Northern Territory Clinical School Newsletter

SEPTEMBER 2007

Northern Territory Careers Expo 2007

NTCS and NTRCS staff and students recently put energy into promoting health careers to secondary students. The Careers Expo is an annual event across the Territory designed to showcase career options to secondary school students.

Crowds of school students (a record of 3,500 in Darwin alone) from years 9-12 visited the expos with their teachers or parents.

NT Clinical School had a booth at 3 sites: Alice Springs, Darwin and Katherine. Staff, as well as medical and allied health students, worked at the booth to ensure that all secondary students received the career information they needed. ‘Hot off the press’ our new allied health posters looked great. Give-aways included our NTCS brochure showcasing the medical course, as well as the new allied health brochure, lots of lollies, as well as NTCS bags and lanyards.

Thanks to everyone who helped out: students Ju-Lin, Kate, Emilie, Cassie, Bae, Mike, Andrew, Sarah and to staff who organised and attended the Expo for their region: Caroline, Tracey, Anne, Meredith, Narelle, Lila, Marika, Gill, Mary, Des and PJ.

Northern Territory Careers Expo

On Friday 24th August the Katherine Careers Expo was held in the Katherine High School auditorium. The NT Rural Clinical School team set up a power point display, brochures and posters, plus a small bowl of Minties for encouraging students and staff for building the staff.

The students from grade 9-12 came through in groups and were encouraged to go to every booth and ask a question. About 4 students showed promise of following up with Medical and Nutrition studies. Current Katherine medical students Sarah and Andy helped out from 5pm to close and Dr PJ Spafford was in attendance as much as possible.

Katherine Careers Expo

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- Katherine Careers Expo
- General Information

NTCS Newsletter

This is the second edition of the NTCS Newsletter, which will be a quarterly electronic publication. Please contact Lila Loveard on 08 8922 7937 or lila.loveard@flinders.edu.au with any stories you would like to have published.

Katherine Careers Expo

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MANAGEMENT POSITION UPDATE

From Monday 13 August 2007 Ms Jane Harrison resigned as Executive Officer of the Northern Territory Clinical School. Jane had been Executive Officer at the Clinical School since late 2005 and oversaw many innovations during this time. These include the development of the Northern Territory Rural Clinical School in Katherine, Alice Springs and Nhulunbuy; a rigorous marketing strategy; an Information Management consultancy leading to an information management forward work plan and the development of new positions including Student Support Team Leader and Research and Evaluation Officer. We wish Jane the very best with her future career plans and thank her for her efforts here at the Northern Territory Clinical School.

Following Jane’s departure the administrative management structure of the NT Clinical School and NT Rural Clinical School will undergo some changes. While the restructure takes shape, business at the Clinical School will run as normal with Mrs Mary Pocock as A/Executive Officer of the Northern Territory Clinical School and Mr Geoff Veness as A/Senior Administrator of the Northern Territory Rural Clinical School. Contacts for Mary and Geoff are:

Mary Pocock 08 8922 7785 mary.pocock@flinders.edu.au and Geoff Veness 08 8922 8109 geoff.veness@flinders.edu.au

FORMATIVE OSCE 31 AUGUST 2007

The NTCS Formative OSCE was held in Area 2 of RDH on Friday 31st August. Students and staff travelled from Katherine, Alice Springs and Nhulunbuy to participate and examine. The Formative OSCE is held each year to give practice to all involved—exam practise for the students, examining practice for the Academics and OSCE organisation practise to the Administrative staff of the NT Clinical School and NT Rural Clinical School.

The practice OSCE also provides a great opportunity for students, academics and general staff across the Northern Territory Campuses of the Clinical School to meet and work together.

In this years Formative OSCE, two longer 8 minute JCU style stations were run alongside the shorter 5 minute Flinders stations. This allowed both Flinders and JCU students to become familiar with the style station they will be experiencing in their Summative OSCE exam in November.

This year, actors playing the roles of standardised Patients were sought out from numerous locations including Menzies, NT Health organisations in Building 4 and there were also a few trained actors from a Darwin Theatre Company.

Students waiting to begin their exam

The nervous excitement before the exam
NTCS PRIMERH FUNDING

NORTHERN TERRITORY CLINICAL SCHOOL PRIMERH FUND

The NTCS provides its faculty with financial support for research through a small grants scheme, the Projects for Research in Medical Education and Rural Health (PRIMERH) Fund. The objectives of this fund are two-fold: (1) to foster cross-theme, multidisciplinary research in rural, remote, and Territory health or health education, and (2) to train and establish new investigators capable of undertaking research relevant to rural and remote Northern Territory health or clinical education.

