorial Children's Hospital, and a prolific researcher to boot. With his recent *ad hominem* promotion, he became UCT's first professor of paediatric neurosurgery, and the first *ad hominem* promotion to full professor in the Division's history.

In his words, the lecture – titled *Brain/Child. Interrupted* – marked a "long journey" that started with his childhood in Woodstock during apartheid.

"Being schooled at Harold Cressy High School in the turbulent 1980s shaped my thinking," he said. "I think I underestimated how much this affected me and how it spilled over into my medical career. I feel very strongly that the quality of care for children should never be determined by the amount of money their parents make, or whether they were born in Cape Town or New York."

It's a rule he's extended to public hospitals.

"Working in the state sector should never be an excuse to deliver a poorer quality of care either. Academic institutions should be places where the boundaries can be extended; where highly specialised services not available in the private sector can be offered. This has been our goal."

The burden of injury in South Africa, he explained, is massive – injury accounts for the highest burden of disease in Cape Town when measured as causes of premature mortality, even higher than HIV/AIDS – yet there is very little published on head trauma, which accounts for the majority of trauma-related death and disability in South Africa.

To add insult to injury, it's almost impossible to get funding in South Africa for research into head trauma, which contributes to the historically poor standing of South Africa in neurotrauma research.

"We have been poor at treating head trauma – especially given the fact that due to our high trauma load, we should be leading the field globally."

This may have influenced previous injury-preventative strategies to some extent.

"Of course prevention is most important, but our previous preventative strategies have not substantially reduced our trauma load. Head trauma remains a massive and under-recognised problem – a forgotten, or silent, epidemic; we need to be better in treating it."

But producing tide-turning research will require extensive out-of-



Headway: Prof Anthony Figaji and his colleagues have tried to take paediatric neurosurgery in South Africa to new heights. (Download the podcast on <http://www.uct.ac.za/news/lectures/inaugural/2012/>)

the-box thinking; thinking that cannot rely only on cookie-cutter control tests.

"With head injuries there is a huge amount of heterogeneity."

This, he said, calls for treatment that is targeted.

It's what he and the neurosurgery team do at Groote Schuur and Red Cross. How the body reacts to the primary head injury, depends on its regulatory systems – which may be disrupted – and various biochemical, inflammatory and physiological consequences that then go on to injure the brain further.

This approach, he added, is also employed when treating tuberculous meningitis, a disease that progressively strangles the brain's vessels, and other conditions that can cause acute coma. Brain injury is an enormously complex process, and cannot be treated in simple ways. Measuring pressure, oxygenation, cerebral blood flow and metabolism in the brain gives a better insight into what's happening inside it; which, in turn, makes it possible to target treatment appropriately.

"We need a much more comprehensive understanding of what happens in the brain."

This monitoring maxim applies

especially to the surgery of tumours in risky areas of the brain and spinal cord, Figaji explained. Until now, neurosurgeons have had "no indication of whether you've done damage until the patient wakes up".

To counteract this, Figaji employs a method called intra-operative neurophysiological monitoring, which, in very lay terms, reduces the body's sensory and motor systems to basic electrical principles that can be monitored continuously during surgery.

The method involves attaching electrical nodes to a patient's face and body to continuously monitor the electrical signals in the nervous system. So, should the surgeons hit a spot or move the head in a way that may potentially injure these nerve fibres, they can adjust their surgery without having done any permanent damage.

It's no wonder that Figaji is already internationally recognised for the management of acute brain injury in children, and that his inaugural lecture marked a significant goalpost in his career.

But research and titles aside, to the children Figaji treats he will be remembered mainly as the doctor who put them back together again. ■

Africa Month wrap

UCT's Celebrating Africa Month may have headed down the home straight in the second half of May, but its momentum never flagged. Here we condense in photographs the talks, launches, sharing and exhibitions that made up the latter end of the month-long commemoration.

On International Museum Day (this year marked on 18 May) Mary van Blommestein, curator at the Irma Stern Museum, organised a tour of artworks – “with a specific reference to African artwork” – found on the UCT campuses.



An exhibition highlighting UCT's involvement with the rest of the continent drew many visitors.

On 15 May, the Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment hosted Dr Matloteng Matlou, chief executive officer of the Africa Institute of South Africa, who spoke on the African diaspora and the role its members can still play on the continent.



Also on 21 May, Dr Pippa Haarhoff of Iziko Museums of Cape Town, and more topically, the West Coast Fossil Park, gave an overview of the famed fossil site in Langebaan.



On 21 May, Prof Francis Nyamnjoh, head of social anthropology in the new School of Gender and African Studies, Anthropology and Linguistics, spoke about how social transformation in Africa is associated with cellphones.

Pliers, wire-cutters and steely-eyed determination were out in force on 22 May as staff got to grips with African beading techniques at a workshop jointly hosted by the International Academic Programmes Office (IAPO) and the Human Resources Department.



African Culture, Human Rights and the Constitution was the topic disputed at a panel discussion on 24 May. The marquee event of the month, the discussion involved panellists Prof Salvatore Mancuso, Dr Sindiso Mnisi-Weeks, Prof Pitika Ntuli, Prof Kwesi Prah and Prof Tom Zwart, and was chaired by deputy vice-chancellor Prof Thandabantu Nhlapo.



Africa Month served as a backdrop for the launch of the *Curate Africa* project, headed by Siona O'Connell and forming part of UCT's Centre for Curating the Archive. *Curate Africa* aims to create a collection of thousands of photographs, taken by people across Africa, which capture everyday life on the continent.



At a seminar on 16 May at All Africa House – the residence set aside for hosting visiting scholars from other parts of Africa – residents and other participants revealed how their initial fears about UCT turned into pleasant surprise after their arrival.



The Africa Month photography and fancy dress competitions drew to a close at a function after the panel discussion. Prof Thandabantu Nhlapo presented the awards to the fancy dress winners – (from left) Vuyokazi Mdingi (first place), Nkateko Mnisi (second) and Dr Charles Wiysonge (third).



The closing of Africa Month was a memorable occasion.

