

PSSA NEWSLETTER

Physiology Society
of Southern Africa



From the President's Desk

How time flies!

Another year has swiftly passed as we head towards the summer vacation and the prospect of a new year ahead (yet again!). Year-end is usually a time for introspection and self-reflection and thinking back it has been a good year for the PSSA. We have had an excellent annual congress (attracting record numbers) that was superbly arranged by Professor Edward Ojuka and his team. The next PSSA congress is scheduled for Pretoria and already Professor Peet Du Toit and his team are busy with preparations to put together a great meeting. The PSSA also presented several prestigious awards this year and a special mention regarding the newly-launched travel scholarships that enabled several younger members to attend the annual congress in Cape Town. Such initiatives are of course all part of our strategic vision to create better value for PSSA members and to also establish a world-class, relevant and inclusive society. I can also report that our finances are in sound condition and here the aim is

that such resources ultimately benefit PSSA members.

I am indeed privileged to have been elected to a second term as president of the PSSA. This is indeed a great honor and my aim is always to serve the PSSA to the best of my ability and also to take our society to even greater heights. A new executive council has also been elected at the Cape Town congress and includes (for the first time) a student representative:

President: Prof Faadiel Essop (SU)
Vice President: Prof Peet Du Toit (UP)
Treasurer/secretary: Dr Balindiwe Sishi (SU)
Prof Willie Daniels (Wits)
Dr Aletta Millen (Wits)
Prof Stefan Du Plessis (SU)
Prof Gill Dealtry (NMMU)
Student Representative: Marie Du Toit (UFS)

I look forward to working together with such an accomplished team and am excited at the prospect of striving to fulfil some of the strategic objectives



set for the society. High on our agenda is to launch phase II of our website revamp with the aim to further enhance the experiences of our members. This includes online registration for new and existing members and also access to a database of expertise, e.g. in terms of methodologies and equipment available, or to better network with other physiologists in the region. I wish all of our members a happy and joyous time over the festive season and hope you take off some time from your busy schedules to revitalize body, mind and spirit!

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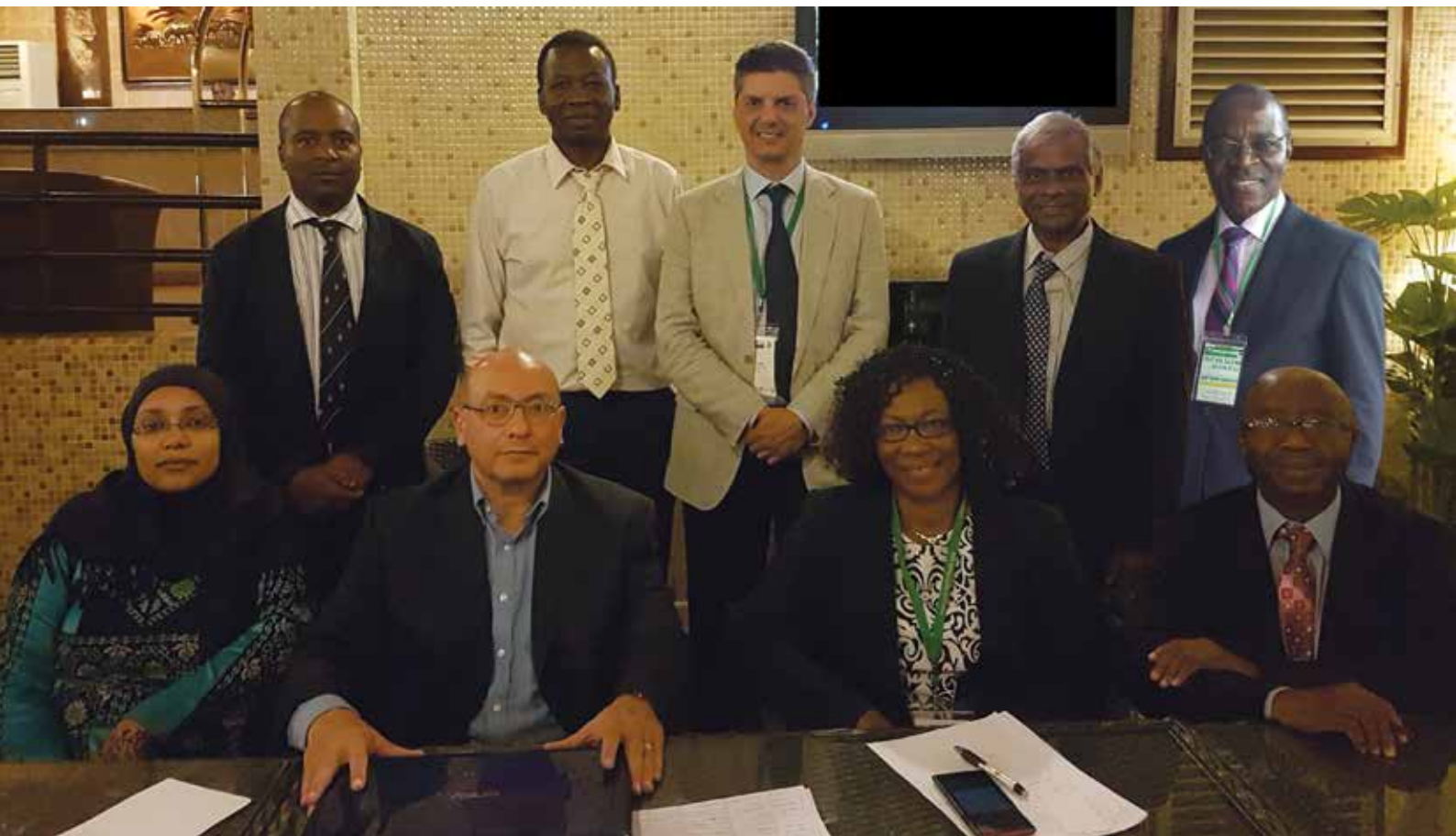
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Election of New AAPS Council – Lagos, Nigeria



