



DEAN'S UPDATE



December has been an interesting month of celebrations, looking back over the past year's achievements. Pharmacy researchers make use of the University's Electron Microscope Unit (EMU) so I was pleased to be part of the celebrations with our collaborators at the EMU's 50

years Golden Jubilee Luncheon. I met with alumni and previous academic staff including past Head of Pharmacy Department, Professor Tom Watson, at the Vice-Chancellor's alumni and friends Christmas reception where the Faculty was well represented. The Faculty also hosted its own Christmas gathering for alumni and donors who have supported the Faculty in 2008. As part of the festive season I also attended the PSA Annual Pharmacy Dinner. The Faculty welcomed Professor Michel Eichelbaum from Institut für klinische Pharmakologie, Stuttgart, who gave a Special Seminar and spent time with Faculty academics and collaborators. The Faculty also hosted visitors from Sun Yat-sen University, China, for the Australia-

China Centre for Research in Chinese Medicines Symposium. Presentations on the latest findings and future projects showed that research in this area is growing from strength to strength. I hope that the Faculty will continue to flourish and look forward to a challenging and successful 2009.

Professor Iqbal Ramzan
Dean, Faculty of Pharmacy

Faculty of Pharmacy Newsletter December 2008

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GRANT SUCCESS

Dr Maria Sukkar has received an Asthma Research Sustainability Grant of \$50,000 from the Asthma Foundation of NSW. Her project is entitled "High-mobility group box-1 and airway smooth muscle synthetic, proliferative and migratory function".

Congratulations to Dr Ramin Rohanzadeh who received a Rebecca L. Cooper Medical Research Foundation Grant 2009 for his project entitled "Drug-delivery coating for a new generation of orthopaedic implants". The grant of \$19,900 will purchase a Micro-hardness Tester (Buehler Indentamet 1100 Series) equipped

with 2 objectives (10X and 40X) and 2 types of indenters (Knoop and Vickers).

Academic researchers throughout the University have benefited from the experience and advice given by Professor Carol Armour, Acting Pro-Vice Chancellor (Research). Carol instigated a series of workshops and peer review opportunities for NHMRC applicants that, when taken up by the applicant, greatly increased the success rate of the application for funding. Success rates for applicants increased from approximately 20% to approximately 40%.

GLAXOSMITHKLINE AWARDS SUSAN HOE \$25,000 FOR PHD

Congratulations to Susan Hoe, PhD student in the Faculty of Pharmacy, on receiving a GlaxoSmithKline Postgraduate Support Grant of \$25,000 for two years. GSKA Post Graduate Support Grants are offered for up to \$15,000 per annum for two years to PhD or

Post Doctorate students in the field of human health. These awards were designed to provide further financial support to PhD or Post Doctorate research students who are already in receipt of a research grant from a non commercial body. Susan is supervised by Drs

Daniela Traini and Paul Young and her PhD project focuses on the development of the electrical Next Generation Impactor (eNGI) for the study of electrostatic charge in pharmaceutical aerosols.

BRITISH COUNCIL RESEARCHER EXCHANGE PROGRAM

The British Council has awarded Dr Daniela Traini £3378 for a 4 week visit to The London School of Pharmacy in 2009, as part of the Researcher Exchange Program. The title of the project is: 'The use of isothermal calorimetry and thermal atomic force microscopy for the investigation of pharmaceutical

material bulk crystallization'. The Researcher Exchange Program aims to promote the development of research cooperation and contacts between the UK and other countries and to help develop new research links between higher education institutions and research laboratories in the UK and other

countries. It aims to encourage mobility and internationalism among postdoctoral researchers for the exchange of information, ideas and knowledge, and for long-term relationship building.

GRACIA WINS YOUNG INVESTIGATOR POSTER AWARD

Congratulations to Gracia Quek who received a poster award at the recently attended international IUPHAR Neuropharmacology Conference in Washington, DC. Gracia won second prize for her poster entitled 'Probing the nAChR channel using SCAM to locate the binding site of novel nicotinic antagonists' by G.X.J. Quek*¹,

J.I. Halliday², M.D. McLeod², M. Chebib¹, ¹The University of Sydney, Australia, ²The Australian National University, Australia.