Honorary docs for two

As part of the mid-year graduation, literary icon Zakes Mda and medical pioneer Professor David Sanders will receive honorary doctorates on Friday, 8 June. Mda and Sanders will be the first of eight recipients to be so honoured by UCT in 2012, the remaining six to receive their degrees in December



An acclaimed novelist, poet, playwright, painter, composer and filmmaker, **Zakes Mda** will receive an honorary Doctorate in Literature (DLitt). Mda, who has distinguished himself as a writer and continues to have a significant impact as a commentator and thought leader, was born in the Eastern Cape in 1948. He spent his early childhood in Soweto, but left the country in 1963 – when his father went into exile – at age 14, returning only after three decades in exile. Over this period away from South Africa he would finish his first play, *We Shall Sing for the Fatherland*, which in 1978 won the first Amstel Playwright of the Year Award. *Fatherland* and other works allowed Mda to complete a master's degree in theatre at Ohio University, and later – upon his return to South Africa – a PhD degree from UCT in 1990. His works focus on South African politics after the fall of apartheid. He has earned countless accolades, and his 2004 novel, *The Madonna of Excelsior*, was named as one of the Top Ten South African Books Published in the Decade of Democracy. Today, Mda commutes between South Africa and the US, where he works as a professor of creative writing at Ohio University.

Public-health icon **Professor David Sanders** will be awarded an honorary Doctor of Science in Medicine. His work has contributed to the understanding of primary health care as a framework for health and development, and to improvements in child health through research, teaching and training, and policy advocacy and service development. Born in 1945, David Sanders trained as a medical doctor in Zimbabwe. He qualified in paediatrics and public health in the UK and returned to Zimbabwe in 1980, working in paediatrics and district health and heading the Department of Community Medicine at the University of Zimbabwe. He later became the founding head of the School of Public Health at the University of the Western Cape, where he established the first multi-disciplinary master's programme of its kind. He has pioneered thinking on the implementation of the World Health Organisation's model of primary health care. The importance of his work has been recognised by policymakers and implementers, both internationally and locally. He is often called upon to contribute to analysis and policy development by a range of both state and civil society actors, including the World Health Organisation, UNICEF, Oxfam, Save the Children, the national and provincial departments of health, and labour organisations. ■



Creative research careers to be fêted at grad



Landscapes: Prof Michael Godby's The Lie of the Land – Representations of the South African landscape, has won him a Creative Works Award.

At graduation this week, UCT will confer two Creative Works Awards – for their influential, creative, and scholarly works – on Emeritus Professor of History of Art Michael Godby and artist Professor Gavin Younge.

Godby, of the Michaelis School of Fine Art, will receive the award for *The Lie of the Land – Representations of the South African landscape*, an exhibition he curated in 2010 and 2011.

The project included scholarly essays on literary, cultural, political and environmental aspects of the South African landscape. It was carefully designed to showcase and celebrate a vigorous tradition of South African art, not only engaging with the role of land through South African history, but also clarifying the changing stylistic strategies for representing land at different points in South Africa's history.

Speaking about the award, Godby said that it “signals the university's recognition that scholarly work with historical material can indeed be creative; and it will, hopefully, lend support to further curating projects I have in the pipeline”.

Professor of sculpture at the Michaelis School of Fine Art, Younge will receive the award for his 2011 solo exhibition *Cheval de Bataille*, a project commissioned by the French Monuments Council and which was housed in the Forteresse de Salses, a fortress in France that has run a vigorous contemporary art programme for many years.

“The award is the culmination of a productive period in my creative research career,” said Younge. “I am also pleased to share the award with my distinguished friend and colleague Michael Godby.” ■



French connection: Prof Gavin Younge won a Creative Works Award for his exhibition Cheval de Bataille.

2013 TB Davie Memorial Lecture: Call for nominations

The Academic Freedom Committee invites UCT staff and students to submit nominations for the 2013 TB Davie Memorial Lecture. The TB Davie Memorial Lecture is an important event in UCT's calendar, and an opportunity to affirm and clarify the values of academic freedom in our contemporary context, and stimulate debate on issues related to the university.

Nominations should not exceed three pages and should include a motivation for the nomination. Nominations should be submitted via email to Denise Benjamin (denise.benjamin@uct.ac.za), or posted to Room 141, Bremner Building, Lower Campus, UCT, on or before Monday 11 June 2012.



Agents of change: Dr Zameer Brey and his wife Ayesha Rawoot will graduate together this week.

Think lean in transforming healthcare, says graduate

His career path says it all – Dr Zameer Brey is passionate about and committed to improving public health care in South Africa.

But to effect real change in the embattled sector, Brey found that he needed solid skills and a broad experience base to work from. After laying a foundation with a degree in medicine he went on to pursue an MBA, and this week he adds another string to his bow when he graduates with a PhD in health systems, all from UCT.

It will be a family affair, to boot. His wife, Ayesha Rawoot, is graduating with a postgraduate diploma in business administration, and collectively Brey's family holds a dozen degrees from UCT to date.

Brey's PhD thesis is titled *Towards Building a Theory of Lean Implementation in Health Care*.

The Lean model is derived from the famed Toyota Production System (of the Japanese car company), and has been applied predominantly to the manufacturing industry.

Recently some have employed it in health care processes, and the focus, says Brey, is on improving patients' experiences, reducing waste and decreasing staff frustration.

It is well known that South Africa spends massive amounts of money on health care, but the outcomes are very poor. Brey, a chief operations officer at the South African Tuberculosis Vaccine Initiative, among other leadership positions, believes that Lean is one of the management systems that can be used to bridge the divide between massive spending and poor outcomes.

During his research, he implemented and documented a Lean process at five units in the public health system, and found the results encouraging.

For instance, the average waiting time in an outpatient pharmacy was reduced from four hours to 55 minutes in just four months, with no additional resources. Staff members still believed they could do better, and there were days when a 25-minute waiting period was recorded – almost on par with the private sector.

This speaks to a direct improvement in patient quality of care and satisfaction, Brey noted.

Most recently, a National Department of Health initiative, in which 54 projects at 18 hospitals around the country took part, involved a larger-scale Lean implementation.

"Those results certainly show that the answer is not only more resources, but better management of resources, too," Brey says.

It will take some doing, though, before Lean can be implemented full scale, he adds.

It requires buy-in from middle management, a supportive environment for change, employee recognition for improvements, and empowering employees with the tools for change, Brey suggested.

"A deep understanding of the health care system, coupled with strong training and expertise in management, can yield results like this across the system. I am confident that Lean will be part of a national plan to improve quality of health care in South Africa." ■

It's a gut feeling



Caution ahead: Clinton Moodley's doctoral work suggests that prudence should be applied in the use of probiotics, as certain stomach bacteria can build up resistance to drugs.

A hardy bacterium found naturally in the gut – and usually considered quite useful – has developed or recruited mechanisms which have made it resistant to certain drugs, says a UCT PhD graduand.

