Winthrop Professor George Jelinek, pictured here with his wife Dr Sandra Neate, turned the health of the emergency department at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital around, not to mention his own health. He has now said farewell to WA and moved to Melbourne to take up a prestigious research position. See story pages 12 and 13.

“GUANXI” — GETTING IT RIGHT GOES A LONG WAY IN CHINA

Six visiting Chinese professors hosted by the School of Population Health have given their tips for developing good research collaborations with China.

There were huge opportunities for collaborations between the Faculty and Chinese academics, they said.

The professors spoke at a seminar in April where Winthrop Professor D’Arcy Holman, Chair in Public Health, described the strategic plan of the Lu Cha (Green Tea) Sino-Australian Research Collaboration and Research Associate Professor Min Zhang, also of the School of Population Health, reported progress of the project which has received funding from the National Health and Medical Research Council.

Continued page 15

OUTREACH TO COUNTRY DOCTORS

A panorama of clinical scenarios that a surgeon working single-handedly in a remote area should be able to handle has been mapped out by two Faculty bodies at an outreach conference.

The Rural Clinical School and CTEC conducted the inaugural Emergency Surgery course at the Bunbury campus of Edith Cowan University in February.

As country-based doctors are regularly faced with life and limb threatening problems, the aim was to show WA surgical trainees what a surgeon should be capable of when working solo in the bush, here or overseas, without immediate transfer facilities.

The sessions covered a wide range of clinical problems including neurosurgical crises, orthopaedic injuries that “can’t wait”, burns, obstetric complications, neonatal and paediatric problems, vascular injuries, urological emergencies, eye and hand injuries and medico-legal matters. They were presented by a range of Bunbury and Perth specialists.

Initiated and convened by Mr Val Lishman, a retired Bunbury surgeon, and Dr Ruth Blackham, a surgical trainee, the weekend event was attended by 120 people, mostly surgical trainees, surgical interns and theatre nurses from across the State. However, it also attracted country GPs and even two psychiatrists from Graylands.

The outreach conference was such a success that it will be repeated next year in February. Conferences with a similar format are planned for this year, including Leukaemia, Lymphoma and Myeloma, aimed particularly at physician trainees, on July 3 and Tropical and Expedition Medicine, expected to be of interest to many doctors and specialists, on October 2.
A recent medical graduate, whose passion for medicine was evident from the time she did work experience in her mid-teens, has been awarded a highly prestigious and valuable Oxford University scholarship plus another with the World Health Organisation.

Dr Esther Davis, who graduated last year, will spend 10 weeks from this month in Geneva as a bioethics intern with WHO's Department of Human Ethics, Trade, Rights and Health Law.

She has been undertaking a Masters in Bioethics through Monash University part time since January last year and in December was awarded the 2009/2010 Monash-WHO Bioethics Fellowship, awarded annually to one student in the Masters of Bioethics course.

"While I am in Geneva, I will be assisting with research work in the department as well as getting a really exciting opportunity to gain insight into the work of the WHO," Dr Davis said.

Then in October, she will head for Oxford to take up a Clarendon Scholarship to study for a DPhil in cardiovascular medicine. The Clarendon Fund aims to bring students with the best proven and future potential to Oxford and scholarships are given across all disciplines to graduate students from all over the world.

For entry in 2009-10, there were 1,815 eligible applications for the Clarendon Scholarship and 124 awarded, making it a very competitive scholarship with a success rate of seven per cent. Only 22 Clarendon Scholarship in Medical Sciences were awarded for this year.

The scholarships cover tuition and college fees in full and a generous grant for living expenses. Dr Davis’s scholarship covers the three years of her DPhil degree, which she will undertake within the Department of Cardiovascular Medicine at the John Radcliffe Infirmary.

"The research will be focused on cardiovascular imaging and early development of cardiovascular disease," she said. "I will be particularly looking into the relationship between aortic function and cardiovascular physiology in patients with a low conventional cardiovascular risk profile as well the impact of lifestyle intervention on genetic risk."

Dr Davis said she was sad to be leaving Royal Perth, where she had a wonderful experience working as an intern and RMO. "But I hope to return in the future to complete physician training with the aim of one day going into clinical cardiology," she said. "I believe that the education that I received at UWA has prepared me for the future challenges."

Dr Davis paid tribute to Winthrop Professor of Paediatric Haematology and Oncology Catherine Cole. "She was my mentor through Medical School but also supported me and my interest in medicine from a much earlier age, including when I did work experience with her aged 15 in the Paediatric Oncology Department at Princess Margaret Hospital," Dr Davis said.

"She has encouraged me to believe that I could go to Oxford and has been an invaluable support."

Dr Esther Davis (right) with Winthrop Professor Catherine Cole, taken when Dr Davis was told she had won the scholarship
With an aging academic workforce Australia-wide, there has been growing pessimism about where the next generation of academics to inspire and lead our students may come from. Such pessimism is clearly misplaced given the high profile and far-reaching influence of the senior female academic staff of this Faculty, a profile that is once again highlighted in this issue of MeDeFacts.

Professor Cathy Cole was appointed over two years ago as the Winthrop Professor of Paediatric Haematology and Oncology at Princess Margaret Hospital for Children. Her passion for thorough clinical trials to develop a careful evidence base for the treatment of childhood malignancies, especially leukaemia and lymphoma, has been inspirational. It is no surprise that through her example and mentorship, one of our recent medical students is now heading off to Oxford on a Clarendon Scholarship in Medical Science (see story p2), hopefully to return one day to teach and inspire another generation of students at UWA. The achievements of W/Prof Christobel Saunders also feature heavily in this issue following her well-earned receipt of the Patron’s Pink Ribbon Award from the National Breast Cancer Foundation (see story p4).

W/Prof Saunders is an internationally renowned clinician and researcher in the field of breast cancer diagnosis and therapy and similarly brings a passion not only to her research but also to strong mentorship of students and junior colleagues. Last year this resulted in the formation of SWIM (Surgeons and Women’s Initiative to Mentor), created by a team from the School of Surgery to provide one-on-one mentoring for females early in their surgical careers.

The “Three Fionas”
The “Three Fionas” have iconic standing within the Faculty for their past and continuing endeavours. W/Prof Fiona Stanley AC is an epidemiologist who is deeply committed to fostering a healthier future for Australia’s children and their families, a commitment that sees its realisation through her role as the founding Director of the Telethon Institute for Child Health Research (TICHR) overseeing groundbreaking research in a broad and challenging spectrum of childhood disorders.

