

ALUMNI NEWS

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Tackling the structural drivers of HIV

In this issue...

New MSc degrees in Nutrition and Global Mental Health

Introducing the TB Centre

Olympics and trafficking: the myths and the evidence

LONDON
SCHOOL of
HYGIENE
& TROPICAL
MEDICINE



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Message from our Director



Life at the School has been busy, with another generation of students graduating from the School during the Masters Graduation Day on 10 March and the Research Degrees Graduation Ceremony on 8 June. These events are an important rite of passage for our graduates, marking a new phase in their careers which will bring new experiences, challenges and opportunities that will test the tools and expertise our graduates have been taught at the School.

During the Masters Graduation Day, we were very pleased to award honorary fellowships to Professor Sir Brian Greenwood, who this year has been knighted and awarded the Canada Gairdner Prize for his contribution to medicine and public health, Professor Dame Valerie Beral, Director of Oxford's Cancer Epidemiology Unit and formerly at the School, John Godfrey, a long standing School Board and Council member and Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, alumnus and the Ethiopian Minister for Health, whose leadership in malaria research and public health policy is internationally recognised.

Picking out the highlights is always a difficult task; here is a selection:

- Richard Hayes and colleagues have won a prestigious award from the US Global AIDS Coordinator's Office, NIH and the Gates Foundation, totalling \$37M for PopART, a project to test an innovative combination of strategies to prevent HIV in African countries.
- Our TB Centre (see page 12) held a symposium to mark World TB Day. The School's Centre for Global Non Communicable Diseases was launched on 25 April, and the International Diagnostics Centre has been approved.
- The LSHTM-UCL initiative, the Bloomsbury Institute for Pathogen Research (See page 11), aims to pool expertise and resources in pathogen research with the ambition to co-locate both institutions' high tech laboratory pathogen facilities.
- The school signed a memorandum of understanding with the National University of Singapore's Saw Swee Hock School of Public Health, as a strategic institutional partner working together on research and education programmes for the South-East Asia region.

A date for the diary – John Snow Bicentenary Symposium on 11-12 April 2013 marks 200 years since John Snow's birth. It will be a contemporary evaluation of Snow's legacy and how epidemiological methods have developed and adapted to be important outside health sciences.

I hope you will be able to attend.

I am pleased to announce the School's new five year strategy. The School is committed to ensuring the continued relevance and quality of its education programme. I would be interested to hear your suggestions on how the School's education provision can be developed. We aim also to involve our alumni more in the life of the School, advising and inspiring current and future students, along with seeking your help in forging partnerships and links between the School and individuals and institutions around the world.

Finally, thank you to those of you who contributed to the Alumni Fund. As Dr Tedros said at the March Graduation, "This School is my School!", a sentiment I hope you share. I ask you, personally, to support us and help us flourish over the coming months and years.

Peter Piot
director@lshtm.ac.uk

2012 HONORARY FELLOWSHIPS

The Honorary Fellowship is the School's most prestigious honour. Fellowships are conferred triennially on people who have rendered exceptional service to the School or have attained exceptional distinction in any of the subjects taught in the School.



John Godfrey

For exceptional service to LSHTM through his leadership role on School Committees.

John Godfrey has been providing invaluable support and guidance to the School for over 15 years, including as a member of the Board of Management, subsequently Council, and as Chair of the Planning and Finance Committee.

Professor Sir Brian Greenwood

For outstanding contribution to the development of the School and major accomplishments in tropical and infectious disease research globally.

Brian Greenwood has had a distinguished career in research on diseases of the tropics, starting in 1965 in Nigeria, then from 1980 in The Gambia where he was Director of the MRC Unit, and since 1996 in London at the School. He has made outstanding contributions to the understanding of the pathogenesis, epidemiology and control of several important tropical diseases. In The Gambia, he established a multidisciplinary research programme which focused on some of the most important infectious diseases prevalent in West Africa, including malaria, pneumonia, measles, meningitis, hepatitis B and HIV. His work included demonstration of the efficacy of insecticide treated bednets in preventing death from malaria in African children and trials to measure the impact of *Haemophilus influenzae* type b and pneumococcal conjugate vaccines. He was the founding Director of the School's Malaria Centre. Since moving to the School, he has attracted major funding from prestigious funding agencies, which has developed a new generation of African malaria researchers.

Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus

For an outstanding career including important contributions as a malariologist and in a public health leadership role nationally and internationally.

Tedros Ghebreyesus is one of the School's most distinguished alumni. He has made important contributions academically in the area of malaria and is an outstanding leader as the Minister of Health in Ethiopia. He has improved the primary healthcare system in Ethiopia through training the providers and setting policies based on the research evidence. Internationally he was the chair of the governing boards of UNAIDS, Roll Back Malaria Partnership, the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health, and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria.

Professor Dame Valerie Beral

For outstanding contribution to the areas of epidemiology and cancer research.

Dame Valerie worked at the School for almost 20 years. In 1988 she moved to Oxford to be Director of the Cancer Epidemiology Unit. Her research includes the role of reproductive, hormonal and infectious agents in cancer. She is Principal Investigator for the Million Women Study on the effect of women's lifestyle on health, with a particular

focus on the effects of hormone replacement therapy. Since 1991, she has led the international collaborative studies of breast, ovarian and endometrial cancer. Dame Valerie has served on various international committees for the World Health Organization and the United States National Academy of Sciences, and chaired the UK Department of Health's Advisory Committee on Breast Cancer Screening.

CONGRATULATIONS to our MSc class of 2011!

Over 1,400 graduates and their guests attended the 2012 MSc Graduation Day on 10 March. This event has become so large that the day has been split into two ceremonies, with the morning ceremony for graduates of the faculty of Public Health and Policy and the afternoon ceremony for graduates of the faculties of Epidemiology and Population Health, and Infectious and Tropical Diseases.

316 graduates who studied for their MSc degree in London joined 63 graduates who completed their degree by distance learning. The graduating class of 2011 came from over 45 countries around the world. The annual Distance Learning Reception took place on Friday 9 March and was the largest reception in the event's six year history. Over 180 alumni, students and staff came together in the Keppel Street Library for a celebration of the School's distance learning community. ■



In focus: MSc Nutrition for Global Health

Since the 1940s, the School has been offering research and teaching in nutrition. We have trained postgraduates for a wide range of occupations, both nationally and internationally.



Medair nutrition worker weighing a baby in Afghanistan
Photo courtesy of Medair

Past students are engaged in operational work such as community nutrition programmes or humanitarian and emergency support for NGOs including Save the Children, Action Contre la Faim, Goal and also for WHO and UNICEF. Others are working in the public health arena in the UK and overseas on topics ranging from health promotion and nutrition education to national policy in organisations such as the Department of Health, the Department for International Development, the British Nutrition Foundation, the Association for Nutrition and local health authorities. Some past students have remained in the academic

environment, becoming university lecturers and researchers, others have gone on to hold influential positions in government ministries and international agencies.