As a gut bacterium, *Bifidobacterium longum* plays a host of useful roles, including boosting the immune system, degrading certain toxic compounds and repelling certain disease-causing bacteria in the gut, explains Clinton Moodley, who graduates this week with a PhD from the Department of Molecular and Cell Biology. *B. longum* is therefore much-beloved by the pharmaceutical industry, which uses it as a probiotic supplement (so called because these live organisms are thought to be beneficial to the host organism); while the food industry harnesses it as a food additive in yoghurts and the like.

The problem is that the hosts (human and animal) have been exposed to antibiotics over their lifetimes. To survive those antibiotic doses, *B. longum* has developed or recruited drug-resistance genes, in the end becoming resistant to many of these antimicrobial compounds.

"This provides these bacteria with a competitive advantage during periods where the host is treated with antibiotics for bacterial infections,

since these beneficial bacteria are able to survive and also continue conferring their health benefits at times when they would be most needed," says Moodley, now a medical research scientist at the National Institute of Communicable Diseases at Groote Schuur Hospital.

Adding this bacterium to food or using too many probiotic supplements during antibiotic therapy, thus triggering the expression of such drug-resistance genes, may not be the wisest thing to do, he cautions. Consume the bacteria in large numbers, and there's an increased risk that it could pass on the drug-resistance genes to other bacteria in the gut.

For example, Moodley has found that when these 'ABC-type multidrug efflux genes' – genes involved in mechanisms that are used by cells to expel toxic substances – were expressed in a very close relative to *B. longum*, that bacterium also acquired drug-resistance capabilities.

In his study, Moodley also identified a series of genes that may well be regulating these drug-resistance genes. While they have been studied in other bacteria, Moodley is the first to find these regulatory proteins – which typically regulate other multidrug-resistance genes – in *B. longum*.

But all may not be lost, says Mood-

ley, since *B. longum* can now survive antibiotic treatment, and it is able to continue providing its health benefits during disease. However, feeding more of this bacterium into the gut could pass on the drug resistance to other bacteria.

"Our research merely suggests that caution be exercised when prescribing probiotics, as well as limiting their use in the food industry, since there is a small chance that these genes may be transferred to other bacteria. It may be prudent rather to screen these probiotic cultures for drug-resistance genes, and then select only those which are limited in the scope of their drug resistance."

Moodley's work has also provided insights into the working of the ABC-type multidrug efflux systems mentioned above. These efflux systems are problematic for cancer treatments as they are used by certain cancerous cell lines to pump out chemotherapy drugs, and so become resistant to chemotherapy.

By getting to grips with the mechanisms that bacteria use to build up their drug resistance, it may well become possible to design new antimicrobial compounds that could circumvent or suppress the expression of drug-resistance genes, opening the door to new therapies. ■

Eskom expos inspire young scientists

Lightning doesn't strike twice, they say; unless you're Leonard Molefe.

While doing his master's degree a few years back, Molefe's supervisor resigned, leaving him treading water for six months. However, a year later he was awarded his dissertation with distinction.

More tragically, Molefe was halfway through his PhD studies when his supervisor, the late and much-beloved Associate Professor Kevin Rochford, was killed.

The loss of Rochford hit particularly hard. "It was so painful," Molefe recalled.

But Molefe found solace in two publications he completed with Rochford – part of the preliminary studies that framed his PhD study.

He rallied, and the painful experi-

ence has taught him a few valuable lessons about his own resilience.

"It's one of those things that when I look back, I say, 'I'm a fighter, not a quitter'."

Molefe, a former life sciences educator, graduates this week with a PhD in science education. His groundbreaking research, *A Study of Life Sciences Projects in Science Talent Quest Competitions in the Western Cape, South Africa, with special reference to scientific skills and knowledge*, investigated whether the Eskom Expos for Young Scientists allow participants to develop scientific skills and life sciences knowledge.

As his was an in-depth study, he also explored factors that shaped the students' participation in the expos.

The study comprised five grade 10-11 learners from three schools in



Resilient: Leonard Molefe found that resources, facilities and parents are important in students' success in science education.

the Western Cape. These cases were selected from a pool of learners who

showcased their projects at the two main exhibition venues in the province in 2007.

"They are participating in the Science Expo, but are they meeting requirements stipulated in the life sciences curriculum?" he asked. "Are they able to conduct research projects, do they develop new Life Sciences concepts, and are they able to construct scientific knowledge that is practical for our everyday life and that can solve problems in South Africa?"

Molefe followed the learners who had done well in the competition, one even winning an international contest.

Although the results showed the learners' shortcomings in relation to their performance in regard to certain science process skills, Molefe found

the learners' critical inquiry, reflection, understanding of Life Sciences concepts and processes and their application in society "impressive".

"They were able to plan, to raise questions, to observe, to measure, to interpret data, to communicate scientific information, and to hypothesise."

Molefe noted that support structures were critical for the success of the learners.

Those who did best in the competition came from schools that were well-resourced, they had experienced teachers and science experts, and their parents were involved.

"We often overlook the power of parents in education," Molefe says.

The important thing, he adds, was that the participants loved science and recognised the role of science in their lives and in society in general. ■

Tug of war between medical innovation and colonialism

Even in the colonial-era Southern Rhodesia of the 1930s to 1960s, innovation in community-oriented health care was not unheard of.

But, says Glen Ncube, who graduates this week with a PhD in historical studies (with barely a correction to his thesis from his adjudicators), politics undermined whatever good could come out of that innovation.

For his doctoral studies, Ncube explored a theme that's close to home. Hailing from rural Zimbabwe – he would go on to study and teach at the University of Zimbabwe – he scrutinised what he terms a “unique experiment in community-oriented curative health care” in rural Southern Rhodesia between 1930 and 1960. (One of the reasons he chose to do his PhD at UCT, he says, was because of the track record of his supervisor, Professor Howard Phillips, in the field of socio-medical history.)

Ncube's protagonists included

Irish doctor Dr Robert Askins and Dr James Kennedy, who had attempted to set up rural health care systems in rural Rhodesia akin to what Askins had seen pioneered in Gloucestershire in the UK.

Current interpretations of those early experiments in social health care in Rhodesia typically fall into two camps, explains Ncube. There are those who hail it as pioneering medical innovation; in contrast, others condemn it as decidedly racist and insensitive to the needs of the locals.

Like others, Ncube was looking for a middle ground. “I wanted to see if there was a tension between this bio-medical vanguard on the one hand, and the broader ambitions of the colonial medical system and the colonial state on the other.”

A tug of war there certainly was, Ncube found. Not only more focused than most approaches in place at the time, Askins and Kennedy also tried



Looking back: Glen Ncube describes the tensions between medical innovation and colonialism in rural Rhodesia.

to set the tone for a genuine primary health care system in rural Rhodesia. But even then the better-than-thou colonial agenda would wear away at any advances – local practices and treatments were written off as supersti-

tion, for example, says Ncube. “Obviously medicine continued to invent, it continued to investigate, it continued to conduct trials, and it continued to have some very progressive programmes developed by particular

individuals and particular institutions. But those programmes were, in a way, watered down by the colonial, racist agenda.”