W/Prof Fiona Wood is Perth’s only female plastic surgeon and her research goal has been to achieve scarless healing in the burns victims she daily attends. Her unfailing enthusiasm is inspiring a number of the current generation of medical students to pursue careers in health and medical research.

W/Prof Fiona Lake fills the Eric Saint Chair in Medicine and through her leadership in both the Teaching on the Run and Learning on the Run programmes has been integral to the improvement of the teaching and learning skills of thousands of health professionals throughout Australia and overseas.

The roll call of influential Faculty female academics continues with W/Prof Karen Simmer, a Professor of Newborn Medicine and the first academic from our Medical School to chair The University of Western Australia Academic Board. She is Director of the Neonatal Intensive Care Units at King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women and PMH with research interests in neonatal nutrition and infection. W/Prof Susan Prescott, a paediatric allergist and immunologist at PMH has made a large international impact with her research in the area of allergy and the developing immune system during fetal and early postnatal life. W/Prof Jennet Harvey, Professor of Anatomical Pathology, firmly believes that a good understanding of the pathological basis of disease is the best possible foundation for future physicians. With that philosophy as her driving passion, she has been teaching pathology to medical students at UWA for over 30 years.

Inspirational researchers
Together with our clinical academics are a number of inspirational researchers who have also achieved appointment at Chair level. W/Prof Billie Giles-Corti, Director of the Centre for the Built Environment and Health, is leading the study of how the built environment can improve physical and mental health in our community, W/Prof Jenefer Blackwell heads the Genetics and Health Laboratory at TICHR and has a long-standing interest in complex disease genetics including both metabolic and infectious diseases. W/Prof Lin Fritschi, a cancer epidemiologist with the WA Institute for Medical Research, has a particular interest in occupational causes of cancer. W/Prof Elizabeth Rakoczy is the founding Director of the Molecular Ophthalmology group at the Lions Eye Institute. She was the first researcher in Australia to apply molecular biological techniques to ophthalmic research, investigating gene therapy for age related macular degeneration and diabetic retinopathy.

The latest to join the Faculty is W/Prof Sandra Thompson. She has recently been appointed as the new Director of the Combined Universities Centre for Rural Health in Geraldton. She has worked in several remote areas of Australia and has a strong commitment to Indigenous health issues. Her research interests also include the prevention and management of chronic diseases, sexual and reproductive health, and refugee and migrant health. With her appointment, the number of women occupying Winthrop Professor positions in the Faculty has risen to thirteen. Overall the Faculty has 55 full professors, 38 of whom are clinical academics, so clearly we have a long way to go before women can be judged as being reasonably represented at the highest levels of this Faculty. However, what they currently lack in relative numbers is more than made up for by leadership, inspiration and influence. Two former Australians of the Year are numbered in their ranks (W/Prof Fiona Stanley in 2003 and W/Prof Fiona Wood in 2005) and they all can lay claim to having made major contributions at a local, national and international level in their respective disciplines. Their broader and often unmeasured influence on our students as role models, teachers and mentors is arguably even more important. The number of leading female academics in the Faculty will undoubtedly continue to grow as current students and younger colleagues look to them as examples and seek encouragement as they weigh their future career options.

Ian Puddey, Dean
Pregnancy during or after a breast cancer diagnosis is one of many research projects being undertaken by a leading breast surgeon in the Faculty, in conjunction with others.

Winthrop Professor Christobel Saunders, Professor of Surgical Oncology, targets issues facing women diagnosed with breast cancer through a number of collaborative research projects being undertaken through the School of Surgery at the QEII Medical Centre.

The projects include psychosocial morbidity associated with breast cancer diagnosis and treatment in women aged 45 years and under; ways to address the lack of high quality, tailored information available to young women and their families to improve decision-making and quality of life; and devising strategies to help reduce the risk of breast cancer, particularly for women with BRCA1 and BRCA2 gene mutations.

Professor Saunders, who is Deputy Head of the School of Surgery, has also been part of a team that has found that 30 minutes of in-theatre radiotherapy is more effective, more accessible, less expensive and less time-consuming for the patient than the standard 5-7 weeks of post-operative radiotherapy after surgery in women with early breast cancer.

The results of the TARGIT (Targeted intra-operative radiotherapy) trial, an international multi-site collaboration, were presented at the American Society for Clinical Oncology (ASCO) conference in Chicago this month, concurrently with the publication of an article in the international journal The Lancet.

The trial showed that targeted radiotherapy could replace whole-breast radiotherapy and that a much smaller dose of radiation would prevent recurrence of the disease.

Another project is aimed at better understanding the relationship between breast density observed on mammograms, breast MRIs and ultrasound appearances to aid clinical interpretation of breast MR images and improve the usefulness of breast MRI as a breast cancer screening tool. This is known as the Mammographic Density Project.

And Professor Saunders is a key investigator in a population-based case-control study investigating occupational and environment exposures as risk factors for breast cancer among WA women. The Breast Cancer, Environment and Employment Study (BCEES) includes other Faculty members - Professor Lin Fritschi, Ms Jennifer Girschik, Ms Allyson Thomson and Ms Pierra Rogers, all of the WA Institute for Medical Research, and Associate Professor Jane Heyworth, Sub-Dean of Health Sciences.

In recognition of her outstanding commitment and dedication to research, Professor Saunders this year received a Patron’s Pink Ribbon Award from the National Breast Cancer Foundation for the advancement of breast cancer research. The citation said, in part: “Since 2002, Christobel has been a member of the Research Advisory Committee, contributing to the work of National Breast Cancer Foundation by bringing a depth of knowledge of breast cancer and understanding of research processes. Throughout her distinguished research career, Christobel has made a mark on the national and international research agenda.”

Her commitment to her role as academic surgeon was acknowledged again recently when she was presented with a Certificate of Outstanding Service from the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons.

Professor Saunders is also passionate about translational research and has played a leading role in a national group that successfully lobbied for the introduction of a Medicare item number for MRI as a screening tool for women at high risk for breast cancer. She is now undertaking another application to Medicare for an item number for the targeted radiotherapy intra-operative procedure.

The academic surgeon has written a book on breast cancer which focuses on the patient journey, from disease background to diagnosis, treatment and the emotional aspects of survivorship. Breast Cancer: The Facts was co-authored by Dr Sunil Jassal and published by Oxford University Press. It was launched at the beginning of the year.
A prompt list for GPs, mental health clinicians, child health nurses and others working with mothers with a serious mental illness has been developed by a Faculty centre.