Legend for photograph: New AAPS council (2016-2020). Back (left to right): Kennedy Erlwanger, Edward Ojuka, Faadiel Essop, Prem Gathiram and Anthony Ebeigbe. Front (left to right): Lamis Kaddam, Yasser El-Wazir, Elsie Adewoye and Soga Sofola.

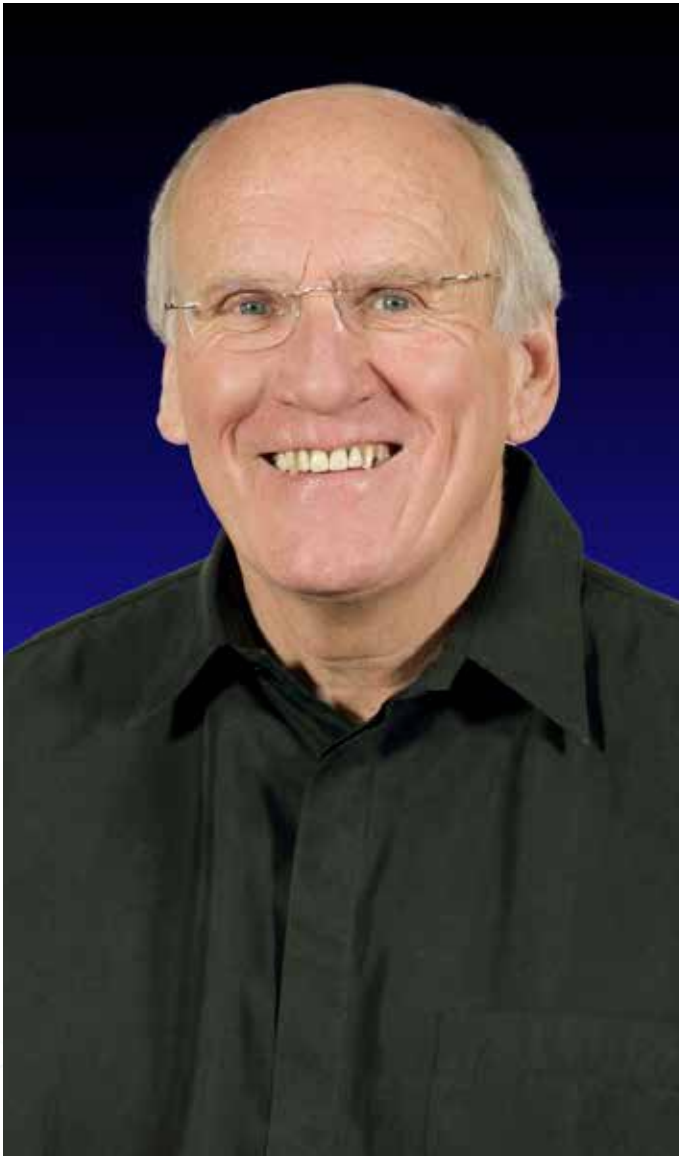
After a highly successful congress of the African Association of Physiological Sciences (AAPS) that was held in Lagos, Nigeria (5-8 September 2016), a new council and executive was elected (2016-2020).