The consequences of those early days would be felt for decades, he says. ■

The eternal question: What keeps humans clocking in?

It's that thing that's confounded managers since someone at Stonehenge decided they needed someone else to move a few rocks around: what motivates people in the workplace?

Jean-Michel Jaquet – his father is French-Swiss, but Jaquet is very South African – wanted to take a decidedly modern look at this question in his doctoral thesis, *A Non-Linear Approach to Modeling Motivation in the Workplace Using Artificial Neural Networks*. For this, Jaquet explains, he employed some principles from a burgeoning discipline known as evolutionary psychology – which holds that evolution has played a role in both our biological and psychological development – and what's known as an artificial neural network (ANN), a mathematical model that is very loosely based on the way



Impulses: In his thesis, Jean-Michel Jaquet – in picture with girlfriend Kelly Gray – explored the factors that keep people motivated in the workplace.

the human brain is believed to function.

The ANN allowed him to flesh out the workings of the human brain, as he

could add a score of variables. These included perceptions of the achievability of a particular goal or perceptions

of personal competence; environmental feedback such as the social affirmation that achievement of a goal would bring; or the degree of novelty someone experiences while pursuing a goal.

“Each would give you some kind of picture of that person,” says Jaquet, who graduates with a PhD in business administration from the Graduate School of Business this week.

Taking a non-linear-systems approach also allowed Jaquet to add levels of complexity to his study and findings that a more linear approach wouldn't allow. “This might mean recognising that people are actually motivated by a whole range of variables – and taking these into account when understanding how to encourage their engagement with their jobs.”

At times his results were as expect-

ed. Those in the creative professions, for example, felt a lack of security in their work or in their ability to control their future. At the same time, they found an intrinsic pleasure in the act of creating, which served as compensation.

On the other hand, there were quite senior business people, Jaquet says, who have all that security and control thanks to their incomes, but have very little satisfaction.

Although, Jaquet cautions, we shouldn't be too quick to paint everyone with the same brush. “Humans are incredibly diverse in our motivations and it would be unlikely to find any two people with the same kind of pattern.”

That's something the Stonehenge managers may have found out as well. ■

Graduate builds world's fastest rapid-compression machine

Mechanical engineering PhD graduate Gavin Evezard singlehandedly built the world's fastest rapid-compression machine, or RCM, a machine that could set the tone for improved fuel combustion in automobile engines.

Evezard, who graduates on 7 June, first explored the concept of a faster RCM in his final undergraduate year; built a prototype for his master's; and completed the real thing for his PhD. The machine investigates what happens when an air/fuel mixture is squeezed very suddenly.

“It reveals a lot about the fuel,” explains Evezard's supervisor, Adjunct Professor Andy Yates, explains. “What happens is that it ‘thinks’ about burning for a moment, starts to burn, stops burning and then explodes. These timescales are crucial to extracting the optimal combustion performance from fuels.”

The automated RCM Evezard built stops a piston that is moving at up to 40km/hr in less than one half of a millisecond (ie one half of a thousandth of a second). That's twenty times faster than a blink of an eye.

The best rapid compression

machines elsewhere in the world are slow by comparison, needing at best two milliseconds to stop a piston.

Speaking from his office at specialised energy operation company Associated Energy Services in Cape Town, Evezard says that for all intents and purposes the machine is ready for use.

“The RCM is typically used in research facilities for fuel characterisation,” he says. “Once fuel characteristics have been established and published, the data can be used for various new and existing combustion devices, normally with the inten-

tion of improving performance and efficiency.”

And even if right now he's not pursuing any further work on the RCM, his study has paved the way for further research at UCT. “There are master's students currently working on the machine to see how hard it can be pushed.”

Currently, piston speeds of 50km/hr have been achieved, with equally impressive deceleration times. As to the limits in terms of maximum piston velocity and minimum deceleration time? Only time will tell. ■



Braking records: Gavin Evezard has built what's considered the world's fastest rapid-compression machine, able to stop a piston at times well below those of any other such machine.



Fieldwork: Terence Suinyuy collects volatile compounds from female cones of *Encephalartos friderici-guilielmi*.

Cycads lead pollinators by the nose

It's not just, um, antsy humans who find the smell of others appealing.

It's long been known, for example, that the cone-shaped fruit of the ancient cycad plant uses smells and heat to attract and repel insect pollinators. The plants heat up and produce a nasty odour that drives pollen-covered insects out of the cones of male cycads, after which female cones attract those selfsame *goggas* with a milder, more alluring odour.

At UCT, Terence Suinyuy, who graduates with a PhD in botany this week, has been examining that ‘mating’ ritual – or “patterns of push-pull interac-

tions”, as botanists call it – and cone odours in 19 local cycads.

Suinyuy, who conducted his study from the South African National Biodiversity Institute, with funding from the Fairchild Tropical Botanical Garden, analysed the chemical composition of these cone odours, and traced the physiological and behavioural responses of the pollinators. His evidence is said to be the strongest yet obtained for a cycad-pollinator interaction.

He also came up with some game-changing findings, notably around some cones' self-heating

mechanisms, or thermogenesis.

“Cone heating did not result in the mass movement away from male cones,” he reports. “As a result, the function of cone thermogenesis remains unknown.”

Equally interestingly, he found that cone odours are more variable than had previously been thought. Also, there were some striking variations in patterns of odour composition.

For example, his work on a plant known as the most common and widespread from that genus in South Africa, *Encephalartos villosus*, suggests that not all cycads from that

same population smell the same.

And his (admittedly limited) sampling from the species *Encephalartos natalensis* (found from the northern borders of the Eastern Cape through most of KwaZulu-Natal) and *Encephalartos laevifolius* (found in KwaZulu-Natal and Nelspruit) also suggests that there may be geographical differences in odour between populations.

These features need to be explored further, says Suinyuy. Which means he and other botanists will have to keep their noses to the grindstone for some time still. ■

Professor David Cooper's recent book, *The University in Development*, highlighted the need for universities' research agendas to include a strong social development component. UCT students are taking that to heart.

Rissa Niyobuhungiro, who graduates from UCT this week with a master's degree in chemical engineering, focused her research on something that would literally benefit the women and men on the street.

Since the 1930s, chromated copper arsenate (CCA) has, globally, been one of the most popular chemicals used for the preservation of timber, aiding weather-resistance and keeping decay fungi and wood-attacking insects at bay.

