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ALUMNI MAGAZINE 2020

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LETTER TO ALUMNI

As an institution, RCSI has a 236-year history marked by firsts. Our pioneering spirit has meant we can claim the first female medical graduate in Ireland or Britain, the first female surgical fellow, the first truly international student base, the first educational establishment fully focused on health care, the first medical institution to offer a four-year graduate entry programme in Ireland ... the list of firsts is astonishing. And, so far, 2020 has been a year marked by firsts. For the first time, we brought forward the final examinations, with the Class of 2020 taking examinations seven weeks early and online (see page 4); we held our first virtual results day, then our first virtual graduation so that many of our students could provide front line support to the health service when it most needed it.

The highly prized title of University has been conferred on RCSI, following a resolution passed by the Oireachtas. University status recognises RCSI's impact on higher education in Ireland and internationally and will significantly contribute to our efforts to attract excellent students and researchers, faculty and staff, and to build our reputation globally. In the Times Higher Education 2020 impact rankings, RCSI was ranked number one in the world under the category of "good health and well-being". Another first for which we are justifiably proud.

As well as mobilising rapidly to provide continuity of education for our students, RCSI's response to COVID-19 has been far-reaching, not only in using our health care expertise to support Ireland's national response to the crisis but to bring expert-driven information to the public (see the interview with Professor Samuel McConkey, page 8).

The impact of RCSI alumni on the response to COVID-19 throughout the world (page 12) underlines the leadership qualities and talent of these truly amazing health care professionals. Many of our committed surgeons, doctors, nurses, physiotherapists and pharmacists would not be working to the benefit of all, without the help, generosity and kindness of alumni and friends who pledged a gift to RCSI that could be used to support them early in their career. For the first time, we will mark the precious contributions from our alumni and friends with the launch of the RCSI Legacy Programme later this year. Chief Executive, RCSI, Professor Cathal Kelly tells us more about why alumni want to leave a gift for the future (page 33), and why the future will be brighter as a result.

AÍNE GIBBONS

DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT – ALUMNI RELATIONS, FELLOWS & MEMBERS



NOMINATIONS NOW OPEN

Nominations for the 2021 RCSI Alumni Awards, which we hope will take place next year, are now open. The Alumni Awards set out to honour the outstanding achievements of RCSI alumni, from all disciplines, who as global health care professionals, are leading the world to better health. The nominations process is open to all alumni, faculty and staff to ensure wide participation. Please spread the word and let us know who you believe should be recognised for their achievements. Visit rcsi.com/dublin/alumni-awards to submit your nomination today.



PROTECTING YOUR DATA RCSI is committed to protecting your privacy. New laws governing how we manage your data and communicate with you have been introduced. To enable you to receive invitations for reunions, events and scientific conferences and to continue to stay in touch with classmates, please keep us informed of any changes to your details. You can update your information anytime online at rcsi.ie/alumni, by email to alumni@rcsi.ie or by calling the Alumni Office directly on +353 (0) 1 402 2523.



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ON OUR COVER
RCSI Alumni around the world respond to COVID-19

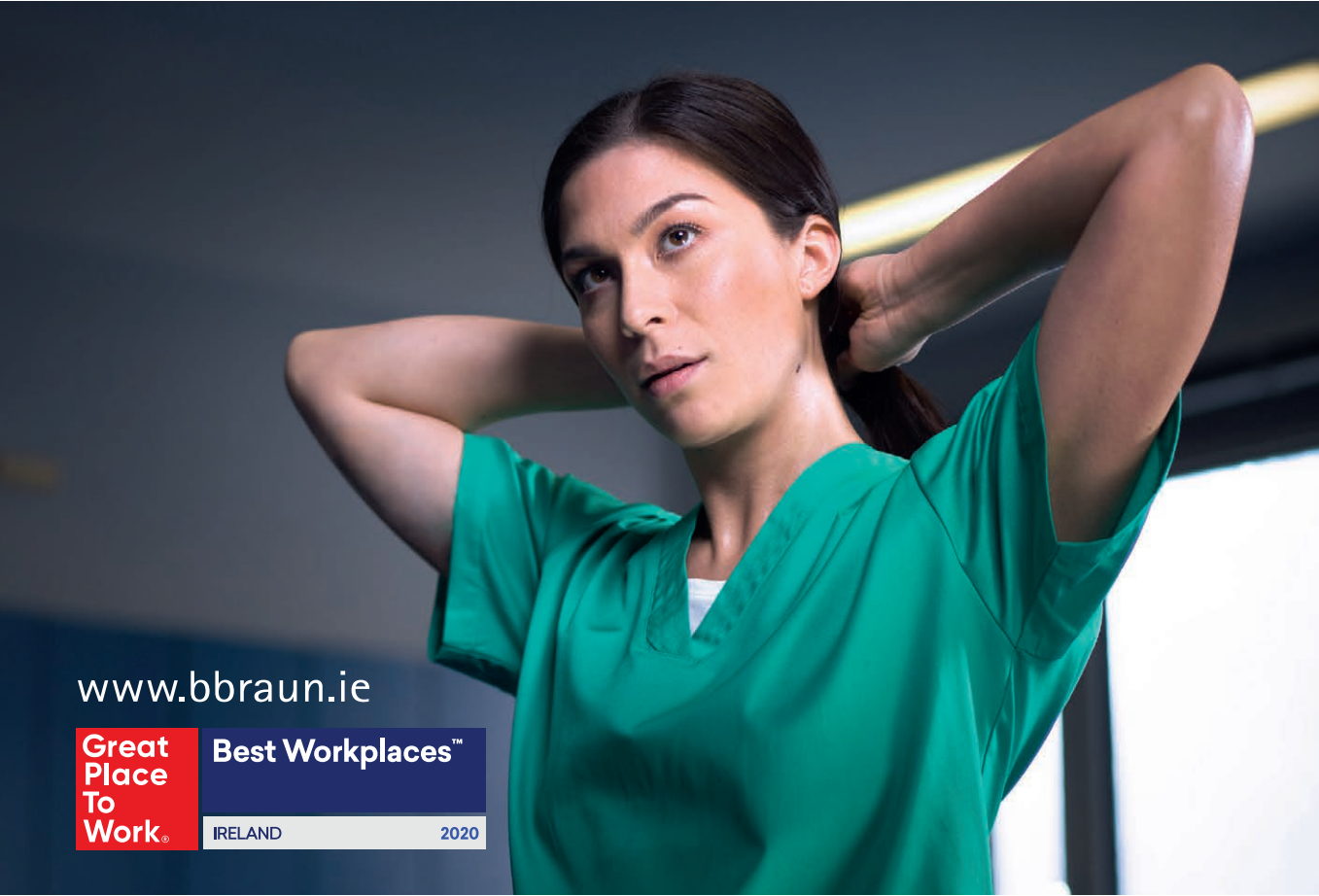
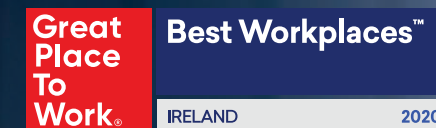
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OUR HERITAGE

RCSI was founded by Royal Charter in 1784 as the national training and professional body for surgery. In 1978, RCSI became a recognised College of the National University of Ireland and in 2010, RCSI was granted by the State, the power to award its own degrees. In 2020, RCSI was granted University status and became RCSI University of Medicine and Health Sciences.



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DOING THE ROUNDS

UNIVERSITY NEWS, ALUMNI UPDATES, RCSI IN THE COMMUNITY AND ACROSS CAMPUS ...



FIRST EVER VIRTUAL CONFERRING

On May 13, 312 doctors from the RCSI Medicine Class of 2020 made history, receiving their medical degrees in a virtual conferring ceremony, a first since RCSI's formation in 1784. In response to the unprecedented situation created by the COVID-19 pandemic, medical degrees were presented to the Class of 2020 at a virtual conferring ceremony, so the 312 doctors could join the front line in hospitals and health care settings around the world.

Professor Cathal Kelly, Chief Executive, RCSI, congratulated all those graduating on their success: "We are immensely proud of our graduates, not only for their achievements while studying with us, but also for stepping up to join the front line response to COVID-19. We look forward to watching our graduates progress on the next phase of their journey as health care leaders of the future."

Professor Hannah McGee, Dean of the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences invited graduands to stand together, though apart, and make the graduates' Declaration of RCSI.

Professor Arnold Hill, Head of RCSI School of Medicine, commended graduands for showing resilience and courage in the face of unprecedented circumstances, before announcing the names of the 312 new doctors.

Addressing the class, An Taoiseach Leo Varadkar said: "We need you. Whether it's working in our hospitals, or in our communities to keep people well and tend to the sick. Whether it's working on vaccines or new medicines or public health matters like contact tracing and testing, we need you on the front line."

Other messages of congratulations and encouragement came from alumni including The Rt Hon Professor the Lord Darzi of Denham KBE (Medicine, 1984), Professor Barbara Murphy (Medicine 1989) and Dr Antonia Lehane, President of the RCSI Association of Medical and Dental Graduates (Medicine, 1982).



A MOMENTOUS DAY

In April, 312 medicine students from RCSI University of Medicine and Health Sciences Class of 2020 received their final year results via live stream, marking the first time the historic event has been held online. Professor Cathal Kelly, Chief Executive, RCSI said: "These are truly extraordinary times for our Class of 2020 students. Although we can't be together on campus, we wanted to mark the occasion virtually – celebrating this important milestone with family and friends all over the world. This year's School of Medicine graduates have thrived academically during an unprecedented time in history. I am extremely proud of each and every one of them as their years of hard work and dedication come to fruition today." RCSI brought forward final examinations for medicine students amid concerns over the spread of COVID-19. The decision was made in consultation with students to support their careers on the front line in Ireland and in their home countries worldwide.

RCSI Students Join Front Line at Beaumont and Connolly

More than two dozen medical students worked alongside front line health care workers in Beaumont and Connolly hospitals. Students from RCSI University of Medicine and Health Sciences were trained in prone positioning – turning intubated patients to lie on their front to make breathing overnight easier. The team at St Paul's in Beaumont Hospital made some very important updates to their PPE, adding a photograph of themselves to the front of their gowns. As part of the



#hellomynameis campaign for more compassionate care, all front line health care staff are asked to tell their patients their name, making a vital human connection.

RCSI number one for Good Health and Well-Being

RCSI University of Medicine and Health Sciences has been ranked first in the world for 'Good Health and Well-being' in the Times Higher Education University Impact Rankings 2020. The University's leading position in this category reflects RCSI's singular focus on improving human health for the benefit of patients and communities across the globe. The Times Higher Education University Impact Rankings recognise universities around the world for their social and economic impact based on the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDGs). For its contribution to the UNSDG 3, 'Good Health and Well-being', RCSI was ranked number one of more than 600 global universities assessed. Commenting on the announcement, Professor Cathal Kelly, Chief Executive, RCSI said: "Our singular focus at RCSI University of Medicine and Health Sciences is to improve human health worldwide. As our staff and students face the challenges of working and training in support of the health service during the COVID-19 pandemic, recognition of our contribution to health and well-being is particularly meaningful for the RCSI community at this critical time for global health. The COVID-19 crisis underscores the truly international nature of medicine, where diversity is embraced and where health care professionals cross boundaries to support our communities, all over the world."

WHO Director-General Awarded Honorary Fellowship

World Health Organization (WHO) Director-General Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus has been made an Honorary Fellow of the RCSI Faculty of Nursing and Midwifery. Dr Tedros was awarded Fellowship during the WHO designated International Year of the Nurse and the Midwife. Dr Tedros is globally recognised as a health scholar, researcher, and diplomat with firsthand experience in research, operations, and leadership in emergency responses to epidemics. Under his leadership the World Health Assembly designated 2020 as the International Year of the Nurse and the Midwife.

Dr Teresa Frawley, outgoing Dean of the Faculty of Nursing and Midwifery, said: "Whether holding a health or foreign affairs political brief, all roads lead to universal health coverage for Dr Tedros who has demonstrated what it takes to expand access to health care with limited resources. Dr Tedros is a most worthy recipient of the highest honour the Faculty of Nursing and Midwifery can bestow, Honorary Fellowship. Dr Tedros recognises the centrality of nurses and midwives to achieving real progress in universal access to healthcare and we thank him for that."



Dr Tedros receives his Fellowship from Dr Teresa Frawley, Dean of the Faculty of Nursing and Midwifery



SCHOLARSHIP AWARDED

Saaad Alshleh, a teenage Syrian refugee, has completed her first year at RCSI, having won a €5,000-a-year scholarship to study medicine after achieving excellent results in her Leaving Cert in 2019. The Department of Education-funded scholarship was created in the name of Irish-born scientist and Nobel Prize winner William C Campbell, for a student from a socio-economically disadvantaged background who attended a DEIS school, who is pursuing third-level study in zoology, medicine, physiology or biomedical sciences.

A FIRST: UNIVERSITY STATUS

Minister for Education and Skills Joe McHugh TD and Minister of State with responsibility for Higher Education Mary Mitchell O'Connor TD announced in December that RCSI was authorised to use the title of 'University' in Ireland. The renowned medical institution, founded by Royal Charter in 1784, has had permission to use the title overseas since 2015. RCSI now has full rights to use the title to style, market and describe itself as a University both in Ireland and around the world.

Minister Mitchell O'Connor commented: "The title of University is highly prized in our higher education system and its integrity must be protected. This authorisation is not lightly bestowed nor easily obtained. RCSI meets all of the challenging conditions laid out in the legislation."

Professor Cathal Kelly, Chief Executive of RCSI, said: "I welcome the granting of the title University, which will significantly contribute to our continuing efforts to attract excellent students, researchers and staff and build our partnerships and reputation internationally."



Professor Hannah McGee, Dean of the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, RCSI; Minister for Education and Skills, Joe McHugh TD; Minister of State for Higher Education, Mary Mitchell O'Connor TD; and Professor Cathal Kelly, CEO, RCSI



● **RCSI Bahrain celebrated the tenth anniversary** of its first conferring ceremony over recent months with the hosting of its 10x10 Alumni Gathering series. Unfortunately, the series had to be cut short due to the outbreak of COVID-19 but not before successful events in Kuwait, Dubai and a first ever visit to Abuja, Nigeria. During the events, graduates shared stories of their time at University and their experiences of life since graduation, while University staff were on hand to provide updates on the latest developments on campus and opportunities available to alumni.

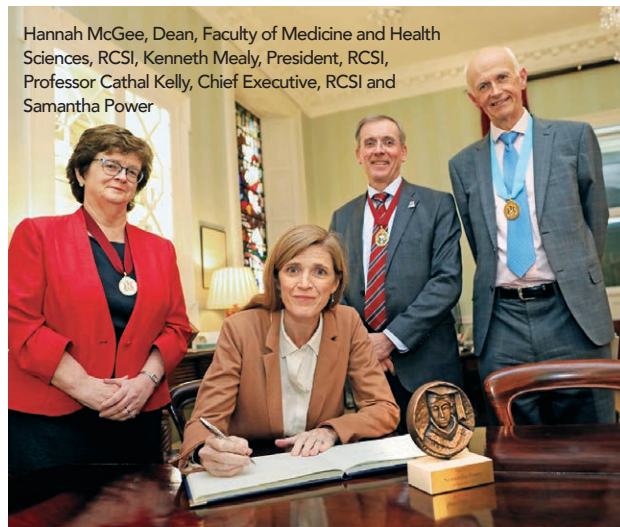


School of Physiotherapy

RCSI has appointed Professor Suzanne McDonough as its new Head of the School of Physiotherapy. Professor McDonough, an expert in the development and evaluation of rehabilitation interventions in clinical populations, brings with her over a decade of experience as Professor of Health and Rehabilitation at Ulster University. Professor Cathal Kelly, Chief Executive, RCSI, said: "Professor McDonough brings with her a wealth of experience in both education and research." Professor McDonough said: "I look forward to joining the ranks of the high-calibre professors, researchers and students in RCSI's School of Physiotherapy."

The Emily Winifred Dickson Award

In November 2019, Samantha Power received the Emily Winifred Dickson Award at a ceremony at RCSI. Irish-born Samantha Power began her career as a war correspondent and in 2003 won a Pulitzer Prize for her book, *A Problem from Hell: America and the Age of Genocide*. In 2005, her critiques of US foreign policy caught the attention of newly elected Senator Barack Obama who invited her to work with him on Capitol Hill. Following Obama's succession to the Oval Office, Power became his human rights adviser and, in 2013, the youngest ever US ambassador to the UN. She has recently published *The Education of an Idealist*, a personal account of her journey from Irish immigrant to UN Ambassador. At the ceremony, Chief Executive, RCSI, Professor Cathal Kelly said: "Emily Winifred Dickson broke boundaries when she became the first female Fellow of RCSI in 1893. For the contribution she has made to global politics, Samantha Power is a most worthy recipient of this award."



Hannah McGee, Dean, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, RCSI, Kenneth Mealy, President, RCSI, Professor Cathal Kelly, Chief Executive, RCSI and Samantha Power

OPEN DAY

More than 600 Leaving Certificate students from schools throughout Ireland learned about life as a medical, pharmacy and physiotherapy student at the RCSI University of Medicine and Health Sciences Open Day 2020 in January. Students explored Europe's most advanced clinical simulation centre at 26 York Street before attending interactive workshops. In the medicine workshop, students experienced a delivery by a birthing mannequin and performed surgical stitching on dummy patients. The physiotherapy workshops used hands-on methods to show students the role of a physiotherapist in the management of people with lung conditions. Students also got the chance to experience the art of drug formulation and delivery in the pharmacy workshop.



WORLD RECORD ATTEMPT

RCSI students from over 60 countries were successful in their Guinness World Record-breaking attempt, becoming the record-holders for the "Most Nationalities in a Health Awareness Lesson", on the 80th anniversary of International Students' Day at RCSI on November 17 2019. This was the first time that students from all undergraduate and postgraduate schools at RCSI came together in support of a singular goal.



RCSI MyHealth public lectures

Members of the public were invited to learn about positive health and wellness at a series of online lectures bringing together leading experts across a range of topics, including exercise, smoking, vaping, alcohol, stress management, mindfulness and relaxation. Hosted by the newly established RCSI Centre for Positive Psychology and Health, the series will address how factors such as optimism and mindfulness may lead to better health.

Launching the series, Professor Ciarán O'Boyle, Director of the Centre for Positive Psychology and Health, said: "The World Health Organization defines health as a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. Modern research is showing that we as individuals can do a great deal, not only to prevent or delay the onset of disease, but also to increase significantly our own health and well-being." See RCSI events pages and social channels for news and updates.

