Quarraisha Abdool Karim receives the Order of the Mapungubwe

Impact on the AIDS response and influence on international and local policy acknowledged in national honours list

Professor Quarraisha Abdool Karim, Associate Scientific Director of CAPRISA was bestowed with the Order of Mapungubwe: Bronze by the South African State President on Freedom Day (27 April 2013) in recognition of her “outstanding work in the field of HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis research and health policy development.” The Order of Mapungubwe is South Africa’s highest honour.

Minister of Science and Technology, Derek Hanekom commented that “While her influence on South African science and her impact on the country’s AIDS response have been profound, it is her passion and deep commitment to human rights, equity and access to health care that have been the true mark of her character.” He said that Professor Abdool Karim “ranks among the world’s top AIDS researchers, for which she also recently received the ‘DST Women in Science’ Award,” and paid tribute to her as “a remarkable and exemplary role model for future generations of South African scientists.”

Minister of Health Aaron Motsoaledi congratulated Professor Abdool Karim, emphasizing that “Her contributions to fighting the AIDS epidemic in South Africa have been immense. This award is an inspiring tribute to her outstanding achievements in AIDS research, policy and advocacy in South Africa and globally.”

Section 27, highlighted her research that has “contributed immeasurably to our understanding of HIV, AIDS and TB and has saved and improved the lives of many thousands. Prof Abdool Karim has served on the Board of Directors of Section 27 and previously the AIDS Law Project since 2006, and has been a constant source of guidance and expertise throughout our work to realise the right of access to health care services in South Africa.”

Professor Abdool Karim commented “I am honoured to receive this recognition. It has been a singular privilege to work with such dedicated community members and such a
Our sincerest congratulations go our three CAPRISA fellows who graduated from the University of KwaZulu-Natal in April 2013.

Virologist, Sinaye Ngcapu, was presented with his Master of Medical Science Degree for his dissertation: *Nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitors-associated mutations in the RNase H region of HIV-1 isolates in South African adults and children failing highly active antiretroviral therapy (HAART).*

Laboratory fellow, Ashley Singh, received his Bachelor of Medical Science Honours.

Rubeshan Perumal, MBCHB, achieved his Master of Public Health following his study on HIV prevalence among tuberculosis cases and suspects at a tuberculosis facility in Durban.

Pretoria University delegation

CAPRISA was delighted to host a high-level delegation from the University of Pretoria’s Faculty of Health Sciences for an information sharing session. Left to right: Ms Marian Swart, Prof Tiaan de Jager (UP), Dr Nesi Padayatchi, Prof Willie van Heerden (UP), Prof Mavis Mulaudzi (UP), Prof Michael Pepper (UP), Prof Quarraisha Abdool Karim, Prof Salim Abdool Karim, Prof Eric Buch (UP).
CAPRISA Training Programme Re-vitalised

The CAPRISA Training Programme has been in existence since inception of the organisation and has through the years nurtured and grown many young researchers.

Late last year, the programme underwent a review and revitalisation in response to the new generation of medical students and in line with the evolving environment at CAPRISA.

CAPRISA Training Subcommittee

The CAPRISA Training Subcommittee (TSC) is committed to the training of the next generation of scientists, building leadership and developing strategic skills.

The task of the recently recreated TSC chaired by Prof Quarraisha Abdool Karim and consisting of key leadership from the scientific programmes and support cores is to address and prioritise training needs in line with the goals and objectives of the CAPRISA scientific programme.

Training focuses on regulatory training, research methodology, journal clubs, management training, as well as training focused on succession planning.

Staff are also encouraged to pursue both undergraduate and postgraduate studies.

CAPRISA Research Placement Programme

The CAPRISA Research Placement Programme (CRPP) is aimed at medical students at the Nelson R Mandela School of Medicine of the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

This year’s recruitment drive focused on 1st-year medical students and recruitment involved a presentation to the students by Professor Salim Abdool Karim, Director of CAPRISA, as well as a poster campaign placed around the medical school inviting applications.

The aim of the CRPP is to harness and nurture “bright young minds” and the plans are aimed at creating opportunities for students to be introduced to research methodology. In the first year, students will be mentored by senior CAPRISA researchers and participate in a wide range of research related activities such as literature reviews and referencing, principles of clinical research, protocol preparation, regulatory requirements, community engagement activities, site preparatory activities, data collection, management and analysis.

The programme will progress to students selecting a specific field of study with continued mentorship.

The objective of the CRPP is to build and strengthen the next generation of young, keen and astute researchers and prepare graduates to apply the skills learnt in their chosen career field.

CAPRISA Fellowship Programme

The CAPRISA Fellowship Programme aims to afford Fellows the opportunity to work and exchange ideas with experienced researchers in HIV/AIDS and TB, engages Fellows in cutting edge trans-disciplinary research, deepens Fellows’ understanding about HIV pathogenesis, prevention and treatment and helps Fellows to strengthen their research skills.

CAPRISA offers pre- and postdoctoral fellowships to individuals from South Africa.

In addition, CAPRISA also hosts international self-funded fellows.
Scientific papers published in 2013


Naranbhai V, Samsunder N, Sandler NG, Roque A, Abdool Karim Q, Ndung’u T, Carr WH, Altell M, Douek DC, Abdool Karim SS and The CAPRISA004 Trial Team. Neither microbial translocation nor TLR responsiveness are likely explanations for pre-existing immune activation in women who subsequently acquired HIV in CAPRISA004. JAIDS; 2013; Mar 11. [Epub ahead of print]


*continuation from previous newsletter

Scientific Reviews

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Conference & Workshop Reminders

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CAPRISA is an official research institute of the University of KwaZulu-Natal and Columbia University.

CAPRISA was established in 2002 through a CIPRA grant from the NIH, as a multi-institutional collaboration, incorporated as an independent non-profit AIDS Research Organization.

Registration Number: 2002/024027/08

www.caprisa.org