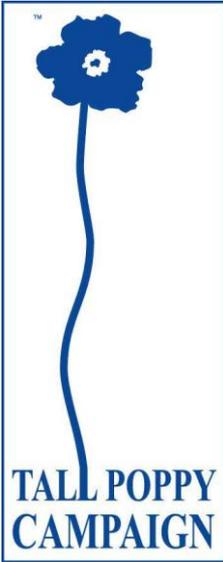


THURSDAY 25th AUGUST 2011



MEDIA RELEASE

2011 TALL POPPY AWARDS – WINNERS ANNOUNCED BY GOVERNOR

Winners of the 2011 Tall Poppy Awards have been announced at a formal Reception at Government House.

The impressive achievements and tremendous potential of eight leading young South Australian researchers have been recognised tonight at the 2011 Tall Poppy Awards Reception at Government House.

The Reception was attended by more than 80 leading representatives of the science, technology, engineering and mathematics sectors from universities, business, government and industry groups.

His Excellency Rear Admiral Kevin Scarce AC CSC RANR presented the awards with Professor Ross McKinnon, Director of Research at the Flinders Centre for Innovation in Cancer and South Australian Director of the Tall Poppy Campaign.

Science and Information Economy Minister Jay Weatherill said: “The Tall Poppy Award winners demonstrate the breadth of talent we have in South Australia among our science community and aims to inspire students to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).”

“I applaud these young recipients for their hard work and dedication,” Minister Weatherill said.

Presentation of the Tall Poppy of the Year Award will take place as part of the South Australian Science Excellence Awards gala dinner on Thursday, 3 November, 2011.

The winners of the 2011 Tall Poppy Awards are:

Dr Stuart Brierley – Neuroscience and Gastroenterology

Research Fellow, Nerve-Gut Research Laboratory, Royal Adelaide Hospital

*Stuart researches the **chronic pain disorder Irritable Bowel Syndrome** which affects up to 20% of all Australians and costs millions of dollars a year in lost productivity and health care. He is investigating why for most people pain is activated only by tissue damage while sufferers of IBS experience long-term pain responses even when damaged tissue has healed. Stuart’s work shows that in these patients special nerve endings that are activated during a bout of gastroenteritis don’t “reset” back to normal after the illness has passed leaving the gut over-sensitive and chronically painful. **Understanding how these pain-sensing nerve endings work will lead to new treatments for IBS.***

Dr Laura Brooks – Acoustics Research

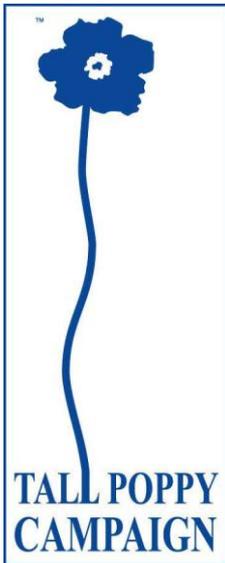
Lecturer, School of Mechanical Engineering, University of Adelaide

*Laura investigates **how different sounds are made**, for example the noise made when the blades of a windmill cuts through the air; the noise of a submarine’s fins cutting through water or the noise of air flowing over an airplane wing as it flies. Laura uses both experiments and computer modelling to understand how the flow of air or water over a surface creates these sounds. Laura’s work will enable the **development of quieter modern transport, energy and defence technologies.***

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The Tall Poppy is a metaphor for excellence and endeavour and symbolises Australia’s pride in its outstanding achievers – in all fields.

ABN 71 000 025 507



Dr Philip Gregory – Breast Cancer Research

Research Fellow, National Breast Cancer Foundation, SA Pathology.

*Philip's research **addresses the leading cause of death for sufferers of breast cancer** – the spread of cancer cells from the initial tumour to other organs. He studies the transformation of cancerous cells into the even more aggressive cells which are able to spread throughout the body. Discovering the genetic reasons for this fatal transformation will allow Philip to develop therapies to target and prevent these changes and lead to **better diagnosis and treatment of breast cancer**.*

Dr Claire Jessup – Diabetes and Transplant Research

Research Fellow, Renal Department, Royal Adelaide Hospital.

*Claire investigates how **transplanting clusters of special cells into the pancreas** of people whose bodies cannot control their blood sugar levels could provide a **long term treatment for diabetes**. These clusters of special cells are called islets, are found only in the pancreas and are the only cells in the body which can produce insulin – the substance that allows the body to control the level of sugar in the blood. Claire is working toward successful transplantation of these islets into diabetic patients by ensuring they develop the tiny bloody vessels they need to survive and carry out their role in their new environment.*

Dr Craig Priest – Microfluidics and Interfacial Chemistry

Research Fellow, Ian Wark Research Institute, University of South Australia.

*Craig researches **the way liquids spread over or stick to surfaces**, much like what happens when writing with a pen, painting a wall or using non-stick cookware. He controls whether liquids stay on or run off a surface by using microscopic bumps, grooves and coatings which often imitate those found in the natural world, for example on the surfaces of leaves. Craig uses this ability to control microscopic droplets and streams of liquid to **perform chemical and biological reactions in small devices to make detection of diseases or chemical hazards faster, safer and more efficient**.*

Dr Tara Pukala – Protein Chemistry

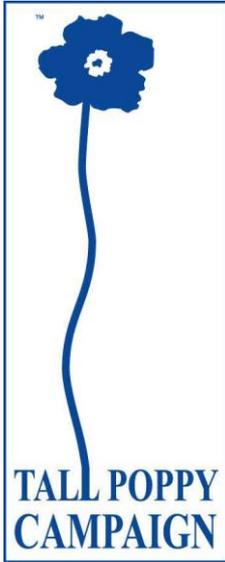
Lecturer, School of Chemistry and Physics, University of Adelaide

*Tara's work investigates **the molecular machinery that keeps our bodies' factories running**. The proteins that make up this machinery are like any other piece of equipment made of multiple parts that need to work together smoothly. Tara's work is generating a better understanding of the shapes of proteins and the way they fit together to help manage and repair this vital machinery. Her research is developing new methods to "see" the atomic detail of proteins and so unravel the processes which go astray and cause disease. Currently her focus is **the protein linked to Parkinson's Disease and how small changes in the machinery can cause or cure this illness**.*

Dr Erin Symonds – Gastroenterology and Nutrition

Senior Research Officer, Nerve-Gut Research Laboratory, Royal Adelaide Hospital

*Erin's work examines **the way the human stomach senses food** causing feelings of fullness and loss of appetite. She has discovered that "taste buds" for different nutrients exist not only in the tongue but also throughout the gut and that these sensors are decreased when too much fatty food is consumed. Erin's research investigates how our bodies sense the sort of food we eat to enable development of **drug therapies to reduce appetite and the incidence of obesity and associated diseases**, such as diabetes and heart disease, in society.*



Dr Mark Tingay – Geoscience and Petroleum Engineering

Senior lecturer at the Australian School of Petroleum, University of Adelaide

*Mark's research examines stresses in the Earth's crust caused by movements of its tectonic plates. In particular he investigates **how rocks buckle and break under natural processes** (e.g. formation of mountains, generation of earthquakes) and man-made influences (e.g. tunnels, mines). Mark also studies **how oil wells are drilled to avoid and control disasters** that cause oil spills. These two research areas came together in Mark's study of the 2006 Lusi mud flow disaster in Java, Indonesia which flooded ten square kilometres of the city of Sidoarjo with hot mud. While debate has raged over the cause of this disaster Mark's studies show that it was triggered by a nearby drilling accident.*

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