

true blue

Newsletter of the Friends of St George's



Celebrating 30 years

Thirty years of St. George's University clinical faculty in the United Kingdom were celebrated at a reception in London earlier this year.

In a special message, Chancellor Charles R. Modica congratulated the faculty on "all its achievements over the past 30 years. It has made an enormous contribution to the success and international reputation of St. George's University."

Speaking at the function, which was attended by the Friends of St. George's University, Chairmen, and Directors of Medical Education associated with the faculty, UK Dean Rodney Croft said, "we have helped to train nearly 8,000 young men and women from all corners of the globe to become doctors, who have practiced in over 45 countries worldwide."

"The final two years of clinical study in United Kingdom are a key component of the

medical degree programme. Students have a choice of training hospitals in the United States and United Kingdom - or preferably both, giving them a unique experience of the two systems, in addition to the Basic Sciences study in a developing country, Grenada. For their part, the NHS hospitals involved in the St George's programme receive considerable and much-needed income from this teaching programme".

At any one time, 100 students from St. George's University are taking their clinical studies in 16 NHS affiliated hospitals, he pointed out.

Rodney Croft also congratulated HE Ruth Elizabeth Rouse on her return to London for a second term



as High Commissioner, drawing attention to the close links with the Commonwealth, where, in collaboration with the Commonwealth Secretariat and Grenada, a total of 75 full-tuition scholarships have been offered to Commonwealth countries since 2007, as part of the University's own 30th anniversary celebrations.

Here's to the next 30 years - distinguished guests and Friends of St. George's University at the reception. From left, with Lord Soulsby of Swaffham Prior (centre); Lord Ballyedmond; Baroness Howells of St. Davids; UK Dean Rodney Croft; Grenada High Commissioner Ruth Elizabeth Rouse; UK Registrar Sue Huntington; and the Deputy Secretary of the Commonwealth Ransford Smith.

The reception also marked the 10th anniversary of the St. George's University veterinary medical programme.

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High RCVS pass rate

Eight graduates from St. George's University School of Veterinary Medicine (SGUSVM) have passed the Statutory Membership Examination of the UK's Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS), representing more than one-half of the total number that passed. Of the 50 candidates that took the exam, a total of 14 worldwide passed successfully.

"Nearly 400 students from St. George's University have graduated from the School of Veterinary Medicine since its inception in 1999," says Austin Kirwan, St. George's University Associate Dean of UK and Ireland Clinical Affairs. Since that time, a total of 22 graduates have passed the RCVS membership exam, including students from Sweden, the United States, and

most recently, Ireland. Rachel Heenan, one of this year's eight SGUSVM candidates, is the University's first veterinary medical graduate from Ireland.

Rachel describes her time at St. George's University as "a hugely rewarding and hands-on experience" and praised the teaching staff for their "enormous support and kindness."

Presenting the graduates with a membership certificate at the Ceremony of Admissions at the RCVS in London in July, Professor Alexander Trees welcomed the students to veterinary medical practice.

Commenting that the students were now part of a "privileged elite," who were well-equipped to protect animal welfare, he advised the students to nurture and maintain this well-earned privilege.



Seated, from left: Rachel Heenan, Danielle Priestley, Victoria Fernandez-Vidal, and Jessica Ellis. Standing, from left: Rachel Cartledge, Samantha Shone, Professor Alexander Trees, Jennifer Newitt, and Lian Doble.

Message from the Chancellor

I am delighted to announce that St. George's University International School of Medicine, in the United Kingdom, has been awarded the much anticipated Tier 4 Sponsor Licence by the UK Border Agency.

This means that St. George's University clinical students, seeking placement in the UK Clinical Programme can be sponsored by St. George's University International School of Medicine (SGUISM), pursuant to the new UK immigration regulations introduced earlier this year. Although the Tier 4 Sponsor Licence application process caused an unavoidable interruption in the UK Clinical Programme, the situation has been satisfactorily resolved and we are resuming clinical training in the United Kingdom.

Since receiving the Tier 4 Sponsor Licence, SGUISM has sponsored several St. George's University clinical students, whose visa applications are now under review by the UK Border Agency. We are confident that we will have a full complement of clinical students in the United Kingdom in the upcoming term.

As an international School of Medicine, we greatly value the work of the UK Clinical Faculty.

My congratulations to the Dean, his staff, our University Counsel and staff, and the distinguished Friends of St. George's University who worked so hard to restore the programme to its pre-eminent position of growth and expansion.