But what happens when that timber is converted from furniture to fuel source? Today, for example, small businesses offering wood-fired culinary delights are a common sight alongside South African streets, and a significant number use CCA-treated wood to fuel their fires.

And as Niyobuhungiro's dissertation, titled *Investigation of CCA-Treated Wood in Informal Caterers*, has suggested, the smoke from fires fuelled by such wood poses a significant risk to people and the environ-

Up in smoke



On fire: After struggling to settle in at UCT, Rissa Niyobuhungiro has gone on to conduct research that could save lives.

ment at large.

"[My research] has really opened

my eyes to the environmental impacts

of burning treated wood and the asso-

ciated health hazards to those exposed to the smoke – who, unfortunately,

are poor urban dwellers," she argues.

Niyobuhungiro arrived at UCT from Rwanda in 2010 via a scholarship from the Organisation for Women in Science in the Developing World; this after completing a bachelor of science in education at the Kigali Institute of Education. With English not her first or even her second language, she found the going tough at first.

She credits her supervisor, Associate Professor Harro von Blottnitz, and other colleagues at the university with helping her get into her stride.

And what a stride that was.

One of her dissertation's examiners reported that "the candidate has produced an excellent body of knowledge on an important topic; the dangers of CCA used as a preservative chemical".

Niyobuhungiro describes her impending graduation as a "dream come true", and – thankfully for the many who draw their livelihoods from street catering businesses – is currently planning her assault on a PhD at UCT.

She shared her winning secret: "I have learnt that all one needs for a victory is to focus and evaluate one's objectives, remain humble, pray, and draw support from friends." ■

The engineer with corrosion-resistant guts

Ntseuoa Motsieloa's story is one that has become all the more familiar as the profiles of UCT students change.

His story began in the rural areas of Maseru in Lesotho, herding his father's cattle, while attending St Benedict's Primary School in the small village of Ha Khanyetsi.

His parents, Motsieloa says, "loved education". His own love for bridges, dams, skyscrapers – he read about them insatiably at the United Nations Library in Maseru – inspired him at school, and he finished top of his class at St Joseph's High School in Maseru. He still wasn't ready for UCT, however.

School-leaving certificates in Lesotho are rated as O-level, and are not sufficient for direct entrance into UCT. Far from being discouraged, Motsieloa enrolled for a Bachelor of Science degree in physics and computer science at the National University of Lesotho.

Inspired by the story of astronomer Dr Thebe Medupe – "reading about his success journey despite poverty inspired me, and I also wanted to go to UCT, like he did" – he burnt the midnight oil. After finishing top of his class at the end of his first year, he applied (successfully) to study civil engineering at UCT in 2005.

Motsieloa graduated with a first-class pass in 2009, with his thesis rated the second-best in its category (cement and concrete materials).



Long road: It took a while for Ntseuoa Motsieloa to get to UCT, but he's made good use of his time here.

In 2010, he was granted a scholarship from the Concrete and Cement Institute to register for a master's degree in concrete materials and structural engineering at UCT.

Two-and-a-half years of work into the resistance of sewer-pipe concrete to acid later, he will graduate this June with a degree that he believes will make a valuable contribution to producing acid-resistant sewer pipes.

The topic is relevant both in South Africa and globally, he says.

"The consequences of the structural failure of these pipes are destructive; the closure of roads for repair and rehabilitation causes havoc, and may cost more than the repair itself."

Motsieloa's perseverance, though, may just be stronger than any drainage system he designs in future. ■

Attachment is academic

Trad and Elaine Nogueira-Godsey may just be taking their 'til-death-do-us-part thing a bit too far.

So they're married and live together, right? But they are also scholars in the same discipline, and once shared the same office – which is how they met a few years ago – in UCT's Leslie Social Science building.

In addition, they started their PhD studies under the same supervisor and at the same time. The couple had even planned to graduate together, until work and family commitments necessitated a change in schedule.

Elaine chose to take it slow with her studies and take on more of the domestic chores, while Trad forged ahead with his research into the impacts of religion on economic growth in South Africa.

Now that he's graduating – and is able to pick up some of those chores, we assume – Elaine is able to make headway with her research into eco-feminism in Latin America from a Christian perspective. She hopes to graduate in December.

The Nogueira-Godseys have so much in common that they often struggle to separate home from work and studies.

"Home is actually an extension of the office," says Elaine, a lecturer and researcher in UCT's Department of Religious Studies.

"One minute you are preparing supper, the next you are fixing a paragraph in your thesis while talking about the academic work," adds Trad.



Ever together: Graduand Trad and spouse Elaine Nogueira-Godsey have more in common than most couples.

Naturally, with all that common ground, the couple has plenty to debate. But, says Trad, they respect, support and understand each other's work.

And the bottom line, they agree, is that they enjoy each other's company all the time. ■



On her radar: Stacey Rukezo graduates with a master's in electrical engineering

No blips on Rukezo's radar

You can run, but you can't hide. At least not when UCT's soon-to-be master's graduate Stacey Rukezo is looking for you.

The electrical engineering student built a radar transceiver that was, in part, derived from a project originally undertaken by UCT's Radar Remote Sensing Group from 2004 to 2007. Called the South African Synthetic Aperture Radar II (SASAR II), that project was designed as a 'flying laboratory' that could provide radar images of the earth's surface.

SASAR II was later abandoned,

but has regained momentum with plans by the South African Space Agency to launch a South African radar satellite within the next decade.

Rukezo's project is a modified, scaled-down version of the SASAR II radar, but uses some of the hardware from that project for a new line of research, says the Zimbabwean engineer. Her transceiver is intended as a prototype for a 'network radar', which uses multiple receivers scattered over a large area.

"This type of radar provides improved detection of moving targets,

such as drug and contraband smugglers in small aircraft, and also poachers operating off the coastline," she explains.

A paper on her project, co-authored by herself, her supervisor Professor Mike Ings and Dr Amit Mishra, was presented by Mishra at the International Radar Symposium in Warsaw, Poland.

Rukezo could not attend because of work commitments in Germany, where she is currently doing a STEP (Students' Experience Programme) internship in the department of environ-

ment perception at Daimler AG.

"This is broadening my understanding of radar and giving me much-needed practical experience," she says.

While she is currently gaining invaluable industry experience, Rukezo hopes to re-enter the academic fraternity to pursue a PhD sooner rather than later. "I feel I still have so much to learn, and the academic environment is where I can get the best exposure," she says.

