



Brian Seymour Award — awarded to a NMMU Alumni again ...



From left: Noel Semour (Son of Brian Seymour), Larita van Wyk and Cedric Pratt (Branch Director)

Larita van Wyk, a NMMU Pharmacy Dept. Alumni, is this year's Brian Seymour Award Winner. She is the sixth Pharmacy graduate to receive this prestigious National Award in the past 8 years. Previous winners have been - Charl Botha (2008), Michelle Bennett (2009), Raydon Juta (2012), Phumeza Mlonzi (2013) and Lana Strydom (2014).
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Message from Head of Department

As we are nearing the end of the year one tends, when we have a moment amongst the business of December, to look back on the year. For the Pharmacy Department staff and students 2015 has flown past in a flurry of activity. There have been many wonderful achievements during the year, some of which we have shared with you in the previous newsletter and some that we share in this newsletter. The Department are very proud of Larita van Wyk (BPharm graduate class of 2014) who received the Brian Seymour Award and as such has been recognised as the top final pharmacy student in the country for 2014. A wonderful achievement which continues the performance of NMMU Pharmacy graduates as in the past 8 years 6 of the winners have been from NMMU.

The staff congratulate our students on their achievements and their dedication and hard work through the year. Enjoy the vacation period !

I would also personally like to thank the Pharmacy Department staff for their dedication and hard work throughout 2015, especially for always putting the students and the delivery of all our programmes as top priority. Without you the Department would not attain the successes it does.

Finally the Pharmacy Department would like to thank all our colleagues both within NMMU and in the pharmacy profession for their assistance and support during 2015. We wish you all well over the vacation period and to those celebrating Christmas a blessed Christmas



First Pharmacy Technician employed at Fresenius Kabi

Caitlyn Ferreira was a member of the first class of Pharmacy Technician to graduate at NMMU in 2014. Today she is the first permanently employed Pharmacy Technician at Fresenius Kabi.



Caitlyn at work

This was her journey It began in 2009, I studied B.Pharm (Extended Program) at NMMU, but I could not cope financially and lost focus, but giving up wasn't an option - Pharmacy was my passion and could not see myself doing anything else other than Pharmacy related. When I heard about the new Pharmacy Technician (PT) course, I was very excited and worked hard to prepare financially for my vision and dream.

The PT course was less challenging than the B.Pharm course but very enjoyable which made learning fun for me. During the visits to the different Pharmaceutical sectors (Aspen, Fresenius Kabi, a retail pharmacy and PHC clinic); what we studied in class was now put into reality and it helped me decide which sector of pharmacy I would like to go into - which was Manufacturing as I'm a very hands on person and pay attention to detail.

I graduated as one of the first Pharmacy Technicians in 2014 which was a very proud and rewarding moment. I then joined the Department of Health at Livingstone Hospital as a trainee for 3 months and then completed

the remaining 3 months at Fresenius Kabi. A few days before my traineeship came to an end at Fresenius I saw a permanent post advertised for a PT in production (SVP-NH). I grabbed this opportunity with both hands and immediately applied as I saw this as an opportunity for growth and where I wanted to be from the very start. I received the overwhelming news that I'm the very first permanent PT at Fresenius Kabi. I began as a PT in production in August 2015 and haven't looked back since. What I learnt in my 2 years at varsity now became so much clearer and of so much more value to me. The PT course has assisted me to develop my skills and knowledge.

My role is not confined to a specific line or area, it covers different areas such as component prep, mixing, filling and visual and packing areas, therefore I can become an expert in various fields. My job focuses on setting of scales, sterile manufacturing, check weighing raw materials, calibrating and adjusting pH, auditing of batch books, sampling for chem and micro labs, ASMS manufacturing, line openings for visual, component prep, filling and packing areas.

I enjoy working for Fresenius for they truly takes care of their staff, I am blessed with a beautiful view of the lake and stadium during my lunch break. There is continuous training of staff and meetings to keep everyone up to date and ensure we all on the same page to drive the company forward. I am truly blessed to receive so much experience and exposure the pharmaceutical manufacturing environment - I get to try new things and am not restricted.

I am always open to learning and getting trained as if there is no limit and it's fulfilling when the officials within the department are happy with the service I render. I could gladly say as a new face I have brought about a new change in the manufacturing environment and there is still so much growth for me.