The conference, entitled Ligand-gated Ion Channels, was a satellite symposium to the 2008 meeting of the Society for Neuroscience and brought together international experts to

review similarities within different classes of receptors and the implications for drug discovery. The IUPHAR Young Investigator Poster Awards sponsors three young investigators, either predocs, postdocs or junior faculty researchers. Gracia has a BPharm (Hons) who returned to complete a PhD.

TEACHING ON THE AGENDA AT EDUCATION SYMPOSIUM

On 3rd December the Pharmacy Education Unit hosted the Faculty's second Pharmacy Education Symposium. The Symposium sessions covered a wide range of pharmacy-related educational issues, and the direct outcomes from the day include:

- Publication of the peer-reviewed Symposium abstracts in the December issue of Australian Pharmacist <http://www.psa.org.au/site.php?id=3142>
- Small TIES grant application submitted to investigate the

feasibility of using Drupal software to create a transferable version of an automated, personalised, electronic student feedback system.

Participant feedback was highly positive, with all respondents agreeing that the day was relevant to their work. In particular, the feedback was strongly approving of the range and quality of the presentations. In addition to the Faculty of Pharmacy participants, the Symposium also benefited from

the attendance and contributions of colleagues from the School of Chemistry, the Institute for Teaching and Learning, the Faculty of Health Sciences and the University Library.

For those who were unable to attend, the Symposium abstracts and presentation files, plus some photographs from the day, are available on the Faculty website, via the Learning and Teaching button: http://www.pharm.usyd.edu.au/peu/pharmacy_education_symposium.shtml

TAMOXIFEN - NEW VISTAS ON AN OLD DRUG

The Faculty was delighted to host a visit and Special Seminar by Professor Michel Eichelbaum. Professor Eichelbaum, from Dr. Margarete Fischer-Bosch-Institut für Klinische Pharmakologie in Stuttgart,

Germany, gave a presentation on "Tamoxifen - new vistas on an old drug". His research interests include pharmacogenetics of drug metabolizing enzymes and transporter proteins, stereoselective

aspects of drug metabolism and drug action, use of stable isotopes in clinical pharmacology, intestinal metabolism and transport of drugs.

CHINESE MEDICINES SYMPOSIUM

The Australia-China Centre for Research in Chinese Medicines (ACRCM) Symposium 2008 was held on 9th December 2008 in the Faculty of Pharmacy. The purpose of the Symposium was to present research achievements on herbal medicines and exchange new academic initiatives between

researchers and scientists from the University of Sydney and Sun Yat-sen University, China.

The Symposium was opened by Dean of Faculty, Professor Iqbal Ramzan, with presentations on topics including Pharmacological studies on Traditional Chinese Medicines (TCM), new TCM

formulation issues, new targets and leads for anticancer drugs, virtual drug screening, anti-diabetic drug lead discovery, quality and chemistry of TCM, physiological based pharmacokinetic studies identification and modification of drug leads and quality control of TCM.

CHRISTMAS DRINKS RECEPTION FOR PHARMACY DONORS

On 15th December, the Dean of Faculty, Professor Iqbal Ramzan, hosted a special drinks reception to thank all those who made donations to support the Faculty in 2008. The event was well attended and offered donors the opportunity to meet and mingle with some of our faculty staff and students. The guests enjoyed the festive decorations in the Pharmacy Common Room and were entertained by a jazz band.

Final year student, Natalie Tasker, gave a brief address, thanking the Alumni and Faculty staff for their support over the past year. Natalie was named Pharmacy Student of the Year in 2008 by the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia



competition and spoke about her experience of the competition and winning the final award. Natalie

also spoke of the general student experience and described what it is like to be a student today.



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Produced by the Faculty of Pharmacy of the University of Sydney, November 2008. The University reserves the right to make alterations to any information contained within this publication without notice.

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