The risk assessment resource is targeted at health professionals caring for women with schizophrenia, bipolar disorder or severe depression who have babies less than one year old. It can be carried out during regular appointments with the mother.

The importance of the mother-infant interaction for the emotional development of the child and the fact that secure attachment is protective against poor developmental outcomes are well known.

Healthy mother-infant relationship: Assessment of risk in mothers with serious mental illness was developed by psychiatrist Dr Johana Stefan, together with Professor Yvonne Hauck, Dr Deb Faulkner and Professor Daniel Rock, all of the Clinical Applications Unit in the Centre for Clinical Research in Neuropsychiatry (CCRN).

It was launched by Mental Health Minister Graham Jacobs last month.

“It’s about providing health professionals with the information they need to identify those who are at risk during pregnancy or following the birth,” Dr Jacobs said.

“They can then refer the mother to the appropriate service to support them in their mental wellbeing and relationship building with their baby.”

About 80 to 100 women with serious mental illness give birth in WA every year and present as complex cases that require intense care.

The children have a high risk of emotional, behavioural and cognitive difficulties. Disorganised patterns of maternal-infant attachment occur in 10% cent of the general population but can increase up to 80% in high risk populations so clinicians can optimise outcomes by assessing risk of disorganised attachment.

A study led by CCRN Director and Winthrop Professor of Psychiatry Assen Jablensky found that children of mothers with mental illness were at increased risk of having a learning disability as well as developmental disorders such as autism and Rett syndrome plus some rare congenital syndromes.

In a later study, he found that mothers with schizophrenia, bipolar disorder and depression had higher rates of complications during pregnancy, labour, and delivery. The babies of mothers with schizophrenia were also more likely to be small for gestational age and had a higher incidence of birth defects.


Dr Stefan, who is a Clinical Senior Lecturer in the School of Paediatrics and Child Health, said it was a list of possible things that could go wrong and could be used by people with training in adult health.

“There is a multitude of women with mental illness not treated by the public health system so GPs can also use this,” she said.

“It gives ideas of what aspects of the mother and baby relationship you need to observe and be aware of and what things can go wrong between mother and baby. If the baby is too quiet, it doesn’t necessarily mean it is a very good baby … there might be a problem.”

She said she would encourage health professionals to form an interdisciplinary network when caring for a patient with mental illness.

The CAU has two more important projects underway – the development of a cardiovascular diseases risk register for people with a serious mental illness in WA and a cancer care coordination project to help those with psychiatric disability access a range of cancer care options.

EMPATHY

The ability of breast cancer cells to “flip” between epithelial and mesenchymal states, which may enable them to resist current therapies, will be the subject of a study by Winthrop Professor Christobel Saunders and others.

She will team up with Victorian surgeon Associate Professor Michael Henderson and scientists from around Australia headed by Associate Professor Erik Thompson, of the University of Melbourne’s Department of Surgery, to conduct the research after receiving a $5 million National Breast Cancer Foundation grant.

The fact that breast cancer cells can swap between states may explain why they can become dormant after initial treatment and later emerge as distant metastases. The survival of such metastatic cells in new environments is paramount to breast cancer recurrence.

Epithelial-mesenchymal plasticity (EMP), the term coined by the research group, is known to be part of normal embryological development as well as a newly recognised process in cancer metastasis. The EMPathy network’s primary aim is to target EMP for improved outcomes in breast cancer, especially in reducing breast cancer recurrence by eradicating disseminated tumour cells which resist adjuvant therapy.
Wanted: Doctors keen to visit Africa, willing to spend two weeks teaching sixth year medical students and able to pay their own way.

The “job description” is for volunteers to travel to Somaliland to help out by giving lectures, bedside teaching sessions and practical demonstrations to students from the Hargeisa Medical School.

They will be following in the footsteps of a “pilot” team from the UWA Medical School and Australian Doctors for Africa (ADFA) who spent a fortnight there in March and identified a need for ongoing teaching assistance. The team consisted of WA GP Dr Rod Thelander and WA general surgeon, Mr Leon Cohen, both from ADFA, Associate Professor Anna Parker, senior lecturer in General Practice at UWA, and Clinical Professor Trevor Parry, of the School of Paediatrics and Child Health.

Associate Professor Parker said one of the most valuable contributions the Faculty could make was to encourage people to go to Africa to teach the medical students.

“The Dean (of the Hargeisa Medical School) really appreciated the fact that people came to give their time and expertise,” she said.

“The other thing I can’t really quantify is the morale boost the clinicians and other professionals get by having people show that they really believe in them and are prepared to support what they are trying to achieve.”

The aim is to send up to two teams of about four doctors each year. “Any specialisations would be welcome,” Associate Professor Parker said.

The time frame of two weeks worked well because it was an intensive period of teaching for the students but meant doctors were only away from their own practice in Australia for a short time.

Associate Professor Parker said she would happily go again. “It really was a very accessible way to contribute to their world,” she said, adding that she and Clinical Professor Parry were kindly supported by the Faculty to make the trip.

The main emphasis was on teaching practical skills to the 26 final year students. “Their theoretical knowledge is very good... but it is practical skills, both procedural skills and clinical examination skills, that seem to be what they need,” she said.

“When they are interns, they get very little supervision.”

Clinical Professor Parry said in the mornings the team mainly concentrated on giving lectures, both surgical and medical/paediatric, plus bedside teaching in surgery, medicine and paediatrics.

In the afternoons, when the power was off, they gave practical demonstrations of clinical examinations followed by student practice.

There were no designated lecture rooms for the medical students, who shared with the other Faculties and each day there were about 4000 students in two shifts.

“Dr Ereg showed us some excellent anatomical charts from UWA, but still in their packaging and stored behind his filing cabinet as there is no designated space to display them,” Clinical Professor Parry said. “Similarly there are microscopes still unpacked and unused.”

Associate Professor Parker said many of the patients they saw at the Hargeisa Group Hospital were desperately ill, often because they presented late. Infectious diseases such as diarrhoea and respiratory disease were common, as were diabetes, hypertension, asthma, heart failure and end-stage liver failure. Malaria was not common due to the altitude and season and neither was HIV.

“Antibiotics were available but little else,” she said. “There was no high dependency unit, no ICU and no monitoring equipment.”

The relationship between the UWA Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences and the University of Hargeisa Medical School was struck in 2007 when the Faculty Dean, Winthrop Professor Ian Puddey, visited Hargeisa at the invitation of the School Dean, Dr Deria Ereg. He met the Health Minister and learnt that the highest health priority for the emerging nation was training.