My nickname is "khetiwe" meaning the chosen one....and I believe I was chosen for this field and have purpose for I am always ready to give a helping hand when needed....and pharmacy is all about the help and love for the health of others.

My Pharmacy journey has truly has contributed to shaping the strong woman I am today, I have developed into a team player and have motivated others to study the PT course through the way I shine when performing my job with a smile, Caitlyn.

Brian Seymour Award (continue from page 1)

The Pharmaceutical Society of South Africa (PSSA) Natal Coast Branch has an annual award for the top pharmacy student in the country, who is in the process of completing his or her internship.

The award was launched locally in 1967 and developed into a national award later on, now being the most prestigious award for pharmacy students. The award honours the late Brian Seymour who was, at the time of his death, the youngest member ever to have been elected to hold office on the South African Pharmacy Board, as it was then. He was passionate about taking the pharmacy profession forward. Therefore, the attributes sought after in the students nominated, are academic excellence, leadership qualities and a keen interest in, and enthusiasm for the pharmacy profession.

The Pharmacy Schools in South Africa nominate their best candidate for the award, where after the adjudicators from PSSA interview the nominees. The chosen winner is presented with the award at a prestigious event in Durban, attended by life members and associates of PSSA, previous years' award winners, as well as invited dignitaries from allied professions.

Larita's pharmacy degree was her second

qualification. Before she started her B. Pharm degree, she obtained a somatology diploma as top student. During her final year at NMMU, she received the PPS Most Professional Student Award and was fourth in her class. She is currently working as a pharmacist intern at Aspen Pharmacare in Port Elizabeth.

When asked about the Brian Seymour award, Larita responded as follows, "I can just thank so many people. I firmly believe in the saying, 'iron sharpens iron', so I am thankful for all the people, especially my family and our heavenly Father, who played a role in shaping me into who I am today. I am grateful for the ability and opportunities I have had to study two qualifications thus far and the eternal support and love I always experience in my family. When you take a step back to look at something and think by yourself, 'there is no way I could've orchestrated this', you know that a divine intervention took place, and that is exactly that this award to me- a divine intervention.

For me personally, pharmacy is where my passion and personality meet in my profession and that alone is a privileged place to be. To uphold our profession, I say that we must care for and invest in our patients and the community as much as we would in family members or people close to us, for this will result in the community *wanting* to support and protect our profession with us."

**AIHA Donation**

The Pharmacy Department have received a computer (laptop) from the American International Health Alliance (AIHA) for use with the MCQ Scanner and for the graduate database. Melissa Law is managing the graduate database and the scanning of MCQ's she will be using the laptop.

We thank AIHA for their donation.

← **Mellisa working hard**

Congratulations

To the Pharmacy staff members who completed the NMMU assessor course, the staff members were : Yakub Kadernani, Monique Klitsie, Celeste Naude, Celeste Farmer, Janet Barry, Jayne Rishworth, Nasreen Isaacs, Candyce Clark and Hannah Pretorius. **Well done to all nine of you !**

Aspen Pharmacy Project Presentation Evening

The Annual Aspen Pharmacy Project Presentation Evening for final year Pharmacy students took place on Tuesday evening 20 October 2015 in the NMMU Auditorium. It was attended by large number of Pharmacy students, friends, families and other delegates.

Research on a wide variety of topics was presented. Project groups either did a group oral presentation or group poster presentation.

The **Best Podium Presentation Award** went to **Roxanne Gerber, Grethé Groenewald, Lindy Janse van Rensburg, Leandri Terblanche, Ryno Van Rooyen** for presentation : "Rabies in Nelson Mandela Bay: Overview of the disease, knowledge of residents and healthcare professionals and its treatment". (supervised by Dr Tarryn Fick).



Best Podium Presentation winner group :

From left : Leandri Terblanche, Ryno Van Rooyen Grethé Groenewald, Lindy Janse van Rensburg & Roxanne Gerber

- The runner-up award went to Jonathan Dietrich, Mohamed Ahmed, Paul Noudem Jiofack, Jenna Stickells and Corbin Williams for their study entitled "Development and testing of a dispersible tablet containing 125 mg Paracetamol." (supervised by Prof Gareth Kilian).
- The **Best Poster Award** went to **Shereé Nel, Tاندokazi Mbopa, Lauren Stevens, Kelly-Ann Swart** for a poster entitled "Strengthening current protocols in managing children with severe acute malnutrition at Dora Nginza Hospital" (supervised by Dr Liana Steenkamp).
- The runner-up poster prize went to Mandy Mey, Robin Stuurman, Lannel Gonzo, for their poster entitled "Analysis of the inclusion of herbal ingredients in nutritional supplements" (supervised by Prof Raj Naidoo).