The new executive committee consists of: Profs. Soga Sofola (President; Nigeria), Faadiel Essop (Vice-President;

South Africa); Yasser El-Wazir (Secretary General; Egypt) and Prem Gathiram (Treasurer; South Africa). Additional council members elected were: Profs. Kennedy Erlwanger (South Africa), Edward Ojuka (Uganda), Elsie Adewoye (Nigeria) and Dr. Lamis Kaddam (Sudan). Prof. Anthony Ebeigbe is also a council member as editor of the Journal of the African Association of Physiological Sciences (JAAPS).

PROFESSOR DAVID A. GRAY

BSc, MSc, PhD



Dave Gray was born in Newcastle upon Tyne in the North-East of England and he was educated (BSc and MSc) in England prior to taking up his first job as a research scientist in the Division of Endocrine Physiology and Pharmacology at the National Institute for Medical Research (NIMR), Mill Hill, London.

At the NIMR he was privileged to work with John Parsons, one of the pre-eminent researchers of the time in the field of parathyroid hormone physiology. In 1981 he moved to Germany to work at one of the Max-Planck Institutes at the W.G. Kerckhoff Institute for Clinical Research located in Bad

Nauheim, just north of Frankfurt. At the Kerckhoff Institute he carried out research into the endocrine control of salt and fluid balance, primarily in birds and during his time there he was again privileged to work with two world renowned

“Published over 100 research articles, all in international journals and he achieved a B3 rating with the National Research Foundation (NRF).”

physiologists, Eckhart Simon and Ted Hammel. During the period 1986 and 1987 Dave was awarded an overseas scholarship by the Max-Planck Society and completed his PhD at the University of Port Elizabeth, South Africa where he carried out studies in the field of osmoregulation in sea birds under the guidance of Theunis Erasmus.

In 1992 Dave left Germany to return to South Africa, spending two years at Rhodes University in Grahamstown, before joining the Department of General Physiology, which was one of two physiology departments at the time, at Wits. His research interests continued to be in the field of avian osmoregulation, however, following the amalgamation of the two Departments of Physiology into a single department in 1996, the focus of his work moved to that of avian thermal biology, specifically the febrile response in birds. Much of his work involved collaboration with colleagues in Australia and Canada. He has published over 100 research articles, all in international journals and he achieved a B3 rating with the National Research Foundation (NRF).

In 2006 Dave was appointed Head of the School of Physiology at Wits, the position he retired from at the end of 2015. Dave is married to Linda and he has two daughters, Samantha and Rachel. He is a Newcastle United fan, something he says makes him an eternal optimist.

INTERNATIONAL UNION OF PHYSIOLOGICAL SCIENCES



The 2017 IUPS congress will be held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil on 1-5 August. As this conference takes place only every four years, the previous four Wyndham winners thus become eligible to be considered for a sponsored trip to the next IUPS congress. It thus gives us great pleasure to announce that Ms. Shireen Mentor, the 2014 Wyndham winner was selected to attend the congress.



PSSA LASEC AWARD

This award honors a well-established, physiologist who has proven their research excellence over a period of time. The recipient should:

- have an excellent national profile and a high level of international recognition.
- have added value to the society through research innovation
- be an active contributor at the PSSA congress in terms of the research presented by themselves and/or their students and the fostering of critical thinking and discussion.