The wheels had been set in motion by Dr Thelander who had visited Somaliland in 2006 in a visit sponsored by ADFA and spoke to Professor Puddey on his return about what could be done to help. The most recent trip was the fifth for Dr Thelander.

Emeritus Professor David Allbrook also made a trip last year and pulled together the most recent trip.

WA obstetrician and gynaecologist Dr Gary Hastwell has been on previous trips, helping to forge the relationship and provide medical assistance.

By Cathy Saunders
What is needed

* A business plan for the building of a Clinical Laboratory and Computer Laboratory has been drawn up. Land is available and the estimated cost is US$100,000. About half of the funding is available so more funds would be welcome.

* Sponsorship of students to enable them to attend medical school would be valuable. The university tries to select students on merit but there is a cost to the students. It is about A$1,000 per year to pay for their university fees.

* There may be a case for some gifted graduates after their two years of internship being given scholarships to spend time in an Australian hospital/health service. It may be preferable to provide specialty training in Africa - but Australian scholarships could support this. All specialisations are needed but pathology, internal medicine, paediatrics and obstetrics are priorities.

* Tutors would benefit from skill development in teaching and supervision. A program such as Teaching on the Run could be offered during a visit.

The birth of a Republic

By Clinical Professor Trevor Parry

Following devastating civil wars for independence for about 10 years, the north-western part of Somalia declared itself as the independent Republic of Somaliland in 1991.

The essential infrastructure of the country had been destroyed and, following clan linked further civil war, agreement was reached with the establishment of stable government and the new country began to rebuild.

It is however still not recognised internationally, nor within Africa, as a valid entity and is viewed as a “rogue state”. Part of the reconstitution of the new country was the founding of the Medical School within the University of Hargeisa, the first graduates emerging in 2009.

Congratulations!

Hearty congratulations to five Faculty members who have been honoured with awards for their outstanding achievements.

Winthrop Professor Geoff Riley, Head of the Rural Clinical School of WA, was made a Member (AM) in the General Division in the Queen’s Birthday Honours list. His award was for service to medical education, particularly to rural and clinical practice, as an academic and administrator and to professional organisations.

Emeritus Professor Teik Oh, of the Division of Anaesthesiology in the School of Medicine and Pharmacology, also received an AM for his service to medicine, particularly through the development of protocols for the specialties of anaesthesia and intensive care, through leadership roles in clinical and academic practice, and with professional bodies.

Dr John Owen, an Honorary Clinical Consultant with the Faculty, was awarded an AM for his service to the specialty of orthodontics and through a range of leadership roles within the dental profession.

Clinical Professor Trevor Parry was named a 2010 WA Citizen of the Year. He received the Children and Young People Lifetime Achievement Award for his work as a medical and public educator with a particular focus on parenting, child development and the importance of the early years. He set up the State Child Development Centre almost 30 years ago and was its Director until April 2004.

Consultant plastic surgeon Robert Pearce, also a Clinical Associate Professor with Faculty, was another WA Citizen of the Year award winner. He received the Professions Award for his integrity and commitment to his patients, always finding time for his students and patients and happily assisting colleagues and friends at all times, and for inspiring those under his guidance to maximise their potential.
A LONG ROAD FROM STUDENT DAYS TO BECOMING AN AUTHOR

A UWA medical graduate, who is now a urological surgeon and Conjoint Associate Professor at the University of NSW, has updated a lay person’s guide to prostate cancer aimed at helping men make informed choices about testing and treatment.

Associate Professor Prem Rashid’s third edition of Prostate Cancer – your guide to the disease, treatment options and outcomes was launched by Retired General Peter Cosgrove in February. It is endorsed by three key men’s health organisations - Andrology Australia, the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia and the Urological Society of Australia and New Zealand.

“There remains a great need for high quality information to allow men to fully appreciate what the prostate is and what a diagnosis of cancer means,” Associate Professor Rashid said.

Prostate cancer is the most common cancer diagnosed in Australia, excluding non-melanoma skin cancers, and affects one in nine men. It is the second greatest cause of cancer deaths in men, according to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

More than 20,000 men are diagnosed and more than 3,000 men die from prostate cancer in Australia every year.

Associate Professor Rashid, who is a senior visiting urological surgeon and supervisor of urological training at the Port Macquarie Base Hospital, said it had been a long road since starting his MBBS in 1981 and completing his PhD in 1994, both at UWA. “I am now in NSW but there is no doubt that my early years through my many teachers at UWA contributed positively to where I am today,” he said.

He arrived from Malaysia as a 14 year old after the family migrated for the sake of a better education. His father, also a medical doctor, felt it was better to relocate the family rather than send the children to boarding school.

The teenager realised how important education was to his parents and applied himself academically, going from a straight C student in early high school to achieving the required grades to enter UWA’s Medical School, then under the leadership of Professor Richard Joske.

“I knew that I always wanted to be a surgeon and I passed my part 1 FRACS by my second post-graduate year and commenced my PhD with Winthrop Professor Michael Stacey at the Department of Surgery in Fremantle Hospital,” he said.

He recalled the collegiality of other members of the Department, including Winthrop Professor Paul Norman.

Associate Professor Rashid spent some time in general practice in Sorrento before re-commencing advanced urological training in Adelaide and later training further in the UK.

Since moving to Port Macquarie in NSW, he has been in clinical practice and is also involved in advanced urological training.

The 307-page third edition of his book breaks down the subject into easy to understand language for people with prostate cancer and their families.

“Prostate cancer remains a silent condition and men are desperate for information when diagnosed,” Associate Professor Rashid said. “The internet, where most turn to, can be a source of great confusion.”

The book is available from www.prostatebook.com au

CREATING HELPFUL LINCS

A student initiative that organises medical equipment and supplies to be sent overseas is on the beat again.

LINCS, a joint WA Medical Students’ Society and Interhealth project, involves 5th year medical students taking donated supplies with them when they undertake their electives in developing countries.

Kate McHugh, 2010 LINCS coordinator, said students notified their host organisations of LINCS and asked them to send a wish-list back.

“We then fulfil the wish-list the best we can and the more donations we receive from the community, the better we can do this,” she said. “The wish-list concept ensures only medical equipment that is needed and requested is sent. This prevents a build up of unnecessary or irrelevant equipment at the other end.”