Ready to Enjoy her Retirement



Prof Boschmans with Maureen at her farewell function

After 16 years of dedicated service to the Pharmacy Department, our dearest colleague and friend, Maureen Tube, will be retiring at the end of December.

We wish you the very best for the future where you will be serving as grandmother and leader in your community.

Thank you Maureen for your diligence, friendship and many contributions to the Pharmacy Department!

You will be missed !

Message from Maureen : Thank you for all the wonderful years working together!



Thanks to **Clicks** for donating a further 8 benches to put inside the Pharmacy foyers on each floor. The benches look so professional and smart. They are in regular use by the students and is greatly appreciated. It has been such a success !

Pharmacy Adventures in South Africa for STLCOP students

Two STLCOP final year PharmD students, Susan Ha and Alex Majors spent 3 weeks with the Pharmacy Department as part of their international rotations, this is what they had to say about their experience

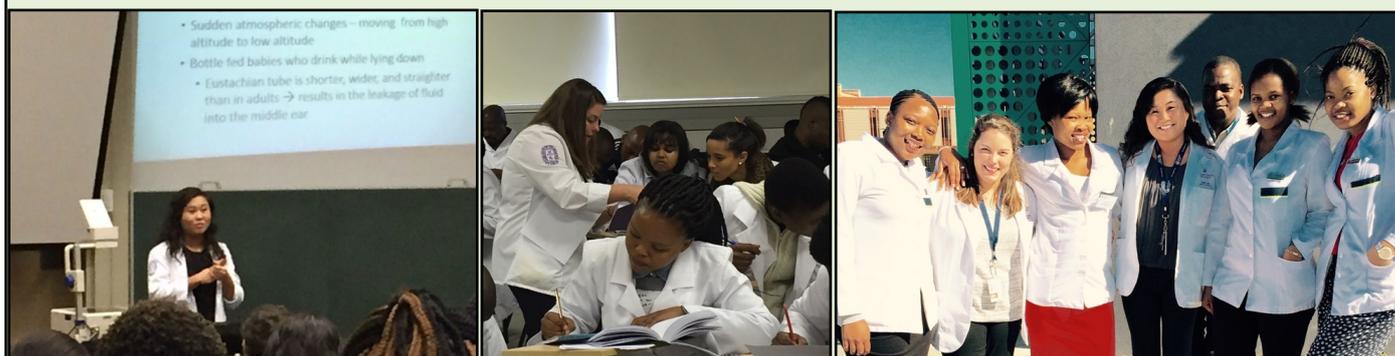
I still remember when Alex and I found out that we were going to South Africa. We were so EXCITED because South Africa was both of our number one choices when we applied to different countries for our international rotations! We could not believe we were the lucky ones chosen for a rotation at Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University in Port Elizabeth.

During the first two weeks at NMMU, we lectured the pharmacy technical assistant students on four different topics: Sinusitis, Rhinitis and Pharyngitis, Ophthalmic Conditions, and Otological Conditions. We included engaging activities such as short questions and answers, fill-in-the-blanks, cases, etc. during our presentation to keep the students focused. For the final review, we created Jeopardy over all the topics that they had learned in the past two weeks to help them prepare for their upcoming exam. It was great to see how much the students actually learned from our lectures and that they were having a great time during the game. Additionally, we led practical sessions to help the students apply the materials from the lectures into different patient scenarios. It was our first time teaching, and we did not know what to expect. Thankfully, the students were very respectful and gave us their undivided attention. We were grateful for the opportunity to lecture an amazing group of students.