She plans eventually to open a business that uses radar in commercial applications. ■

Double whammy for schools initiative

The new Schools Improvement Initiative (SII) (sii.uct.ac.za) marked two red-letter occasions in quick succession in May – its official launch, and a day later its inaugural series of seminars. On 28 May, the initiative – established by vice-chancellor Dr Max Price to address a key national concern – hosted its formal launch at the Centre of Science & Technology (COSAT) in Khayelitsha. “Through this initiative the university is committing itself to playing a more deliberate role in engaging practically, developmentally and critically with the challenges of schooling in this country,” said SII director and former COSAT principal, Dr Jonathan Clark. Assoc Prof Roshan Galvaan, Pam Gretschel, and Liesl Peters of the Division of Occupational Therapy were the speakers at the SII’s first seminar, which was attended by educators, principals and representatives from the private sector. ■



Forum celebrates and ponders innovation

UCT’s Innovation Forum was launched in April, with its maiden event attended by inventors and innovation stakeholders from across the university.

These fora will provide the opportunity for the dissemination of information and the hosting of debate, as a ‘framework’ for a UCT innovation strategy is developed.

Hosted by deputy vice-chancellor responsible for research, Professor Danie Visser, the event saw a number of UCT innovations exhibited together in one place for the first time.

The invited speaker, alumnus Dr Richard Gordon, a commercialisation specialist at the Technology Innovation Agency, mentioned that when looking at university rankings, often the publication and research activities of institutions

are similar. It’s the commercialisation of research or innovation activity that is emerging as the key differentiator – something that has recently led to Cal Tech ousting Harvard from its top university ranking.

He is convinced that South Africa has the ability to be successful at innovation and entrepreneurship, said Gordon, but there’s a mindset change that needs to happen. “UCT should have its destiny in its own hands, with access to its own funding for innovation – one cannot rely only on the government or the venture capital industry.”

“It’s understood that it’s not for every academic,” commented Professor Francis Petersen, dean of the Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment and chair of the university’s Innovation Working



Pushing ahead: The Innovation Forum is a celebration of the work of UCT scholars like Assoc Profs Margit Härtling and David Britton, whose ‘electronic ink’ – printable ink crammed with semiconductors – has captured both awards and the imagination of science publications.

Group, on the Innovation Forum, “but the goal is to influence the creation of an enabling environ-

ment for innovation, to realise the intrinsic value of innovation at the university.” ■

Centre celebrates first decade

The Centre for Popular Memory (CPM) had every reason to roll out the fanfare when it celebrated its 10th anniversary in May.

For one thing, the Centre has made a substantial contribution to UCT’s social responsiveness efforts over the past decade. It did so by taking archiving of South Africa’s oral history to new levels, increasing intellectual capacity in this area, and making the stories of everyday South Africans accessible.

The CPM started in 2001 when the unit not only changed its name – from the Western Cape Oral History Project, which originally began in 1985 – but its vision too.

Dr Sean Field, CPM director, recalls that at the time there was a turn to memory studies internationally. In response, the Centre began devoting considerable energies to developing sound and audio-visual archiving.

“The central idea was to make it easier for users to access our archives,” Field says.

One of the highlights of the decade has been a five-year Bridging the Digital Divide Schools Project, with staff from the CPM teaching over 1,000 learners across schools in disadvantaged communities how to implement an oral history project.

In total, the CPM has produced six film documentaries, five books, and has published over 30 articles over the past 10 years.

Field and his colleagues are also about to launch a large-scale, video-taped oral history research and archiving project titled *Memories of Apartheid*, and at the birthday bash, unveiled a new holding catalogue. ■

Major national accolade for Underhill

UCT’s Emeritus Professor Les Underhill received the prestigious Harry Oppenheimer Fellowship Award for 2011 at a ceremony in Johannesburg last week – in so doing, becoming the fourth UCT (and twelfth overall) recipient of the award.

The Harry Oppenheimer Fellowship Awards were established by the Oppenheimer Memorial Trust in 2001 to commemorate the Trust’s founder, and especially to recognise his efforts to support human and intellectual development, to advance scholarship, and to encourage ideas.

The honour comes with some special memories for Underhill: when he graduated with his PhD in mathematical statistics in 1973, it was Oppenheimer who capped him.

“It is a great honour and privilege



Flying high: Prof Les Underhill receives his award from Mary Slack, chairperson of the Oppenheimer Memorial Trust.

to be linked to this amazing person once more, in this remarkable way,” said Underhill.

Having “drifted far from” his roots in mathematical statistics into a new discipline known as statistical

ecology – “where we put statistics into biology, and biology into statistics” – Underhill is now director of UCT’s internationally acclaimed Animal Demography Unit (ADU).

The Oppenheimer award, which carries a monetary purse of up to R1 million, will go towards setting up early-warning systems for biodiversity in South Africa, reports Underhill. The “big idea” is to contribute towards the development of a toolkit for biodiversity monitoring.

“Not only has his vision of ‘citizen science’ shown how the broader community can become seriously involved in the work of the university,” commented Professor Danie Visser, deputy vice-chancellor responsible for research, “but it has produced data sets that are indispensable to the future of our continent.” ■



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news in brief

news in brief

news in brief

news in brief

news in brief

1. Make UCT world class

Vice-Chancellor Dr Max Price pulled out all the stops to convince members of the Consular Corps of Cape Town to support UCT's strategy to remain globally competitive. In May, UCT hosted a lunch for about 30 members of the Consular Corps, an influential group made up of career and honorary consular officers.

2. UCT environmental change course an online winner

Going online with one of her courses has won UCT lecturer Dr Gina Ziervogel – in picture, middle, with colleagues Assoc Prof Laura Czerniewicz and Glenda Cox – a major international open-content award. Ziervogel's third-year course, *Vulnerability to Environmental Change*, was selected as one of five – out of a possible 17,000 submitted by universities worldwide – to scoop the course Awards for OpenCourseWare Excellence in the category for text and still images, presented by the OpenCourseWare Consortium (OCWC).

3. New appointment for chair in Jewish studies

Professor Milton Shain has been appointed as the Isidore and Theresa Cohen Chair in Jewish Civilisation, a chair that was created in the Department of

Hebrew Studies thanks to a bequest made by the late Isidore Cohen in 1971. Shain believes the new chair will “add weight to the Centre’s research efforts, which engage with the Jewish experience as a whole, with a focus on South Africa”.

4. Inquiry-based education

Delivering the Vice-Chancellor’s Open Lecture at UCT on 23 May, Bruce Alberts, professor emeritus of biochemistry and biophysics at the University of California, San Francisco, and editor-in-chief of the august *Science* magazine, said that if scientists are going to influence the world, one area that needs addressing is science education. “To generate the scientific temper for any nation, we need to redefine what is meant by science education at all levels, from kindergarten to college.”