In the past, students have taken a lot of basic items such as dressings, needles, pulse oximeters and glucometers, which are always in high demand. LINCS has also received requests for big items such as ECG machines.

They hoped to have many more students taking supplies this year, Ms McHugh said.

“If you are interested in supporting LINCS financially we are also seeking to create a fund to buy certain items that are not commonly donated,” she said. “In particular, many students have found hospitals in dire need of nutritional supplements and food for patients.”

Please contact lincs@wamss.org.au or visit the website interhealth.org.au and find LINCS under the ‘Initiatives’ tab.
Celebrating the passion of teaching

Associate Professor Erica Yates of the School of Dentistry was this year’s stand-out winner of the Faculty Excellence in Teaching Awards, receiving the highest number of student nominations.

She won the Early Career Award and the Outstanding Contributions to Student Learning Award.

The award ceremony was held in March at Fraser’s Restaurant in Kings Park. It was attended by nominators and nominees along with Heads of Schools and various academic and administrative staff who went to celebrate the contributions each nominee had made to the enrichment of the student learning experience.

Three staff members have been nominated by the Faculty for a UWA Excellence in Teaching Award. If they are successful, they will be put forward by the University to compete at the national level for an Australian Learning and Teaching Council Award.

They are Associate Professor Jane Heyworth of the School of Population Health, who won the Individual Teaching Award, Associate Professor Pam Nicol of the School of Paediatrics and Child Health, who was a nominee in the same category and also highly commended in the Outstanding Contributions to Student Learning category, and Associate Professor Paul McGurgan of the School of Women’s and Infants’ Health, who was a nominee in the same category and the Early Career category.

The nominees and winners in each category were:

**Early Career Award.** This category is aimed at those teachers who have been teaching within the Faculty for five years or less to recognise their contributions to student learning in that time. **Nominees:** Associate Professor Paul McGurgan of the School of Women’s and Infants’ Health, Associate Professor Erica Yates of the School of Dentistry. **Winner:** Associate Professor Erica Yates. She is the unit coordinator for three units in Operative Dentistry across years 1 and 2 of the BDSc Course whose teaching and research focus lies in preclinical skills and training for dentistry students.

**Postgraduate Coursework Award.** This is for those involved in teaching students at the postgraduate level in any of the Faculty’s disciplines. **Nominee and winner:** Assistant Professor Zarrin Siddiqui. A lecturer in a suite of the Faculty’s postgraduate health professional education courses, Assistant Professor Siddiqui has twice been nominated for this award.

**Research Supervision Award.** Given the importance of research within the Faculty, this award aims to recognise excellence in both undergraduate and postgraduate research supervision. **Nominees:** Dr Oyekoya (Koya) Ayorinrhe of the School of Medicine and Pharmacology, Professor Nigel Laing of the WA Institute for Medical Research, Winthrop Professor Cameron Patell of the School of Surgery, Associate Professor Flavie Waters of the School of Psychiatry and Clinical Neurosciences. **Winner:** Professor Nigel Laing, who is Head of the Laboratory of Molecular Genetics.

**Small Group Teaching Award.** **Nominees:** Associate Professor Wynand Breytenbach, Dr Eng Gan, Associate Professor Michael Gibbard, Professor Charles Greenfield, Associate Professor Lucy Gilkes, Dr Rupert Hodder, Associate Professor Clyde Jumeaux, Clinical Associate Professor Peter Kendall, Dr Senq Lee, Dr Joseph Ng, Associate Professor Robert Whitehead. **Winner:** Associate Professor Robert Whitehead. He is the medical coordinator for the Karratha and Port Hedland Rural Clinical School campuses. He is also this award’s recipient for the second time in a row.

**Individual Teaching Award (UWA).** This category is open to all UWA lecturers who teach undergraduate students in any of the Faculty’s disciplines. **Nominees:** Associate Professor Jane Heyworth of the School of Population Health, Associate Professor Pam Nicol of the School of Paediatrics and Child Health, Associate Professor Casey Parker of the Rural Clinical School’s Broome campus. **Winner:** Associate Professor Jane Heyworth.

**Individual Teaching Award (Non-UWA).** This award allows an opportunity for non-UWA teachers, such as clinical academics and clinicians, to be recognised for their teaching in a variety of settings, including hospitals, general practice and other clinical or practicum environments. **Nominees:** Dr David Hawkins, Dr Peter Panegyres, Clinical Professor Murugasu Segasothy. **Winner:** Clinical Professor Murugasu Segasothy, who is an Adjunct staff member of the School of Medicine and Pharmacology. He provides clinical teaching in general medicine for fourth and final year medical students at Royal Perth Hospital and Swan Districts Hospital, was a recipient of the Student Teaching Award at Flinders University for three successive years in a row from 2001-3 and received the Vice Chancellor’s Award in 2004 for Excellence in Teaching at Flinders University.

**Team Teaching Award (Clinical/Practicum Setting).** This category is aimed at recognising that teaching in off-campus settings can often be a collaborative effort where no one individual can be rewarded and where a team approach has been taken in the delivery of teaching. **Nominees and winners:** Dr Betty Lau and Dr Kim Yeoh. In their shared role as medical preceptors, they provide clinical training to fifth year students at their Ocean Reef Medical Practice.

**Outstanding Contributions to Student Learning Award.** **Nominees:** Merlyn D’Souza, Associate Professor Michael Gibbard, Professor Charles Greenfield, Dr Rupert Hodder, Associate Professor Clyde Jumeaux, Associate Professor Paul McGurgan, Dr Joseph Ng, Associate Professor Pam Nicol, Associate Professor Flavie Waters, Associate Professor Erica Yates. **Winner:** Associate Professor Erica Yates.

The 11 nominations received by Associate Professor Yates far exceeded those of any other candidate and the fact that one of those nominations was submitted on behalf of the entire Year 2 Dentistry cohort highlighted the high regard in which she is held by her students. The recurrent theme in all of the nominations was the dedication she shows to her students and the generosity of time and effort she gives to ensuring student success.

**Special commendation:**

Associate Professor Pam Nicol

A high commendation was awarded by the judging panel because of her continued contributions to medical student teaching and curriculum development over the past four years in her role as medical educator in the School of Paediatrics and Child Health.
The first centre of WA's state-of-the-art medical research hub is poised to start coming out of the ground in the next few months.

The start of construction of the new WA Institute for Medical Research building at QEII Medical Centre this year will be followed by that of the WAIMR centre at the Fiona Stanley Hospital next year.