During our first two weeks of rotation, we visited Dora Nginza Hospital and Livingstone Hospital with the 4th year BPharm students. Unlike America, PharmD is not a requirement in South Africa, and one can become a pharmacist after graduating with their BPharm. Students enter the program immediately after high school to pursue a four year degree. Both hospitals were public hospitals which meant that patients without health insurance could receive free healthcare without paying a fee. At Dora Nginza Hospital, we went to the psychiatric, pediatric, and medical wards. At Livingstone Hospital, we shadowed the PharmD students from another university and rounded with the medical team in the ICU. Public hospitals were completely different to hospitals in America. The wards had multiple beds in one room separating each patient only by a thin curtain. All the medical charts were handwritten and not computerized. However, we were extremely impressed with the efficiency of the entire medical team since they could not heavily rely on computer systems like we do in America. It was fascinating to see how much knowledge the staff had since they did not have automated alerts from their computer systems nor could they look up drug information on their electronic databases.

During our last week of rotation, we visited St. George Hospital, Rink Street Pharmacy, and Korsten Primary Healthcare Clinic. St. George Hospital was a private hospital and was more like our hospitals in America. They had a great team of pharmacists who showed us how to prepare chemotherapy drugs, how to control inventory for scheduled substances, and how to manage antibiotics to prevent resistance in the hospital. Rink Street Pharmacy was an independent community pharmacy. The major difference we noticed was their technology. The computer system was older, and there were no electronic or faxed prescriptions at all. Drive thru pharmacies did not exist in PE, and the staff was shocked to hear about them in America. Korsten Primary Health Care Clinic was a public outpatient clinic. Similar to an ambulatory setting in America, they dealt with chronic conditions such as anticoagulation, diabetes, and hypertension. However, they also dealt closely with patients with AIDS/HIV and tuberculosis which was interesting for us since we do not have much contact with these patients. We even verified prescriptions which was difficult at times since some medications had different names than what we were used to in America.

Throughout the three weeks, we learned more than we could have ever imagined. Besides learning about different sectors of pharmacies in South Africa, we learned about its culture and people which is what we really wanted to accomplish. We are so grateful and blessed that we had this opportunity and were selected to complete a rotation in South Africa. We want to thank everyone for their generosity and making us feel like part of their family. We will never forget the new friends we made on our journey and hope to revisit soon in the future!



Faculty of Health Sciences Researcher of the Year for 2015



Prof Ilse Truter receiving her Award for Faculty of Health Sciences Researcher of the Year

A few of her latest Research activities :

- She is involved with the Interprofessional Research Unit of the Faculty of Health Sciences
- Attended the 9th Congress of the European Pain Federation (EFIC), Vienna, Austria, 2-5 September 2015
- Attended the International Society for Pharmacoeconomics and Outcomes Research (ISPOR) 18th Annual European Congress from 7 to 11 November 2015 at the MiCo - Milano Congressi in Milan, Italy. She presented five posters. One of the posters, entitled "The South African Guidelines for Pharmacoeconomic Submissions: A review in context of existing legislation and challenges to implementation", was co-authored with Shelley McGee, Mark Brand and Paul La Cock.
- Ilse is a Board Member of ISPOR (South Africa), and represented ISPOR (SA) at the ISPOR Regional Network Chairs meeting, as well as the ISPOR Arabic and Africa Networks meeting in Milan.

"Healing is an art. Medicine is a science. Healthcare is a business. I am living the research journey between my two passions, Business Management and Pharmacy"



Pharmacy Department explore our beautiful surroundings

The Pharmacy staff went on a team building tour in November, with Alan Tours. We decided to go and appreciate our NMMU surroundings, to explore the southernmost tip of Algoa Bay, Cape Recife and its lighthouse. We entered the Lighthouse in groups of 10 and were introduced to the old machinery that provided the mechanical power to this fully functional lighthouse, which had been built and completed in 1851. Many braved the narrow circular stairway all the way to the top of the lighthouse where one could see a clear view of the area and distant Port Elizabeth oceans.

The team then continued onto the Grysbok Game Reserve in their vehicles where we were given an insight into this large protected area surrounding the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University and safe refuge not only to a number of large herbivores and the small Cape Grysbok but also to the threatened environment that constitutes the largest officially protected portion of Coastal Dune Fynbos with a total area of some 1500 ha². We were very lucky to see Zebra, Bushbuck, Springbok and a variety of Birdlife. We met for a well-deserved rest, drinks and snacks after climbing the lighthouse. Our journey ended as sunset was setting and we were all revived for the final few weeks of term. What a wonderful experience with a great team !