Prof Annart-Engelbrecht – Lasec Award for Excellence in Physiology Research 2016

Anna-Mart Engelbrecht holds an MMedSc from the University of the Free State and a PhD in Medical Physiology from Stellenbosch University, where she is currently a Professor and head of the Department of Physiological

“Her groups’ research is to explore new avenues of chemotherapy and adjuvant treatments”

Sciences. The specific focus of her groups’ research is to explore new avenues of chemotherapy and adjuvant treatments that would favour the use of lower chemotherapy concentrations with less side-effect to normal healthy cells, while maintaining satisfactory levels of cancer cell death. When she’s not teaching or delving into research, she enjoys spending time outdoors, either hiking, horse riding, gardening or rowing. “I’m a bit of an adrenalin junkie too,” she confesses. “I like to do one thing each year that takes me out of my comfort zone. Last year it was parachuting - I’d also like to try paragliding,” she says.

PSSA Student Winners



Ms Tanja Davis – Wyndham Student Competition 2016

"I have always been interested in the mysteries of science and biology. I chose the field of cancer research not only due to the significant burden it places on society but also because, to me, it's a fascinating disease. Cancer is a complex and sophisticated disease that takes hold of physiological processes to use for its own benefit. It can control its environment and learn and adapt to ensure its survival against defensive attacks from the body or from therapy. To me, it's important to do research that helps to understand cancer, because if we understand something, we can challenge it. This was a central theme in my project, understanding how the AHNK protein is involved in cancer and whether it can affect treatment outcome. I believe we still have much to learn about cancer and I'm excited to be part of this discovery process."

"From a young age diabetes and cardiovascular disease has touched my heart. Since my family has been affected by these diseases I have placed my research focus on understanding their pathogenesis. We are all affected by the western diet, however, the underlying mechanisms in how they cause these disease remain unclear. This is the scope of my study to shed more light in this topic, specifically focusing on sugary-sweetened beverages. I don't only spend my time in the lab, I'm also a Maties football player, I love hiking and taking photos of the wonders of this beautiful world."



Ms Natasha Driescher - Jonny Van de Waalt Student Poster 2016

PSSA 2017

Date: 27-31 August

Hosted by: Pretoria University at the Groenkloof Campus.

In order to qualify for the early bird discounts, members/delegates/students are encouraged to renew their annual membership fees on or before **Friday 31 March 2017**.

To renew membership fees, delegates can use the following link: <http://physiolsoc.org.za/us/membership/register> or contact the secretary/treasurer of the PSSA directly.

**Live Education Task Force
International Society for the Advancement of Cytometry
in Association with
BD Biosciences and Stellenbosch University,
ANNOUNCES**

**The First Flow Cytometry Workshop
11-13 April, 2017
to be held at
Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences,
Tygerberg Campus, Cape Town, South Africa.**

Lectures and Wet labs on

- Basics of Flow and build a flow cytometer
- Cell Cycle, Proliferation and Apoptosis
- Stem Cell Analysis
- Polychromatic Flow Cytometry
- Electrostatic Sorting
- Quality control
- Cell signaling and Phosphoproteins

Invited Faculty

- Awtar Krishan, Miami , USA
- H. Krishnamurthy, Bangalore, India
- Vivek Tanavde, Singapore
- Zosia Maciorowski, Paris, France
- Joe Trotter, San Diego, USA
- Paresh Jain, India
- Vince T. Shankey, USA

Organizing committee

- Lize Engelbrecht (SU)
- Danni Ramduth (BD)
- Nazma Mansoor (BD)
- Rozanne Adams (SU)
- Andrea Gutschmidt (SU)
- Mari van de Vyver (SU)
- Awtar Krishan, USA
- Zosia Maciorowski, France

REGISTRATION:

Early-bird: (1 Nov 2016 -31 Jan 2017)

Students : R 4 000

Non-students: R 6 000

LATE: (1 Feb – 1 March 2017)

Students: R 4 500

Non-students: R 7 000

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10/20/2016