The course has changed over the years, evolving from a two year MSc in Nutrition to a one year MSc in Public Health Nutrition and now a Masters of Nutrition for Global Health. The School is proud that our MSc was the first course of its kind to be accredited by the UK Association for Nutrition and that it has been described by nutrition professionals as 'the best course of its kind' and the 'standard bearer for training in public health nutrition'. Increasing public awareness of nutrition problems, ranging from famine to obesity, means that nutrition has a higher profile than ever before and there is a continuing demand for the kind of training we offer. ■



Medair nutrition worker in Afghanistan
Photo courtesy of Medair

Report highlights need for action on health in **the aftermath of war**

Countries recovering from war are at risk of being left to their own devices in tackling non communicable diseases (NCDs), leaving an “open door” for exploitation by alcohol, tobacco and food companies, health experts warn. Writing in the Bulletin of the World Health Organization, Bayard Roberts and Martin McKee, of London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, and Preeti Patel, of King’s College London, argue that the post-conflict environment risks increases of mental health problems and other NCDs, such as high blood pressure, diabetes and cancer.



After exposure to violent and traumatic events, people may be prone to developing harmful health behaviours, such as excessive drinking and smoking, which exacerbate the problem of NCDs in the long-term. This is why the lack of a strong will from the authorities to restore the health system leaves an open door for commercial ventures to influence health policy to their advantage.

The authors write: “This toxic combination of stress, harmful health behaviours and aggressive marketing by multinational companies in

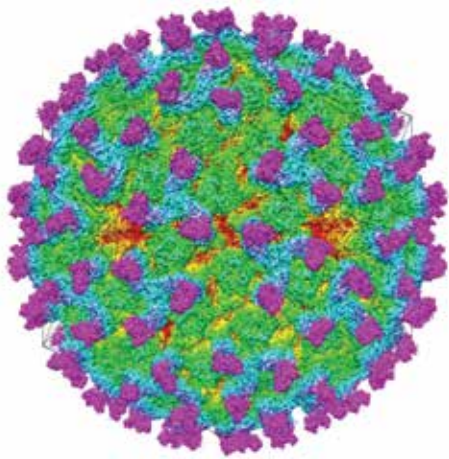
transitional settings requires an effective policy response but often the state has limited capacity to do this.”

Afghanistan has no national policy or strategy towards NCDs and, apart from the European Commission, none of its partners have given priority to introduce and support them. High blood pressure is largely untreated in Iraq, three times as many people die prematurely from NCDs in Libya than from infectious diseases, and similar patterns can be found in other countries recovering from conflict.

“This policy vacuum provides an open door for multinational companies to influence policies in ways that undermine efforts to control tobacco and alcohol use or improve unhealthy diets in transitional countries,” the experts say. The authors argue that this gap must be filled, pointing out that the post-conflict period can provide an opportunity to completely rewrite strategies and undertake reforms to better address the health needs of a population and lay the foundations for a more efficient health system. ■

Photos courtesy of
World Health Organization





Pioneering Bluetongue research

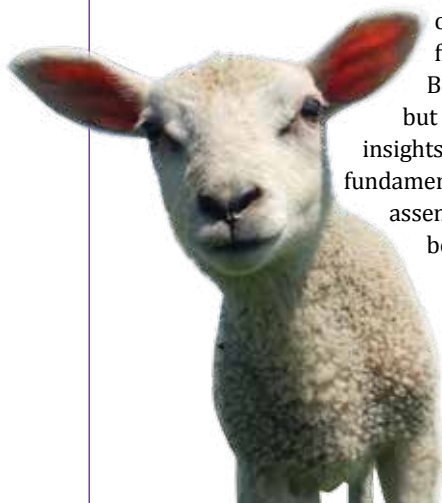
OPENS WAY FOR A NEW GENERATION OF VACCINES

School researchers have developed the first totally man-made live and replicating Bluetongue virus, a disease that affects livestock and kills about 70% of infected animals.

The discovery has the potential to lead to the development of more efficient vaccines for Bluetongue and to a better understanding of the way viruses assemble themselves, positively influencing research into other vaccines.

Professor Polly Roy, who led the team, says: "We've developed the tools and provided the instruction manual for developing new and more effective Bluetongue vaccines.

This will not only be useful for combating Bluetongue but will provide insights into fundamental virus assembly that will be useful for producing vaccines for other viruses." ■



FOOD HYGIENE:

Investigating a neglected subject

Contaminated food accounts for a substantial proportion of diarrhoeal diseases, especially among infants and children, yet this subject remains under-researched. Efforts are now under way to help plug this knowledge gap as part of the activities of the School-led DFID-funded SHARE (Sanitation and Hygiene Applied Research for Equity) consortium.

A recent ground-breaking intervention study of weaning food hygiene in Mali showed how simple measures, such as reheating food and handwashing, could achieve large reductions in the numbers of faecal bacteria ingested by young children. The authors of the article included LSHTM's Professor Sandy Cairncross OBE, Research Director of SHARE, and Ousman Touré, of the Agence Nationale de la Sécurité Sanitaire des Aliments, Ministère de la Santé, Bamako, Mali. SHARE has also funded a similar weaning food hygiene study in Matlab, a rural area of Bangladesh. The lead researcher for the Bangladesh study was School alumnus Dr Sirajul Islam, of the International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh.



Photo by Alumnus Mirna Robert

Indonesian poultry worker, clearly not too worried about the transmission of viruses and bacteria, as he smokes a cigarette and attaches the live birds to his motorbike.

These projects reflect a growing interest in the subject of food hygiene, and they are proving instructive for School PhD student Om Prasad Gautam as he plans to investigate this neglected subject. Om will be carrying out a randomised controlled trial of a food hygiene intervention in his homeland Nepal. He is drawing on more than 10 years of professional experience working for the World Health Organization and WaterAid Nepal to assist his studies. His formative research will involve analysing current food hygiene practices and motivations. He will then design a simple, focused and replicable food hygiene intervention, which is likely to include the promotion of handwashing with soap, the cleaning of utensils, and reheating of food before eating. His studies, which are supervised by Dr Val Curtis, Director of the School's Hygiene Centre, are funded by the SHARE consortium. ■

NEW MSc IN GLOBAL MENTAL HEALTH LAUNCHED

The first face-to-face taught MSc in Global Mental Health in the world has just been launched by the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine and King's College London Institute of Psychiatry.



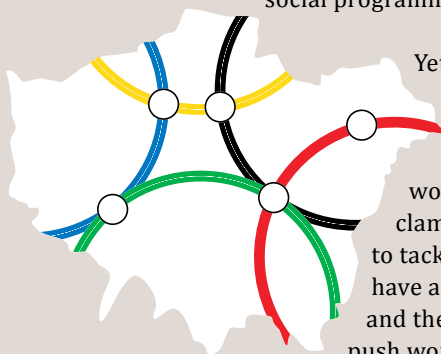
Starting in September 2012, the MSc in Global Mental Health can be taken either full-time for one year or part-time for two years. The course aims to provide people with the knowledge and the skills to initiate, develop and oversee mental health policies and programmes in low resource settings, and to conduct and critically evaluate research on Global Mental Health.