PRIMERH funds are to be utilised for exploratory/developmental research projects, pilot studies to collect preliminary data for external grant applications, student research assignments, and projects addressing educational issues relating to the NTCS teaching and learning environment.

Guidelines for Applicants

Applications are accepted on a rolling basis. Awards will be based on the quality, relevance, and feasibility of the proposal, the qualifications of the applicant, and the availability of funds.

Applicants for a PRIMERH award may request a project period of up to two years and a budget for direct costs of up to $10,000 per year.

To be considered for PRIMERH funding, an application must address the following issues:

- Rural, remote, and Territory health: Could the research have an impact on the quality of life for people living in rural or remote areas, especially in the NT (e.g., disease causation, prevention, diagnosis, treatment, physical and(or) mental well-being, access to health care)?

- Health education in the context of the NTCS: Could the research enhance the provision of high quality, culturally-appropriate clinical education by the NTCS? Does the research address an issue relevant to the NT health workforce and (or) clinical practices?

Please contact Dr Anna Smedts for further information on anna.smedts@flinders.edu.au or phone 08 8922 7937
I had the good fortune to attend the Garma Festival held at Gulkula, Arnhem Land, from August 3-7, 2007. Dr Jenni Brown, the NTRCS Snr Lecturer in Nhulunbuy and NTCS student, David Janmaat also attended. The theme of the Key Forum of the Festival was "Indigenous Health: real solutions for a chronic problem". The Key Forum was a very full three day programme with plenary sessions and workshops covering a wide range of critical issues related to Indigenous Health.

The Festival, now regarded as the major cultural exchange festival in Australia was not all work. Every day saw exhibitions of Indigenous Art and Culture with the culmination being a concert performed by Yothu Yindi, which will possibly be their last performance.

There were in excess of 1,500 indigenous and non indigenous participants - ranging from politicians, QC's, eminent academics, media personalities, health workers, and people committed to Indigenous issues, all camping in the paperbark forest of Gulkula.

The Indigenous Forum and indeed the whole Festival had an undercurrent of critical appraisal of the Federal Government Intervention in the Territory. It was clear that the underlying sentiment expressed at Garma by both Indigenous and non-indigenous participants was one of anger and disillusionment at the nature of the Government intervention. Speaker after speaker reinforced the need for any solution to be bottom up rather than top down. To hear the authors of the Anderson Wild Report "Our Children Are Sacred" say that they felt both angry and betrayed by the Federal Government response was challenging.

The Garma Festival was a great experience which challenged many of my perceptions regarding a wide range of Indigenous issues. It was a great personal experience and is a unique event now gaining national and international recognition. I am grateful to the Clinical School for making my attendance possible.

Geoff Veness, A/Senior Administrator, NT Rural Clinical School

NTCS STUDENT TRAVELS

While preparing for the upcoming exams NTCS Year 3 student David Janmaat has squeezed in the Asian Medical Students Conference held in Seoul, Korea, and Garma Festival 07 in Arnhemland.
LATEST MEMBERS OF THE NTCS

We welcome the following new staff to the Northern Territory Clinical School:
- Associate Professor Sarah Strasser, Director of NT Rural Clinical School and Community Based Medical Education
- Dr Alan Ruben, Director of Online Education
- Dr Simon Morgan, temporary contract assisting with Community Based Medical Education program
- Gillian Paynter, Student Placement Officer RDH
- Meredith Fogarty, Campus Administration Officer, Katherine
- Dr Anna Smedts, Research and Evaluation Officer, returning from Maternity leave on a part time basis

FAREWELL TO DR GARY LUM

Past and present Staff and students of the NT Clinical School wish Dr Gary Lum the best for his future and thank him for his many years of dedicated teaching. Gary has been teaching NTCS students for many years and his teaching was always valued for his insights into Microbiology and Pathology. Thank you from all of us.

IN MEMORIAM PAM GOLLOW

Manager of Top End Oral Health and Physical Nutrition, Public Health Nutritionist, Student Supervisor and Researcher. Pam Gollow was all of these and more. Since Allied Health became a part of the Northern Territory Clinical School, Pam was a fabulous support to nutrition students undertaking their community health placements. She ensured that students were always a part of a current research or community development project. Many of the projects were cutting edge and international in their significance. Passionate about aboriginal health, Pam was a great advocate for student access to indigenous communities. She assisted her students to develop more in depth understandings about the needs of aboriginal people by ensuring appropriate support while they worked in indigenous communities as part of their placement.

Pam’s untimely death while sailing in Queensland is a great loss to the Northern Territory, to the staff and students with whom she has worked, and to the Northern Territory Clinical School Allied Health Program. Our sympathy and support goes to her family, Adam, Conor and Jess, her extended family and to her many friends. She will be missed greatly. Thanks Pam for all you did.