FIRST PROGRESS WOMEN IN SURGERY FELLOWSHIP

In February, Ms Ailín Rogers, FRCSI, became the recipient of Ireland's first PROGRESS Women in Surgery Fellowship, funded by Johnson & Johnson Medical Devices Companies. RCSI published the 'PROGRESS: Promoting Gender Equality in Surgery' report in 2017, identifying the barriers to female progression in surgery and calling for the provision of fellowship for female surgeons to inspire exceptional trainees with career-defining international fellowship training. Ms Rogers will undertake a fellowship in robotic colorectal surgery and multi-visceral resection for advanced pelvic malignancy at the Royal Marsden Hospital in London.



Ailín Rogers



Kenneth Mealy, President, RCSI and Dato' Dr Godfrey Geh

Honorary Fellowship: Dato' Dr Godfrey Geh

Dato' Dr Godfrey Geh has been awarded an Honorary Fellowship by RCSI in recognition of his outstanding contribution to medical education. Dr Geh, who graduated in 1965, was instrumental in the establishment of the Penang Medical College in 1996 in a joint venture with RCSI and University College Dublin (UCD), now known as RCSI & UCD Malaysia Campus (RUMC). Dr Geh is presently the senior consultant general and plastic surgeon at Pantai Hospital Penang.

"In a career that has spanned over 50 years, Dr Geh has been an international leader in supporting and mentoring health care professionals, which has enabled people to live long and healthy lives," said Mr Kenneth Mealy, President, RCSI. "Dr Geh embodies all the attributes this university instils in its graduates. He has reached out with caring compassion and professionalism to his patients, established sustainable models of surgical care and has left a lasting legacy for future leaders in medical care through the establishment of an international medical school." Read more about Dr Geh in *A Life's Work*, on page 34.

MAN OF THE MOMENT

BRINGING GLOBAL EXPERIENCE TO
BEAR ON COVID-19

Infectious disease expert Professor Samuel McConkey was among the first in Ireland to raise the alarm about COVID-19, and he urges political and social cohesion as vaccines and more effective treatments are developed to help manage the pandemic. He spoke to Dr Claire O'Connell

When China shut down its economy in late January, Professor Samuel McConkey knew it was time to act. Like many other experts in infectious disease, for weeks he had been tracking reported case numbers and deaths from an unusual new disease in Wuhan, in the Hubei province.

"Initially it was an outbreak of pneumonia, and it was not overly worrying from an international perspective," recalls Professor McConkey, who is Associate Professor and Head of the Department of International Health and Tropical Medicine at RCSI. "But then the numbers grew, and more and more people were dying. Every day I started going to public health websites from China, translating them into English and plotting the numbers into a spreadsheet. It became clear that this was something that could spread. I started to ask myself whether this might be the next pandemic."

As well as plotting the numbers, Professor McConkey took note of what the Chinese authorities were doing. And when they shut down the country's economy, he sat up.

"If a country that prides itself on economic growth switches off its economy, you suspect that the highest level of a response plan has been triggered," he says. "That was the moment when I realised that this event was something we really needed to prepare for."

He started to sound the alarm, even though speaking out so relatively early sometimes raised eyebrows, recalls Professor McConkey. "I think people thought I had gone a bit mad," he says. "But they listened. We got a plan in place

"SOMETHING I PROBABLY DIDN'T ANTICIPATE WHEN I STARTED MEDICINE IS THE IMPORTANCE OF LISTENING TO THE STORIES OF PEOPLE."

for the University, and I started talking to people in media about what could unfold here in Ireland."

Pathway to medicine

His blend of expertise in infectious disease, his love of data and his interest in the human and societal impact of outbreaks makes Professor McConkey an ideal analyst of the evolving COVID-19 pandemic. Yet he almost didn't become a doctor.

Growing up in a small, close-knit community just outside Clones in Co Monaghan, the family focus was on the land. "I'm from Killeevan, a parish that dates back to the time of St Patrick – there's a river bed and a standing stone that bear impressions said to be from his foot and knees," says Professor McConkey. "I grew up on a farm, and I had planned to study agriculture and follow in the footsteps of my ancestors."

But as the time came to choose a course of study, he started to broaden his horizons. "In my final year of school, I had a desire to get out and explore the big wide world," he recalls. "The challenge of agriculture is that you are on the farm, there is no mobility. Medicine seemed to offer more of an adventure of discovery, and a chance to serve and work with people beyond your own community. That sense of otherness is what attracted me to medicine, and to tropical medicine in particular. And I'm happy to say now, at the age of 54, that what I set out to do at 17 is what I have done."



"MODELS OF DISEASE HAVE THEIR LIMITATIONS, BUT I SEE THEM AS A TOOL LIKE A HAMMER OR A SHOVEL, AND WHEN YOU USE THEM PROPERLY THEY CAN REALLY HELP YOU BREAK DOWN A PROBLEM."

Vaccines by numbers

Following his medical degree at Trinity College Dublin, Professor McConkey did his Fellowship in Infectious Disease at Washington University School of Medicine in St Louis, Missouri, while doing a Masters in Statistics on the side.

"I was always very good at maths and science in school, and during my medical training I had thought of going down the route of mathematical modelling. Models of disease have their limitations, but I see them as a tool like a hammer or a shovel, and when you use them properly they can really help you break down a problem. Over the last few months I have often been up at 6am on a Sunday morning, plugging the COVID-19 numbers into models so I can discuss them with colleagues."

With statistics in the toolkit, Professor McConkey was comfortable designing experiments and analysing data when he worked in Oxford University and then

for five years in The Gambia – first as a researcher with the Wellcome Trust and then as Head of the Viral Disease Research Programme at MRC Laboratories. "Our son loved growing up in The Gambia, near the beach," he says.

Professor McConkey's research has focused on therapeutic vaccines against Hepatitis B, a chronic viral liver condition that affects almost two billion people worldwide, and against malaria. "I showed very definitively that a particular strategy for vaccination against Hepatitis B did not work," he says. "Sometimes science is not just about showing what does work, but also what is not effective."

That research has steeped him in the language and processes of vaccine development, a hot topic for COVID-19. "We are seeing a lot of hype about vaccines against the SARS-CoV-2 virus that causes COVID-19," he says. "But you can get a lot of false starts with vaccines and the initial vaccines that are developed may be not be very effective. It can be like having a first draft, then the vaccine gets refined and improved over time."

Inequalities

As well as medicine and maths, the interplay between disease and society has long intrigued Professor McConkey. He has witnessed how a virus can exacerbate inequalities in societies.

"Something I probably didn't anticipate when I started medicine is the importance of listening to the stories of people," he says. "We carried out a lot of qualitative research in The Gambia on what helped or hindered people through their journey with HIV. We could see unfortunately that women with HIV and their children suffered horrendous discrimination and that the people who were rejected by society often didn't have enough food to eat – this was one of their biggest constraints to having better health."

Today, he can hear echoes of this imbalance playing out in the COVID-19 pandemic as it exposes some parts of society more acutely to disease and insecurity more than others. "We need to pay attention to how the COVID-19 pandemic is affecting people and sections of society differently," he says. "And we must not underestimate the influence of social factors on disease outcome."

Speaking out

Another experience that left a lasting impression was when, in the early 1990s, Professor McConkey and his wife, Mary Dowling, worked as APSO (Agency for Personal Service Overseas) volunteers during the civil war in Sierra Leone.

In his role as medical superintendent in a mission hospital run by Irish nuns from the Holy Rosary Sisters, he led the hospital through escalating contingency planning up to a complete shut down. He carried out surgery and obstetrics and, with some help from Professor Martin Corbally, presented and published a case series of 180 acute abdomens in *World Journal of Surgery*, the largest in Africa at that time.

"Those experiences of leadership and planning for a crisis have flashed into my mind during the last three months many times, and certainly helped me," says Professor McConkey. "The message that emerges for me from that experience is to speak out clearly and loudly what you understand to be the truth, even if others consider you odd, or forceful."

As the situation came into sharp focus in China in late January, he wrote to the Department of Defence, he encouraged senior management at RCSI to set up a contingency planning team and he bent the ear of media, writing for national newspapers and commentating on news and current affairs programmes.

"I had done media in Ireland during the Ebola outbreak in West Africa, so they knew I could talk sense," he says, adding his gratitude that RCSI communications

expert Paula Curtin was on hand to lend support. "Writing articles about an emerging situation can be a lonely station, so I have been glad to have a sounding board who knows so much about getting a message across."

From the start, Professor McConkey warned of the need for businesses and other organisations to plan for the potential devastation of a pandemic, to arrange working from home, anticipate cash flow problems and secure protective equipment. However, this invited criticism in the early days. "People thought I was too focused on the economic impact," he says. "But you need a functioning economy for people to be healthy, and you have to figure out how to make that happen."

Choices for practice

As a Consultant in General Medicine, Tropical Medicine and Infectious Diseases at Beaumont Hospital Dublin, and at Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital, Drogheda, Professor McConkey has been treating patients with COVID-19 and implementing changes to reduce the risk of infection.

"We stopped non-emergency procedures and we set up COVID-positive and COVID-negative streams," he says. "We also set up a rehabilitation institute in

St Joseph's Hospital in Raheny and at Clontarf Hospital for patients recovering from the virus. It's hard work, but there are a lot of sensible steps we can take."

Looking to the future, he believes that improved anti-viral therapies will be an important component of treating COVID-19. "Some of the current anti-viral therapies that people are looking at are partially effective, but we need combinations of therapies, we have seen this with many viral diseases," he says.

Ireland, like the rest of the world, now faces choices about how to move forward. "I think Ireland has an opportunity to come out of this well, we export things that the world needs, such as food and pharmaceuticals, financial

services and computer chips and software," he says. "But we need to make choices. I think in the coming months and years, two worlds will emerge. One will be COVID-free, and that includes New Zealand, Australia, China and South Korea, where they keep the virus at bay through extreme measures, so people there can work and play. The other world has COVID in it, and that will sadly probably include much of Africa and Asia."

Where a country or region lands on that divide depends in part on social cohesion and a unitary response, he adds. "To be part of a COVID-free world, we need not just public health measures but political will too. We need everyone in this together," says Professor McConkey. "Ireland is a small country and we have a lot of county councillors and TDs, which may be a good thing in this kind of tight spot. While they all disagree with each other they listen to each other, and they can work well together in cross-party committees and coalition governments and community events. There is an omnipresent dignity about our elected representatives which has helped us through this. In Ireland we also have a strong and proud sense of who we are: our spuds, farms, music, sports, dancing, *cúpla focal*, welcomes, drinking, festivals, our troubles, theatre, poetry, literature, film, art and its modern interpretations. That communal framing of ourselves as Irish will get us through this." ■



MATHS TO MAKE SENSE OF COVID-19

Maths offers a way of making sense of the world, and a tool for analysing and solving problems. For Professor Sam McConkey, it was almost a career. "I was very good at maths in school, and the career guidance counsellor suggested I study actuary," he says. "I had to look that word up at the time."

Medicine won out, but in his career studying tropical and infectious diseases, maths has remained a staunch and powerful ally, and it is now a lens through which to view the COVID-19 pandemic.

"I am constantly plugging the data about COVID-19 cases and fatalities into mathematical models, and I'm working with colleagues on how to improve those statistical models," says Professor McConkey. "There is still that piece of me that is more than happy to use numbers as a way to understand the world."

He believes that the education system should instil more confidence in maths among students, given its power as a problem-solving tool. "Over the last 15 years I have taught a lot of medical students, and I see maybe a third of them are scared of maths," he says. "This saddens me, it is almost like not being able to appreciate music, not to hear the shift from major to minor. The students who shy away from maths are missing the power of this tool that gives you insight into solving problems and developing strategies, whether for your household budget or the trajectory of a global disease."

RCSI UNIVERSITY OF MEDICINE AND HEALTH SCIENCES

#RCSIttogether for our Students' Future

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- Personal Protective Equipment
- Mental healthcare support
- Study essentials

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"COVID-19 AND ITS AFTERMATH WILL NOT STOP CURRENT AND NEW STUDENTS FROM GAINING THE WORLD CLASS EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE THAT RCSI PRIDES ITSELF ON."

STRONGER TOGETHER

The mantra which underpins all that we are doing today to prepare for the new academic year is #RCSIttogether. We are re-imagining the campus and putting plans in place to warmly welcome our new students who arrive in Dublin later this summer. Students will experience our new learning communities, benefit from an increased number of mentors and enjoy the restructured extra-curricular offering being prepared by the Students' Services Office and Students' Union.

From a financial perspective, we are bolstering student support funds to ensure that those that find themselves facing financial difficulty are still able to continue their studies and, this year we will offer more scholarships than ever before to ensure that students from around the world are able to pursue their career ambitions.

It cannot be overstated that COVID-19 has created unprecedented challenges for universities globally, but through careful leadership, strategic planning and the steadfast spirit of the RCSI community we are confident that our students will continue to receive a world class medical education in an inspiring and safe environment.

But we cannot do this alone. We anticipate that requests from students for financial assistance will be greater this year than ever before and we need your help to ensure that students who find themselves in financial hardship can continue to pursue their medical careers as planned. RCSI has set aside significant financial resources to deliver on our mission and we are asking you, our committed Alumni community to consider joining us in supporting the '#RCSIttogether for our Students' Future' campaign."

Philip Curtis, Head of Admissions



Dr Naren Selva, (Medicine 2010, RCSI/PMC), Malaysia

Testing for COVID-19 on a daily basis, Malaysia-based Dr Selva also set up the Donate A Mask initiative with other doctors, retired nurses, physiotherapists and medical students, to increase vital stocks of PPE for those on the front line.



Dr Farhad Jahani (Medicine 2002), UAE



Dr Anne Whitford (Medicine 1985), Ireland

Dr Gerard Meachery is working on the front line for the NHS and for the first time alongside his wife, fellow RCSI graduate, Dr Gráinne Gorman. "It's 22 years since we met in Beaumont Hospital, and Gráinne and I are back in scrubs at Freeman Hospital, Newcastle, this time managing COVID-19 wards. It's quite surreal!"



Dr Gerard Meachery (Medicine 1993)



Mr Samer Arnous (Medicine 2001), Ireland

Consultant cardiologist Mr Samer Arnous teamed up with the University Hospital Limerick's consultant anaesthetist and vascular surgeon, along with three engineers from the University of Limerick, to design personal protective equipment (PPE) for hospital staff. This included a shield to protect anaesthesiologists during patient intubation for ventilation and reduce the spread of COVID-19.



Lord Ara Darzi (Medicine 1984), UK



Dr Irene Nee (Medicine 2016), Sibul Hospital, Malaysia

ALL IN THIS TOGETHER

At the onset of the coronavirus crisis, the Alumni eNews became a forum for alumni to share messages of support and expressions of solidarity, sparking dispatches from all over the world



Dr A David Barnes (Medicine 1965), USA

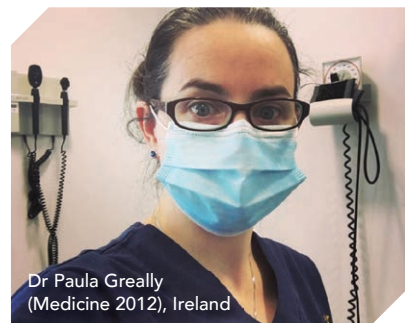
Obstetrician Dr David A Barnes, a first responder during the COVID-19 outbreak in Salt Lake City, Utah, notes that even in a crisis, babies keep on coming. He adds, "I still remember the good times at the Rotunda and share my best wishes for all alumni, as well as the new class of 2020."



Dr Elysha Brennan, a cancer survivor, graduated top of her class in 2019 and is now helping health care workers who are caring for COVID-19 patients, Ireland



Dr Alexander Tan, (Medicine 2016) Sultan Ismail Hospital, Malaysia



Dr Paula Greally (Medicine 2012), Ireland



Dr A David Barnes (Medicine 1965), USA

Dr Elisa Lazzari, University of Trieste, Italy. "I am sending you a picture of myself working during these hard times (in Italian, reads "Research does not stop"). I want to share it with you, a message of hope and commitment to the scientific community, now called upon to provide guidance to the general public and to work towards advancing our understanding of this disease and of the measures to fight it. All the best to RCSI Alumni and stay safe."



Dr Yee Wen Tan (Medicine 2016) Bau Hospital, Malaysia

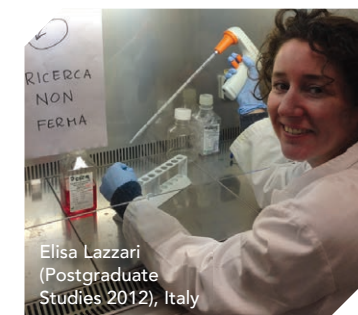


Shazia Samanani (Medicine 2015) Canada



Dr Ghaleb Halaseh (Medicine 2017), Dr Simarjeet Brar (Medicine 2018) and Dr Shwanik Bhargava (Medicine 2017), USA

Dr Halaseh, Dr Brar and Dr Bhargava from the COVID-19 ICU team at Lahey Clinic in Boston: "We want to encourage alumni out there to stay safe and to continue their amazing work, taking care of extremely sick COVID-19 patients. They are all making an amazing sacrifice for the rest of the world."



Elisa Lazzari (Postgraduate Studies 2012), Italy



Els Van de Velde (Institute of Leadership 2018)



ALUMNI AWARDS 2020

AWARDEES

The second annual RCSI Alumni Awards ceremony, scheduled to take place in RCSI in March, was cancelled due to COVID-19. While the outstanding achievements of the six RCSI Alumni Awardees for 2020 could not be celebrated in person, the University will honour these global healthcare professionals virtually in the coming months



RCSI ALUMNI AWARDS 2020 CATEGORY & SPONSOR

RCSI acknowledges the support and contribution from our Alumni Award sponsors

- School of Medicine, supported by Medical Protection Society
- School of Pharmacy and Biomolecular Sciences, supported by Novartis
- School of Physiotherapy, supported by Physio Needs
- School of Nursing & Midwifery, supported by 3M + KCI
- School of Postgraduate Studies, supported by IMSTA
- Institute of Leadership, supported by Enovation

When the Alumni Awards 2020 became a casualty of restrictions imposed by the global pandemic, it was hugely disappointing for the six exceptional Awardees, their families and friends and all who would have gathered in RCSI to celebrate.

Representing the diversity of RCSI, the six Awardees were selected from each of the following Schools: Medicine, Physiotherapy, Pharmacy and Biomolecular Sciences, Nursing and Midwifery, Postgraduate Studies and the Institute of Leadership. More than 21,000 alumni of the University worldwide were invited to participate in the selection process by nominating their classmates and peers. Written submissions were then assessed by a panel of judges led by RCSI Chief Executive, Cathal Kelly, Dean, Hannah McGee, Professor Arnold Hill (Medicine), Professor Frances Horgan (Physiotherapy), Professor Brian Kirby (Pharmacy and Biomolecular Sciences), Professor Zena Moore (Nursing and Midwifery), Professor Niamh Moran (Postgraduate Studies) and Mr Eunan Friel (Institute of Leadership).

