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Regenstrief awarded informatics grant

The information age is upon us. However, there are still corners of the world that do not have the accessibility to sources of information as students and faculty do at IU.

That inaccessibility can have far-reaching effects, particularly in the field of medicine. That is a concern to IU faculty involved in the Indiana University-Moi University partnership, a program designed to enhance the clinical, teaching and research skills of faculty and students at the medical school in Eldoret, Kenya.

"In this country, if you want to learn about a medical problem you go to the library," said William Tierney, MD. "In Eldoret, they have limited library resources. With Internet technology, you don't need an actual library because you have access to a virtual library. We will supply them with the wherewithall to use the online resources."

Dr. Tierney is the principal investigator for a unique National Institutes of Health grant promoting medical informatics in developing nations in Sub-Saharan Africa. IUSM is the recipient of one of four grants awarded by the NIH's Fogarty International Center. The Regenstrief-Moi Medical Informatics Fellowship will further IUSM's involvement with the Kenyan medical school.

Medical informatics is the use of medical information to maintain and improve the quality and efficiency of health care. It can be anything from a State Department of Health database on flu outbreaks to the compilation of statistics on the effectiveness of viral agents in the treatment of HIV. Research data from medical journals also can be called medical informatics.

Not having information at their fingertips makes it more difficult for physicians at Moi University and elsewhere in Kenya to treat patients or, in some cases, understand the ramifications of that treatment. For instance, physicians in Kenya may treat several cases of meningitis in their region, but not know how widespread the outbreak might be. Being able to track that information could result in a concentration of

supplies in affected areas and allow for an increase in the use of vaccines in areas not yet affected.

The program grant will enable IU to support Moi University with knowledge and the expertise to access, utilize and construct computer-based tools to advance biomedical research and public health.

Moi University recently has secured 122 computers from other sources. Part of IUSM's contribution will be to assist in training personnel there to keep the computers operational. IU also will assist the Kenyan university in gaining better Internet access. That will benefit both the Kenyan faculty and students and the IUSM faculty and students at Moi. To further enhance their resources, the IUSM library will make sure its Web site has links to other sources of information that are necessary for delivering the best care and education possible.

The grant funding will allow four Moi University faculty members to study at IUSM in a fellowship program. One faculty member will train at IU each year and, when they return home, the fellows will use the information gained during the first year of their fellowship to develop a research project utilizing the knowledge they have gained in medical informatics.

IU faculty also will travel to Moi University to give a short course on medical informatics to faculty and students. In addition, IU will assist Moi faculty in developing a Department of Medical Informatics.

Other IU personnel involved in the project are Fran Brahmi, interim director of the IUSM library; Beverly Hill, EdD, director of the Medical Education Resources Program; Hassan Danesh, PhD, assistant director of development and CME, MERP; Joyce Dobson, program manager of the IUSM-Moi University partnership, and Robert Einterz, MD, who is program director of the IUSM-Moi University partnership and co-director of the medical informatics grant with Dr. Tierney.

BRIEFS

Chairman resigns

Merrill Benson, MD, stepped down as chairman of the Department of Medical and Molecular Genetics. The change became effective March 2. He was named to the position in 1996.

Gail Vance, MD, has been named acting chairman.

Founders Day

Robert Einterz, MD, will be the recipient of a 1998 President's Award at the annual Founders Day ceremony March 27 at Assembly Hall on the Bloomington campus. The President's Award, established

in 1974, recognizes outstanding teaching and can be given to any division of the university at any professorial rank.

Dr. Einterz is a clinical associate professor of medicine and program director of the IU-Moi University program. He is involved with clinical teaching at the IU Medical Center, and the promotion of learning opportunities for students through the Moi partnership.

IU's Founders Day awards ceremony honors excellence in teaching, service, research and scholarship university-wide and students on the IUB campus. IU celebrates its 179th birthday this year.

At Founders Day in 1997, Dr. Einterz received the John W. Ryan Award for Distinguished Contributions to International Programs and Studies.