By the end of the course, the students will have acquired an understanding of the challenges in providing accessible and effective mental health services in low resource settings, and will be equipped with the knowledge and the tools to work towards reducing the global burden of mental, neurological and substance abuse (MNS) disorders, which comprise about 14% of the global burden of disease. Yet, in low- and middle-income countries, which contain about 80% of the world's population, the great majority of people with MNS disorders do not receive treatment because they lack access to adequate care. Reducing this "treatment gap" will require a new generation of experts who will take on the challenges of improving and expanding mental health services in low resource settings. ■

Uncovering the myths and evidence around OLYMPICS AND TRAFFICKING

Misguided fears that sex trafficking will increase during the London Olympics could leave vulnerable women without access to health services and at risk of harm, according to experts who gathered at the School for a debate on the issue.

Similar concerns were expressed before the World Cup in Germany and South Africa, the Olympics in Athens and Vancouver, and the US Super Bowl, but recent research demonstrates that anti-trafficking measures put into place in a range of countries have proved disproportionate, unnecessary or harmful in cases where sex workers become increasingly criminalised and unable to access health and social programmes.



Yet despite evidence collected from police authorities, the International Organization for Migration and services working with sex workers, clampdowns and extra measures to tackle the perceived influx have already been introduced and the experts warn this could push women on to the streets or

away from their existing support networks and NHS outreach schemes.

Joanna Busza, Senior Lecturer in Sexual and Reproductive Health at the School commented: "There is no reason to think the UK will have a very different experience, and we should learn from the experiences of other cities. In the meantime, however, discussion of trafficking is distracting attention and resources from ensuring good quality services are in place and able to access vulnerable sex workers. Outreach programmes and specialised health services are evidence-based, and associated with improved health. Police crackdowns and brothel closures tend to displace sex workers from flats and saunas to less safe work venues, including the street, and make them wary of all authorities so that they are less likely to access services or to report episodes of violence or crime to the police." ■

STRIVE: Tackling the structural drivers of HIV

HIV/AIDS continues to take life and undermine development and progress. Despite twenty years of concerted action, the number of people who are newly infected with HIV outstrips the numbers entering treatment. Anyone working in health knows that factors such as violence and stigma combine to create vulnerability and hinder prevention. But how, precisely, do such social forces influence HIV? And what works, in practice, to address them?

Over a six-year span, Department for International Development funded consortium STRIVE brings together partners in Tanzania, India and South Africa to generate and systematise evidence on upstream factors that influence risk: gender inequality and violence; poor livelihood options; alcohol availability and drinking norms; and stigma and criminalisation. STRIVE seeks to understand how these factors drive the epidemic, what programmes are effective in tackling them, how such interventions can, affordably, be taken to scale, and how best to translate this research into policy and practice.

Main photo: Taken on a STRIVE visit to rural Tanzania



IDEAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Building capacity for measurement, learning & evaluation in maternal and newborn health

Photo by: Ruth McGavin
Mother and child in Central Asia.



Two million lives a year are lost as a result of complications during labour and childbirth. These deaths occur mainly in low-income settings, from well understood, and preventable, causes.

The IDEAS (Informed Decisions for Actions) project will measure, learn from and evaluate innovations in health provision and demand in Ethiopia, North-Eastern Nigeria and Uttar Pradesh, India. By using this data to advocate evidence-based policy decisions, IDEAS aims to improve the survival and health of mothers and newborns.



Underpinning STRIVE's work are methodological innovations, such as attempts to expand mathematical modelling to incorporate structural factors into HIV transmission models that evaluate the impact of different interventions on the number of infections prevented.

Through STRIVE, partners are collaborating across geographies in targeted interventions with adolescent girls and sex workers, using methodologies from randomised cluster trials to participatory action research, and generating new findings as well as analysing existing data. Presently, researchers are seeking insights from longitudinal studies of men in the Mumbai slums; conducting secondary analysis of data from the Millennium Villages Project, which addresses key development challenges in 18 villages across Africa; and analysing the impact of community mobilization on the effectiveness of HIV prevention programmes in Karnataka, India. ■

MAIN PHOTO: Taken on a STRIVE visit to rural Tanzania

PHOTO LEFT: STRIVE partner, the Karnataka Health Promotion Trust, develops interventions in community mobilisation of sex-workers

PHOTO MIDDLE: Blessings to welcome a London School researcher from the STRIVE team to a programme for adolescent girls in rural Karnataka, India

PHOTO RIGHT: STRIVE Chief Executive, Lori Heise, learns first-hand about the skills programme accompanying a clinic-based trial in a Mumbai slum

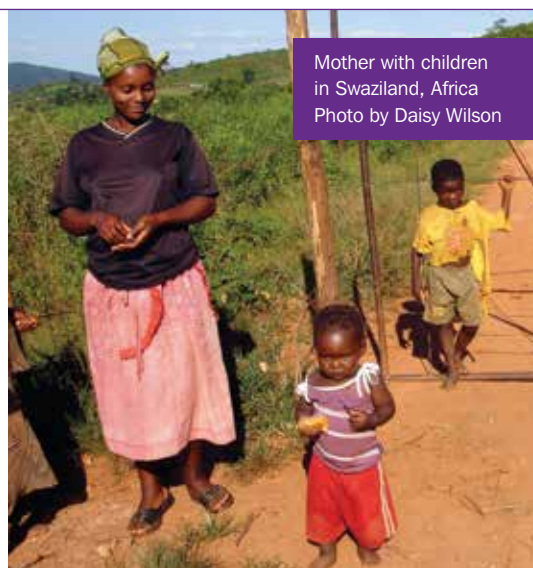


IDEAS not only uses measurement, learning and evaluation techniques for its own research, the team has also launched a Technical Resource Centre to strengthen measurement, learning and evaluation capacity amongst its in-country partners.

The new low bandwidth Technical Resource Centre website, launched in January 2012, allows partners to take part in discussion forums, browse published papers and reports, download distance learning resources for self-study and request support from LSHTM experts to review documents and run training courses. ■



Keep track of developments by signing up to the IDEAS quarterly newsletter via ideas@lshtm.ac.uk



Mother with children in Swaziland, Africa
Photo by Daisy Wilson

BIOSCIENCES PARTNERSHIP WINS FUNDING FOR PhD STUDENTSHIPS

The School has been awarded funding from the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC) to train a new generation of scientists as part of a newly formed London consortium.

The new BBSRC London Interdisciplinary PhD Programme is being led by UCL with the School, King's College London, Birkbeck, University of London, and the Royal Veterinary College as partners. The £5.4 million award is for 18 four-year studentships a year for three years. ■



DRAMATIC DROP IN CHILD DEATHS

In 2008, one in seven children in sub-Saharan Africa died before their fifth birthday, and worldwide almost nine million children under five die each year. A study published in *Tropical Medicine and International Health* has shown that deaths in under-fives in a rural area of Africa “dropped dramatically” through simple actions, such as effective immunisation and malaria control.