5. Science hails its standouts

The Faculty of Science hosted its first Faculty research awards on 24 May. Three prizes were handed out – two for the best-cited research papers for work done at UCT over the period 2008-2012, in which a UCT researcher played a leadership role, and the Dean’s medal for the top PhD student for 2011. In the publications category for best-cited research papers, Prof William Bond was named the winner in the professor/

associate professor category, while Dr Chris Clarkson won the lecturer/senior lecturer category. The Dean’s Medal for the best PhD student in 2011, bequeathed by Prof Daya Reddy, former dean of the faculty, was awarded to Dr Jasper Slingsby (in picture, middle, with Prof Jeremy Midgley and dean, Prof Anton le Roex).

6. Interactive art exhibition a hit

Community Punching Bags, an exhibition by UCT senior lecturer Johann van der Schijff and run in collaboration with a number of high schools in Cape Town, is on show at the Iziko South African National Gallery Annexe until 16 June. The multi-coloured punching bags – all adorned with faces – were designed, said the press release, to “show that issues often not spoken about openly, such as those that deal with violence, ‘the other’, stereotyping, discrimination, racism, xenophobia and human rights, can be addressed in a collaborative and creative way through the making of art”.

7. EU delegation visits UCT

The European Commission’s director-general for education and culture, Jan Trzuszczynski (third from right), together with a small delegation, visited UCT on 16 May. The group met with UCT vice-chancellor Dr Max Price

in the early morning, and later with students and staff beneficiaries of the Erasmus Mundus Academic Mobility Scholarship Programme.

8. A Fulbright future beckons

UCT alumnus Mandisa Mazibuko (right) has won a Fulbright Scholarship for a master’s degree in engineering management at Duke University in the US. Mazibuko started her studies at UCT on the Academic Support Programme for Engineering in Cape Town (ASPECT), and graduated with a degree in civil engineering in 2009.

9. SKA decision will expand UCT’s astronomy reach

UCT scholars enthusiastically welcomed the decision by the SKA Site Advisory Committee and its associates to assign a portion of the international Square Kilometre Array (SKA) of radio telescopes to South Africa. The majority of SKA dishes in Phase 1 of the €1.5 billion project will be built in South Africa in combination with MeerKAT, aka the Karoo Array Telescope, the South African array currently under construction in the Karoo region. Further SKA dishes will be added to the Australian Square Kilometre Array Pathfinder.

10. Epic story

The new School of African and Gender

Studies, Anthropology and Linguistics (AXL for short) was launched on 21 May. The school, which will be headed by Assoc Prof Jane Bennett (in picture), was born out of a partnership between the African Gender Institute, the Department of Social Anthropology, its Linguistics Section and the Centre for African Studies. This partnership, promised Bennett, will allow the School to explore issues – gender, the construction of the term ‘African’ and the work done in the name of this construction, culture, identity, the formal structure of languages, and the humanities itself – in new and varied ways and from different perspectives.

Ex-Bok coach on managing in a fish bowl

Don’t aim to be the best in South Africa. Aim to be the best in the world. This was the message former Springbok rugby coach Peter de Villiers passed on to UCT’s Postgraduate Diploma in Sports Management class on 15 May. Brought in to share some of his top-level experience of “managing in a fish bowl”, De Villiers imparted some invaluable insights into how to develop the thick skin necessary to perform optimally when one’s every move and utterance is – often harshly – scrutinised by an interested media and public.

Erratum

In the article ‘UCT three awarded national orders’, in volume 31.08 of 18 May, we indicated that Prof Apollon Davidson, formerly of UCT’s Centre for Russian Studies, had received his national order posthumously. We have since learnt that Prof Davidson is very much alive and well, and is both professor at the National Research University – Higher School of Economics in Moscow, and also head of the Centre for African History at the Institute of General History, Russian Academy of Sciences. We also said that Prof Davidson was at UCT from 2008 to 2001. This is obviously wrong – he was in fact based here from 1998 to 2001. We apologise for these errors.

EVENTS

Short Courses

Project Management: Principles, Methods and Practice. A six-day certificated course, commencing Monday 25 June 2012. Accredited with ECSA for CPD points. For further information and application forms see www.cpd.uct.ac.za or contact Heidi Tait 021 6505793

VACANT POSTS

EXECUTIVE AND ACADEMIC POSTS:

Senior Lecturer/Lecturer: Materials Engineering, Department of Mechanical Engineering, Faculty of Engineering & The Built Environment, Closing date: 20 June 2012

Professor/Associate Professor: Education Development Unit in Health Sciences, Academic Development Programme, Centre for Higher Education Development, Closing date: 22 June 2012

Professor/Associate Professor/Senior Lecturer: Thermo-Fluid Mechanics, Department of Mechanical Engineering, Faculty of Engineering & The Built Environment, Closing date: 22 June 2012

Professor/Associate Professor: Electro-Mechanical Engineering, Department of Mechanical Engineering, Faculty of Engineering & The Built Environment, Closing date: 29 June 2012

Allan Gray Chair and Senior Lecturer in Values-Based Leadership, Graduate School of Business, Closing date: 1 July 2012

Professor/Associate Professor: Energy Efficiency, Department of Mechanical Engineering, Faculty of Engineering & The Built Environment, Closing date: 6 July 2012

RESEARCH, PROFESSIONAL, ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPPORT POSTS (PASS)

Management Accountant, Faculty Finance, Faculty of Health Sciences, Closing date: 11 June 2012

Research Nurse, Department of Psychiatry & Mental Health, Faculty of Health Sciences, Closing date: 15 June 2012

Systems Engineers: Identity & Access Management, Technical Support Services, ICTS, Closing date: 15 June 2012

Technical Specialists: Network Infrastructure, Technical Support Services, ICTS, Closing date: 15 June 2012

End User Support Officer, Student Systems and Support,

Office of the Registrar, Closing date: 18 June 2012

Assistant Maintenance Manager: Residences, Properties and Services, Closing date: 18 June 2012

SRC Election Officers (X3), Student Development, Department of Student Affairs, Closing date: 22 June 2012

POSTS FOR UCT STAFF ONLY: EXECUTIVE AND ACADEMIC POSTS:

To view the full advertisements and application requirements for each post, please visit www.uct.ac.za and click on "Vacancies"

PROPERTY/ACCOMMODATION

Southern Suburbs: Couple seeks temp accom for 2-3 months from June, up to R6000 per month. S Suburbs, City Bowl, Atlantic Seaboard. Pls call Sarah 0727533115.