The Nedlands hub will also house Faculty academic and research groups, the Lions Eye Institute (LEI) plus several other specialised research teams and hospital clinicians. This precinct will also provide a new home for the Telethon Institute for Child Health Research (TICHR), when the Princess Margaret Hospital for Children relocates to that site.

The aim is to boost interactions between laboratory-based and clinical researchers and fast-track new treatments for patients.

WAIMR Director Professor Peter Klinken said Federal funding was obtained by a consortium known as the Western Australian Institutes for Health, consisting of WAIMR, the University of WA, TICHR and LEI.

“We’ve also succeeded in gaining funding from Wesfarmers to create a Centre for Translational Research in WA and appointed Winthrop Professor Peter Leedman as Director of Translational Research to specifically address the issues of improving transfer of information from the bench to the bedside, and vice versa,” Professor Klinken said. “Professor Leedman is a clinician and a scientist and is therefore ideally suited to this role.

“In addition, we’ve just opened a Phase I clinical trials facility to hasten transfer of new drugs and treatments into the clinical arena.”

It was now recognised internationally that multi-institutional collaborations that promoted translational research were the way of the future, he said.

“The potential of discoveries made in the labs being converted in clinical application is accelerated while, conversely, information transmitted from clinicians to laboratory researchers is vital for guiding future research directions,” he said.

“The US National Institutes of Health has recently created Clinical and Translational Science Awards and Regional Translational Research Centres with the goal of increasing multi-institutional collaborations and similar strategies are unfolding in Europe. In Australia the “Parkville strip” is an excellent example of a powerful research precinct.”

The “Parkville strip”, a collection of prestigious biomedical research centres, includes the University of Melbourne, Monash University’s Parkville campus, the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute, the Howard Florey Institute, CSL Limited, the Ludwig Institute for Cancer Research and CSIRO’s Division of Health Sciences.

Professor Klinken said Western Australia was in a unique position at present to pursue the precinct model with vigour.

The concept of Advanced Health Care Centres as precincts which integrate the work of hospitals, university education and research activities, and medical research institutes has recently been discussed by Australia’s National Health and Medical Research Council.

A new genetic link for a subgroup of schizophrenia patients who retain good cognitive ability despite experiencing persistent psychotic symptoms has been discovered by Faculty researchers.

Winthrop Professor Assen Jablensky, Director of the Centre for Clinical Research in Neuropsychiatry, and Professor Luba Kalaydjieva, Head of the WA Institute for Medical Research’s Molecular Genetics Laboratory, found that two polymorphisms in the gene Neuregulin 3 (NRG3) are associated with the schizophrenia subtype. The ability of patients in this subgroup to think, perceive, remember and reason is relatively unaffected.

The research findings were published in the international journal Molecular Psychiatry.

They are expected ultimately to help in the development of new drugs targeting specific dysfunctions and lead to more personalised treatments for patients. “It is good news for patients,” Professor Kalaydjieva said.

The research was conducted as part of The WA Family Study of Schizophrenia and involved studying 411 people with schizophrenia and 223 people with no history of mental illness.

The NRG3 gene has recently been identified as one of several genes that differentiate the genome of modern humans from the genome of the Neanderthals, suggesting an evolutionary selection for enhanced cognition.
Where to after graduation?

The Health Science Alumni has made good its promise to produce a careers book that was proposed by a group of third year Health Science students less than two years ago.

In April, the dynamic group launched the first edition of the Health Science Careers Graduate Profile Book, which they created as volunteers in their own time. The Faculty funded the printing.

HSA communications officer Victoria Gray said the Health Science degree was unique, with a broad range of career opportunities. “It can be both exciting and challenging for potential and current students when there is no one answer when they ask: What do you become when you graduate from Health Science?” she said. “This is unlike degrees such as law or engineering.”

The book showcases 38 graduate profiles from 11 of the 13 available Science majors, which are all coupled with a Public Health major. Some graduates have double degrees in commerce or economics.

The book also contains some insights from key employers of Health Science graduates and lists some of the graduate destinations.

It caters for three main groups - potential and current students to give them a glimpse of the range of interesting jobs they will be equipped for after graduation, graduates to see what their peers are up to, and industry members to alert them to the skills of Health Science graduates and ways in which they may be useful to their organisation.

“The Alumni hopes to produce the book again in the coming years, showcasing other graduates,” Ms Gray said.

Opening a window on pain

The powerful link between suffering and art was the basis of a special exhibition held last month at Graylands Hospital’s Creative Expression and Centre for Arts Therapy.

Winthrop Professor of Psychiatry Assen Jablensky, Director of the Centre for Clinical Research in Neuropsychiatry, described the work of artists with mental illnesses such as Edvard Munch, Piet Mondrian and Vincent van Gogh, those with physical illnesses such as Matisse and Picabia, and also those with drug problems, such as Baudelaire.

He said Van Gogh once wrote in a letter to his brother that true artists do not paint things as they are, but rather “as they themselves feel them to be”.

Professor Jablensky also referred to the Cunningham Dax collection, currently housed in the Mental Health Research Institute in Melbourne, which contains more than 12,000 works of art by people who have experienced mental illness or psychological trauma.

The CECAT exhibition, with the theme of Creativity, Health and Disease, was held to mark the opening of Schizophrenia Awareness Week.

Guests included Mr Neil Guard, Acting Commissioner for Mental Health, and Dr Ann Hodge and Ms Sylvia Meier, both of North Metropolitan Area Health Service - Mental Health.
Moving on to Melbourne – farewell to an exceptional medico

He loves music and keeping fit, was the first Chair in Emergency Medicine in Australasia, follows a vegan and fish diet, latched into shape an ailing emergency department in a major hospital, has published numerous clinical studies and several books, was a WA finalist for Australian of the Year in 2008 and has kept multiple sclerosis at bay for years.

He is Winthrop Professor George Jelinek, who retired in mid-April as Professor of Emergency Medicine at UWA and Head of Emergency Medicine at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital.

A UWA medical graduate, he was appointed in October 1996 as the first Chair in Emergency Medicine at the University of WA, which was a first for Australasia. He was initially based in the University’s Department of Surgery and SCGH.

“The hospital was going through a fairly difficult time and there were even stories about closing the hospital altogether, which seems extraordinary these days” he says. “The problem was a very dysfunctional Emergency Department which at that time had no consultants, no training registrars and was not accredited for training by the College.”

He was brought from Fremantle Hospital, where he had been working for 11 years as a consultant and Deputy Director of Emergency Medicine, to pull the ED at SCGH into shape.