MALARIA CENTRE AWARDED GRANT TO EXPLORE zoonotic malaria infection

Thanks to the £2.9m grant, supported by four UK research councils, School researchers at the Malaria Centre will now be able to investigate how a parasite, previously only identified in macaques, has crossed species and is now causing acute disease and death in humans.

The first official cross-transmission from monkey to man of *Plasmodium knowlesi* was confirmed in 1965 by an investigation in Malaysia. Since 2004, reports of infections have been increasing in South East Asia, some of which have severe or even fatal outcomes.

To date, it is unclear if this increase is due to better diagnostics or other environmental and behavioural changes that might bring macaques and their associated mosquito vectors in closer contact with humans.

Professor Chris Drakeley and Dr Rachel Hallett are leading an international team with the skills

The findings are likely to provide important insight into effective measures to cut child deaths, which can be applied more widely and contribute to achieving the UN's fourth Millennium Development Goal (MDG4), aiming to reduce by two thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the mortality rate in children under five years of age.

During the 20 year period from 1989 to 2008 deaths in the under-fives in the Farafenni area of The Gambia are estimated to have fallen by 56% (from 165 to 74 per 1,000 live births), and in one to four year olds by 69% (from 105 to 33 per 1,000 live births), according to research from the School and Medical Research Council Unit in The Gambia.

The study found that by 2008 the child mortality rate in this region had fallen sufficiently to meet MDG4 – from 159 per 1,000 live births in 1990 to 45 per 1,000 live births in 2008. The precise reasons for these improvements, which potentially reflect the picture in The Gambia as a whole, are not clear, but improvements in control of malaria and its complications are likely to have been important contributory factors. ■



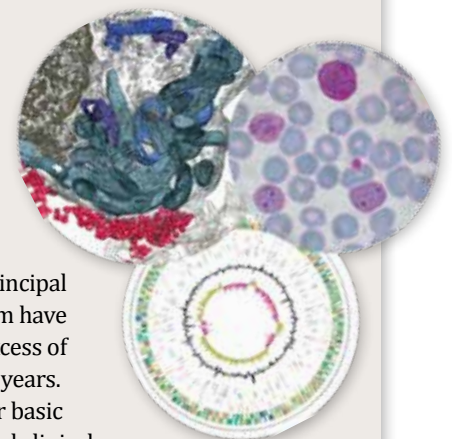
to understand the clinical, social, entomological, primatological and environmental factors contributing to the transmission of this new infection, focusing their investigations in Palawan in the Philippines and Sabah, Malaysia. The work will be conducted with research partners from the Universities of Glasgow and Greenwich in the UK, University of the Philippines Los Baños and Research Institute for Tropical Medicine (also in the Philippines), The Queen Elizabeth Hospital and the University of Sabah, both in Malaysia, and the Menzies School of Public Health in Australia. ■



Malaria fieldwork near Kisii, Kenya
Photo by Rachel Irwin

LAUNCH OF INFECTION RESEARCH INSTITUTE

The Bloomsbury Institute for Pathogen Research, a joint venture between UCL and the School was launched in November. The venture will bring together more than 70 principal investigators who between them have attracted research income in excess of £100 million over the past four years. The institute will bring together basic science, translational studies and clinical expertise from across both institutions and their associated hospitals, to provide an optimal environment to develop new drugs, vaccines and diagnostics. ■





Introducing the TB Centre

Photo courtesy of World Health Organization

Alumnus Profile: Dr Lin Yan

Dr Lin Yan is a medical doctor and professor of community health. After graduating from the Norman Bethune University of Medical Sciences, he attended a masters course of public health in Beijing, and received training in epidemiology, public health, tuberculosis, sociology, and tobacco control at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, the University of Melbourne (Australia), the University of Michigan (USA), the Union and Johns Hopkins University (USA).



Over the past 20 years, he worked as physician, researcher, associate professor and professor in the Norman Bethune University of Medical Sciences, Central Office of Caring of the Elderly, Xuanwu Hospital of Capital University of Medicine, Ministry of Health and China Rehabilitation Research Center. Lin Yan has worked as a public health consultant or programme manager in the field of chronic

disease control for WHO, UNFPA, and many international NGOs. He had an assignment with WHO Western Pacific Region for five years before joining the international Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease in 2005. Currently, he is Director of the Union China Office.

“The training at London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine made an unforgettable impression on me particularly in terms of assessing and updating knowledge and international best practice. With the knowledge and skills learned at the School, which I keep using in China, I am working with many international organisations. These opportunities and experiences have made vital contributions for my career development”.

“In simple words, the highlight of my time at the School was the excellent training opportunities and making friends, as well as sightseeing in beautiful London. The School alumni act as a platform for all of us to share information and learn from each other. We can always find encouraging stories from the alumni magazine.” ■

“In simple words, the highlight of my time at the School was the excellent training opportunities and making friends, as well as sightseeing in beautiful London”

The School's new TB Centre is a unique collaboration bringing together over 120 scientists, doctors, epidemiologists, statisticians, public health officers and policy-makers.

The TB Centre provides a focus for the School's long-established global research expertise in tuberculosis epidemiology, immunology, diagnosis and treatment. It will enable the development of enhanced international partnerships, building on the success of existing projects in more than 30 countries including the UK, South Africa, Uganda, Senegal, Malawi, India, Pakistan, China, Peru, USA and South Korea.

Tuberculosis continues to inflict a severe burden of morbidity and mortality worldwide, disproportionately affecting the poorest fractions of societies. School alumni can play an essential role with the TB Centre to redress the challenges facing TB today. We are actively encouraging those involved in TB research, clinical practice and public health to make contact with the TB Centre to propose new projects and contribute to existing areas of work. ■

tb.lshtm.ac.uk



Photos courtesy of World Health Organization

For further information on collaborative research and other opportunities, please email alumni@lshtm.ac.uk

Sanitation Ventures: delivering sanitation innovations



Photos left to right: Hungry Tiger worms are used to process waste in Sanitation Ventures' lead innovation, the Tiger Toilet

Members of the Sanitation Ventures team collecting latrine data in Tanzania, for analysis to find new routes to longer-lasting latrines



Based at the School, Sanitation Ventures is a project taking a new approach to developing affordable, sustainable solutions to the problem of pit latrine filling. Sanitation Ventures aims to use new technologies to develop affordable on-site sanitation systems.

For around 1.7 billion of the world's poorest people who use pit latrines every day, this can't come soon enough. When their pits get full, they suffer health risks, smells, flies, embarrassment, worry and expense.

New innovations include the Tiger toilet, using hungry Tiger worms to consume human waste. Another approach uses Black Soldier Fly larvae, which can be processed into animal feed and biofuel. Researchers are working to uncover the scientific secrets of the latrine and what controls how quickly it fills – from pH and temperature, to soil type or resident microbes.