The Awardees from each of the Schools, chosen on the basis of their extraordinary accomplishments in their own field, have not only made significant contributions to patient welfare and the business of health care but have also enhanced the reputation of the University worldwide.

Aine Gibbons, Director, Development-Alumni Relations, RCSI said: "We are extremely proud of our six extraordinary Awardees who truly are leading the world to better health. These distinguished individuals have made enduring contributions to the improvement of human health and are united by their time spent at RCSI. We look forward to receiving nominations for the 2021 RCSI Alumni Awards and to being able to gather to celebrate another cohort of exceptional RCSI alumni." Please fill out the Alumni Awards Nomination Form (2021): www.rcsi.com/dublin/alumni-awards.



Institute of Leadership Awardee

DR AMER AHMAD SHARIF

CLASS OF 2007

Country of Residence: Dubai

Vice Chancellor, Mohammed Bin Rashid University of Medicine and Health Sciences (MBRU)

Dr Amer Ahmad Sharif obtained his Master of Science (MSc) degree in Healthcare Management from RCSI. He is Vice Chancellor of the newly established Mohammed Bin Rashid University of Medicine and Health Sciences (MBRU), an institution that aspires to drive change in health care in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) through an innovative and integrated academic health system that is nationally responsive and globally connected, serving individuals and communities. "We're inspiring a new generation of healthcare professionals who will impact the world with groundbreaking discoveries."

Amer has more than 15 years of experience in the UAE health system. He was appointed head of Dubai's COVID-19 Command and Control Centre which was set up following a decree by the Crown Prince of Dubai. "The Dubai COVID-19 Command and Control Centre created an integrated network to manage the COVID-19 situation in the emirate. This network consists of various public and private entities as well as non-health care facility providers who are operating around the clock."

Amer is also a Visiting Scholar at the Thomas Jefferson University – Sidney Kimmel Medical College – Center for Research in Medical Education & Health Care. He has a Doctorate of Philosophy (PhD) in Public Health from the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, UAE University. He holds a Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery (MBBS) degree from the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, UAE University.



School of Pharmacy and Biomolecular Sciences Awardee

MS DEIRDRE HEALY

CLASS OF 2006

Country of Residence: Belgium

Technical Officer, World Health Organisation

Sligo-born and raised, Deirdre Healy obtained her degree from RCSI in 2006, followed by a Public Health Masters degree at London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. She has worked with the World Health Organization (WHO) since 2015. Her role is based in the prequalification technical unit which facilitates access for WHO Member States to affordable diagnostics, vaccines and medicines that are quality assured, safe and appropriate. "In many countries there is no regulatory framework for licensing so it is vital that products are assessed and evaluated before they are used in these countries." She has worked in application evaluation and dossier assessment for in vitro diagnostics, and currently develops WHO guidance for manufacturers applying for prequalification of their in vitro diagnostics.

Deirdre began her career in the Mater Misericordiae University Hospital as a clinical pharmacist and subsequently worked with the NGO Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) where she managed pharmacy services for its HIV/TB programme in Uganda. She set up and managed pharmacy services for refugee camps and field hospitals in Syria and Jordan. She later worked for MSF in Brussels coordinating the procurement and quality assurance of medical devices for MSF, overseeing supply chain strengthening. RCSI has honoured Deirdre for her inspirational work as a global healthcare leader and change agent. "RCSI encouraged an international mindset. I remember my lecturers willing us to succeed and how passionate and engaged they were."



School of Physiotherapy Awardee

MS AISLING BRENNAN

CLASS OF 2002

Country of Residence: Ireland

Musculoskeletal Clinical Specialist, Tallaght University Hospital

Aisling Brennan is a Musculoskeletal Clinical Specialist Physiotherapist working in Advanced Practice in Tallaght University Hospital (TUH). She works alongside rheumatology and orthopaedic consultants to triage new patients referred by GPs. Aisling was involved in introducing the musculoskeletal physiotherapy initiative in the acute setting to TUH and leading the development of this role nationally. "In 2010, I went to the UK to train in musculoskeletal injection therapy and then in 2012, I trained in diagnostic ultrasound for assessment of musculoskeletal structures. Incorporating these skills demonstrated that a higher quality care could be provided to patients by physiotherapists. I believed I could translate what I learned in the UK into practice here."

While working as the National Planning and Performance physiotherapist from 2017-2019, she developed a model of care for the future development of Musculoskeletal Clinics nationally which involves the integration of MSK services between primary and secondary care, in line with the Sláintecare programme.

Being an Alumni Award winner in 2020 marks almost two decades of association with RCSI. In 1998, after Aisling completed a sports science degree in the UK, RCSI had just introduced the course in physiotherapy. "Lecturers were either practising clinicians or very close to clinical practice and class sizes were small. We graduated with excellent skills. Being an alumna is hugely important to me. I very much appreciate the collegiality and contact between former students and faculty."



School of Medicine Awardee
PROFESSOR MARY LEADER

CLASS OF 1976

Country of Residence: Ireland
Chairperson Academic Pathology Dept, RCSI and Consultant Histopathologist

Professor Mary Leader was just 16 when she entered RCSI in 1970, following in the footsteps of her father and three siblings. After graduating in 1978, she pursued a career in histopathology at the Royal London and the Westminster hospital. In 1986, at 32, she was appointed to the Chair in Pathology at her alma mater and the Richmond hospital, later to become Beaumont Hospital.

Mary developed a highly successful clinical pathology teaching programme at RCSI and has presented scientific papers all over the world.

With colleagues, she established a research laboratory in RCSI, one of the first in Ireland to develop a tissue bank and a molecular pathology research and diagnostic facility. A cytology screening service was initiated, the first to be accredited in the country. Over the last 30 years, Mary has been very involved in postgraduate pathology and surgical training. She visits sub-Saharan Africa biannually to deliver pathology training in the RCSI COSECSA programme.

Mary has served on numerous national and international committees, most recently as President of the British Division of the International Academy of Pathology. She has been Vice President of the IHCA and President of the Irish Society of Surgical Pathology and is a founder member of Beaumont Foundation, a fundraising charity for Beaumont Hospital.

Mary says she loved RCSI from her first day as a shy medical student from Cork. She credits its supportive and visionary environment for allowing her thrive and develop her career in pathology.



School of Nursing and Midwifery Awardee

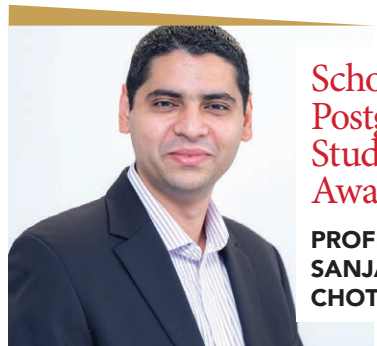
MS CAROL HILLIARD

CLASS OF 2004; MSC 2006

Country of Residence: Ireland
Assistant Director of Nursing in Children's Health Ireland (CHI), Crumlin Hospital
Carol Hilliard is an Assistant Director of Nursing in Children's Health Ireland (CHI) at Crumlin. She is a Registered Children's Nurse and Registered General Nurse with over 20 years' experience in acute paediatric healthcare. She is responsible for more than 400 national and international undergraduate and postgraduate nursing students who attend clinical placements in Crumlin annually. She also contributes to the

planning and development of nursing education and research across the Children's Hospital Group. Carol is a member of the hospital's Ethics Committee, and is the hospital's nominated Director on the Board of the National Children's Research Centre.

From 2015-2018, Carol was co-author of several reports for the MOCHA: Models of Child Health Appraised project, a €6.8m EU Horizon 2020 study. Throughout her career, an abiding belief in the importance of giving voice to children and families has influenced Carol's practice and research interests, including children with complex health care needs. She has received several awards and published papers in these areas. Carol is currently undertaking a Doctorate of Governance, the focus of her studies, 'Moral Action in Paediatric Healthcare' seeking to understand the decision-making and actions of paediatric nurses and doctors. Carol has demonstrated a commitment to empowering staff at all levels to engage in and deliver on practice developments and research projects, which improve the outcomes and experiences of children and their families.



School of Postgraduate Studies Awardee

PROFESSOR SANJAY CHOTIRMALL

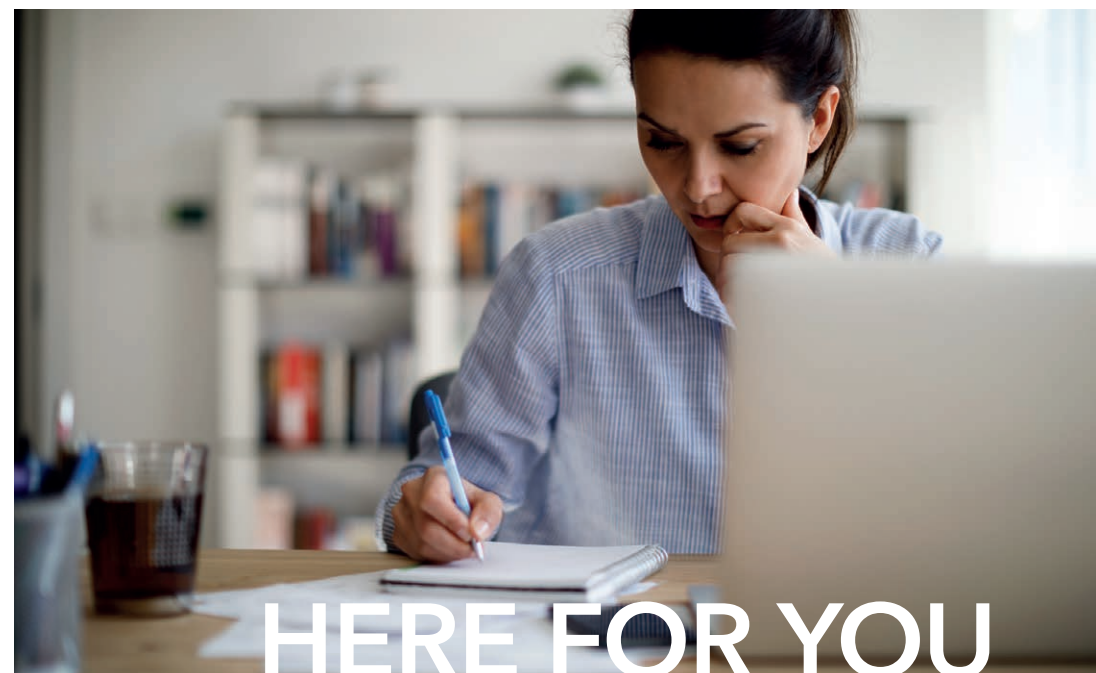
CLASS OF 2005, PhD 2012

Country of Residence: Singapore
Provost's Chair in Molecular Medicine, Principal Investigator, Translational Respiratory Research Laboratory, Nanyang Technological University
Professor Sanjay Chotirmall graduated from RCSI with the gold medal in Microbiology. An internationally recognised clinician-scientist, he was awarded the Royal Academy of Medicine of Ireland Doctor award in 2010 and 2013, the Irish Thoracic Society Award (2011), the Dublin Centre for Clinical Research (DCCR) Young Investigator Award (2011), the MMI-CSFP Medal (2011), the Royal College of Physicians William Stokes Award for research (2010) and the American Thoracic

Societies International Award (2009).

In 2015, Sanjay established the Translational Respiratory Research Group at the Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine at Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. His group has since published key high-impact work focused on infection, inflammation, and immunity, in the context of chronic inflammatory respiratory diseases affecting Asian populations.

In 2018, he established and now leads The Academic Respiratory Initiative for Pulmonary Health (TARIPH), a Singapore-wide research initiative to align strategic academic expertise. He has developed strong national, regional and international partnerships including the formation of the Singapore Initiative Respiratory Consortium, an academic respiratory partnership between Nanyang Technological University, National University of Singapore, Imperial College London, Karolinska Institutet, the University of British Columbia and the University of Newcastle, NSW. He was conferred as Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians in Ireland and a Fellow of the American College of Chest Physicians in 2018, and in 2019, appointed Provost's Chair in Molecular Medicine at Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. ■



HERE FOR YOU TODAY, TOMORROW AND YESTERDAY

For over 100 years we have supported our members through both the good times and the bad. It's our job to protect your career, reputation, finances and well-being through difficult times. Whatever challenges you may face, we want to be here for you now and in the future

As part of our commitment to you, we are heavily investing in our future in Ireland. This means we can continue to deliver expert advice and ensure we have a team that provides a full service offering for all our members in a range of challenging circumstances. This investment includes a new office in Ireland and further recruitment to build a new team in Ireland, offering a local service to our members.

As part of this commitment, we have brought a new senior figure on board. Tom Hayes, Head of Delivery Services for Medical Protection in Ireland, has an extensive background in medical law and malpractice. Since 2007, Tom has

been based in Dublin working for panel firm Matheson, where he established their health care services, including clinical negligence. During his tenure with Matheson, he headed up the 140-strong litigation department and was the senior partner working with Medical Protection.

With Tom in post, Medical Protection is demonstrating its dedication to establishing a stronger presence in Ireland, a move that will not only enable us to better understand and address the concerns of members here, but one that will also help provide us with increased clarity of the risks and trends faced by practitioners.

Tom says: "Our current and future plans for Ireland are unaffected by the current pandemic and we're even more determined to recruit a team and build on our commitment in Ireland.

"OUR CURRENT AND FUTURE PLANS FOR IRELAND ARE UNAFFECTED BY THE CURRENT PANDEMIC"

"Feedback from members in Ireland was that they wanted a local presence providing a local service. So that's exactly what we've done.

"When our new Dublin office opens, there will be an additional team of local Medical Protection experts on the ground, so members can get to

know their medicolegal team and come to the office for meetings and discuss any situations they need support with."

There is a chance that COVID-19 may cause an increase in claims and complaints. With the reserves we have in place, and a strong team of experts behind us, members can rest assured that their career and reputation are in good hands and they have the best medical defence organisation on their side.

Medical Protection is very aware of the risks of COVID-19 but we are also proud of the advancements that have been made in such a short time frame. Seeing health care professionals' ability to make e-referrals and the rise in telemedicine is showing the strides being made within the profession and the ability to adapt to challenging circumstances.

We've been proactive in our approach to protecting members' financial security by providing subscription relief to those who have seen a decline in their private health care income.

We've also recently launched a new well-being hub, encouraging our members to take positive steps towards well-being, providing a range of resources to support members through potentially challenging times and to help reduce stress and burnout.

We're prepared for what's to come. We are investing for the long term, and nothing will get in our way. As a mutual organisation, we will always put the needs of members first – we are here for you, today, tomorrow and yesterday.

For more information visit:

www.medicalprotection.org/ireland

NINE REMARKABLE WOMEN

Nine new portraits chosen to illuminate the story of RCSI today and its women leaders were entered into the University's art collection in 2020

When the portraits of nine trailblazing academic leaders were unveiled at RCSI in March 2020, the series represented a striking addition to the University's art collection. That the portraits were contemporary photographs, commissioned by RCSI to enhance female representation across the University, seemed a significant departure. The choice of subjects – the nine most senior women across all academic departments in 2018 – was a visible expression of RCSI's commitment to diversity and inclusion. For RCSI, promoting female representation to future generations was a key objective: "These portraits mark a significant place on our journey towards embedding a culture of equality throughout RCSI," says Professor Cathal Kelly, Chief Executive, RCSI.

The photographic portraits are themselves a snapshot in time. The series was created by Amelia Stein, winner of the RCSI Art Award 2018, in association with *The Irish Times* and the Royal Hibernian Academy (RHA). The award was established in 2016 to celebrate the common heritage of RCSI and the RHA and the longstanding association between art, medicine and well-being. Born in 1958, Amelia Stein lives and works in Dublin, where she has established herself as a singularly exacting photographer

whose work is characterised by meticulous attention to detail in tandem with the attributes of fine black and white photography. Stein has worked in theatre and opera in Ireland and she was elected a member of the RHA in 2004 and of Aosdána in 2006.

In 2018, when these nine trailblazers were chosen to be photographed to complement the Women on Walls collection, which commemorates historical female leaders in health care, their combined achievements highlight what an extraordinary collection of women they are. Recognising and celebrating their achievements, Stein chose to photograph the women in her signature black and white, using only natural daylight, in simple compositions, in the quiet privacy of the board room of 123 St Stephen's Green. She set out to capture their true selves without artifice. "They are such accomplished women, I simply wanted to photograph the best version of themselves." The individual photographic sessions took place with just Stein and her subject. Stein, during the lead-up process to the session had asked them to bring an object that represented their role. "The objects they brought helped tell me their story. I asked each of the sitters to remove their shoes and to stand – one tends to hide a lot when sitting – and each assumed a pose that seemed characteristic. They hold their object in a way that feels natural and right to them."

The new works are featured in the University's central public space, and will add to RCSI's rich collection of portraiture. ■

Professor Hannah McGee
Dean of Faculty of Medicine
and Health Sciences

"As the first woman dean of the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences at RCSI, I am proud to wear The Dean's Medal as it represents my role as an academic and educator. I am holding The SAVI Report which represents my role as a researcher. It is a book summarising a national survey of the prevalence of sexual abuse and violence in Ireland. Published in 2002, as a survey of more than 3,000 adults about childhood and adult experiences, it provided a unique population backdrop to understanding the subsequent decade of revelations about various forms of institutional abuse."

PHOTOGRAPHS BY AMELIA STEIN



Professor Anne Hickey

Professor of Psychology and Deputy
Dean for Positive Education

“I am holding the plastic model of a brain. This is for two reasons – the first is that my teaching is in the area of psychology which is defined by the American Psychological Association as “the scientific study of the mind and behaviour”. The second reason is that my particular research focus is in the area of stroke, a common vascular condition affecting the brain that will become more prevalent as our population ages. My research focuses particularly on cognitive impairment and dementia after stroke, and development of rehabilitation interventions to address and improve these outcomes.”

**Professor Marie Guidon**

Foundation Head of School
of Physiotherapy

“The aim of physiotherapy is to develop, maintain and restore movement and functional ability. I am holding a hand dynamometer, which measures grip strength. Grip strength indicates physical capability and is a significant predictor of all-cause and cardiovascular mortality. Higher grip strength is associated with better health outcomes.”