Spinola named Jacobs Professor of Infectious Diseases

Stanley Spinola, MD, has been named the first David H. Jacobs Professor of Infectious Diseases.

Dr. Spinola has served as chief of the Division of Infectious Diseases at IUSM for the past three years. He joined the IUSM faculty in 1993. Previously, he taught at the State University of New York at Buffalo from 1987 to 1995.

He received his medical degree from Georgetown University. The David H. Jacobs Chair in Infectious Diseases was established in 1998 by Barbara Jacobs in memory of her husband. Mr. and Mrs. Jacobs both graduated from IU in the 1940's and have a long history serving their alma mater. Mrs. Jacobs is a member of the IU Foundation Board of Directors and is director of the David H. and Barbara B. Jacobs Foundation.

Mr. Jacobs died in 1992 of an unusual infectious disease.

Health care views topic of lecture

Faculty, staff and students are invited to attend a presentation by Roberta Baer, PhD, entitled "Differences in Worldview: Conflict Between Biomedicine and Ethnomedicine" from noon until 1 pm, Thursday, March 25, in the School of Nursing auditorium, room 103.

Dr. Baer is the guest of the IU Cancer Control Committee. Her research focuses on the differences between health care provider's and patient's perceptions of illness. Dr. Baer holds a bachelor's degree from Brandeis University. She received her MA and PhD in anthropology from the University of Arizona. Most of her research has been in Mexico where she studied cross-cultural issues in diet and nutrition. Currently, she is an associate professor at the University of South Florida in Tampa.

Her research on cross-cultural issues in health and nutrition has been funded by the National Cancer Institute, PAHO, NSF, and the US Census Bureau. She is also working with AHEC and several medical schools in Florida to help train providers in more culturally competent approaches to health care.

Nominations for Irwin award sought

The 1999 Glenn W. Irwin, Jr., MD Experience Excellence Recognition Awards recognize faculty and staff members for service "above and beyond the call of duty." The awards to those selected will be presented at the IUPUI Chancellor's Honors Convocation, April 30.

You are invited to nominate any full-time IUPUI faculty or staff member. The deadline for nominations is March 19. Nominations may be submitted to Kim Manlove, administrator of Academic and Faculty Records, AO Building, Room 126. Her phone number is 274-4627.

Honors

JoAnn Brooks-Brunn, DNS, RN, has been inducted as a fellow in the American College of Chest Physicians. She is the first nurse to receive this honor. In 1997, she was named as a fellow in the American Academy of Nursing.

Peter Marcus, MD, has been selected by the Association of Professors of Gynecology and Obstetrics/Solvay Pharmaceuticals Educational Scholars Program, as a member of the 1999/2000 class of scholars. The national program is designed to enhance the way women's health is taught to future ob/gyn physicians. Dr. Marcus serves as the associate clerkship director, director of the ob/gyn component for second-year medical students, and as director of the resident laparoscopy course.

Robert Saywell Jr., PhD, MPH, has received the Silver Beaver Award, the highest award the Boy Scouts, Crossroads of America Council can bestow upon a volunteer. The Silver Beaver Award is a national award presented upon nomination of the Council and is given for "distinguished service to youth." Dr. Saywell has been involved in Scouting for the past 10 years, serving in multiple leadership

capacities, including Scoutmaster of Troop 120.

Douglas Zipes, MD, was elected vice president of the American College of Cardiology at the group's annual meeting in New Orleans. His year-long term begins March 10. He will become president-elect for 2000 and president in 2001. Most recently, Dr. Zipes served as chairman of the development committee, which raised \$3 million, exceeding the goal by \$900,000, in recognition of the 50 th anniversary of the ACC.

Osteoporosis topic of women's health lecture

The Center of Excellence in Women's Health March conference will be presented by Michael Econs, MD, on "Prevention and Management of Osteoporosis." The conference will be from noon to 1 p.m., Wednesday, March 24, at the IU Cancer Research Institute, room 101.

<http://www.medicine.indiana.edu>
