

Unit GR05, Brookside Office Park, 11 Lansdowne Road, Claremont, 7700
Tel: + 27 21 683 5814 | Fax: +27 21 674 6328 | www.africagenome.com

NEWSLETTER Issue # 7

November 2009

The Teaching Biology Project – Report on September Conference

Written by Ms Cheryl Douglas – Project Director

The third Teaching Biology Project workshop for in-service teachers ran from 28 September to 1 October. This conference targeted mainly teachers from areas outside Cape Town and from schools in disadvantaged areas.

Tommy Botha, senior curriculum advisor in the Western Cape, attended the conference as a delegate and really impressed the teachers with his willingness to get involved and to do all the activities with them, whether this was extracting DNA from wheat germ or planning a lesson using ICT. A group of 10 students from Cape Peninsula University of Technology also attended the conference and from their feedback and that of the in-service teacher, they all thoroughly enjoyed themselves and learnt a lot.

Many of the teachers had had limited exposure to conducting practicals in the classroom and to using ICT. The practical sessions in the biology and computer labs challenged teachers to think about how they could apply what they had learnt in their own classrooms.

The presentations on various aspects of evolutionary biology were all superb. Ian McCallum, in addition to being the opening speaker, also facilitated a discussion around race after the delegates had watched the movie 'Skin' at the MTN Science Centre.

To find out more about the 2010 Teaching Biology Project, please visit www.teachingbiologyproject.org.za or contact melody@agei.co.za.



Events

*LAUNCH OF DARWIN EXHIBITION

Date : 23 November 2009
Time : 17h30 for 18h00
Venue: Iziko S A Museum,
25 Queen Victoria Street,
Cape Town

Professor Chris Stringer FRS

Research Leader in Human Origins and Director of AHOB, Dept of Palaeontology, Natural History Museum, London
will deliver the opening address at the Darwin Exhibition Launch, as well as present the below-mentioned Nelson Mandela Science Lecture.

*NELSON MANDELA SCIENCE LECTURE Part of the DARWIN200 series

You are invited to attend a **FREE** Public Lecture

"Charles Darwin, Africa, and Human Evolution"

Date : Tuesday 24 November 2009
Time : 13h00
Venue: GH1, University of the Western Cape, Modderdam Road, Bellville

RSVP: Linet at 021 557 0246
linet@hippocommunications.com
For more info visit: www.africagenome.com

Breaking Science news...

Angry Faces: Facial Structure Linked To Aggressive Tendencies, Study Suggests

ScienceDaily (Nov. 2, 2009) — Angry words and gestures are not the only way to get a sense of how temperamental a person is. According to new findings in *Psychological Science*, a quick glance at someone's facial structure may be enough for us to predict their tendency towards aggression.

Read more... <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2009/10/091031002319.htm>

Cancer: using our enemies to attack our greatest threat

Written by Gavin Chait

With HIV, TB, Malaria, malnutrition, typhoid, diphtheria, tetanus, and cholera to contend with, you know Africans shouldn't be forced to worry about anything else.

Unfortunately, as Africans start to live longer thanks to improved healthcare, diseases usually associated with wealthier nations are starting to make their presence felt. The UN Global Cancer study, released in 2002, highlighted that over 50% of cancers were occurring in developing countries. By 2020, they expect that number to go up to 70%.

Yet, because the perception is that cancer is so anomalous in Africa, people are diagnosed very late. "80 percent of cancer victims already have late-stage incurable tumours when they are diagnosed, pointing to the need for much better detection programs," says the report. There are over 11 million deaths every year as a result of cancer.

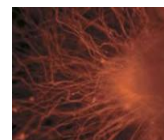
Professor Leonard Seymour of Oxford University, and president of the British Society of Gene Therapy, is optimistic about the future of cancer research. His stock in trade is in research into the use of lytic viruses to attack and destroy cancer cells.



Prof Leonard Seymour

The current approach to treating cancer is to irradiate the cancer cells in order to kill them. The radiation causes so much damage to the cells that it triggers their autodestruct mechanism and the tumours will wither and die.

Read more ... <http://www.africagenome.com/genetic-politics/cancer-using-our-enemies-to-attack-our-greatest-threat.html>



Human stem cell