**Professor Zena Moore**

Professor and Head of School
of Nursing and Midwifery

“I am holding a sub-epidermal moisture scanner. One in every ten patients in hospital develops a pressure ulcer, which arises due to sustained mechanical loading of the soft biological tissues of the body. Early detection is fundamental to prevent the advancement of cell changes from stressed or injured (reversible processes) to damaged or dead (irreversible processes). Sub-epidermal moisture (SEM) relates to the quantity of skin and tissue water and is an indication of early pressure ulcers development. Since 2015, the RCSI School of Nursing and Midwifery/Skin Wounds and Trauma (SWaT) Research Centre has led ten research projects exploring the value of SEM measurement across a number of different settings. Our experience shows that the SEM predicts damage four days before visual evidence appears on the skin.”

**Professor Mary Leader**
Head of Department of Pathology

“I am holding a cardboard oblong tray that pathologists use to keep their histopathological slides safely. These slides are placed in these trays in the histopathology laboratory and are then given to the pathologist to examine the slides under the microscope and provide a clinical report. The smaller object is a plastic container for a similar purpose.”



Professor Tracy Robson
Professor and Head of School of
Pharmacy and Biomolecular Sciences

“I am a research scientist at heart – a cancer biologist – working on new approaches to further personalise and improve treatment outcomes for cancer patients.

I led a major programme of research to develop a drug that completed Phase 1 clinical trial in cancer patients and was granted Orphan Drug Designation by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in the treatment of ovarian cancer. I hold a conical flask – a real symbol of the “research laboratory” where it is used routinely.”



Professor Niamh Moran
Head of School of Postgraduate Studies

“My research is based on understanding how blood platelets play a role in disease manifestation; so we analyse blood from patients and volunteers in standardised laboratory tests. We collect blood in special blood tubes called vacutainers which we place in a 96-well plate, a sample of which I am holding. In the past, scientists would have used glass test tubes but as we get more sophisticated, we have reduced the volume of the tests to only use micro litres of blood. A 96-well plate is essentially an array (12 X 8) of micro test tubes.”



Professor Teresa Pawlikowska
Director of Health Professions
Education Centre

“I trained as a doctor and was an oncologist before entering general practice, which enabled me to pursue my career as an educationalist. I have developed a variety of medical education programmes in diverse environments as part of EU and World Bank curricular reform to support capacity building and progress towards patient-centred care. I have contributed to the expansion of graduate entry medical education and am interested in consultation quality. I have chosen a stethoscope and clicker, the clicker I use to advance slides so I can move around and teach groups of students freely.”



Kate Kelly
Director Library Services, RCSI Library

“I chose as my object a booklet entitled “Instruments and Innovations”, signifying how the Library supports student learning and research, enhances RCSI’s reputation by engaging the public with RCSI heritage, preserves RCSI outputs, past and present, and makes them discoverable and accessible for the future, in print and online.”

CLASS CALL

At RCSI, we love to hear news about your career achievements and information about you and your life after University. Find out what some of your classmates have been doing here ...

■ While working at Blackpool Victoria Hospital, **LAVA CHALIKONDA** (Medicine, 2017) was the audit lead for an audit titled “Clinical Management of Postpartum Haemorrhage at Blackpool Victoria Hospital”, which was accepted for presentation at the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists World Congress 2019 in London.

■ **DILIP DHUPELIA** sends us a photo of a mini-reunion in Brisbane of six doctors (all Medicine, 1976) - Dr Ruban Ratnam, Dr Abdul Saleh, Dr Yvonne Sundrum, Mrs Lossi Pensil, Dr Sarves Pensil, Mrs Ann Dhupelia, Dr Dilip Dhupelia, Mrs Camela Tang and Dr Lawrence Tang.

■ **BAKR JUNDI** (Medicine, 2017) recently graduated with a Master's degree in Clinical Investigation from Harvard Medical School. His thesis, on a new technology which uses a drop of blood to monitor sepsis patients, was published in *Nature Biomedical Engineering*.

■ *Misdiagnosis* is a documentary about the misdiagnosis of Lyme disease which follows three patients of **HARPAL MANGAT** (Medicine, 1985). Alec Baldwin will narrate.

■ **ANNE MARIE LENNON** (Medicine, 1996) is Professor of Medicine, Surgery, Radiology and Oncology and the Interim Director of the Department of Gastroenterology and Hepatology at The Johns Hopkins Hospital. Her research interest is in early cancer detection: she developed CancerSEEK, a blood test designed to detect eight different types of cancer.

■ **LALIT KAMDAR LRCSI** (Medicine, 1965) celebrated his retirement after a distinguished 55-year medical career. Born in Nairobi, Kenya, Lalit completed his medical degree at RCSI in 1965. He is proud of all his various memberships and affiliations including: General Medical Council (London, England), College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta, Canadian Medical Association, Alberta Medical Association, Misericordia and Grey Nuns Hospitals, Edmonton Academy of Medicine, Clinical Lecturer at the University of Alberta Department of Family Medicine, Examiner for the Medical Council of Canada, College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (Life Membership) and American Academy of Family Physicians (Fellow and Life Membership).

■ **MELISSA PENDERGRASS** (Medicine, 2007) works as a gynaecologic surgeon for Legacy Health in Oregon. With her husband, she welcomed her third daughter, Olivia Nicole Pounce, in February.

■ **MESHARI AL-KOOT** (Medicine, 2006) has opened the Meshari Clinic, a multi-speciality polyclinic over eight floors, overlooking the Arabian gulf and Sharq Marina in Kuwait City.

■ **PATRICK TREACY** (Medicine, 1985) won the 2019 Medical Aesthetic Practitioner of the Year award at the My Face, My Body, Global Aesthetic Awards.

■ **PAUL DHILLON** (Medicine, 2009) is course founder at the Review Course in Family Medicine in Montreal, which trains over 750 family medicine exam



candidates every year to prepare for the national licensing examination.

■ **RÓISÍN DOLAN** (Medicine, 2019) was awarded a 30% Club Scholarship and completed the Professional Diploma in Clinical Leadership at the RCSI Institute of Leadership in 2019. Since then Róisín has commenced her post as Consultant Plastic & Reconstructive Surgeon with a special interest in hand surgery at St Vincent's University Hospital Dublin.

■ **VANESSA LYONS** (Pharmacy, 2006) took up a new role as a seconded national expert to the European Commission in March. The role is in DG SANTÉ, which has responsibility for quality, safety and innovation in medical products.

■ **GRÁINNE GORMAN** (Medicine, 1997) has been appointed Director of the Wellcome Centre for Mitochondrial Research at Newcastle University, a centre of excellence in mitochondrial disease.

■ **KEVIN SCULLY** (Medicine, 2015) celebrated his wedding to Lewena Maher (Medicine, 2015) in April 2019. ■



Dr Kate Coleman (Medicine, 1985) was presented with the Distinguished Graduate Award by Dr Antonia Lehane at the RCSI Alumni Gathering Dinner on August 24, 2019.

VISION REWARDED

Since its inception in 1988, every year the Association of Medical & Dental Graduates honours the recipient of the Distinguished Graduate Award. The most recent recipient, Dr Kate Coleman transformed the lives of millions of people via the charity she founded

Each year, the President and Committee of the Association of Medical & Dental Graduates (AMDG) at RCSI, invite nominations for the Distinguished Graduate Award. This award, established in 1988, honours a medical or dental graduate of RCSI Dublin who has made an outstanding contribution to the improvement of health care through education, research, humanitarian aid or patient care.

The most recent recipient is Dr Kate Coleman (Medicine, 1985). Dr Coleman was presented with the Distinguished Graduate Award by the Association President, Dr Antonia Lehane, at the Gathering Dinner on 24 August 2019. In her citation for the award, Dr Denise McAuliffe Curtin FRCSI (Medicine, 1973) praised Dr Coleman, whose “hard work, energy and enthusiasm have positively transformed the lives of millions of people, by treating preventable blindness. Furthermore, she has inspired and encouraged colleagues to influence change and development.”

Dr Coleman's journey began at RCSI – Class of 1985. She achieved Fellowships in Surgery (FRCSEd) and Ophthalmology (FRCOPhth) in 1990. Subsequently, Dr Coleman was a research Fellow with the late Professor

Leo Koornneef in Amsterdam, then with Professor Mary Leader at RCSI, before completing a PhD in the Pathology of Ocular Uveal Melanoma. Dr Coleman has published widely in the area of orbital and oculo-plastic surgery and in the use of Botulinum toxin in oculo-plastic conditions. Appointed as Consultant Ophthalmologic Surgeon at Blackrock Clinic, Mount Carmel and St Michael's hospitals, she also lectured and was an active member of the European Ophthalmic Oncology group.

At the award ceremony, Dr McAuliffe Curtin also highlighted Dr Coleman's philanthropic endeavours, initially inspired by a lecture in Dublin delivered by Alan Foster, describing the severe shortage of eye surgeons in Africa. Dr Coleman went on to found the charity Right to Sight in 2006.

As Dr McAuliffe explained, “Kate started Right to Sight with a personal grant of €100,000 and subsequently raised over €5m to provide high-quality, high-volume eye care using cutting-edge technology, empowering African doctors to carry out cataract procedures in local communities. Right to Sight also supplied practical help and support, transporting patients and assisting aftercare.”

In its early years, Right for Sight enabled 180 African doctors to train in cataract surgery at the Arvin Institute in India. To date, Right to Sight has provided eye health care to more than 2.5 million people in over 20 sites across Africa and facilitated 250,000 sight-restoring operations, treating people who would otherwise be blind. In addition, the charity has been instrumental in hospitals in nine sub-Saharan African countries developing cataract surgical facilities for patients in their own communities.

“With her classmate and RCSI graduate, Dr Trine Jacobsen,” Dr McAuliffe explained, “Kate co-ordinated a movement to eradicate needless blindness on a global scale, through the WHO ‘Vision 2020’ movement. She continues to develop ideas and projects, including screening for glaucoma-associated blindness in Africa, using artificial intelligence to directly examine the optic nerve for signs of glaucoma.”

“This award is an endorsement and recognition from the most influential medical school in the world,” says Dr Coleman. “At RCSI, one third of my peers were from developing countries, so I was exposed to third world problems which set in motion my subsequent quest to empower African eye surgeons. The award will act as a powerful stamp of approval when I approach global influencers to discuss world health strategies and raise further awareness of my goal to eradicate needless blindness. I am deeply honoured to receive it.” ■

FORMER RECIPIENTS OF THE ASSOCIATION OF MEDICAL & DENTAL GRADUATES DISTINGUISHED GRADUATE AWARD

- 1988**
Dr Pat O'Callaghan
- 1989**
Dr Harry O'Flanagan
- 1990**
Dr Victoria Coffey
- 1991**
Mr John McAuliffe Curtin FRCSI
- 1992**
Dr Fergal Nally
- 1994**
Mr Desmond Kneafsey FRCSI
- 1995**
Dr Jack Preger
- 1996**
Professor W.A.L. MacGowan FRCSI
- 2002**
Dr J. Vincent Coyle
- 2006**
Mr Hy Browne FRCSI
- 2008**
Professor Eoin T. O'Brien
- 2009**
Professor Lord Ara Darzi FRCSI
- 2010**
Mr Peter McLean FRCSI (Posthumously)
- 2018**
Dr Helen Towers
- 2019**
Dr Kate Coleman

To make a nomination for this award, please contact the Association President, Dr Antonia Lehane or Honorary Secretary, Dr Jacinta West.

RESEARCH & INNOVATION

RECENT HIGHLIGHTS

The last year has seen RCSI researchers gain global recognition, attract significant growth in funding and generate enhanced collaboration with industry



Professor James O'Donnell PhD, MB, FRCPI, FRCPath, FFPATH RCPI is the Director of the Irish Centre for Vascular Biology and Professor of Vascular Biology, RCSI. He is also George Gabriel Stokes Professor of Haematology, Trinity College and Consultant Haematologist, National Coagulation Centre, St James's Hospital. Professor O'Donnell is also Adjunct Senior Investigator, Blood Research Institute, Versiti Blood Center of Wisconsin, USA and President, Haematology Association of Ireland.

COVID-19 RESEARCH BLOOD CLOTTING AND MORTALITY IN PATIENTS WITH COVID-19

The publication of a study carried out by the Irish Centre for Vascular Biology (ICVB), RCSI and St James' Hospital in the *British Journal of Haematology*, recently attracted widespread international media attention. The team of clinician scientists at RCSI, led by Professor James O'Donnell, Director of the ICVB, RCSI and Consultant Haematologist in the National Coagulation Centre in St James's Hospital, Dublin, found that blood clotting was a significant cause of death in Irish patients with COVID-19. The authors found that abnormal blood clotting occurs which causes micro-clots to form within the lungs. They also found that Irish patients with higher levels of blood-clotting activity had a significantly worse prognosis and were more likely to require ICU admission.

"Our novel findings demonstrate that COVID-19 is associated with a unique type of blood clotting disorder that is primarily focused within the lungs and which undoubtedly contributes to the high levels of mortality being seen in patients with COVID-19," said Professor O'Donnell.

"In addition to pneumonia affecting the small air sacs within the lungs, we are also finding

hundreds of small blood clots throughout the lungs. This scenario is not seen with other types of lung infection, and explains why blood oxygen levels fall dramatically in severe COVID-19 infection.

"Understanding how these micro-clots are being formed within the lung is critical so that we can develop more effective treatments for our patients, particularly those in high-risk groups. Emerging evidence also shows that the abnormal blood-clotting problem in COVID-19 results in a significantly increased risk of heart attacks and strokes.

"Further studies will be required to investigate whether different blood-thinning treatments may have a role in selected high-risk patients in order to reduce the risk of clot formation," Professor O'Donnell said.

Research will continue under Irish COVID-19 Vasculopathy Study (iCVS), led by Professor O'Donnell, which is jointly funded by the Health Research Board and Irish Research Council as part of the Irish government's COVID-19 Rapid Response Research Funding.

The study will investigate why patients with COVID-19 develop these blood clotting abnormalities leading to micro-clots in the lungs that block normal blood flow which, coupled with pneumonia, can result in the patient's oxygen levels in the blood falling to



Dr Louise Walsh

BREAST CANCER TREATMENT A POTENTIAL NEW APPROACH

Breast Predict cancer researchers at RCSI focused on discovering a potential way to target invasive lobular breast cancer, a form of cancer that affects around one in eight breast cancer patients and that has no tailored treatment options. Dr Louise Walsh, joint author with Dr Kathryn Haley, of the paper which was published in *Breast Cancer*, was supervised by Professor Darran O'Connor and Dr Triona Ni Chonghaile at RCSI. The potential new treatment, a combination approach that comprises two different drugs, blocks molecules in

breast cancer cells that control cell growth and survival. The researchers suggest that this treatment approach may be useful for patients who no longer respond to standard therapies. The team is now in the final stages of testing this treatment in the laboratory, supported by additional funding from Susan G Komen's Foundation before it hopes to advance to clinical trial stage.

Head of Research at the Irish Cancer Society, Dr Robert O'Connor, said: "New treatment options for this cancer subtype are urgently needed, so this discovery is hugely important for patients who might benefit from a tailored approach to their treatment."

dangerously low levels. In some patients the blood clotting problem also affects other organs and their risk of developing heart attacks and strokes is increased.

"The mechanisms through which COVID-19 triggers such a unique and life-threatening clotting disorder are not understood. This research programme will use state-of-the-art testing to answer this key question which is puzzling doctors and scientists around the world," said Professor O'Donnell.

"By understanding why these micro-clots are being formed within the lungs, the team aims to identify subsets of Irish patients who would likely benefit from blood thinning medication, as well as specific anti-inflammatory treatments. The study will also investigate whether clotting biomarkers may be useful in order to better define prognosis for COVID-19 patients and thereby prioritise ICU resources, with the ultimate goal of saving lives."

The Irish COVID-19 Vasculopathy Study (iCVS) will bring together scientists at RCSI, TCD and UCD with frontline clinicians involved in caring for patients with COVID-19 in three of Ireland's largest hospitals (Beaumont Hospital, St James Hospital and St Vincent's Hospital respectively).

"Given the urgency of addressing the COVID-19 pandemic, a major strength of the iCVS program is the multi-disciplinary team involved which includes Irish clinical leaders on each hospital site. With the iCVS scientists and clinicians working in 'real time' to address

this critical unmet clinical need, we are confident of the value of the study to the Irish and global population," Professor O'Donnell said.

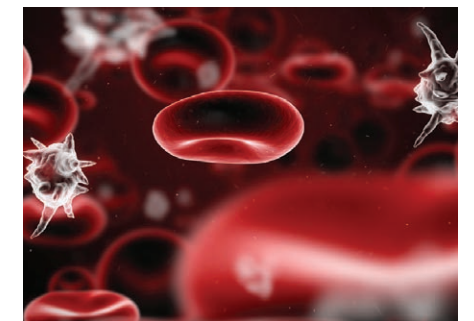
Professor Fergal O'Brien, Director of Research and Innovation at RCSI said: "As a focused health sciences university, RCSI's clinicians and scientists have been at the forefront of the global and national response to COVID-19. Professor O'Donnell and his team at the Irish Centre of Vascular Biology here at RCSI, along with hospital colleagues, have already established Ireland as a world leader in the research and treatment of bleeding disorders. I welcome this funding for the Irish COVID-19 Vasculopathy Study which will harness this expertise to improve treatments so urgently needed to improve outcomes for patients."

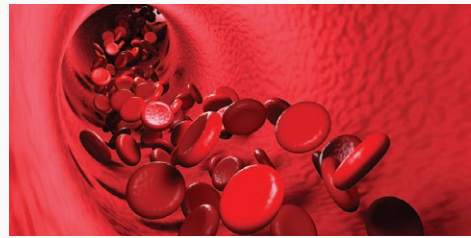
Commenting on this and other research taking place at RCSI, Minister for Health Simon Harris said: "I am delighted to see such collaboration and coordination in a collective battle against COVID-19. These projects have real potential to have an impact on the health and well-being of patients, families, healthcare workers and the healthcare system.

"In particular, having suitable treatments or vaccines is the best exit strategy from COVID-19 and the related restrictions we are living with so I am committed to ensuring a coordinated and proactive approach is taken to ensuring that COVID-19 patients across all settings in Ireland have access to new and emerging treatments as part of clinical trials."

ENTERPRISE IRELAND COMMERCIALISATION FUND SUCCESS FOR RCSI

Three RCSI researchers were the recipients of awards, worth a combined total of over €1m, from the Enterprise Ireland Commercialisation Fund Programme which aims to convert the outputs of state-funded research into innovative new products, services and companies. The three funded projects are: ■ Professor Mauro Adamo (Chemistry): Commercialisation of Small Molecule Manufacture including amino acids, peptides, proteins and biomacromolecules for late stage inclusion of 18F and 19F. ■ Dr Helena Kelly (Pharmacy and Biomolecular Sciences): ChemoGel - a novel thermoresponsive hydrogel for direct intratumoral delivery in solid tumours: evaluation of the path to market. ■ Dr Aamir Hameed (Anatomy): PReduction - A novel device for Heart Failure with preserved Ejection Fraction (HFpEF).