Chancellor Charles R. Modica

- Dr Peter Bourne • Mrs Vanessa Bourne • Sir Kenneth Calman • Mr Rodney Croft •
- Mr David Jessop OBE • Baroness Hanham CBE • Baroness Howells of St Davids OBE • Sir Jim Lester DL •
- Professor Sir Malcolm Macnaughton • Professor Ian McConnell • Lord Soulsby of Swaffham Prior •
- Sir Kenneth Stuart • Mr Jonathan Taylor • Lord Walton of Detchant • Mr Bowen Wells •

Students on clinical safari

Fifteen students from St George's University School of Medicine have visited Kenya to take part in the first practical tropical medicine course to be held in collaboration with the African Medical and Research Foundation (AMREF), one of the largest international non-governmental health development organisations in Africa.

Seven of the students came from Grenada, while eight were from St George's University's Keith B. Taylor Global Scholar's programme at Northumbria University. The students were joined by five local medical students from Nairobi University "who added greatly to the cultural interchange experienced by the students," according to Professor Cal Macpherson, St George's University Vice Provost for International Programme Development, who accompanied the group.

As well as visiting hospitals, research institutes and receiving lectures from experienced AMREF administrators in Nairobi, the students visited the AMREF health centre at Entasopia, in southern Kenya. The students participated in an ultrasound clinic where more than 250 people were screened including 49 pregnant women.

Said Professor Macpherson: "it was a tremendous learning experience for our students to see and hear first hand from the AMREF experts, both in Nairobi and in the field. Such a wealth of both practical and field experience that was shared had a profound effect on the students' outlook on culture, health systems and health care delivery options. I felt that the course was tremendously successful and we will build on this experience and offer a similar course on an annual basis."

Professor Cal Macpherson, St George's University Vice Provost for International Programme Development, conducting an ultrasound examination at the AMREF health clinic, Entasopia. Born in Kenya, Professor Macpherson worked for AMREF for ten years starting in 1978.



Recognition for St George's University

To add to its long list of recognitions and approvals by external bodies, St George's University was granted accreditation status in June 2009 by the Caribbean Accreditation Authority for Education in Medicine and other Health Professions (CAAM-HP).

St George's University was the first private medical school to be evaluated in 2007 with a site visit. It received provisional accreditation by meeting the academic standards and performance criteria mandated by CAAM-HP.

Accreditation has previously been granted only to the University of the West Indies, a public university serving the nations of the Caribbean.

AMREF Scholarship recipient devoted to Africa's health development



One of the key AMREF people involved in the St. George's University visit – or selective – was Vicky Kimotho from Kenya who, with Edna Matasha from Tanzania, was awarded a full Master of Public Health scholarship by St George's University in 2006, a result of Chancellor Modica's determination to strengthen the links between St. George's University and Africa.

After seven years dedicated to improving health conditions in Kenya, Vicky realised that a Master of Public Health would be necessary if she was to further her career and become a more effective "decision maker" in the field.

"I knew that if I was to contribute more in health development I would need a stronger academic background. I had reached a stage in my career where I had the experience but I could not get to a higher position without completing my master's degree," she says.

The financial limitations of a master's degree had forced Vicky to defer her studies until the AMREF scholarship provided the means to alter her path. "I knew the only way I could afford to study was to get a scholarship, otherwise it would have taken years of saving."

The scholarship enabled Vicky to "learn about the theory in health development, understand the underlying factors that affect the health of the community and to make contacts within her field," while being "trained by experienced lecturers with expertise in their field."

The scholarship proved to be a "turning point" in Vicky's professional development and on her return to AMREF she began work in a leadership role as a researcher in the Directorate of Health Policy and Systems Research. "Without the master's degree, this role would not have been possible and I would have remained as a project officer," she says.

Vicky is also studying for a PhD in Public Health, with the experts she met during the scholarship continuing to mentor her. "The support provided to the students to improve their performance was crucial to the shift from one education system to another," she says.

After Vicky's "illuminating" experience, she is keen for other students to share her experience and hopes to see the collaboration between St George's University and AMREF grow and host "more African students through the scholarship. An exchange programme of AMREF and St. George's University faculty and students can only enrich the two institutions."

HAPPY DAY

St. George's University students with the Keith B. Taylor Global Scholar's Programme celebrate after the White Coat Ceremony at the University of Northumbria in August. Some 120 students have registered for the current programme, which teaches first year sciences at Northumbria before students move to Grenada to complete their pre-clinical training. Since the programme began, 645 students have registered



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