Working with leading worldwide experts in biochemistry, environmental technology, microbial diversity, mathematical modelling and geophysical mapping, Sanitation Ventures is learning about pit latrine performance and what influences it. Samples have been taken from latrines in two countries, Vietnam and Tanzania, to examine what goes on inside the pit, analysing and modelling latrine contents and processes to identify major factors controlling fill rate. ■

www.sanitationventures.com

IN FOCUS:



London International Development Centre

The London International Development Centre (LIDC) facilitates interdisciplinary research and training to tackle complex problems in international development. It brings together social and natural scientists from across the University of London's six Bloomsbury Colleges: Birkbeck, Institute of Education, London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, Royal Veterinary College, SOAS, and School of Pharmacy.

LIDC was established in 2007 with a grant of £3.7m from the Higher Education Funding Council for England, and it now has more than 2,000 staff, students and alumni members.

LIDC membership is free and open to all staff, postgraduate students and alumni from the six Bloomsbury Colleges who are interested in international development. To join, fill in a short form on www.lidc.org.uk. ■

Photo was taken in Rwanda by Richard Kock, Royal Veterinary College. Richard is a LIDC member.

The benefits of LIDC membership include:

- Access to the wealth of development-related knowledge and expertise
- Opportunities for interdisciplinary research projects
- Invitations to LIDC events
- Networking opportunities
- Work experience placement schemes

Introducing the Latin American and Caribbean network



The Latin American and Caribbean network has recently been created to strengthen the School's collaborative ties in the region. The network aims to bring together staff, students and alumni from the School who are currently working or are interested in working in the region. By doing so, we hope that the network will strengthen current research and training activities in Latin America and the Caribbean.

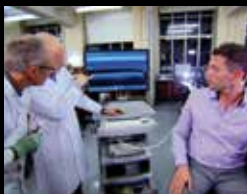
Our main activities so far have been: to create a database with current and past students of the School in the region, and to organise seminars in which we exchange ideas, experiences and information on research and funding opportunities.

Alumni are invited to join the network. If you have information that you want to share with the network or have any suggestions please send an email to: LACnetwork@lshtm.ac.uk ■

HOOKED ON YOU



Dr James Logan takes part in a unique experiment and finds some surprising benefits of hookworm infection



Photos above courtesy of Maverick Television. Dr James Logan taking part in the experiment on Channel 4's Embarrassing Bodies programme.

Science has a long history of self-experimentation. In the 17th century, Sir Isaac Newton nearly blinded himself by staring at the sun for too long in a mirror to study the after-images it left on his retinas, and there are numerous other examples of people using their own bodies to further knowledge. Nowadays the practice is much rarer, with ethical considerations and large-scale trials aimed at achieving statistically significant results dominating the approach. But even today a few brave scientists occasionally volunteer to be a test subject in the name of science. One such experiment recently took place at the School, when medical entomology researcher and lecturer Dr James Logan agreed to infect himself with hookworm.

The aims of the experiment were two-fold: to learn more about the mechanisms by which hookworms enter the body and to test a phenomenon reported in other studies that infection can reduce some allergic responses. The experiment was filmed for the new series of the UK television show, Embarrassing Bodies, on Channel 4.

Designed with the help of Dr Quentin Bickle, Reader in Parasite Immunology, the experiment represented a world first. State-of-the-art imaging cameras captured the exact moment the hookworm entered Dr Logan's skin, enabling the team to watch as the creatures made their way into his arm. Over the next two months the

parasites travelled through his bloodstream, reached his heart and moved into his lungs. From there, they were coughed into his throat and unconsciously swallowed, ending up in his intestine. The hookworms matured into adults, and both the worms and visible damage to the intestines were recorded when Dr Logan swallowed a pill camera. In addition to intestinal inflammation, tests revealed he had an increase in eosinophils, a type of white blood cell and a classic sign of immune responses to worms. Although Dr Logan suffered intestinal pain, he did experience a welcome benefit as his yeast intolerance was alleviated and he was able to eat bread for the first time in years. Finally, all observations done, he removed his "guests" after 60 days using an anti-worming drug.

Dr Logan said: "Surprisingly, worm infections have been reported to have a potentially beneficial effect on health. For example, there are several reports of intestinal worm infection alleviating symptoms of inflammatory bowel disease, allergy and food intolerance. The worms release substances which can change the immune system to prevent your body from over reacting to the things that cause allergies in the first place.

"This is a fascinating area of research for scientists who are studying this phenomenon to try and understand how the worms are able to regulate our immune system and to discover new ways to treat autoimmune diseases."

Dr Bickle said: "The application of novel imaging methods in the television experiment provided an interesting opportunity to find out more about hookworm skin penetration and about the balance and the link between the pathological effects of hookworm infections on the gut mucosa and the potentially beneficial effects of the modulated immune response induced. Further research on worm infections should shed light on these immunomodulatory mechanisms, information which may lead to the development of new therapies." ■

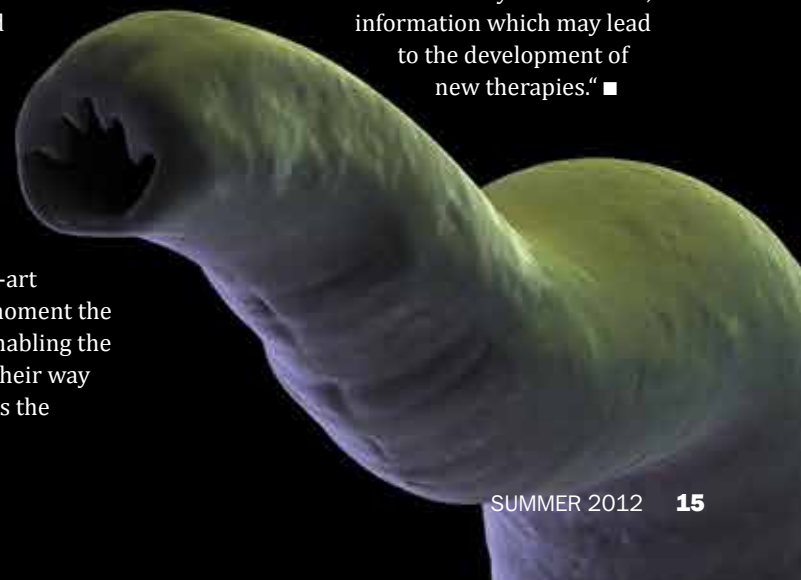


Photo right: iStockphoto.com/ Sebastian Kaulitzki

Alumni Fund

In 2011 the Alumni Fund was launched to raise money for scholarships, international partnerships and the Keppel Street Laboratories. The response from alumni was overwhelming. A four week telephone fundraising campaign in November raised over £70,000. We are extremely grateful to everyone who made a donation to these excellent causes.



SCHOLARSHIPS

Alumni Fund donations have been used to create a scholarship to fund an international student to study the new MSc degree in Global Health Nutrition. (see page 4)

EAST AFRICA DIPLOMA IN HYGIENE AND TROPICAL MEDICINE

In 2011 LSHTM and partners established a new three month Diploma in Tropical Medicine and Hygiene based in Tanzania and Uganda. The aim of the course is to support the development of postgraduate clinical training in East Africa by encouraging local doctors to realise their potential in policy and research.

57 participants from 15 countries took part and the feedback was excellent. Participants enjoyed immersing themselves in the healthcare issues relevant to patients and policymakers living in Africa and several graduates from the 2011 course have stayed on to work in the region.