MULTIPLE MYELOMA RESEARCH SKYLINE DX AND CELEGENE PARTNER WITH RCSI

Dr Siobhan Glavey, Consultant Haematologist at Beaumont Hospital and honorary senior lecturer at RCSI, recently received significant support from Skyline DX and Cellegene for a study examining the impact of genetic expression profile on depth of response and survival in myeloma. Multiple myeloma is a cancer of the plasma cells that normally produce antibodies that help fight infection. Every year in Ireland about 250 people are diagnosed with this cancer and 170 succumb to the disease. The study will evaluate the combined assessment of gene expression profiling and MRD analysis to determine impact of genetic risk on achievement of MRD negativity and PFS in newly diagnosed transplant eligible patients with Multiple Myeloma receiving standard care regimens.

FUNDING FOR TWO RCSI RESEARCH PROJECTS THE DTIF FUNDS INNOVATION

Two projects led by researchers at RCSI, one involved in improving the recruitment of patients for clinical trials, the other in kidney dialysis, have received €6m in funding from the Disruptive Technology Innovation Fund (DTIF).

FutureNeuro, the SFI Research Centre for Chronic and Rare Neurological Diseases hosted at RCSI, will play a central role in the first project, which aims to better recruit patients for clinical trials. It was awarded €3.9m of funding. Professor Gianpiero Cavalleri, Deputy Director of FutureNeuro and Professor of Human Genetics in the RCSI School of Pharmacy and Biomolecular Sciences led the proposal, which was conceptualised by Professor Oran Rigby, founder of Singularity Alpha. The project will also involve partnership with Microsoft Ireland and Ergo.

The second project, awarded €2.1m, will develop medical software and a device to enable patients to administer kidney dialysis at home and will be led by RCSI professors and Beaumont



nephrologists Conall O'Seaghda and Peter Conlon, in partnership with patientMpower and Sixty.

"I am incredibly proud of our researchers who succeeded in securing awards from the highly competitive DTIF," said Professor Fergal O'Brien, RCSI Director of Research and Innovation.

The DTIF is a €500m fund established under Project Ireland 2040 and run by the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation with administrative support from Enterprise Ireland.



Bijoy Sagar, Chief Digital and Technology Officer of Stryker and Professor Cathal Kelly, RCSI CEO

DIGITAL HEALTHCARE STRYKER AND RCSI DRIVE INNOVATION

RCSI and Stryker, one of the world's leading medical technology companies, have announced the opening of Stryker's Digital Platform Services Centre of Excellence at RCSI's Smurfit Building at Beaumont Hospital. The Centre will develop digital solutions for use in emergency and specialist care settings to provide more seamless care coordination for patients suffering from time-critical medical emergencies.

At the announcement of the strategic collaboration, Professor Cathal Kelly, CEO of RCSI said: "Today, our dynamic research culture has a global reach, driving discoveries and innovations that enhance patient care and outcomes. Engaging with industry is an integral part of our research culture and partnerships, such as the one announced today with Stryker, are vitally important to delivering on our mission to improve human health and patient outcomes on a global scale."

"This partnership will enable knowledge sharing and ensure we are grounded in clinical reality as we build digital products that make a difference for our customers and their patients," said Shaun Braun, Vice President of Digital Platform Services at Stryker.

Stryker has six locations in Ireland and employs over 3,500 people. The company celebrated its 20th anniversary in Ireland in 2018.



RCSI AND NCAD IN PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPING DEVICE INNOVATION

RCSI and the National College of Art and Design (NCAD) have established a partnership to develop projects with industry partners medical device design, surgical trainer design, procedure task analysis, prototyping, and innovation in health care practices and processes. As part of the collaboration, NCAD students analyse the technical steps involved in completing a surgical procedure, enabling them to design new surgical simulators for use to teach surgical skills. Since the start of the collaboration in 2016, 14 novel simulators have been created with four currently in the pipeline in Orthopaedics, General Surgery, Hepatobiliary and Cardiothoracic, and two NCAD graduate MSc students have gone on to work in the surgical simulation industry.

GROWING LUNG CELLS IN THE LAB RESEARCHERS IMPROVE TECHNIQUE

A team led by Killian Hurley, MD, PhD, researcher at RCSI, who co-authored the study with Jun Ding, PhD, a post-doctoral fellow at CMU, has evolved a new technique to generate new lung cells in a laboratory. Cells may be stored for more than one year without losing their lung identity, so can be used to model lung diseases including idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), alpha-1 antitrypsin deficiency, neonatal respiratory distress or early-onset interstitial lung disease. "We developed a combination of techniques that examine the gene expression of thousands of single cells combined with DNA barcoding of each individual cell and machine learning to build up a dynamic picture of what factors favour cells that go on to be lung cells in our system. Using this knowledge we were able to improve our methods for generating lung cells so that we can now create more relevant cells that keep their cell identity in a dish for more than one year," explained Dr Hurley.

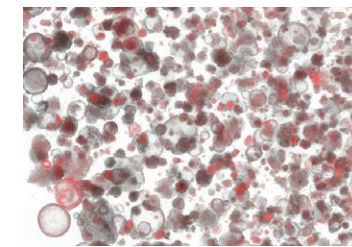
The new technique was developed in collaboration with Boston University and Carnegie Mellon University (CMU) in Pittsburgh.

Induced pluripotent stem (iPS) cells are derived from the donated skin or blood cells of adults and, with the reactivation of four genes, are reprogrammed back to an embryonic stem cell-like state. iPS cells can be differentiated toward any cell type in the body and do not require the use of embryos.

Building on previous work from the Center for Regenerative Medicine (CReM) of Boston University and Boston Medical Center, the researchers reprogrammed blood from adults into iPS cells. They then treated these stem cells over a period of one month until they became cells which were very similar to adult lung cells.

"The key hurdle to understanding what goes wrong with an individual patient's lung cells has been our inability to access those cells or to grow them in the laboratory. This approach allows us to now engineer those very finicky cells and to introduce bar codes into those cells that allow us to track and understand each cell and all their progeny over time

in the laboratory dish. The result is an inexhaustible source of new lung cells that can be prepared from any patient of any age," added co-corresponding author Darrell Kotton, MD, David C Seldin Professor of Medicine and Director, CReM, who led the work together with Ziv Bar-Joseph, PhD, the FORE Systems Professor of Computer Science at CMU.



Lung organoids grown from stem cells by researchers from RCSI, Boston University and Carnegie Mellon University (CMU) in Pittsburgh

RCSI research impact in 2019

2,114 COLLABORATING INSTITUTIONS 2014 - 2018

115 COLLABORATING COUNTRIES

18 NEW INVENTIONS DISCLOSED

International Collaboration

54% of RCSI's publications (2014-2018) were co-authored with international institutions

INDUSTRY FUNDING FOR RESEARCH:

2.3 MILLION IN 2019

CITATION IMPACT: RCSI's field-weighted citation impact is twice the world average and is ranked 124th in the World* (Source: Times Higher World University Ranking 2020)

3.3M RESEARCH COMMERCIALISATION FUNDING IN 2019

The Industry Income to Academic Staff (Times Higher World University Ranking 2020) has increased from 28 in 2014 to

47.5 in 2020

2,920 PUBLICATIONS 2014-2018 SCOPUS INDEXED

771 PUBMED INDEXED ARTICLES PAPERS PUBLISHED IN 2019

29 COLLABORATIVE AGREEMENTS WITH INDUSTRY SIGNED IN 2019



HEART DISEASE CAUSED BY PREMATURE BIRTH HOW BREAST MILK COULD HELP

Early use of breast milk could play a “vital role” in preventing heart disease in prematurely born infants, according to research by the RCSI and the Rotunda Hospital.

One of the long-term health complications in young adults who were born prematurely can include smaller heart chambers, relatively higher blood pressure and a disproportionate increase in muscle mass in the heart.

The new research, published in *Pediatric Research*, was written in collaboration with researchers from Harvard Medical School, University of Oxford and University of Toronto.

One study cited looked at 30 preterm-born adults who received exclusive human milk and 16 preterm-born adults who received an exclusive formula-based diet during their hospital stay at birth. They then underwent detailed cardiovascular assessment between 23 and 28 years of age, including an MRI of their hearts.

As expected, all of the hearts of those born prematurely had smaller chambers than the hearts in people who were not born prematurely.

However, the study showed that the smaller heart chambers were less profound for the exclusively human milk-fed group in comparison to those who were exclusively formula fed,

suggesting a potentially protective effect of human milk for heart structure.

The researchers then identified potential reasons for why breast milk results in a lower risk of heart disease. Breast milk, they said, could help prevent heart disease by better regulating hormones and growth factors, strengthening the infant’s immune system, reducing inflammation and possibly improving the metabolism of the child.

The research concluded that identifying the key components within breast milk that result in improved heart health could pave the way for a more targeted approach to improve long-term cardiovascular well-being for those born prematurely.

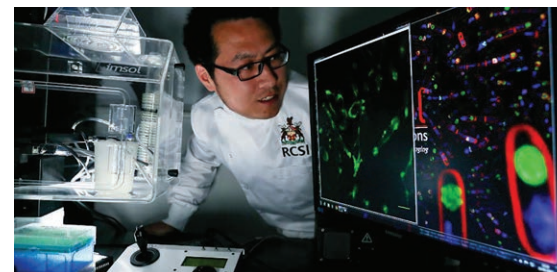
Afif EL-Khuffash, Honorary Clinical Professor of Paediatrics at RCSI and Consultant Neonatologist at the Rotunda Hospital, Dublin, said the research could play a role in better treatment options.

“It is becoming increasingly clear that premature birth results in long-term adverse cardiovascular effects with important clinical consequences,” he said. “There is a distinct lack of preventative and therapeutic interventions available to alleviate those effects. “The current evidence comes from observational studies and highlights the strong link between early breast milk administrations and improvement in long-term heart health, but it lacks concrete mechanistic explanations.”

SURGICAL MANAGEMENT OF CANCER TRANSFORMATIONAL TECHNIQUES

A study led by RCSI Professor of Chemistry Donal O’Shea, published in *Chemical Science*, has the potential to help surgeons more accurately remove tumours and detect cancer in lymph nodes during surgery using a fluorescence imaging probe.

“Almost 60% of all cancer patients will undergo surgery as part of their treatment,” says Professor O’Shea. A new technology that could improve surgical outcomes by giving the surgical team real-time, informative images during the surgical procedure would have a wide-ranging and sustained impact on the care of cancer patients. At the moment, this is



science. A clinical trial is our next goal.”

The team recently secured funding for a project on colorectal cancer diagnosis and treatment under the Project Ireland 2040 Disruptive Technology Innovation Fund (DITF) in collaboration with leading cancer surgeon Professor Ronan Cahill in the Mater University Hospital, UCD and Dublin-based industry partners IBM-research and Deciphex.

EPILEPSY DRUG EFFICACY UCB FUNDS CLINICAL INVESTIGATION

Professor Norman Delanty, Consultant Neurologist in Beaumont Hospital, Honorary Associate Professor in RCSI and Funded Investigator in FutureNeuro secured funding from UCB Pharma to participate in a multi-centre, randomised, double-blind, placebo-controlled, parallel-group study to evaluate the efficacy and safety of padsevonil as adjunctive treatment of focal-onset seizures in adult subjects with drug-resistant epilepsy. UCB is a multinational biopharmaceutical company headquartered in Brussels, Belgium which focuses primarily on research and development, specifically involving medications centered on epilepsy, Parkinson’s, and Crohn’s diseases. The company’s efforts are focused on treatments for severe diseases treated by specialists, particularly in the fields of central nervous system disorders, inflammatory disorders and oncology.



CYSTIC FIBROSIS LOWERING THE RISK OF LUNG TRANSPLANTS AND DEATH

A new approach to treating people with cystic fibrosis (CF) has been shown to reduce inflammation, which has the potential to reduce the need for lung transplants and lower the risk of death.

The study, led by joint authors, Professor Gerry McElvaney, Professor of Medicine at RCSI, and Dr Emer Reeves, is published in the current edition of the *American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine*.

CF affects about 1,300 children and adults in Ireland and 70,000 worldwide. The main cause of death is lung disease, which is driven by severe inflammation and chronic infection in the airways. “Previously, people with CF had a very low life expectancy. Due to improvements in medical treatment, these individuals are now living longer. However, they still suffer from a very severe disease. We hope that this advancement can lead to further improvements in outcome, better

quality of life and eventually a normal life expectancy for our patients,” said Dr Oliver McElvaney, the study’s first author.

The researchers found that one of the most aggressive bacteria found in the lungs of those with CF caused certain immune cells to change their metabolism. This change caused the immune cells to produce a protein that causes more inflammation. They identified that high levels of the protein were associated with worse lung function and a higher risk of death or need for a lung transplant.

The team then used a small molecule called MCC950 to reduce levels of the protein in a laboratory model of CF. In addition to reducing inflammation, this also helped clear the lungs of bacteria. This marks the first time that researchers were able to stop this protein in CF in vivo by targeting cell metabolism, which could potentially lead to a new approach to treating inflammatory diseases like CF.

“This is an important first step to significantly improving patient outcomes for people with cystic fibrosis. While more testing is required before delivering this to patients, we believe these results are very promising and could make this molecule a candidate for clinical trials,” said Professor McElvaney.

The study was carried out in collaboration with the University of Duisberg-Essen and the Trinity Biomedical Sciences Institute. The research was funded by the StAR (Strategic Academic Recruitment) MD Programme, which aims to transfer impactful research discoveries to clinical practice more quickly for the benefit of patients.



INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION PROFESSOR WINS PRIZE FOR RESEARCH IN LIFE SCIENCES

RCSI Professor Kevin McGuigan (Physiology and Medical Physics), recipient of the UNESCO-Equatorial Guinea International Prize for Research in the Life Sciences, was honoured for his cutting-edge research on the development and implementation of solar water disinfection technology (SODIS) to combat waterborne diseases among people without access to safe drinking water in Africa and Asia.

His unique and pioneering research, in both laboratory and field, has demonstrated the effectiveness of SODIS against all major waterborne pathogens.

More recently, the EU-funded WATERSPOUTT project, coordinated by Professor McGuigan, developed three solar water disinfection technologies currently being field tested in Ethiopia, Malawi, Uganda and South Africa.

He is also the research coordinator for PANI-water, a four-year project that is developing six prototypes that will be deployed in rural and peri-urban areas in India.

“I’m honoured to receive this award in recognition of the work our group has accomplished over the past 30 years,” said Professor McGuigan. “Nearly five million people use solar water disinfection on a daily basis to meet their water requirements. We have an expanding global population relying on a shrinking reserve of safe water. There is no time to rest on our laurels. The fight to provide access to safe water for all continues.” Professor McGuigan received his award alongside Professor Cato Laurencin (USA) and Professor Youyou Tu (China). ■

By leaving a gift in your will to **RCSI** or making a gift in memory of a loved one, you can help shape the future of medicine and patient care

LEAVE A LASTING LEGACY THAT WILL TRANSFORM LIVES

If you would like further information on legacy gifts please call **Aíne Gibbons** on **00 353 (1) 402 5189** or email **ainegibbons@rcsi.ie**

A LASTING LEGACY

I had an interest in medicine from a very young age. Growing up in semi-rural Donegal the only health professional I ever saw was our family doctor. I still remember the smell of his surgery and the curiosity I felt whenever I visited. I saw how people relied on his advice and I was instantly drawn to the profession.

Over the years as my dream became reality and I joined RCSI, I found new inspiration in the Professors and clinicians guiding, mentoring and supporting me. But as well as these individuals at the forefront of my career development, I quickly learnt that there were many more in the background; thousands of alumni who had walked the same corridors, stood with trepidation in the Anatomy Room during card signing (just as I had) and benefited from the RCSI experience. Through their ongoing involvement and support, this cadre of alumni were now enhancing my time at RCSI; helping to improve facilities, supporting student initiatives and enabling RCSI to invest in new inspirational faculty.

Many years on, I understand that I am a part of the legacy of those individuals and that is truly humbling.

Today, I am conscious of my own legacy and my ability to give back to future generations. I am pleased to make a gift every year, however, by remembering RCSI in my will I am able to recognise, through a gift of greater value, the leading role that RCSI has played in my life, whilst also supporting the University's future ambition.

I believe that RCSI will progress to be within the top 1% of Universities worldwide, continuing to grow in prominence and reputation, and I believe that those who will follow in our footsteps have the potential to be some of the brightest minds in health care and I am proud that they will be part of my legacy.

For this reason, I want to launch our Legacy Programme so that we can show our gratitude for the special intentions and contributions made by those leaving a bequest to our University. As part of the programme, we will be establishing the 1784 Society which brings together like-minded alumni and friends who plan to help shape the future of RCSI through philanthropic legacy giving. I look forward to sharing more on the programme with you in the coming months and welcoming many of you to the 1784 Society as we begin to grow the community.

If you are interested in supporting RCSI by leaving a gift in your will please contact Aíne Gibbons, Director of Development on 00 353 (1) 402 5189 or email ainegibbons@rcsi.ie



A LIFE'S WORK

Alumnus, Fellow and Honorary Fellow of RCSI, Dato' Dr Godfrey Geh Sim Wah (Medicine, 1965), has had a busy surgical career and co-founded a hospital and a medical college in Malaysia, among many other achievements. At 80 he still practises general, plastic and reconstructive surgery in Penang



In July 1970, Godfrey Geh was made a Fellow of RCSI with wife Mei Ling and his eldest daughter Evelyn and son Vernon, who are now both doctors, in attendance. Dr Geh was conferred by Mr Lannigan, President, RCSI, and Consultant Neurosurgeon.

Nineteen-year-old Godfrey Geh arrived in Ireland to study medicine at RCSI in October 1959, in response to a telegram from the College instructing him to “come immediately”. At the time, there were no medical schools in Malaya (now Malaysia).

“I had never set foot outside Malaya before,” he recalls. “It was an adventure. The journey from Penang to Dublin was via Singapore, Colombo, Bombay, Beirut, Geneva, Frankfurt and London.”