“It was probably the biggest challenge going around at the time in medicine,” he says. “The hospital was frequently bypassed by the ambulance service.”

He negotiated to be allowed to appoint a clinical director, Dr Ian Rogers, to run the ED.

“I was very lucky because I was in a position where the hospital was prepared to pay good money and devote a significant proportion of its budget to fixing the department,” Professor Jelinek says.

Coming from a base of no consultants in the ED, Professor Jelinek asked for, and got, nine clinical consultants, including two senior lecturers, all recruited within a year. For the academic unit at UWA, he appointed a secretary and a full-time research officer, all funded by the hospital.

“You had a rare, one-off situation with a hospital prepared to do anything to get themselves turned around and prepared to pay for it,” he says.

One of the inaugural senior lecturers was Dr Tony Celenza, now a high profile Winthrop Professor of Emergency Medicine, and the other was Dr Lindsay Murray, who started the WA toxicology service now run through SCGH.

“One of the real highlights for me was convincing the Health Department to move the Poisons Information Centre from Princess Margaret Hospital to Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital so we could have the poisons information, the poisons treatment and the poisons research all on the one site,” Professor Jelinek says. One of his key personal research interests then was toxicology, particularly focusing on snake bite and spider bite.

Three years into his new role, the Professor had Emergency Medicine moved from being a sub-unit within the Department of Surgery to becoming its own discipline within the School of Primary, Aboriginal and Rural Health Care.

This gave emergency medicine a stronger profile and extra research funding.

With more funds he was able to employ more people, including Dr Ian Jacobs who is now a Winthrop Professor of Emergency Medicine.

“He gave us a very strong link into the ambulance service,” Professor Jelinek says. “He was heading the WA pre-hospital care research unit at St John Ambulance and we moved that across to UWA. So we were able to have all the ambulance data to work on and to research and we linked that with (Winthrop Professor) D’Arcy Holman’s data set at Public Health.”

This led to the formation of the ECHO (Emergency Care and Hospitalisation Outcomes) data set, considered unique in Australia as it enabled the researchers to track patients from arriving at the emergency department by ambulance to their outcomes as a result of various treatments. “It started us off on a very rich vein of research which we have continued and had multiple publications in,” Professor Jelinek says.

“For instance, we published a paper showing that overcrowding in emergency departments was resulting in substantially increased death rate of patients. It was a critical paper in the whole debate in Australia about overcrowding and access block …and gave us the ammunition to really lobby hard to get governments to fund more beds so we would have places to put our emergency patients.”

Although he was the founding editor of the prestigious journal Emergency Medicine Australasia and has other achievements too numerous to mention, one thing close to his heart that he didn’t find time to achieve was to establish a Chair in Toxicology within Emergency Medicine.

“We have established what is the premier toxicology treatment centre in the country and we have done most of the toxicology research and got the best point of information network,” Professor Jelinek says. “Everything about it lends itself to an academic discipline.”
Although he is retiring from clinical medicine, he will continue his research work. He has an appointment with the University of Melbourne and St Vincent’s Health as academic director of a research unit known as the Emergency Practice Innovation Centre.

The timing is right for him. Now that his three children in Perth are grown, he and his wife are keen to live in Melbourne, as her children and family are there.

A life-changing diagnosis

In his early research days, Professor Jelinek focused on toxinology and was fascinated by the WA brown snake and the redback spider.

Then came a life-changing diagnosis which sparked new research interests and he now looks into the impact of lifestyle on the development and treatment of chronic illness.

Eleven years ago, he was told he had multiple sclerosis and, once he had researched the literature, he made major life changes which have led to him being symptom-free.

The 56-year-old eats a plant-based wholefood diet with fish but no dairy or meat, swims 1500 metres every day and runs at least six kilometres one or twice a week, meditates for 20-30 minutes every day and, despite his hectic work schedule, gets plenty of sleep.

“I am judicious in how I spend my time,” he says, adding that he shuns TV. He continues to advocate medication for people with MS.

He also strongly recommends that people get regular, low-dose sun exposure in order to ensure good levels of vitamin D, which is known to have beneficial effects on the immune system. Typically, people with MS have very low levels of vitamin D, he says.

“I am pleased to say that 11 years on from being diagnosed with MS, I remain perfectly well so it is possible that the prevailing paradigm, which is that most people at that stage of illness would be substantially disabled, can be changed,” he says.

Although he at first focused his research on MS, he has since broadened his scope to include other diseases such as type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

“I am pushing very hard to have a more holistic approach to health and wellness and for governments and research bodies to start looking at funding programs that are much more based on changing the way people live,” he says.

Professor Jelinek has published books on dealing with MS and released another in February called “Overcoming multiple sclerosis”, a best-seller which was going to its first reprint four months after release.

He also runs week-long, live-in retreats all over Australia and in Auckland, New Zealand for people with MS.

-By Cathy Saunders
WA Institute for Medical Research director Professor Peter Klinken is QAS initial results of a clinical trial of a vaccine being tested in Britain for the advanced stages of melanoma look promising. In the study of 50 patients with advanced melanoma who had been given no more than nine months to live, 16 per cent recovered completely with the treatment. They have been disease-free for four years. In another 28 per cent, the size of their tumours shrank by more than half. “It is obviously important for these initial results to be tested in a bigger number of patients, so we’ll watch out for the results of the (latest) clinical trial with much interest,” Professor Klinken said.

Clinical Associate Professor Tim Jones, of the Telethon Institute for Child Health Research, is QAS a regional diabetes clinic run by Princess Margaret Hospital that has celebrated its 21st year takes the pressure off families who previously had to travel long distances to Perth for treatment. More than 400 patients in rural areas receive treatment from the diabetes team, which travels almost 30,000km each year into the country. “No other diabetes team travels as far in Australia, if not the world, to see their patients,” Clinical Associate Professor Tim Jones said. “This approach of managing the increasing numbers of children with type 1 diabetes in regional areas has become a model for other clinics around Australia.”

Clinical Associate Professor Roger Clarnette, of the School of Psychiatry and Clinical Neurosciences, is QAS thousands more nursing home beds will be needed to cope with an explosion in dementia cases over coming years. The number of people in WA affected by Alzheimer’s disease is expected to increase by 164 per cent by 2030. Dr Clarnette said the Government had to increase funding for aged care services because dementia sufferers could not live at home or stay in public hospitals and nursing homes were already full. “All the baby boomers are retiring and living longer,” he said. “They have looked after themselves and will live long enough to get Alzheimer’s disease.”