One third of the places were awarded to East African physicians on full scholarships. Applicants were selected competitively by our partners, Kilimanjaro Christian Medical College in Tanzania and Makerere University in Uganda. Money raised by the LSHTM Alumni fund will contribute to more scholarships for 2012. Other support has come from the Wellcome Trust via the THRiVE training initiative and from our academic partners at Johns Hopkins and the University of Washington.

NEW INSTITUTE FOR PATHOGEN RESEARCH

Alumni Fund donations have been used to support the Bloomsbury Institute for Pathogen Research (see page 11). This new institute will bring together infectious-disease researchers from the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine and UCL. It will include “open laboratory” facilities for collaborators from other universities and industry. The institute will have lab space for 200 researchers, making it one of the largest concentrations of health researchers in Europe.



Photo top: An Anopheles mosquito.

Photo bottom: Teun Bousema. Fingerprick sampling in a small lab in Uganda

Photo right: Telephone fundraising campaign November 2011



Photos by Anne Koerber
The MSc student callers

Turning the derelict chemistry labs into a world-leading, state-of-the-art pathogen research facility will require a major fundraising effort by the School and UCL. We are delighted that the first gift to this excellent cause came from our alumni!

MALARIA CENTRE

Malaria Centre members attended an annual two day retreat on the 22-23 March 2012. The retreat was held in Canterbury Cathedral Lodge and provided a great opportunity for members who work in over 35 countries to meet up and present their latest research findings. This was the largest retreat to date with 127 members attending. The School Malaria Centre comprises of over 250 staff and students working on malaria from a variety of research areas ranging from basic laboratory science to social and economic studies. The annual retreat provides an excellent forum for promoting discussion and facilitating cross-disciplinary research.

This year, money raised by the Alumni Fund enabled two colleagues from Tanzania to attend

“It was a unique experience and allowed me to meet experienced and talented researchers in the field of malaria. I strongly recommend that this opportunity is given to other young scientists so they too can develop concrete research and science – they will never regret it”.

Donations from the 2011 Alumni Fund also went to support MARCH, the Maternal and Reproductive Child Health Centre and the Gender Violence and Health Centre.

2012 ALUMNI FUND

The 2012 Alumni Fund Campaign will raise funds for Scholarships, the School Centres and Research and Travel Grants. Our MSc students will be calling alumni in November and will really appreciate any time alumni can spare for a chat.

this important meeting. Dr. Peter Mangesho is the lead field social scientist for the InterACT qualitative study (ACT Consortium funded) in Tanga, Tanzania. Thanks to his travel award from School alumni, Peter was able to present his findings from a qualitative study on 'Perceptions amongst HIV Positive and health workers of taking antimalarial medication



concomitantly with anti-retroviral therapy'. Dr Mangesho commented: "The malaria retreat enabled me to interact with other scientists and we exchanged ideas and constructive feedback. I was also able to discuss a few potential collaborative projects. On a different note, Canterbury was simply beautiful."

Dr Alphaxard Manjurano is a Visiting Research Fellow in the Department of Immunology and Infection and is based in Tanzania. He obtained his PhD at the School and is currently working on a prestigious Royal Society Award to further investigate the role of alpha-thalassaemia and malaria. Dr Manjurano presented preliminary observations from his study at the retreat and commented: "I am very thankful to the School alumni and Malaria Centre for enabling me to attend and present. It was a unique experience and allowed me to meet experienced and talented researchers in the field of malaria. I strongly recommend that this opportunity is given to other young scientists so they too can develop concrete research and science – they will never regret it." ■

THANKS TO OUR DONORS

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NO TIME TO LOSE – A LIFE IN PURSUIT OF DEADLY VIRUSES



Photo by Heidi Larson

“From the discovery of the Ebola virus to the struggle against HIV, Peter Piot has been at the forefront of the global fight against infectious diseases. In this insightful book, Dr Piot reminds us of the importance of our shared responsibility for overcoming global humanitarian challenges.”
Kofi Annan, Nobel Peace Prize laureate and former Secretary-General of the United Nations

“Ultimately the hunger for adventure is also one for knowledge, and Piot’s fervour to learn, grow, and adapt consistently served him. I suspect students of science and public health will benefit from the methods Piot deployed in analysing and solving problems”

Laurie Garrett, Pulitzer Prize winning author of ‘The Coming Plague’ review for The Lancet

Published in the UK in July 2012, *No Time to Lose* is an inspiring account of how scientists and activists came together to tackle the most urgent global challenges of our age.

The story begins in a laboratory in Belgium in 1976, where the newly qualified Dr Piot and his colleagues receive mysterious blood samples from victims of a lethal new disease in the equatorial forest of Zaire. Having identified the virus later named Ebola, Piot is dispatched to the quarantine zone to track the outbreak to its source and discover its transmission mechanisms.

Living and working among dying villagers and terrified missionaries deep in the rainforest,

Piot repeatedly risked his life to collect blood samples and understand the spread of the Ebola epidemic.

Back in Europe, he set out to work with vulnerable communities from Antwerp to Nairobi. As one of the few researchers in sexually-transmitted diseases with knowledge of Africa, he was among the first to understand and respond to the burgeoning AIDS epidemic there.

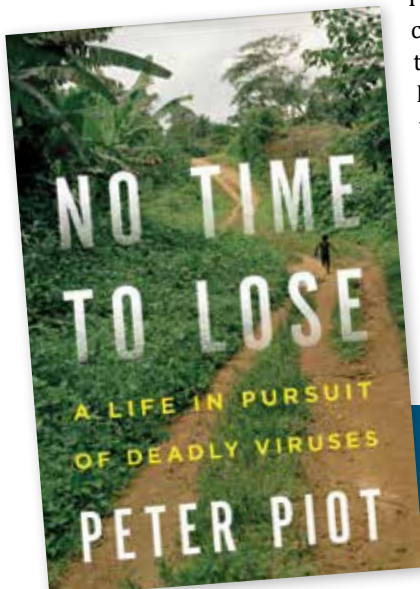
Throughout the 1980s and ‘90s, millions suffered and died. Piot and his co-workers struggled against official denial and corruption to prevent new infections, care for patients, set up clean blood banks and pull together the first international AIDS research initiatives. Piot offers a harrowing account of how the epidemic ravaged Africa, and how he undertook the difficult task as director of the fledgling agency UNAIDS.

Piot worked tirelessly to engage with AIDS groups and activists, win over world leaders including Nelson Mandela, Fidel Castro, Bill Clinton and Kofi Annan, and persuade the pharmaceutical industry to bring down the price of life-saving medicines. Over a few hectic years, he succeeded in mobilising billions of dollars in funding and co-ordinated political support for effective medical and social action to limit the pandemic and save lives. However, millions more died needlessly from AIDS, and it is still infecting hundreds of thousands today.

Throughout the book, Peter Piot raises urgent questions that go to the heart of what it means to be human in today’s globalised world. Have we learned our lessons? Will we act to control the next pandemic or will ignorance and inertia prevail? And with AIDS again on the rise among vulnerable populations, how can we ensure that governments continue to take effective action?

