



In this Issue

The feature article this month reports on the global call to March for Science held in Durban on 22 April.

We outline the ICMR-SAMRC meetings held in India to strengthen research capacity and collaboration between the two countries and congratulate the six CAPRISA fellows who graduated with masters degrees on page 2.

On page 3 we congratulate the CAPRISA Laboratory team on receiving the best laboratory performance award from the HVTN and the MTN team from the eThekweni site on their Excellence award. We also pay tribute to Prof Salim Abdool Karim who was recently inducted into the Association of American Physicians and summarize Prof Lynn Morris' visit to the VCR antibody production plant.

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CAPRISA organizes Durban chapter of the international March for Science



Leading the March for Science in Durban were (from L-R) Dr Bonginkosi Mfuze, Ms Linda Dlamini, Prof Quarraisha Abdool Karim, Prof Jerry Coovadia, Prof Glenda Gray and Mr Ravi Pillay

CAPRISA staff joined tens of thousands of scientists in a global March for Science on 22 April, Earth Day, led by stalwarts of the fight for a healthier South Africa and leading AIDS scientists: Professor Quarraisha Abdool Karim CAPRISA Associate Scientific Director, Professor Glenda Gray President of the South African Medical Research Council and Professor Jerry Coovadia of MatCH.

The march started with interactive engagement with members of the public outside the Durban City Hall and ended at the Gugu Dlamini Park, where participants remained for an hour interacting with science exhibits.

Also present at the march were the MEC for Human Settlements Mr Ravi Pillay, Ms Linda Dlamini of the provincial department of health, Ms Bessie Mchunu from the Department of Science and Technology and recent medical graduate Dr Bonginkosi Mfuze.

The marchers carried signs that read 'Science saves lives', 'Science unites' and 'Science is in our genes'.

Co-organisers of the march were the South African Medical Research Council, the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) and the

Africa Health Research Institute (AHRI). It aimed to draw attention to how South African scientists, and those based in KwaZulu-Natal in particular, have made the world a better place for all who live in it.

"Investing in research and development is about investing in the citizens of our country. Science changes lives, shifts paradigms of thought and promotes innovative economic progress", said Professor Glenda Gray, President of the SAMRC.

Scientists aren't always recognized for their contributions to society, said Quarraisha Abdool Karim. "We all benefit in some way or the other in the products of science, innovation and technology, but don't often stop to reflect on how these come to be in society and what innovation and discovery led to it." The march was an opportunity for scientists to stand up and proudly share their research.

The idea behind the March for Science originated in the United States, where science budgets and evidence-based policymaking are facing pressure under Donald Trump's administration. The main march was held in Washington

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March for Science

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For example, Trump has said he wants to dismantle the Fogarty International Center entirely—an agency which CAPRISA and other South African health research institutions have relied on for support for many years. The Columbia University-southern African Fogarty AIDS Training Programme has been critical for building the science base in southern African for the past 20 years. This programme has enabled several HIV and TB research institutions and centres to be established including CAPRISA.

Although South Africa's government is funding more science than it used to, a claw-back of the US support through NIH and other US Federal agencies could harm the country's ability to strengthen its own science capacity, says Quarraisha Abdool Karim. Sci-

ence is a long-term endeavour, she says: "It takes about a decade for game-changing science. It takes two decades to nurture a critical mass of independent scientists."

Marches took place in over 500 cities worldwide, including Seoul in Korea, Cambridge in the UK, Mexico City in Mexico, and Washington DC in the US.

"The marches that are happening worldwide not only makes a powerful statement regarding the value of scientists and scientific research, but it also provides an opportunity to unite researchers globally in promoting the intrinsic value of evidence based policy making and decision making to improve the lives of all people", said Dr Albert van Jaarsveld, Vice-Chancellor UKZN.

"The March being held on Earth Day was an additional reminder that we are one planet and one people. There is no Planet B, so we have to look after and preserve what we have," said Quarraisha Abdool Karim.

- Linda Nordling

ICMR-SAMRC meeting on research capacity strengthening

Prof Salim Abdool Karim Director of CAPRISA participated in the Indian Council for Medical Research (ICMR) and the South African Medical Research Council (SAMRC) meeting held in Pune and Delhi from March 27th to March 28th. The meeting aimed to strengthen research capacity and to explore international collaborations in both countries.

At the 2017 Annual ICMR Orator Recognising Excellence in Health Research held on March 27th, Prof Abdool Karim delivered an oration entitled "The HIV Epidemic in Africa: Challenges and Prospects".