Term had already begun when Geh arrived in Dublin, but he soon settled in to college life, playing badminton, rowing for the College Eights, serving as president of the Malayan Students Union of Ireland and occasionally skipping afternoon lectures to catch a double bill at the Green Cinema, located a short distance from the College, where the Fitzwilliam Hotel is now. He lived in Mrs Kennedy’s boarding house on Grand Canal Street (“near Boland’s – you could smell the bread in the air”), where there was porridge with milk for breakfast every morning. (To this day, he is not able to eat it.) Mei Ling Loh, whom he knew from Penang, and whom he would later marry, was studying music at UCD and the Royal Irish Academy on Westland Row. Mei Ling is from a prominent medical family in Penang and her three siblings – Kelvin, Wilfred and Kathleen – all graduated from RCSI.

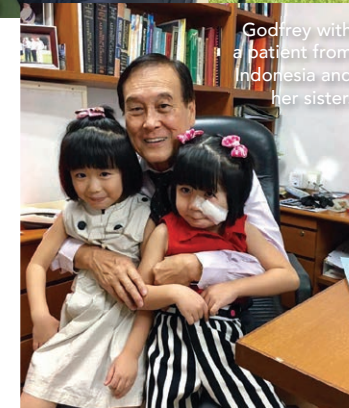
At RCSI, Dr Moira O’Brien, Dr Sheamus Gallen, Mr Tom Garry and Professor Brendan Rooney were

amongst the lecturers who taught the young Geh. Most of his clinical training was at the Richmond Hospital, and he remembers receiving excellent practical teaching from Mr Harold Browne, Professor Colman Byrnes and Dr Richard Conroy.

“Initially I had thought that I wanted to be a physician,” recalls Geh, “but during the summer of 1964 I went to Baltimore, US to do a three-month Externship in Union Memorial Hospital. There I was attached to Professor John Classen’s Surgical Department. Because they were short of doctors that summer I was doing a job almost equivalent to that of an intern. Professor Classen was very encouraging. He said: ‘Godfrey, you’ve got a good pair of hands, a good brain and good eyesight – come and join us!’

“At that time, even though we had recently gained independence there was no opportunity to train as a surgeon in my own country. So, after sitting the ECMFG in January, getting married to Mei Ling in April and sitting my finals in the summer of 1965 – I remember I was conferred by Mr Terence Millin, who was then President of RCSI, which was a great honour – I returned to Baltimore to take up a rotating internship at Union Memorial. I worked in medicine and the ED, where I saw every type of patient and learned a lot, before joining Classen’s team.”

Geh’s mother was diagnosed with kidney cancer while he was in Baltimore and he made the decision to return to Penang, taking up a position in the Penang General Hospital as the second in command looking after 160 patients.



“I WAS CONFERRED BY MR TERENCE MILLIN, WHO WAS THEN PRESIDENT OF RCSI, WHICH WAS A GREAT HONOUR”

“There was my boss, me and four housemen,” Geh remembers.

“My boss used to go to the club every day at 4.30pm, leaving me in charge. I had seen a lot in the US, but this was very hands-on.”

Sadly, Geh’s mother died three months after his return and, with a second child on the way, he made the decision not to return to the US but to take up a training job at the University of Malaya Medical Centre in Kuala Lumpur, the country’s first medical school, which had opened in 1965.

In 1969, Geh returned to Ireland for the first time since graduation to sit his Primary Fellowship exams and took up a position at the Meath Hospital as Registrar to Mr Douglas Montgomery, the then President of RCSI. During the course of the following year, he passed his final Fellowship exams and obtained the FRCS (Ire), FRCS (Eng) and FRCS (Edin).

Around this time, Geh made the decision to specialise in plastic surgery. With a glowing reference from Montgomery, he secured a locum position in the Royal East Sussex in Hastings and went on to work at the Royal London Hospital in Whitechapel, Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children, and Queen Victoria Hospital in East Grinstead, Sussex, the mecca of plastic surgery made famous by Sir Archibald McIndoe during World War II.

Geh returned to Malaysia in 1973 and was appointed Lecturer in Surgery at the University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, and Chief of Plastic Surgery at University of Malaya Medical Centre. At the time, there were only three plastic surgeons in the country, which had a population of 20 million.

At the age of 35, Geh departed Kuala Lumpur for Penang and in 1975, with his father-in-law, an established General Practitioner, founded a

private hospital, the Loh Guan Lye Specialist Centre in Georgetown. Initially the hospital had just 70 beds, but soon grew to over 300. Geh managed the hospital and practised there for 13 years, before leaving to found another private hospital, Pantai Hospital Penang, in Bayan Baru, another township, where he practises general and plastic surgery to this day.

“These days about 60 per cent of my time is taken up with general surgery, and about 40 per cent with plastic and cosmetic surgery. I like the challenge of reconstructions and burns work.”

Of Geh and Mei Ling’s four children, three are doctors. Evelyn is a graduate of RCSI who now practises as a GP in Sydney, Vernon is a paediatric ophthalmologist in Southend on Sea, Ashling is a lawyer, and Lynette is a GP in the UK. One of the couple’s six grandsons, now aged 15, hopes to study medicine.

Alongside his surgical career, Geh has been active in medical education. In 1996, with the assistance of Professor Kevin O’Malley and the late Professor David Bouchier-Hayes, Mr Michael Horgan and Professor Alan Johnson, he founded the private Penang Medical College, a joint venture with RCSI and UCD, a legacy that he describes as his “pride and joy”. From UCD there was input from Professors Niall O’Higgins, David Powell and Ron Reagan.

“My idea was that we establish an independent medical school to be run on a ‘reverse-twinning concept’, whereby the first two and a half years (pre-clinical) would be conducted in Dublin and the following two and a half years (clinical) be carried out in Penang’s public hospitals. The advantages of this programme would be a cost-effective medical education and the acquisition of a medical qualification from two established, well-known and world-recognised medical institutions. Furthermore, returning students would be exposed to our local health care systems and diseases.”

The first intake of 14 students commenced studies in October 1996 in Dublin, returned to Penang in March 1999 and graduated in June 2001. Renamed the RCSI and UCD Malaysia Campus (RUMC), there are now 1,800 graduates.

The bestowing of the Honorary Fellowship of RCSI on Geh in February, is not the first recognition by RCSI of the enormous contribution that he has made to both surgery and medical education during the course of his career. On Charter Day in 1998, Geh was presented with the RCSI Medal, he was made FRCPI in 2006 and his picture has hung in the College’s Corridor of Fame since 2015.

In 1999, Geh was awarded the Penang Datukship (Malaysian Knighthood) in recognition for his role in the improvement of health care services and for furthering medical education in Malaysia.

Today, at the age of 80, he considers himself a fortunate man.

“I have been blessed. I have good health, enough wealth, have enjoyed a successful, satisfying career and am still practising full-time. I have the support of my darling wife and family. I am getting better at work-life balance and try to spend time on the golf course whenever I can. Mei Ling and I, our children and grandchildren, play all over the world – last summer it was Portugal and soon, I hope we will be back in Ireland and hope to play in Dooks, Killarney and Ballybunion.” ■ KATY MCGUINNESS

A STEP BACK IN TIME...

The story of York Street – site of RCSI’s state-of-the-art new building – is a fascinating one, as Antonia Hart found out

York Street is one of 13 avenues radiating from St Stephen’s Green. An airy 40 feet wide, it was laid out in the 1670s as part of a new suburb created by Francis Aungier, connecting the ever-fashionable St Stephen’s Green to Aungier Street. York Street’s novelty and proximity to the Green attracted just the status- and fashion-conscious residents Aungier had hoped for, but its spell in the sunshine was short. By the 1720s the fashionable types looked longingly east, to Joshua Dawson’s new development, and when the city corporation bought Dawson’s own mansion to use as the Lord Mayor’s residence, York Street’s days at the centre of style were done. But the departure of the fickle beau monde opened the street to others. An increase in partial house lettings meant more variety in the street’s characters. Many newer residents now were members of the medical community, the backbone of the neighbourhood for so many years, both before and after RCSI made its significant move to York Street in 1810. At least ten of the University’s Presidents through the 19th century were born or lived in the street.

Despite York Street’s modernity today, there remain essential elements, which would be recognisable to long-gone eyes: its aspect and building line, the glimpse of glossy railings and foliage as you turn out of the noise of Aungier Street by The Swan, and walk east to the Green with the morning sun in your eyes. In the mid-18th century, the Green was not yet enclosed by those familiar iron railings but was bordered by four tree-lined promenades. Halfway along the west side’s French Walk was the entrance aligned with York Street. Also aligned with York Street, and with the rival Dawson Street, was the towering pedestal supporting George II on horseback. This kind of axial vista, drawing the eye up an avenue to an architectural or monumental focal point, was one of Georgian Dublin’s baroque specialities.

Late 18th-century advertisements, tinged with neighbourhood pride, describe York Street’s houses. Number 45 was talked up as being ‘in the best part of York-street, in good order, and completely furnished, with Coach-house and Stable’. Number 37 was ‘large and commodious’, while number 11 contained ‘three rooms on each floor, 5 of them 25 feet by 18, wine cellar, beer cellar, extensive coal vaults, two large stables’. A house of that size, and rooms of that size, took some furnishing. When the entire contents of number 29, up the street near the Green, were sold, they included ‘Mahogany Chairs; Dining, Card, Breakfast and other Tables; Dumb Waiters, Trays, a large Tambour Writing Table, Office ditto, Glazed Library Bookcases, and Deal Office Presses and Alphabets. Tea Store, Guardevine ... Hall and Stair Bells;



Beds and Bedding; Bed room Chairs, Tables, Commodes, Tallboys, Pier and other Glasses’. These notices give an insight into the luxurious lives of those for whom the houses were originally built. Residents needed to house book collections, and tea, beer and wine supplies. Servants answered bells, and sent food up from the kitchen, leaving their employers free to write letters and play cards in vast rooms warmed by giant coal fires.

From the 1790s, the houses were turned to a variety of other uses. Mrs Hurst ran a boarding school at number 20, paying ‘a strict attention to the Education of the young Ladies committed to her Care’. These young ladies, on their walks around the Green, may have paid some covert strict attention to the young gentlemen attending the Reverend Dr Edward Martin’s school further up the street. Schools were all the rage in York Street: certainly Miss Paterson hoped for a share of the market when she opened one at number 3, in 1810. Miss Paterson promised ‘the utmost attention’, both to her young ladies’ modern languages and to their manners. The business of education continued through the century. A ‘Sophister of College’ advertised in 1846 his willingness to coach would-be university entrants and freshmen in Classics, Mathematics and Logic, from his lodgings at number 11. Perhaps he had been burned before, during his ‘several years’ experience’, or perhaps he was just a bit of snob, because he ‘particularly requested that none but parents of respectability will answer this advertisement’. One would hate to



York Street, 1954

NUMBER 11 CONTAINED ‘THREE ROOMS ON EACH FLOOR, 5 OF THEM 25 FEET BY 18, WINE CELLAR, BEER CELLAR, EXTENSIVE COAL VAULTS, TWO LARGE STABLES’.



Social Housing



Salvation Army HQ



The Swan Bar



York Street, 1962



26 York Street

educate the wrong sort. Number 50 was also turned into a school when two London sisters, the Misses Swanwick, undertook to instruct young ladies in ‘all the ordinary Branches of Modern Education’, with a particular focus on the formation of character.

Houses were repurposed in other ways, too. Spacious single-family homes inevitably ended up parcelled out as smaller lettings, and the street-facing parts of the hall floors, in particular, were in demand as commercial premises. In 1810, half a house was advertised to let at 3½ York Street, ‘of which O’Malley, the scrivener, now occupies the shop’. Some of the divisions for letting were more successful than others. The first Earl of Roden’s house, on the corner of York Street and St Stephen’s Green, was, after his death in 1797, carelessly carved up into three self-contained lettings. Early one September morning in 1809, a gable wall collapsed and ‘tumbled completely streetward’. The early hour meant that there were no passers-by, and no injuries, but it was far from the last collapse of a poorly maintained and overcrowded house in Dublin.

In 1820, the mix of York Street residents included a handful of clergymen and widows, a tallow chandler, a haberdasher, a shoemaker, and a Classics teacher. One of the clergymen was also a novelist: Charles Maturin. At home at number 7, he indulged his favourite pastimes, including drinking,

singing, and dancing. His habits weren’t ideally matched with his job, as curate of fashionable St Peter’s, where he preached sermons so enthralling that people elbowed one another out of the way to get into the church to hear him. A clergyman’s salary made a tight enough budget for his vivid social life and dependent family. To boost his income Maturin turned to writing, developing a habit of pasting a wafer onto his forehead when mid-flow, as a warning to any family members barging into his study not to

interrupt with conversation. He was successful, and widely admired. James Clarence Mangan remembered listening to Maturin conducting a funeral at St Peter’s. Maturin’s eyes swept over the congregation and lingered on the poet, who blushed crimson at his literary hero’s notice. Celebrity, sadly, did not translate into ready cash, and his money worries never subsided. He died unexpectedly when, one night in 1826, he drank the wrong medicine. Maturin’s novel *Melmoth the Wanderer*, published 200 years ago this year, was the inspiration for Sarah Perry’s recent bestseller *Melmoth*.

Mangan, too, was shaped by York Street, apprenticed in a scrivenerly at the ‘small but convenient’ number 7 when he was 15 years old, in 1818. Much as Mangan detested scrivenerly, he too was obliged to support family members, and so stuck it out grimly for 20 years. His later poetry, increasingly political after the Great Famine, was published in *The Dublin University Magazine*, *The United Irishman* and *The Nation*, but these were Mangan’s most wretched years. With neither salary nor permanent home, he drank too much, ate too little, and grew bone-thin. Cholera swept through Dublin in the late 1840s, and Mangan died of it in 1849, aged 46, one of over 11,000 cholera victims buried in Glasnevin Cemetery that year.

Poetry continued as the street’s soundtrack. In the 1880s, John Butler Yeats took a studio described by his son William as ‘a large room with a beautiful 18th-century mantelpiece in a York Street tenement house’. Father and son travelled there from Howth each morning to breakfast and host poetry readings. Throughout the day people called in either to sit for Yeats Senior, or to chat, drawn to the long, sky-lit room, painted pale green, stacked with frames and canvases, ringing with the never-ending discussions the artist so loved.

The York Street houses followed a cycle replicated across Dublin. A hundred years after it was let as a single residence with coach house and stables, number 45 York Street housed ten separate households, totalling 30 people. A few doors away at number 42, commercial clerk John O’Reilly had a family of eleven living in two rooms, including two boarding babies. Twelve-year-old John McNamara from 45 York Street became one of the child casualties of the 1916 Rising, shot in the head. He died at Mercer’s Hospital, with his father Henry beside him. The York Street Tenant League in 1934 expressed the residents’ horror and anger over their homes’ appalling conditions and high rents, but change was still years away. By the 1940s, a local barman reported that one house in York Street contained 24 families, with one outside lavatory. Most of the houses were eventually demolished, as were the pastiche rebuilds that followed.

Although York Street remains bookended, as it has been for so long now, by the RCSI building at the St Stephen’s Green end, and the The Swan at the Aungier Street end, the intervening stretch is entirely modern. Two standout buildings are Seán Harrington’s block of 66 low-energy sustainable social housing apartments, and the most recent addition to the RCSI campus, 26 York Street, recently voted Ireland’s favourite building. Meanwhile, at the sign of the The Swan, you can still hear poetry, if you’re listening. ■



AWSAN AL-MOHAINI

Medicine 2004 Home: Kuwait

Specialist in Internal Medicine at Al-Almari Hospital in Kuwait, Dr Al-Mohaini paid a visit to assist the careers team, providing valuable information on the health care system in Kuwait for students looking to return after graduation. He is pictured here with Paul Igbrude from the CoMPPAS team.

JOSEPH MORRIS

Medicine 2019 Home: Ireland

“At a Surgery Grand Rounds In January at Beaumont Hospital, Dr Morris presented a case entitled “Calyx Collection Catheter Complication”, and was awarded the overall best case and the winner of the M’Donnell Medal in Surgery. Pictured here with Professor Arnold Hill, Dr Neil Collins, Dr Joseph Morris, Professor Ger Curley, Dr Declan De Freitas.



DR FATEN HASSANI

Nursing 2019 Home: Bahrain

Dr Hassani returned to RCSI in November to receive her PhD from the School of Nursing and Midwifery, having previously been an undergraduate student in Bahrain (2014). She is pictured with Professor Zena Moore and Professor Tom O’Connor.

DR BURJOR ANKLESARIA AND TAHA ALARRAYEDH

Medicine 2018 Home: Bahrain

Back on campus to deliver interactive workshops to high school students during the latest edition of the “Future Doctors” programme. The programme is designed to introduce high-school students to elements of life as medical student and life as a doctor, with the graduates on hand to provide personal experiences.



FIONNUALA MONAGHAN

IoL 2019 Home: Ireland

Graduate of the Institute of Leadership, Fionnuala Monaghan, launched “The Missing Days, ICU Patient Diary” at the NOCA Annual Conference which took place in February, as part of RCSI’s Charter Week programme. The publication is a resource for patients to help bridge the memory gap post critical illness and a record of what happened during their ICU stay.



FARHAD JANAHI

Medicine 2002 Home: Dubai

Dr Janahi, Consultant Urologist at Mediclinic City Hospital in Dubai, returned to his alma mater in October and brought back fond memories of his time at RCSI, when he toured the University and caught up with old friends and faculty, including head porter Frank Donegan and Professor of Anatomy Medicine, Clive Lee.

CAUGHT ON CAMPUS

Alumni don’t need a reason to return but when they do, they get stuck in. We capture some alumni encounters ...

CAMILLA CARROLL

Medicine 1985 Home: Ireland

As part of the Charter Day 2020 programme, Ms Carroll, Council Member RCSI, Consultant Otolaryngology Head and Neck Surgeon, delivered the citation at the conferring of an Honorary Fellowship on Dato’Dr Godfrey Geh Sim Wah.



HIMMET DARJEE

Medicine 1974 Home: South Africa

Dr Darjee returned to RCSI for the Alumni Gathering 2019 which brought together a large and diverse cohort of 350 graduates, spanning seven decades from Classes of 1959, 1964, 1969, 1974, 1979, 1984, 1989, 1994, 1999, 2004, 2009 and 2014. He talked about his experience of arriving at RCSI from apartheid South Africa in 1969.



MICHAEL KUHLMANN

Medicine 2014 Home: Canada

Dr Kuhlmann returned to his alma mater and took a tour around 26 York Street: “The tour was absolutely great and brought back many memories but also showed how many things have changed, even for a recent graduate of the Class of 2014.”



AHMED HARB

Nursing 2010 Home: Bahrain

A member of RCSI Bahrain’s inaugural graduating class of 2010, Ahmed had been an avid supporter of the University in that time and once again he answered the call to take part in a new promotional video for the School of Nursing. Ahmed took time off work and donned his scrubs for the video, which is due to go live in the coming months.



