

Students shine in health research

By SHMRC organising committee

The best research

completed by students of the Faculty was showcased at the fourth annual Students in Health and Medical Research Conference (SHMRC) on 15 September, which was attended by medical students and Faculty staff.

The SHMRC is the first conference designed exclusively to raise the profile of research by students within the Faculty.

The night started with an address from SHMRC patron Winthrop Professor Fiona Wood, who emphasised the importance of clinician-led research as an effective means of advancing medicine answering the “unanswered questions” that clinicians come across in everyday practice.

The level of competition at SHMRC was high, with nine students selected to speak from a field of 32 entrants. The presentations covered topics as diverse as the cost-effectiveness of telemedicine, health issues for pregnant women transported by aeroplane and anti-venom for “jack jumper” ant bites. The evening ended with the awarding of prizes and a closing address from acting Dean Winthrop Professor John Newnham who pointed to research as the key feature that distinguished high quality medical faculties. WA fosters a strong research culture, beginning from undergraduate learning. Student research is supported by UWA and many research organisations, which encourage students to undertake research as part of a university degree, for work or electively part-time through scholarships.

Until recently, however, there was no conference designed exclusively to recognise the contribution of undergraduates to medical, dental and health research in WA. With this in mind, the SHMRC was a WA Medical Students' Society initiative in 2007 to encourage and reward undergraduate health research at the University of Western Australia.

The SHMRC offers an opportunity for these researchers to be recognised and become a part of the wider research community in WA. It is also hoped that other health students can take inspiration from their work and get involved in the world of research.

The selection of speakers at SHMRC is representative of a small fraction of the undergraduate student research going on today. The SHMRC convenor for 2010 was sixth year medical student Tabitha Mok.

The prize winners were:

Research Deemed to Have Most Clinical Significance:
Ben Silbert

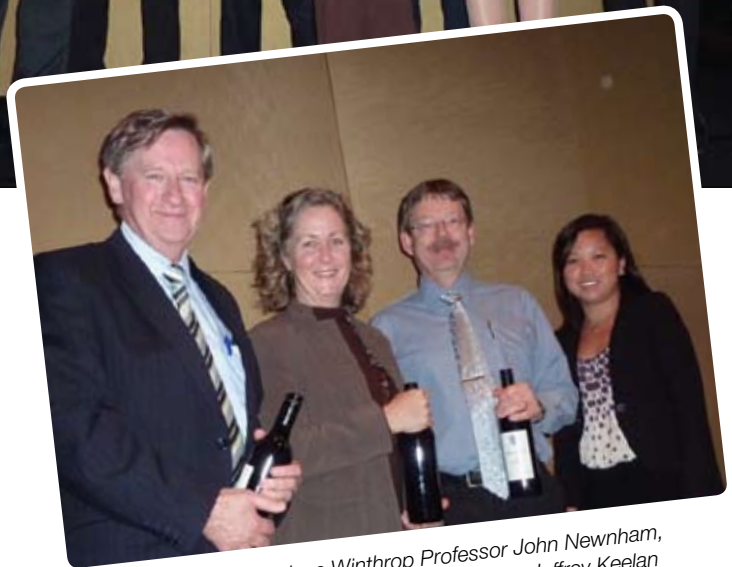
WAGPET General Practice and Primary Care Award:
Claire McGerr

Best Young Investigator: **Natalie Akl**

Most Significant Multidisciplinary Research: **Claire Meyerkort**



(from left) The student presenters were Matthew Josiah, Lu Png, Joseph Luo, Ben Silbert, Claire McGerr, Tim Marr, Natalie Akl, Claire Meyerkort, Andrew Webster



(from left) SHMRC Judges Winthrop Professor John Newnham, Associate Professor Naomi Trengove, Professor Jeffrey Keelan and convenor Tabitha Mok

Get your nominations in

Students and staff are being asked to fire up their laptops and send in nominations for the Faculty's Excellence in Teaching Awards.

The awards are a means of paying tribute to staff who have done an outstanding job in teaching, supervising research, supporting students and developing programs.

The three categories are Teaching Excellence, Outstanding Contribution to Student Learning and Programs that Enhance Student Learning.

Nominations close 31 October.

See the Faculty website for details:

<http://www.meddent.uwa.edu.au/staff/teaching/awards>