The inaugural session for the ICMR-SAMRC Meeting on HIV Research followed on March 28th. During the meeting, round-table discussions were held in order to explore Indo-South Africa cross-learning opportunities in the field of HIV/AIDS. These discussions focused on potential areas of collaboration and alignment between



At the ICMR-SAMRC meeting: L-R: Prof Glenda Gray, President SA MRC, Dr Soumya Swaminathan, Secretary (DHR), DG, ICMR, Prof Salim Abdool Karim, Dr Tanuja Gengiah from CAPRISA, and Dr Marlon Cerf.

South Africa and India. Prof Abdool Karim moderated a discussion on "Potential Areas for Alignment of South Africa with the National Program for clinical and biomedical research".

At the end of the five day visit

with several high level meetings and scientific presentations, Prof Abdool Karim attended ward rounds and delivered a talk on TB-HIV treatment at Seth GS Medical College and King Edward Memorial Hospital in Mumbai.

CAPRISA Masters Fellows graduate

Congratulations to six CAPRISA Fellows who recently graduated at the University of Kwa-Zulu-Natal's graduation ceremonies held in April. Riona Matadin obtained her MMedSci *summa cum laude* and Gbotemi Aloro graduated with the

Master of Social Science *cum laude*. The following Fellows successfully completed their degrees: Faa-diela Jogee (Master of Law); Palesa Xulu (MSocSci Res Psych); Sanele Mhlungu (MMedSci) and Londeka Mbewe (MSocSci).



Recognition for outstanding contribution to medicine



CAPRISA's Director, Professor Salim Abdool Karim, was elected a member of the Association of American Physicians (AAP) in recognition of his outstanding contributions to medicine. The induction as a member was made at the AAP Gala Dinner held on 22 April in Chicago. With Professor Abdool Karim (R) in the photo is his nominator - Professor Sunil Ahuja of University of Texas (L)

CAP 256 team visits VRC production plant



L-R: Dr Kevin Carlton, Dr Nicole Doria-Rose, Prof Lynn Morris and Dr Julie Ledgerwood

Professor Lynn Morris, CAPRISA Research Associate and head of the HIV Virology section in the Center for HIV and STIs at the National Institutes of Communicable Diseases in South Africa recently visited the NIH Vaccine Research Center's (VRC) Gaithersburg process plant as well as the Frederick pilot plant where the manufacture of the CAP256-VRC26.25 antibody for human clinical trials is underway. Prof Morris gave a research seminar at the VRC where she discussed the history of the CAP256 donor and various studies on the isolated antibodies as well as the plans for the upcoming clinical trials.

MTN Excellence Award for CAPRISA study site



The CAPRISA eThekweni Site was recognized for excellence at the MTN Annual Meeting in Washington, DC (19-22 March 2017) in the conduct of MTN-032, a study that intends to understand how women viewed their experiences with the vaginal ring in ASPIRE through the collection of qualitative data. MTN-032 is the site's first qualitative study under the MTN. From left to right: Jared Baeten, Kalendri Naidoo, Jeanna Piper, Sharon Hillier, Leila Mansoor, Wendy Mkhize, Nqobile Myeni.

CAPRISA labs scoops Best Laboratory performance award

The CAPRISA Vulindlela CRS laboratory and the main laboratory received Best Laboratory Performance at the recent HPTN Annual meeting held in Washington DC for the 2015-2016 time period. The award was in recognition of the Vulindlela CRS site laboratory and the main laboratory having not a single audit finding during the DAIDS initiated audit conducted by FHI360/WESTAT. The comments from the HPTN Laboratory Core group was "This was the first time we have seen a laboratory receive no finding in their 12 years of

the network". The audit was of the Quality Management Systems for compliance to the ISO 15189:2012 Standard and the Code of Federal Regulations 42 part 21. The 2016 audit of the Vulindlela CRS site laboratory was the second of its kind and thus this clean audit report was more cause to celebrate.

"The entire laboratory team involved in this audit need to be congratulated for their amazing consistent work that always makes audits a pleasure to go through" said Natasha Samsunder the CAPRISA Laboratory Director. "It was my privilege to be in Washington to collect this unexpected, but well deserved award on behalf of my team to work to always maintain the high level of quality."