SABRINA BERDOUK

Medicine 2013 Home: UAE

Dr Berdouk, Consultant Emergency Medicine and Associate Programme Director of the Emergency Residency Programme at Sheikh Khalifa Medical City in Abu Dhabi UAE, also class valedictorian, received the Inspiring Excellence Award presented during RCSI Bahrain’s Annual Alumni Reception Dinner in Dublin. “This place is like a home to me and it is always good to be home.” Her portrait was unveiled by RCSI President, Mr Kenneth Mealy, RCSI Bahrain President, Professor Sameer Ootom, and RCSI Chief Executive, Professor Cathal Kelly.



ROBERT KELLY

Medicine 1992 Home: Ireland

Hosted by the newly established RCSI Centre for Positive Psychology and Health, Dr Kelly, Consultant Cardiologist and Ireland’s only certified Lifestyle Medicine Consultant, gave a guest lecture highlighting nutrition’s key role in lifestyle interventions for the prevention and treatment of disease. Dr Kelly addressed the need for everyone to make their health their number one priority.

THE RESULTS ARE POSITIVE

RCSI has established a new Centre for Positive Psychology and Health. Director Professor Ciarán O'Boyle explains its purpose and why positive psychology enhances physical well-being ...



Professor Ciarán O'Boyle, Director, RCSI Centre for Positive Psychology and Health

THE LINK BETWEEN PSYCHOLOGICAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH

In 1930, the Mother Superior of the North American Sisters of Notre Dame, a Catholic congregation of nuns, wrote to the congregation's sisters asking them to write a short sketch of their life in no more than 300 words. Little did she or the sisters realise at the time that, 70 years later, these autobiographies would form the basis of "The Nun Study" and a remarkable scientific finding reported by a team of researchers at the University of Kentucky. As the sisters aged and died, the research team found a strong inverse association between positive emotional content in these writings and risk of mortality in late life. When the top 25%, in terms of positive emotional content, were compared with the bottom 25% they showed a 2.5-fold decrease in their mortality risk. For every 1.0% increase in the number of positive-emotion sentences in the autobiographical sketches there was a 1.4% decrease in the mortality rate. This, and similar studies, have highlighted the relationship between our psychological and physical health and have helped spur scientific interest in elucidating the physiological and behavioural mechanisms through which mind, brain and body are integrated. Lifestyle, integrated and precision medicine are among the new approaches that are emerging from increased understanding of the systemic nature of the human condition. These

disciplines are throwing new light on the importance of behavioural factors in predicting the onset of many acute and chronic conditions and the extent of the physical and mental burden associated with them.

THE RCSI CENTRE FOR POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY AND HEALTH

In response to new emerging approaches to health and disease, RCSI has established a new Centre for Positive Psychology and Health (CPPH). The Mission of the Centre is "To educate, nurture and research for the benefit of positive health and well-being". Its main goal is to undertake and deploy evidence-based research, with associated training and education, to contribute to the flourishing of individuals and organisations. The CPPH, located in 123 St Stephen's Green, focuses on the role of psychological factors in health and well-being and draws on the emerging disciplines of positive psychology, positive organisational research, lifestyle medicine and integrative medicine to undertake research and provide education and training in this area.

In autumn of this year, the Centre will launch a new online Professional Diploma in Positive Health and will also deliver a new public education course on Positive Health and Positive Psychology. The main focus of the CPPH's research will be on the application of positive psychology to

maximising health and well-being. Research has already begun on the application of attention-based training (meditation), in conjunction with behaviour change support and digital health coaching to enhance well-being in the healthcare, corporate and educational sectors.

WHAT IS POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY?

Positive psychology is a new scientific discipline that studies human happiness and well-being and seeks to develop interventions to improve people's lives. It is important to understand that positive psychology differs from "pop psychology" in that it is rigorously based on scientific evidence. The growing research literature in the field indicates that enhancing well-being has many positive effects, not just in terms of mental health, but also in terms of physical health, relationships, the culture of organisations and even the health of economies.

Positive psychology is an approach that fits neatly into the World Health Organisation (WHO) definition of health as "a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease".

It complements traditional psychological and psychiatric approaches on the basis that the absence of mental illness does not mean the presence of mental health. As one commentator put it "traditional approaches get you from -10 to 0 whereas positive psychology attempts to get you from 0 to +10". The key change is that, as one of the founders of positive psychology, Martin Seligman puts it, psychology should be just as concerned (I) with strength as with weakness, (II) with building the best things in life as with repairing the worst, (III) with making the lives of normal people fulfilling and with nurturing high talent as with healing pathology.

NATIONAL, INTERNATIONAL AND GLOBAL APPLICATIONS

Subjective well-being is increasingly recognised as an important global health issue. For example, the UN resolution on the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda calls not only for the ensuring of healthy lives but also for the promotion of well-being. The general goal of the WHO Mental Health Action Plan 2013-2020 has been to promote mental well-being and to prevent mental disorders, and the plan states that governments should put in place actions to protect and promote mental well-being at all stages of life. Last year, the government of New Zealand introduced its first "Well-being Budget" and other countries, including Ireland, are now beginning to factor in well-being as an important adjunct to the economic measure GDP, as an indicator of the nation's progress. The limitation of GDP as the sole measure of progress has long been questioned. Senator Robert Kennedy, in a University of Kansas speech in 1968, exactly one month before his assassination, put it as follows:

"The Gross National Product does not allow for the health of our children, the quality of their education or the joy of their play. It does not include the beauty of our poetry or the strength of our marriages, the intelligence



ENHANCING WELL-BEING HAS MANY POSITIVE EFFECTS, NOT JUST IN TERMS OF MENTAL HEALTH, BUT ALSO IN TERMS OF PHYSICAL HEALTH, RELATIONSHIPS, ORGANISATIONS AND EVEN ECONOMIES.

of our public discourse, or the integrity of our public officials. It measures neither our wisdom nor our learning, neither our compassion nor our devotion to our country. It measures everything, in short, except that which makes life worthwhile."

COVID-19, RESILIENCE AND MENTAL HEALTH

In addition to the impact on coronavirus on the physical health of our populations, the WHO predicts that a secondary epidemic of mental health problems will follow on from the pandemic. There is also concern for the short and long-term mental health of front line staff who must cope directly with infected patients. RCSI and the CPPH have been active in developing a range of resources to support staff in coping with the challenges presented by the pandemic.

Adopting a positive psychology lens, the literature on psychological resilience in disaster-exposed employees identifies three important factors that reduce the risk of post-traumatic stress disorder. First, those who were satisfied that their pre-disaster training allowed them

to perform their jobs effectively and competently coped better. Second, resilience was enhanced by social support from family, loved ones, colleagues and managers. Third, those who used proactive coping styles – that is, positively taking charge of the situation, engaging in proactive behaviours, accepting the situation and allowing oneself to face traumatic thoughts were more likely to enhance their resilience. Research has also shown that healthcare professionals who are aware of, and reflect on, their "sense of calling" are less likely to suffer from professional burnout

Despite the wealth of research on the prevalence of mental health symptoms after a disaster, increased resilience after a traumatic event is not uncommon. Many of those involved in disaster relief work experience what has come to be called post-traumatic growth. This gives them a greater appreciation of life and their relationships, enhances their self-esteem and provides a sense of accomplishment and a better understanding of their work. Organisations can help create the conditions for this by ensuring their employees are trained and prepared properly, by offering support and by providing training designed to encourage better coping skills.

WHERE TO NEXT?

The MIT based systems theorist Otto Scharmer says that the biggest mistake we make in planning for the future is that we try to learn exclusively from the past rather than the future as it emerges. The writer William Gibson once said that "the future is already here – it's just not evenly distributed". The establishment of the new RCSI Centre for Positive Psychology and Health looks both to the past proud tradition of the RCSI as an innovative organisation in healthcare and education and also to its future role as an authoritative critical investigator and disseminator of research findings that can improve the well-being of individuals, organisations and society. ■

GIVE & TAKE

David Joyce, currently in his third year studying medicine at RCSI, describes how his life has benefited as a result of being awarded the first prestigious Consilio Manuque scholarship in 2017

The awards ceremony celebrating the best academic scholarship and clinical skills of RCSI's leading students is an annual highlight of the University calendar. It's an opportunity for faculty and staff to take pride in the success of their students and also acknowledge the supporting role of family and friends who share in their accomplishments. The ceremony also highlights the central mission and motto of RCSI, that of "Consilio Manuque", meaning scholarship and dexterity. It goes without saying therefore that the purpose of the Consilio Manuque Medicine scholarship is to foster academic excellence and is awarded to the student with the highest combined Leaving Certificate and HPAT score, entering the undergraduate medicine programme.

In 2017, David Joyce was the first awardee of the merit-based scholarship. His Leaving Cert (LC) score was 601 points, and his HPAT was 209, so combined his LC and HPAT score was 770. David admits he had set his sights on this scholarship at school: "While I was researching my options for studying medicine, I came across the scholarships section on the RCSI website and decided that I would apply for the Consilio Manuque award. Ever since I was on the Minimed programme while I was in secondary school, it has always been a dream of mine to study medicine in RCSI. I found the high calibre of teaching facilities, international student body and unique focus on healthcare were all reasons to choose RCSI." From the Admission team's perspective David was just the type of student they seek - who would get involved in every aspect of student life, would use the funding wisely and maintain good relationships with his sponsors.

David says of the process, "Although I had no previous winners to talk to, RCSI offered me plenty of advice about how I could utilise the scholarship [valued at €25,000 over five years] to further my studies in the University." David received The Anne and John Murphy scholarship, which was set up by the Murphy siblings (Kieran, Barbara and Celine) in the name of their parents, all three of whom attended RCSI. Since 2017, David has forged a strong relationship with the entire family. "The generosity and kindness of the Murphy family has made my time in RCSI immeasurably better. I have met John and Anne Murphy several times, as well as their children and grandchildren. They have offered me nothing but help and encouragement over the last three years."

DAVID HAS USED HIS FUNDING TO EXPLORE AND BENEFIT FROM THE INTERNATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE.



David Joyce with fellow scholarship recipients and RCSI faculty and staff.

The scholarship has meant David can study and participate fully in student life without having to worry about finances, or take on part-time work. By his own admission David has loved every minute of his time at RCSI. "Learning about physiology, pharmacology and pathology and how to apply them in a clinical setting, has shown me how to reconcile our coursework with providing the best outcomes for patients. Although I have undertaken only a few weeks of rotations in hospital, I found ward rounds, taking histories from patients and observing operations to be exhilarating and excellent learning opportunities."

In addition, David has used his funding to explore and benefit from the international opportunities available, taking part in clinical electives and an eight-week Research Summer School last year. He explains: "I worked with the Tissue Engineering and Chemistry labs to synthesise a novel antibiotic

that could be injected into wounds to aid with faster tissue healing. It was an invaluable experience to explore the research side of medicine and to improve my lab skills. I also really enjoyed learning new scientific principles such as chemistry and regenerative medicine that we don't cover during our college term.

To be able to undertake a project and follow it through the various stages of development in the different labs while working alongside professors and staff in RCSI was a fantastic opportunity."

David also spent a semester at RCSI's campus in Bahrain. "This was a unique opportunity to see how medicine is practiced in a different healthcare system and to be exposed to a different culture and lifestyle." He has also undertaken placements in Beaumont hospital, St Vincent's hospital and Pearse Street GP service during the summer months. "I felt that this was a great way to experience medicine before I started placements and to get a flavour of the different specialities that are available when I graduate."

Most recently, as part of his Intermediate Cycle 3 semester, in which students are able to work on a six-week research placement anywhere in the world, David worked on a project at Mount Sinai Hospital in New York, thanks to one of his sponsors, Dr Barbara Murphy, who coincidentally is the first female Chair of Medicine in New York City.

"IT WAS AN AMAZING OPPORTUNITY TO BE ABLE TO SPEND TIME IN A HOSPITAL IN AMERICA AND IT WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE WITHOUT THE SCHOLARSHIP."

"While I was working on my project, the Alumni Office at RCSI arranged for me to meet several graduates who were living in New York. This was a great way to network and learn more about the opportunities available after graduation to practice medicine abroad. Although my time in New York was cut short due to the COVID-19 pandemic, I am sure that there will be future opportunities to undertake placements in the US."

It's not all work though and David acknowledges there are plenty of opportunities for socialising in RCSI, with events organised by an impressive array of clubs and societies. "Since my first year I have been

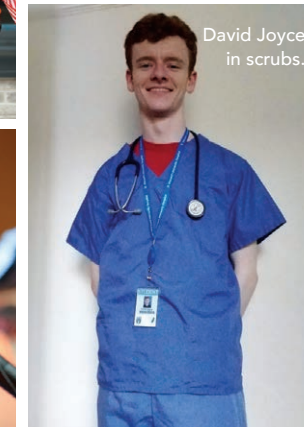


David Joyce as student ambassador at the opening of 26 York Street!



David Joyce speaking at the 2019 Research Summer School wrap up symposium.

part of Friends of Médecins Sans Frontières, the student newspaper, RCSI's student-run conference ICHAMS and have been a class representative. Next year I will continue my work on the committee for Friends of Médecins Sans Frontières and I will be the secretary for the Research Skills Society."



David Joyce in scrubs.

As for his long term goals, David has so far enjoyed the variety of options available after graduation. "Since we started placements this semester, I've been exposed to a number of different specialities and next year we will study even more, from obstetrics and gynaecology to paediatrics and psychiatry. Although I haven't made up my mind yet, I definitely want to work in a speciality that involves a lot of patient contact, as my favourite

part of working in the hospitals is interacting with patients. I would also be interested in undertaking further research, especially during my intern year and subsequent years of training."

Clearly David has a rewarding future ahead of him, one which owes much to the generosity of the Murphy family and the academic excellence at RCSI. This year two further Consilio Manuque Medicine scholarships will be awarded: The Richard & Lucille Nora Scholarship and The 1784 Consilio Manuque Scholarship. The value of such scholarships cannot be overestimated but they are just two of several that students can apply for at RCSI.

The Kiran Pathak Scholarship, established in memory of Kiran Pathak MPSI, and his family, who tragically lost their lives in a boating accident in Kenya in 2001, provides educational opportunities for students with a desire to study Pharmacy. Meanwhile, the Aim High Medicine Scholarship, established in 2012 by RCSI alumni, provides scholarships for Irish Leaving Certificate students who excel academically and are passionate about developing a lifelong career in medicine. Recognising the need to ensure the development of a diverse workforce, RCSI also supports minority and underrepresented students working toward their medical degrees. RCSI's Traveller Community Access Programme (TCAP) Scholarship aims to increase the participation of members from the Traveller Community in the University's undergraduate Medicine, Physiotherapy and Pharmacy programmes. Mature students are also encouraged to apply for the University scholarships, as are the vision-impaired for the NCBI Gerard Byrne Bursary.

Embarking on a medical career requires both passion and a vocation, in addition to considerable financial commitment. Without the generosity of sponsors, many students considering this career might not have achieved their dream; one reason why alumni are urged to give back by promoting bright young talent such as David Joyce. ■



Reema Waqar and Reem Al Shimali recipients of the 2020 Professor Tom Farrell Neuroscience Award.



RCSI Biological Society Inaugural Meeting 2019



RCSI Biological Society Inaugural Meeting 2014.

A SENSE OF BELONGING

Founded in 1931, the RCSI Biological Society remains popular among students. Its Faculty President for the last two years, Professor Camilla Carroll, gives an insider's view of the much-loved organisation

RCSI is home to one of Europe's longest established student societies, the Biological Society (BioSoc). The Society was founded in 1931 by the then RCSI Professor of Biology and medical historian, Dr John Widdess, himself a medical school graduate of RCSI.

Society recruitment takes place during Freshers Week when each society "sets out their stall" and hopes for the best. BioSoc elects its own governing council and the council elects a student and a Faculty President to oversee activities for a one- or two-year term of office. The Faculty President, in consultation with council committee members, chooses an overarching theme for the societal year. Over the past two years the theme has been "equity of opportunity" in the delivery of safe surgery in low-income economies and in technological advancements in the delivery of health care. Professor Geraghty and Ms Anne Cleary of Aidlink Ireland shared their stories of working in Ethiopia during the famine in the 1980s.

Professor Arnold Hill, Head of the School of Medicine and Professor Cathal Kelly, Chief Executive, offer personal encouragement and engagement with BioSoc. The family of Dr french O'Carroll continue to be generous with their time and financial support through the awarding of the french O'Carroll

Medal. A lively Anatomy Quiz is adjudicated by Professor Clive Lee in the late autumn, with the winner awarded the Harold Browne Anatomy Medal in memory of the late General Surgeon and RCSI anatomy prosector, Professor Harold Browne.

An annual highlight is the student awards ceremony held in the Albert Theatre in January at which the medals and certificates for the various competitions are presented and the outgoing presidents hand over their chains of office to the incoming presidents. At this meeting, BioSoc founder, Dr John Widdess is honoured when the Faculty President's invited speaker delivers the Widdess Lecture.

I have had the honour and privilege of being the Faculty President of the RCSI Biological Society for the past two years. I have worked alongside the Student Council and Presidents Safari Aketch (2019) and Githmi Plahepitiya (2020). Being in the company of these dedicated and committed medical students is truly inspiring. I believe our future doctors should be empowered to speak-up for social justice for all. I am truly grateful for the opportunity that "Belonging to the RCSI Biological Society" has given me to start this conversation with our student members. A society steeped in the history of our great University is still fit for purpose.

DR DANYAL Z KHAN, MRCSI
(Medicine, 2018), Academic Foundation Trainee (Neuroscience) – University of Cambridge, Student President, BioSoc 2017

"The Society is the oldest and most prestigious society in our University. Through its educational competitions, it challenges students and inspires them towards academic excellence. Through its annual addresses, it cultivates ideas worth thinking about. Through its collaboration between faculty and students, it connects motivated mentees with dedicated mentors. As a junior student, BioSoc events were formative and I was delighted to later have the opportunity to lead the Society in my penultimate year."

PROFESSOR CLIVE LEE
Professor of Anatomy and Head of Department of Anatomy Medicine, Faculty President, BioSoc, 2013

"As Faculty President of BioSoc, you get to see RCSI from the students' perspective – what works and what doesn't in the University – and to get to know what students are like these days, which can be a very helpful insight into one's own family, of the same age. They are remarkably idealistic, hard-working and excellent dinner guests, but they also like to party!"



Dr Gozie Offiah with RCSI medical student members of BioSoc.