Dr Qun Mai, of the School of Population Health, is QAS researchers in a team she headed were surprised by findings that people with mental illnesses visit GPs more often than those without mental health problems but their physical health is still suffering, with their average life expectancy in the 50s. The study found that people with a mental illness made 1.6 GP visits for every appointment made by people without a mental health condition. Dr Mai said the findings were contrary to their hypothesis and to two big US studies which found mental health patients had poor access to GPs. She said physical health could be taking a back seat to complex mental health concerns because of time constraints of GPs.

WA Institute for Medical Research deputy director Winthrop Professor Peter Leedman is QAS pharmaceutical industry-sponsored later phase clinical trials contribute about $15 million to the WA economy each year. He was talking after the opening of WAIMR’s $9.4 million State Government-funded early phase clinical trials facility in Nedlands, where healthy West Australians will be able to volunteer to take part in a range of clinical trials to determine the suitability of new drugs and treatments. WAIMR is expected to bring millions of dollars into WA from biotech companies keen to undertake trials of their drugs at the 24-bed facility.

Ear Science Institute Australia Director Winthrop Professor Marcus Atlas is QAS a laboratory grown eardrum would be a quicker, less invasive treatment for perforated eardrums, which can burst as a result of injury or chronic ear infections. The ESIA will conduct long-awaited animal trials of its tissue-engineering eardrum, a world first, which could allow patients to grow a new eardrum from skin cells. The new technique uses the patient’s own skin cells and a special scaffold that replicates the human tympanic membrane.

Winthrop Professor Fiona Stanley, Director of the Telethon Institute for Child Health Research, is QAS patients and their families who take part in clinical trials feel they are giving something back. More than 11,500 West Australians are in involved in research at TICHR alone, with many more taking part in clinical trials at hospitals and laboratories across WA. Professor Stanley said more randomised trials were needed so that medicines could be tested more thoroughly.

Our medical quiz is kindly supplied by Emeritus Professor Bernard Catchpole, the second Professor of Surgery appointed to the Faculty.

**What therapeutic substances have been obtained from these plant materials?**

1. Artemisia annua  
2. Jesuit’s bark  
3. Foxglove  
4. Henbane  
5. Plantago genus

Answers opposite
The expert visiting Chinese group consisted of Professors Xing Xie, Xiaoying Zhao and Weiguo Lu, all of the Zhejiang University, Yunneng Liu, of the China Medical University, Chuanding Yu, of the Zhejiang Cancer Hospital, and Shan Zhu, of the Wuhan University.

Professor Xie explained the important concept of “guanxi”, which he translated as meaning good credibility and friendship established and developed between both sides of a collaboration.

He said a priority in the Chinese health system was women’s and children’s health and a national trial of a free screening program of breast and cervical cancers had been recently launched.

Professor Liu told the seminar that the Chinese government spends about three per cent of the GDP annually in research, with one major focus being accessibility to certain public health services that are free to people who are socio-economically disadvantaged. Medical reform is a hot topic nationwide and aims to increase the quality of healthcare services and cut down the cost of medical treatment. Another research focus is the diagnosis and treatment of common diseases rather than their aetiology and prevention.

In Liaoning province, local research priorities are focused on infectious diseases such as viral hepatitis and tuberculosis, and common chronic diseases such as hypertension, diabetes, and cancers.

Prof Lu said the main aim of China’s strategic plan for health by 2020 was to achieve a healthcare system accessible for every resident and to promote health outcomes at a national level. Local research priorities in Zhejiang Province closely follow national ones and include:

- Developing guidelines for diagnosis and treatment of common diseases and improving applications of appropriate technology in diagnosis and treatment.
- Monitoring precancerous lesions and interventions in cancers.
- Diagnosis and treatment of neurological diseases and mental illnesses.
- Diagnosis and treatment of genetic and metabolic diseases.

The research frontier areas set up in China include:

- Technology in stem cells and cloning.
- Research in regeneration and alternative medicine.
- Tissue engineering.
- Technology in artificial organs.
- Research in cancer cell models.

TIPS FOR DEVELOPING GOOD RESEARCH COLLABORATIONS WITH CHINA.

**DOS**

- The game rules are legality, courtesy, and morality.
- Have common research interests.
- Lay a solid foundation for research grants e.g. co-authorship of publications.
- Meet the needs of national and local research priorities.
- Be patient when collaborating with Chinese academics because some administrative systems and processes in China are different from those in Australia.
- Communicate clearly in order to improve understanding. Some Chinese may not be willing to express their opinions in a direct way.
- Learn simple Chinese words. It will be helpful to establish the first steps towards a good “guanxi”.
- Draw up a formal contract.
- Understand the partner’s research background, local culture and tradition.
- Show enthusiasm and generosity.

**DON’TS**

- Deceive or cheat collaborators.
- Abuse intellectual property rights.
- Show lack of respect to supervisors and colleagues because of a lack of knowledge of Chinese culture.
- Show ignorance about China’s situation, local customs and culture.
- Fail to make any effort to acknowledge Chinese language e.g., by failing to provide anything in Chinese writing, even just a business card, or by making no effort to say hello in Chinese.
- Leave without saying goodbye.

The delegation of six visiting Chinese professors is joined by Winthrop Professor John Newnham, Head of the School of Women’s and Infants’ Health (4th from left), Winthrop Professor D’Arcy Holman, Head of the School of Population Health (6th from left), and Research Associate Professor Min Zhang, of the School of Population Health (far right), after the successful Collaborative Research in China Seminar.
A DECADE OF SERVICE

Founding CTEC Director, Clinical Professor Richard Vaughan, has been awarded a commemorative plaque for 10 years of valuable contributions to medicine and surgery in WA and for his leadership in the establishment of CTEC.

The presentation was made by Vice Chancellor Winthrop Professor Alan Robson at a gala dinner at the University Club in April.

The event was organised by CTEC and the Sir Hector Stewart Surgical Club to celebrate a decade of service to medical and surgical skills development and training in WA.

Special guests included representatives of the University of Indonesia, including Dr Ratna Sitompul, Dean of the Faculty of Medicine. She and her team are collaborating with the Faculty to establish a surgical skills simulation centre for Indonesian surgeons.

Mr Matthew Thomas, an expert in research in human factors management from the University of South Australia, told the guests that human input was vital in managing crises in high risk industries such as aviation. Simulation training was crucial for the development of leadership skills as well as technical skills, he said.