Full of poignant and moving detail, this memoir reveals one of the greatest untold stories of our age. It captures the urgency and excitement of working at the forefront of the effort against the deadly forces of disease, dictatorship and denial, and will inspire anyone who wants to make a difference in the world.

About the author: PETER PIOT is Director of the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine and Professor of Global Health. He was formerly Under Secretary-General of the United Nations and founding Executive Director of UNAIDS. ■



Alumni can purchase *No Time to Lose* at a discount with the code WN214 at www.notimetolose-book.com

Health systems research

There is a growing consensus that strengthening health systems will be necessary to reach the Millennium Development Goals. It is through health systems that life-saving interventions are delivered and it is system level constraints, such as financial barriers to access, a shortage of health workers in rural areas, problems of weak management and planning, which impede their wider uptake.

With the growing interest in this multi-disciplinary field, researchers from the Department of Global Health and Development are embracing new research opportunities. Some recent highlights include:

RESYST: New research consortium on health system strengthening



Researchers from the Department of Global Health and Development are leading a new international research consortium called RESYST, which aims to enhance the resilience and responsiveness of health systems to promote health and health equity and reduce poverty. Funded by UKAid from the Department for International Development, research will cover three critical health system components.

- **Financing:** focusing on how best to finance universal health coverage in low and middle-income countries.
- **Health workforce:** identifying effective, practical interventions to address human resource constraints.

- **Governance:** studying the relationships among frontline actors and mid-level management, and leadership in health policy implementation processes.

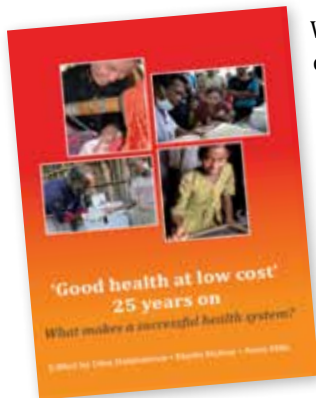
Research will be conducted in several low and middle income countries including Kenya, Tanzania, Nigeria, South Africa, India, Thailand and Vietnam, seeking to identify lessons that are transferable across contexts. ■

For more information please visit resyst.lshtm.ac.uk

IN FOCUS *continued:*

GOOD HEALTH AT LOW COST

ghlc.lshtm.ac.uk



Why do some low and middle income countries manage to achieve good health outcomes while others fail? What factors drive improvements in the health system and in access to primary health care? How can we act on the social determinants of health in cash-strapped economies?

These questions are as relevant today as they were in 1985 when the Rockefeller Foundation published what was to become a seminal report – *Good health at low*

cost, exploring why some countries achieved better health outcomes than others. This new edition of *Good health at low cost 25 years on* draws on a series of case studies from Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Kyrgyzstan, Tamil Nadu and Thailand providing fresh insights into the role of effective institutions, innovation and country ownership in catalysing improvements in health.

New challenges such as increasing urbanisation, a growing private sector and an upsurge in non-communicable diseases suggest that both learning from the past and new thinking are required to strengthen health systems.

What makes a successful health system?

Across the study countries, four interlinked underlying factors were found to be necessary for health systems to succeed. These are: capacity (leaders and promoters of new ideas, and effective institutions); continuity (the stability required for reform to develop fully); catalysts (ability to seize windows of opportunity); and context (taking context into account when developing policies).

It is hoped that the *Good health at low cost* countries can provide useful lessons to other countries that are striving to improve health outcomes. ■



Photo by Anne Koerber

Photo left to right: Richard Horton (Editor in Chief, The Lancet), Anne Mills, Peter Piot, Martin McKee and Dina Balabanova at the book launch

Enas Newire graduated with an MSc Infectious Diseases in 2010. Enas spoke to Alumni News about studying by distance learning in Egypt.



Photo by Anne Koerber

“The School’s MSc in Infectious Diseases by distance learning looked just tailored for me. As a newly married, new mother who is starting her career, it was highly unlikely for me to leave my husband, baby, and job to go for a Masters degree. I really wanted a postgraduate qualification and distance learning was the most appropriate approach for me to continue my studies.

Gaining my MSc definitely helped me in my career. I work as a medical researcher and my degree has helped me to understand and develop my research strategies with the continuous challenges in the rapid evolving field of drug resistance.

I had a very happy, unexpected event during my study. My due date, when I was pregnant with my little Jenna was two months before the exams’ start date. That was a challenging experience; of course a new added responsibility that entails irregular sleeping hours, and surely exhaustion is associated.

I was privileged with the studying hours’ flexibility. This has provided me with the ability to study on my own pace, post my comments and study questions at my convenience, and get back to the web board to keep learning in my few allocated quite minutes. Thankfully, I graduated according to my originally planned schedule.

I encourage any enthusiastic student interested in a postgraduate degree in health, who has geographical, economic, or professional limitations, no matter where they live in the world, to go for a London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine degree.” ■

DISTANCE LEARNING A FAMILY AFFAIR

Husband and wife, Dr Lloyd Mulenga and Dr Pricilla Lumano-Mulenga, and their colleague, Dr Mohammed Limbada, all from Lusaka, Zambia, undertook the MSc Infectious Diseases by Distance Learning. We spoke to the trio at the Distance Learning Reception, on Friday 9 March, about their experiences, travelling to London and their plans for the future.

The three took the trip to London together, along with Lloyd and Pricilla's two young children. Pricilla tells us that she used the prospective trip while she was studying, as a way to motivate the children into behaving, and giving her peace and quiet to work. The three alumni work together in the Centre for Infectious Disease Research in Zambia (CIDRZ), which provides HIV and infectious disease clinical services. The Distance Learning MSc enabled them to continue working full time while studying.

They are all in agreement that the first year was the most difficult – combining the core modules with work and family was a shock to the system. It got easier from there, according to Mohammed, “because we had already learnt from our mistakes, in the first year.” Getting ethical approval for third year projects was time consuming for all three. They strongly advise those studying, or considering studying by Distance Learning to make provisions for this, and plan as far in advance as possible.

The course has helped them in a number of ways. They've noticed a dramatic improvement

in the quality of their written reports, and time management skills. Lloyd is also keen to point out how their teaching skills have been pushed to another level. “There is a huge burden of infectious diseases in our country, and very limited human resources.” They are in agreement in the fact that taking what they learnt and using these skills to inform other health workers in their area has been the greatest advantage of doing the course. “Not to mention the promotions we have all received”, Pricilla adds.

The biggest tip they have for anyone about to embark on a degree by distance learning from the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine is to be committed. Mohammed talks about the hard work and sacrifice involved: “A lot of people think that because they're not going to be studying in a classroom, they won't have to devote much time to it. But with the MSc that the London School offers, you really have to work from the day you receive your course materials, there's no saying ‘wait until the last minute’”. Lloyd adds “setting aside a time for studying is really important. Switch off your phones, the internet, and make sure your family understands that. This is very important.”