Ivydene Apartments: offers long-term rentals in an old cape farmhouse. On Jamie Shuttle route, off-street parking, peaceful setting, close to shops & restaurants. Visit www.ivydeneapartments.com for pictures & information

B&B: Tranquil B&B set in 2 acres of garden, situated 300m from Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens upper gate. 5 Km from UCT Campus – ideal for visiting academics. Self-catering available. Call 0027 (0)217622323, visit www.kleinbosheuwel.co.za

Strand: Beachfront Flat to let. Stunning views. Fully equipped. Garage. Sleeps 3/4 People. R450 p/n for 2 people - low season. Phone Brenda 0828820607

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Holiday accommodation: Rosebank: close to UCT, newly renovated 9 bedroomed house, with individual rooms are available

for rental! Most are ensuite and have internet facility, garden, fully furnished and serviced. Can rent per day or week from June 12th. Contact Dot on 072530276 or d.feast@uct.ac.za

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Brazilian/ Indian Hair: 100% Natural high quality Brazilian and Indian Hair in natural colours of dark brown, black or a bit lighter. Wavy /straight. Desirable hair. Guaranteed to look fabulous. Please contact Vuvu @ gqadun@gmail.com or contact 0727076061/0216504685.

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YOGA @ UCT. If you want to move....this is for you! Join us in a dynamic form of yoga from Monday to Thursday at 17:15. Meet at the top of Jammie stairs from 17:00 - we practice in the top floor of the arts building. For more details follow us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/YOGA-at-UCT/158293457622802>

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Position available: for 'Part Time Student Services Officer'

The applicant will be responsible for supporting US students studying in Cape Town. The position is for 16 hours a week but the applicant must have their own transport and be available to start immediately. Please email your CV to marsha.lipari00@gmail.com if interested

Editor/
proofreader

Available for postgraduate theses, journal articles etc. Experience in academic publishing. CV/references on request. Contact Dave 0828990452 or david.buchanan@telkomsa.net

UCT Libraries hosts an exhibition
ON THE FRONTLINE: YOUTH IN STRUGGLE

Research Wing, Level 4, Chancellor Oppenheimer Library.
25 April - 20 July 2012.



Racial integration in UCT residences a hot topic

How do UCT students experience racism in residences? A workshop hosted by the University Student Affairs Committee (USAC) in May tackled this question and broader issues of racial integration at UCT. USAC chair, deputy-vice chancellor Professor Crain Soudien, said the dialogue was born out of discussions about the likelihood of UCT experiencing similar racist incidents to those seen at the University of the Free State in 2008. In addition to race, a host of factors that might potentially divide students and staff, from socio-economic class to academic field, were mooted. So, how to move forward? Professor Anwar Mall, chair of the College of Wardens, suggested: "Once we've established the things that divide us, we need to find the things that unite us." ■

Library building-works during the mid-year vacation

There will be three major building projects going on at UCT Libraries between Monday, 11 June, and Friday, 20 July:

Phase 1 of the Centre for Open Learning expansion:

- Installation of a new staircase between Immelman Level 5 ('The Terrace') and Hlanganani Level 6 (currently occupied by the Centre for Higher Education Development).
- The flight of stairs between Immelman Level 4 (Main Level) and Hlanganani Level 5 (the 'Undergraduate Wing') will be closed for about a week to allow builders to break through to the floor above.
- Hoarding will be erected around this flight of

stairs to minimise noise and dust, but we can still expect some disruption.

- Access to the Terrace during this period will be via the stairs in the Research Wing.
- Access to the Undergraduate Wing will be via the Terrace.
- Builders will access the site and bring in supplies through the emergency exit on the north end of the Terrace next to the small lift.
- Hoarding around the new staircase on the Terrace will remain until Phase 2 is completed at the end of the year.

Phase 2 of the Jagger Library restoration project

- The Jagger Library will be a building site for the

duration of the structural changes and painting.

- The Jagger Library will be closed to users and staff for the six weeks.
- Special Collections will operate from Government Publications during this time.
- Special Collections materials will be retrieved for users once daily.

Creation of the Digitisation Unit in the Oppenheimer Institute Building

- The new Digitisation Unit will be created in the space formerly occupied by the Manuscripts and Archives Department.
- Minimal disruption is expected.
- Access to the existing Manuscripts Store will be through the Jewish Studies Library. ■



UCT rocks: Young South Africans have voted UCT as the coolest university brand in the Sunday Times Generation Next Youth Brand Survey.

UCT is the cool school

If you are a UCT student, use a BlackBerry cellular phone, bank with FNB, brush your teeth with Aquafresh after snacking on Doritos and are either Trevor Noah or Julius Malema, you are officially 2012's coolest person.

This according to the results of the 2012 *Sunday Times* Generation Next Youth Brand Survey. UCT scooped the 'coolest brand' award for the fourth year running in the university and college category, joining the toothpaste and public personalities mentioned atop South Africa's coolness ladder.

The University of Johannesburg placed second, followed by Wits, Stellenbosch and Rhodes.

Some 5,000 South Africans aged 8-22 in urban and peri-urban settings were surveyed about what they felt were the coolest brands in the land in myriad categories, from petrol and radio stations to cartoon shows and holiday destinations. ■

Understanding the mechanics of HIV transmission and prevention

Much is said in the public domain about transmission of the HI-virus and the state of vaccine development, but what is the science behind these crucial issues? This was what PhD student Andile Nofemela's David and Elaine Potter Seminar on 24 May aimed to explain. For his doctoral research, the medical virology student is attempting to characterise the biological features of transmitted viruses and how these may impact on HIV disease-progression. Nofemela hosted the seminar as part of the David and Elaine Potter Scholarship he received for the final year of his PhD. The young scholar invited a select group of medical researchers, including HIV-vaccine-development expert Professor Anna-Lise Williamson, paediatrician Dr Max Kroon, and Professor Clive Gray, head of UCT's Division of Immunology. ■



Made in UCT

The gift of the gab is strong in the UCT students who swept the boards at the 11th Chinese Language Proficiency Competition on 5 May. With 23 participants from the Universities of Cape Town and South Africa, and Rhodes and Stellenbosch Universities – all enrolled for Chinese language courses – being judged on a range of vocal, dancing and painting skills, UCT students claimed nearly half the prizes on offer. UCT's Rachel Anderson scooped second prize, qualifying for the final of the Chinese Bridge Competition in China in July. Birte Toussaint, a UCT engineering graduate, took third place and won a one-year Confucius Institute Scholarship. First-year language students Tracy Semmelink and Hana Petersen won Best Talent Show awards. ■