At the presentation from (L-R): Jacqueline Kasavan (CAPRISA Laboratory Quality Assurance Officer), Dr Cassandra Keegan (HPTN Study Clinician), Dr Wafaa El-Sadr (Principal Investigator of HPTN), Dr Halima Dawood (Investigator on Record for HPTN – VCRS), Natasha Samsunder (CAPRISA Laboratory Director), Dr Myron S. Cohen (Principal Investigator of the HPTN) and Estelle Piwowar-Manning (HPTN Network Laboratory Deputy Director).



Scientific papers published in 2017

22 **Govender EM, Mansoor LE, Abdool Karim Q.** Influences of geo-spatial location on pre-exposure prophylaxis use in South Africa: positioning microbicides for better product uptake. *AIDS Care* 2017; 29(6):734-740.

23 **Padayatchi N, Naidu N, Friedland G, Naidoo K, Conradie F, Naidoo K, O'Donnell MR.** Turning the Tide Against Tuberculosis. *The International Journal of Tuberculosis and Lung Disease*, 2017; 56:6-9.

24 **Maharaj B, Tanuja N. Gengiah, Yende-Zuma N, Gengiah S, Naidoo A, Naidoo K.** Implementing Iso-niazid Preventive Therapy in a TB-treatment experienced cohort on ART. *The International Journal of Tuberculosis and Lung Disease* 2017 May; 21(5):537-543.

25 **Loveday M, Ramjee A, Osburn G, Master I, Kabera G, Brust JC, Padayatchi N, Warren R, Theron G.** Drug-resistant tuberculosis in patients with minimal symptoms: favourable outcomes in the absence of treatment. *The International Journal of Tuberculosis and Lung Disease* 2017; 21(5):556-563.

26 Roberts A, De Andrade PP, Okumu F, Quemada H, Savadogo M, **Singh JA**, James S. Results from the Workshop "Problem Formulation for the Use of Gene Drive in Mosquitoes". *American Journal of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene*. 2017; 96(3): 530-533.

27 **Abdool Karim Q, Baxter C, Birx D.** Prevention of HIV in Adolescent Girls and Young Women: Key to an AIDS-Free Generation. *JAIDS* 2017;75(Suppl.1):S17–S26.

28 Dheda K, Gumbo T, Maartens G, Dooley KE, McNerney R, Murray M, Furin J, Nardell EA, London L, Lessem E, Theron G, van Helden P, Niemann S, Merker M, Dowdy D, Van Rie A, Siu GKH, Pasipanodya JG, Rodrigues C, Clark TG, Sirgel FA, Esmail A, Lin H-H, Atre SR, Schaaf HS, Chang KC, Lange C, Nahid P, Udawadia ZF, Horsburgh CR, Churchyard GJ, Menzies D, Hesseling AC, Nuermberger E, McIlleron H, Fennelly KP, Goemaere E, Jaramillo E, Low M, Jara CM, **Padayatchi N**, Warren RM. The epidemiology, pathogenesis, transmission, diagnosis, and management of multidrug-resistant, extensively drug-resistant, and incurable tuberculosis. *The Lancet Respiratory Medicine* 2017; 5(4): 291-360

*continuation from previous newsletter

Scientific Reviews

Abstracts submitted for review		Manuscripts submitted for review		Ancillary studies submitted for review	
Total#	Cumulative^	Total#	Cumulative^	Total#	Cumulative^
0	386	3	216	1	76

for month, ^ since committee initiation

iSpotU and Achievement awards

The CAPRISA iSpotU Innovation Award recognises and rewards employees who contributed in an exceptional manner in respect of innovation, which demonstrate that "There Is a Better Way" of doing a task, process or system. The Achievement Award rewards and recognises employees or teams for accomplishments and achievements which received recognition from an external credible individual and/or organisation. Recipients of the awards during April included:

CAPRISA Achievement Award

Cara-Mia Corris, Roshell Dhannoo, Lorna Dias, Msizi Dladla, Ishana Harkoo, Shannie Kamal, Norman Kanni, Jacqueline Kasavan, Siphosihle Khanyile, Leila Mansoor, Zanele

Mchunu, Wendy Mkhize, Nqobile Myeni, Kalendri Naidoo, Nkosinathi Ndlovu, Christina Khwela, Lungile Kubheka, Natasha Sam-sunder, Damien Sookoo, Phindile Tshabalala, and Marlene Venter were recipi-

ents of a CAPRISA Achievement award in April. The teams received the award in recognition of external endorsement of excellence from the NIH HIV Vaccine and Microbi-cide Trials Networks.