Hard work though it was, they are all in agreement when Lloyd says “it has been very wonderful.” Congratulations to Lloyd, Pricilla, Mohammed and all our distance learning graduates! ■



Photo top: Dr Mohammed Limbada. Photo bottom left to right: Dr Pricilla Lumano-Mulenga, Dr Lloyd Mulenga

ALUMNI PHOTO COMPETITION

The Alumni Office has teamed up with the Library to run the 2012 Alumni Photo Competition. Alumni are encouraged to submit photos which represent their time at the School or their subsequent work. We are keen to include photos from all around the world which reflect the work, communities and countries of our alumni.

The winning entry, chosen by a judging panel, will appear in the next issue of Alumni News and on the School website, and the photographer will receive a £25 gift voucher. For further information on the competition please contact the Archivist at archives@lshtm.ac.uk ■

**Entries must be sent to
photos@lshtm.ac.uk
by 31st December 2012**

CAREERS EVENTS



The School's Careers Service organised a Global Health Careers Event on 7 March. The focus of the event was to support current students interested in pursuing a career in Global Health and International Development; the event offered students the opportunity to hear from LSHTM alumni about their experiences in the sector and allowed them to gain valuable advice on how to get their career started in this very competitive field. The event was attended by over 125 students and organisations such as the Health Protection Agency, DAI Europe and Unicef were represented. The event started with a formal careers forum and concluded with informal networking over drinks.

We would like to thank all the alumni who contributed to the success of the event including: Professor David Heymann, Dr Julian Lob-Levyt, Aparna Barau, Priti Davesen and Fergus McBean.

CAREERS NEWS

School alumni are invited to complete the alumni careers survey, posted at: www.survey.lshtm.ac.uk/alumniCareers/

The aim of this survey is to create a database of career stories for current students, future applicants and alumni that indicate possible career paths and successful routes to their dream job. The information gathered is also used to develop careers workshops and future events.

We would also like to hear from you if there are vacancies in your organisation that would be suitable for LSHTM students and alumni. To add these positions to the bespoke LSHTM vacancies board please email careers@lshtm.ac.uk.



GET INVOLVED

If you would like to take part in our careers events then we would be happy to hear from you! Perhaps you would like to meet current students and share your career story? Maybe your organisation is keen to recruit specialists in public health? Please get in touch with us to find out how you can take part by emailing careers@lshtm.ac.uk.

LSHTM RESEARCH ONLINE:



LSHTM Research Online is a freely accessible online database of the research that the School produces. It is a comprehensive listing of all the important research that is conducted by active staff within the school. We currently have over 20,000 records, of which over 2,000 contain the full text for anyone to download.

You are able to browse the research by year, Faculty and Department, Research Centre, Individual Author as well as viewing the latest 10 additions.

From here you can discover the latest research that is being conducted at the School in your own area of interest. There are many reasons for having LSHTM Research Online but a primary one is to increase the availability of leading research globally by removing subscription barriers. Increased visibility of research encourages engagement with ideas to improve health worldwide.

We are adding new articles to LSHTM Research Online weekly and hope that all will find it a valuable resource. If you have any comments or suggestions please let us know at researchonline@lshtm.ac.uk

researchonline.lshtm.ac.uk



PAST ALUMNI EVENTS

New York City, USA

An alumni meeting was held in New York City on 10 December at the Half King Bar and Restaurant in Chelsea. A second Alumni Reception was held on 18 April at the UK's Consul General's Office.

ASTMH, Philadelphia

The alumni reception at the ASTMH Annual Meeting was held in Philadelphia, USA on 7 December. Over 160 alumni, students, staff and friends of the school attended this event. We look forward to the 2012 reception in Atlanta in November.

London, UK

150 guests attended the 2011 Alumni Dinner at Goodenough College in London on 21 November. The school's Director Professor Peter Piot hosted this event. Health campaigner Dr Wendy Savage, alumnus of the MSc in Public Health, was the special guest speaker.

Berlin, Germany

The alumni reception in Berlin took place at the Park Plaza Wallstreet Hotel on 24 October. President of the Berlin Alumni Chapter Annica Reuss joined Head of Alumni Alice Perry to host this event. Over 60 alumni from all over Germany attended. Many alumni had studied for their qualification by distance learning and enjoyed the opportunity to meet up with other members of the LSHTM community.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

2012 Events

Students vs Alumni Pub Quiz – London, UK **27 September**
Alumni Reception – Toronto, Canada **26 October**
Alumni Reception – San Francisco, California, USA **29 October**
Alumni Reception – Atlanta, Georgia, USA **12 November**
Gala Dinner – London, UK **3 December**

Full information about forthcoming alumni events is available online at www.lshtm.ac.uk/alumni

Rome, Italy

The School's Director Professor Peter Piot hosted an alumni reception for around 80 guests in Rome on 18 July. This event took place during the 2011 AIDS Society conference.

Toronto, Canada

Over 100 people attended an alumni reception in Toronto, Ontario on 11 July. This event took place during the International Health Economics Association World Congress on Health Economics. The school's Vice-Director and new President of IHEA Professor Anne Mills hosted this event at the Sheraton Toronto Centre.

Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

The School's Director Professor Peter Piot hosted an Alumni Dinner in Tanzania on 2 June attended by 120 alumni and their guests.

MESSAGE FROM THE ALUMNI TEAM



Alice Perry

Thank you to all our alumni for making the past year so fantastic. Thanks to your generosity the first Alumni Fund Telephone Campaign was an amazing success, raising over £70,000 (see page 16). Over 1,500 people attended one of our alumni events. We have really enjoyed the opportunity to meet and speak with everyone and appreciate the efforts people have made to attend. This was particularly true of our reception for distance learners in March, where people had travelled from over 45 countries to join us in Keppel Street's beautiful art-deco library.



Maria Ryan

We would like to say a special thank you to all our volunteers, who have been running our Alumni Chapters, helping out with student recruitment events, co-ordinating fundraising activities and offering careers advice and support to students and younger alumni. We have been making particular efforts to use the alumni network to offer


support to international students before they come to study in London. For more information about this or how to become involved, do get in touch!

We are looking forward to the year ahead. We are holding a variety of exciting alumni events, including lectures, dinners, afternoon tea, receptions and professional networking events. We will be expanding the Alumni Careers Network. In November we will be launching the 2012 Alumni Fund Telephone Campaign, which will raise money for scholarships, the School Centres and research degree travel grants.

If you have any feedback, thoughts or ideas you would like to share we would love to hear from you.

Best wishes,
 Alice Perry, Head of Alumni
 Maria Ryan, Alumni Administrator

INTERNATIONAL ALUMNI CHAPTERS



London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine alumni chapters are made up of volunteers from the Alumni Association. Our network of alumni chapters provides graduates with opportunities to network, socialise, assist their local communities, and recruit top students to the School.

CONTACT INFORMATION FOR OUR CHAPTERS IS AS FOLLOWS:

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Setting up your own Chapter:

If there is no Alumni Chapter in your region and you are interested in setting one up, we would love to hear from you.

Please visit our website for further information or email:
alumni@lshtm.ac.uk