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UCT Professor of Medicine receives the 2018 Desmond Tutu Award for HIV Prevention Research and Human Rights

Professor of Medicine at the University of Cape Town (UCT) Professor Linda-Gail Bekker received the 2018 Desmond Tutu Award for HIV Prevention Research and Human Rights at the HIV Research for Prevention (HIVR4P) Conference in Madrid, Spain on 22 October 2018.

The former President of the International AIDS Society, Professor Bekker, is being recognised for her leadership in research aimed at developing new HIV prevention methods.

According to the HIVR4P, the award is presented “every two years to an individual or organisation that has done outstanding work to advance both HIV prevention research and the human rights of people affected by HIV.”

“Linda-Gail Bekker is a tireless and innovative leader of efforts to ensure effective HIV prevention for all,” said HIVR4P Co-chair Z Mike Chirenje of the University of Zimbabwe.

“From her clinics in the impoverished Masiphumelele and New Crossroads townships of Cape Town, to her role as chief operating officer of the Desmond Tutu HIV Foundation and in her capacity as immediate past president of the International AIDS Society, Linda-Gail’s fearless advocacy and personalised models of care have saved lives and helped to break down barriers of stigma and discrimination in HIV prevention.”

Under the leadership of Professor Bekker, the Desmond Tutu HIV Foundation has developed expertise in a number of key populations including pregnant women, adolescents, men who have sex with men and other more difficult to reach and engaged populations.

Professor Bekker embodies a physician-scientist who uses their expertise to better the lives of others. Her work is not only relevant to South Africa, but globally.

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