DR GOZIE OFFIAH, MB, MMedSc, MD
MMedSc (Class of 2005), Senior Judge, BioSoc Senior Case Competitions 2019, 2020

"I have had the honour and privilege of being a judge at the BioSoc Senior Case competitions for the past two years. BioSoc attests to RCSI's mission to educate, nurture and discover for the benefit of human health. BioSoc provides a platform for students to shine, develop their skills and become true leaders in the delivery of health care, through numerous events. As a judge of the senior case competitions, I have been amazed at the very high standards that our students at RCSI bring. The students are challenged to be the best they can be, and I have watched them acquire skills, gain confidence and transform into incredible health care professionals, who will no doubt make a real difference."



DR KATIE DUNLEAVY
Internal Medicine Resident, Icahn School of Medicine, Mount Sinai Hospital, New York, Student President, BioSoc 2018

"I was the student president of BioSoc in my final year of graduate entry medicine at RCSI in 2018. Leading the oldest medical student society in Europe seemed a daunting task at first, but those fears quickly dissipated when I realised the strength of the student team, student services and the wonderful mentorship of the two BioSoc Faculty Presidents – Professor James Paul O'Neill and Professor Deborah McNamara – who dedicated countless hours to making this society a success.

"During my student presidency, the 85th Widdess Lecture was given by Dr Austin O'Carroll, a primary care physician in Dublin whose practice cares almost exclusively for the homeless. His care, compassion and clinical training of GPs has allowed a new generation of doctors to make a difference to the lives of the homeless in Irish society. His account left a lasting impression on the student body. In these times of COVID-19 in New York City, the health care disparities we face are ever apparent. I hope as physicians we can make an effort to provide comfort, kindness and treatment to all those who need it, regardless of socioeconomic status.

BioSoc is not only a society to celebrate academic achievement, but a way to bring students together in an intimate setting to meet with consultants and mentors in collegial academic competitions. BioSoc greatly enriched my student life at RCSI and helped me to prepare for competitive residency training in the US. I am now in my second year of residency in internal medicine at Mount Sinai Hospital in NYC. Since February, we have been managing COVID-19 patients in our ICUs and dedicated COVID-19 wards. I am grateful for the leadership of our Chair of Medicine at Mount Sinai, Dr Barbara Murphy (Medicine) during these challenging times. ■

REUNIONS



Class of 1979



Medicine, 1994: Ravin Sadhai and Mary Lynch



Mary Gallagher, Sara Gallagher (Medicine, 1987) and Hugh Gallagher (Medicine, 1984)



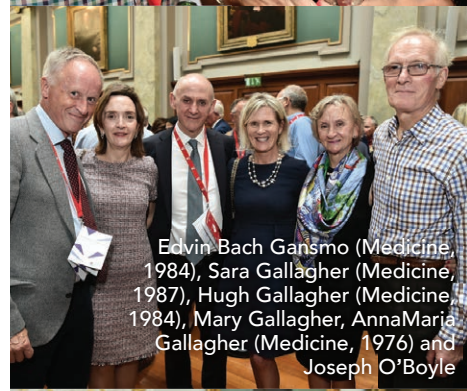
Medicine, 1979: J David Watson, Elizabeth West Watson and Catherine Andrews



Class of 1969: Gabriel McKeon, Donald Tennent, James Harty and Alasdair McKendrick

ALUMNI GATHERING 2019

RCSI was delighted to welcome back more than 350 alumni, spanning seven decades, to the annual RCSI Alumni Gathering. Alumni from Classes of 1959, 1964, 1969, 1974, 1979, 1984, 1989, 1994, 1999, 2004, 2009 and 2014 participated in a vibrant programme of social and academic activities, re-establishing connections and reminiscing with former classmates and lecturers. This year's Alumni Gathering brought together a large and diverse cohort of graduates, hailing from 18 countries including Australia, Canada, Cayman Islands, France, Germany, Ireland, Kuwait, Norway, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, United Kingdom and United States highlighting the global reach of RCSI's graduate community.



Edvin Bach Gansmo (Medicine, 1984), Sara Gallagher (Medicine, 1987), Hugh Gallagher (Medicine, 1984), Mary Gallagher, AnnaMaria Gallagher (Medicine, 1976) and Joseph O'Boyle



Andrew Rynne (Medicine, 1968) and Ramona Valentine



Medicine, 1985: Aine Kenny and Kate Coleman



Class of 1959: Peter Tan, Bozena Docherty-Zakrzewska and Thomas Maguire



Stephen MacNally (Medicine, 1994) and Julia MacNally

REUNIONS



Medicine, 2014

Due to restrictions arising from COVID-19 as well as concerns regarding the health and well-being of alumni and staff attending such an event, the Alumni Gathering 2020 has been postponed until August 2021. We will be assessing the situation as it evolves and hope to be in touch with further updates at a later date. [rcsi.ie/alumni-events](https://www.rcsi.ie/alumni-events)



Medicine, 1969: Fazila Chetty and Alasdair McKendrick



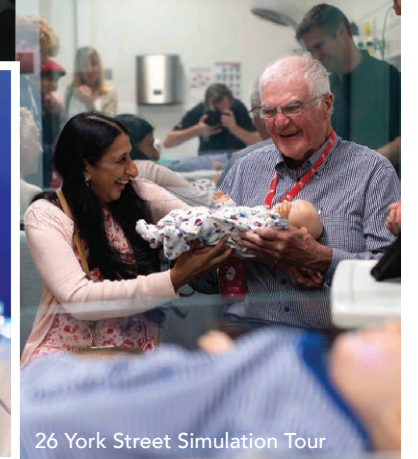
Dentistry, 1961: Cormac Brady, Dolores McGrath & Michael McGrath



26 York Street Simulation Tour



Jim Sherlock (Former RCSI Head Porter) and Ellen Sherlock



26 York Street Simulation Tour



Medicine, 1989



Kim Bird and Nicholas Bird (Medicine, 1999)



Ann Egan and Ernest Egan (Medicine, 1966)



Rona Bach-Gansmo and Edvin Bach-Gansmo (Medicine, 1984)



Sarah Dhillon and Paul Dhillon (Medicine, 2009)



Tim Delaney (Medicine, 2009) and Suzanne Miller-Delaney (Institute of Leadership, 2014)



Medicine, 1969: Maevie Peyton and Anthony Hynes

IN CONVERSATION WITH ...



"In Conversation with" - Dublin Hospitals Cup

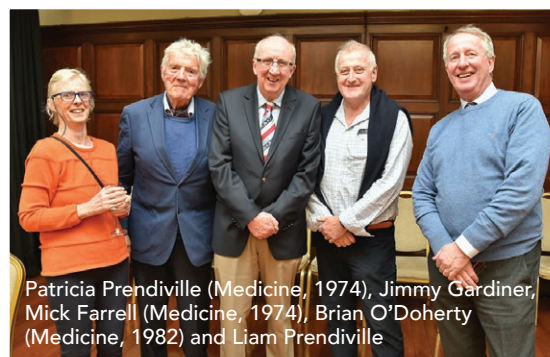
DUBLIN HOSPITALS CUP

Marking the official opening of the Charter Week programme, we were delighted to welcome back alumni to RCSI for a special evening, looking back at the history of the Dublin Hospitals Rugby Cup competition and its lasting impact.

The evening saw RTÉ's Michael Corcoran host a panel discussion between Dr Michael Farrell (Medicine, 1974), Professor Conleth Feighery and Dr Morgan Crowe, on the history of the Dublin Hospitals Rugby Cup.

Dating back to 1879, the Hospitals Cup is Ireland's longest-running rugby competition and has a special place in the history of RCSI.

WATCH OUR VIDEOS
Visit the RCSI Alumni YouTube Channel to watch the highlights from this event and many more



Patricia Prendiville (Medicine, 1974), Jimmy Gardiner, Mick Farrell (Medicine, 1974), Brian O'Doherty (Medicine, 1982) and Liam Prendiville



Arnold Hill, Head of School of Medicine, RCSI (FRCSI 1992), Deborah McNamara, Council Member, RCSI (FRCSI 1997), Ciarán O'Boyle, Founding Director, Centre for Positive Psychology and Health RCSI and Dermot O'Flynn (MSc 2011)



Eoin Cleere, Captain, RCSI Rugby Team and Arnold Hill, Head of School of Medicine, RCSI (FRCSI 1992)



Michael Farrell (Medicine, 1974), Morgan Crow, Kenneth Mealy, President RCSI, Michael Corcoran, Aine Gibbons, Director, Development - Alumni Relations RCSI and Conleth Feighery



Mary Archer (Medicine, 1977) and Anna Maria Gallagher (Medicine, 1976)



Michael Walsh (FRCSI 1977), Sean Hanahoe and Michael Brody



Brian O'Doherty (Medicine, 1982), Bill Twomey (Medicine, 1985) and Noel Williams (Medicine, 1981, FRCSI 1986)



Greg Creavin, Fionn Daly and Ben Creavin (MRCSI 2018)



Noel Williams (Medicine, 1981, FRCSI 1986) and Hy Browne (Medicine, 1956, FRCSI 1969)

Joe Duignan (FRCSI 1979) and Mark Mathews

Robert Ryan (Medicine, 1989), Kevin Tempany (Medicine, 1990, FRCSI 1996), Neil Hickey (Medicine, 1989), John Barrett (Medicine, 1988) and Erika Keane (Medicine, 1987)

CHAPTER OF FELLOWS



Michael Griffin, Jaqueline Taylor, Janet Parks and Claire Sedgwick

Michael Larvin (FRCSI 2013) and Kenya Larvin

Dave Dietz and Fergal Fleming (FRCSI, 2009)

NORTH AMERICAN CHAPTER OF FELLOWS MEETING

RCSI Fellows, Members and Alumni were warmly welcomed to the annual RCSI North American Chapter of Fellows meeting, hosted by RCSI President Mr Kenneth Mealy. The event offered a chance for those based in North America to meet and network with each other and with senior representatives of the University. This meeting takes place annually in conjunction with the American College of Surgeons Clinical Congress.



Peter Lonergan (FRCSI 2017) and Aoife Kiernan



Sonja Kassuba (Medicine, 1988), Kenneth Mealy, President, RCSI and Susan Berstow



Ronan O'Connell, Vice President, RCSI and Michael Griffin

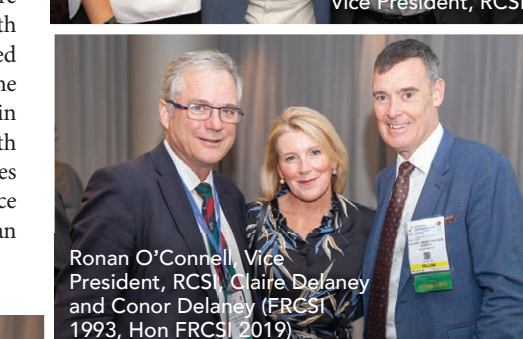


Ellen Griffin and John Griffin (Medicine, 1966)

Cliona O'Farrelly and Daithí S Heffernan (MRCSI 2000)



Kate Gorey, Tom Gorey, Council Member, RCSI (FRCSI 1978) and Ronan O'Connell, Vice President, RCSI



Ronan O'Connell, Vice President, RCSI, Claire Delaney and Conor Delaney (FRCSI 1993, Hon FRCSI 2019)



Raymond Morgan (FRCSI 1983) and William Joyce (FRCSI 1985)



Deborah McNamara, Council Member, RCSI (FRCSI 1997) and Nicolas Mouawad (Medicine, 1985, FRCSI 2018)

RECEPTIONS

Alf Nicholson, Head of School of Medicine and Vice President of Academic Affairs, RCSI Bahrain, Cathal Kelly, Chief Executive RCSI (Medicine, 1985, FRCSI 1990), Sabrina Berdouk (RCSI Bahrain 2013), Kenneth Mealy, President, RCSI, Hannah McGee, Dean, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, RCSI and Sameer Ootom, President, RCSI Bahrain



Amal Mohamed (RCSI Bahrain 2018) and Yusuf Abdulaal (RCSI Bahrain 2018)

ALUMNI RECEPTION BAHRAIN

The annual RCSI Bahrain alumni reception was held in November attracting graduates from RCSI Dublin, Bahrain and Dubai. During the reception, Dr Sabrina Berdouk from the Medicine Class of 2013 was announced as the third recipient of RCSI Bahrain's Alumni Inspiring Excellence Award. Dr Berdouk was selected by the panel as being a distinguished graduate and offering inspiration to current students and visitors to the University.

Wendy Maddison, Head of Student Development & Wellbeing, RCSI Bahrain, Hasan Khalaf (RCSI Bahrain 2011), Marwa AlBaharna (RCSI Bahrain 2012), and Sara AlKanaizi (RCSI Bahrain 2011)

Bayan Mahdi (RCSI Bahrain 2019), Barool Almoosawi (RCSI Bahrain 2018), Alaa AlAkri (RCSI Bahrain 2019), Fatima Ahmad, Maryam Naser (RCSI Bahrain 2019), and Nebras Hasan (RCSI Bahrain 2019)

Cathal Kelly, Chief Executive, RCSI (Medicine, 1985 FRCSI 1990), Layla Jassim (RCSI Bahrain 2014), Ali Bahool, and Faten Ahmad (RCSI Bahrain 2014)



RCSI Dubai Reception 2019

RCSI DUBAI RECEPTION

In November, over 50 Alumni, Fellows, Members and Friends came together for the annual Dubai reception. During the reception Professor Ciaran O'Boyle delivered a talk entitled "Positive Psychology: New Horizons" and Mr Eunan Friel gave an update on the Institute of Leadership and its activities.



ANNUAL DINNER

Antonia Lehane, President, Association of Medical and Dental Graduates, RCSI (Medicine, 1982) and Moira O'Brien, (Medicine, 1956)

Frank Donegan, Head Porter, RCSI and Paul O'Reilly (Medicine, 1985)

Pamela Mangal (Medicine, 1971), Antonia Lehane, President, Association of Medical and Dental Graduates, RCSI (Medicine, 1982) and Margaret Mullett

Anthony Javed Machikan, President, Student Union RCSI, Padraig McGarry (Medicine, Class of 1982), Antonia Lehane, President, Association of Medical and Dental Graduates, RCSI (Medicine, 1982) and Ronan O'Connell, Vice President, RCSI

Ravi Gupta (Medicine, 1990) and Nadeem Moghal (Medicine, 1989)

Richard Brennan (Medicine, 1978), Antonia Lehane, President, Association of Medical and Dental Graduates RCSI (Medicine, 1982) and Marina Hennessy

Association of Medical and Dental Graduates Annual Dinner

Frank Donegan, Head Porter, RCSI and Erika Keane (Medicine, 1987)

Sheila McGarry and Padraig McGarry (Medicine, 1982)

ASSOCIATION OF MEDICAL AND DENTAL GRADUATES ANNUAL DINNER 2019

Over 170 alumni, family and friends returned to RCSI for a black tie dinner on Saturday, 23 November, to celebrate at the annual Association of Medical and Dental Graduates dinner in College Hall.

A great occasion, it was nice to see so many familiar faces back at RCSI for an evening of catching up and festive fun!

CONFERRINGS

DUBLIN



Physiotherapy 2019: Sarah Madden, Daniel Campbell Lee, Rebecca Gallagher, Brian O'Rourke and Sinéad Kinsella



Hannah McGee, Dean, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, RCSI and Cathal Kelly, Chief Executive, RCSI (Medicine, 1985, FRCSI 1990) are pictured with Gerry McElvaney, Professor of Medicine, RCSI and Hilary Humphreys, Professor of Clinical Microbiology, RCSI, who were awarded the NUI Degree of Doctor of Science (DSc)

CLASS OF 2019

In 2019, we welcomed more than 1,800 new graduates to RCSI's global network of 21,000 alumni in 93 countries worldwide. Across campuses in Ireland, Bahrain, Malaysia and Dubai, graduates were conferred with degrees in medicine, physiotherapy, pharmacy, nursing and midwifery and with higher degrees ranging from masters to PhDs in both Leadership and Healthcare Management.

In addition, last year, RCSI conferred 358 surgical Fellowships and Memberships at five ceremonies held in Ireland, Bahrain and Malaysia.

KEEP UP TO DATE WITH OUR EVENTS
rcsi.ie/alumni-events



Conor Creagh and Joseph White (MPharm 2019)



PA Associates 2019: Joseph Ogunbode, Kelly Nwaokorie, Javier Rojas and Yvonne Kirwan



Sinéad Coleman (MSc 2019) and her daughter Izzy



Medicine, 2019: Kimran Sidhu and Lauren Madden Doyle



John Kelly, Carol Cotter, Alison Harper and Emer Gleeson (MSc Leadership 2019)



Aisling McDonald and Donnacha Fitzgerald (MPharm 2019)

CONFERRINGS

DUBLIN



Medicine, 2019: Yara Zayout, Syama Sundar Gollapalli and Mohammad Alhazmi



Nursing 2019: Catherine Marsh, Susan Roe and Ann Foley



Nursing 2019: Deborah Lyons, Carolyne Maeri and Niamh O'Brien



Medicine, 2019: Dermot Wildes, Elysha Brennan, Lauren Madden Doyle and Luke Trench



Physiotherapy 2019: Rebecca Gallagher, Sarah Madden and Sinéad Kinsella



Cathal Kelly, Chief Executive, RCSI; Hannah McGee, Dean, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences; Adrienne Flanagan and Kenneth Mealy, President, RCSI



Wisam Albadr, Mohammed Alzayer (MSc Healthcare Management 2019) with Theresa Keane, Programme Director, Institute of Leadership RCSI



Nursing 2019: Thomas Jobi with Elena Jobi

CONFERRINGS

DUBLIN



Declan Patton, Senior Lecturer, School of Nursing & Midwifery RCSI, Mary Costello, Degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) and Zena Moore, Head of the School of Nursing and Midwifery RCSI



Fatmah Lari, Degree in B.Sc Pharmacy (Kuwait)



Jennifer Finnegan and Linda Curran (MSc 2019)



Michelle Howard, Yvonne Flanagan and Jennifer Hussey (MSc 2019)



Nursing 2019: Trine O'Donovan and Sarah Maher



Sinéad Coleman (MSc 2019), with her supervisor Frances Horgan

DUBAI



Amer Ahmed Sharif (MSc 2007), Eunan Friel, Managing Director Healthcare Management, RCSI Hannah McGee, Dean, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences RCSI, Mohammad Al Redha (Medicine, 2003, MSc 2007), Ciarán O'Boyle, Founding Director, Centre for Positive Psychology and Health RCSI His Highness Sheikh Mansour Bin Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Sheikhha Alya Al Qassimi (MSc 2008), Kenneth Mealy, President, RCSI and Cathal Kelly, Chief Executive, RCSI (Medicine, 1985, FRCSI 1990)



Rinad Zuhair A Alqurashi and Saadia Zuhair Haroun Hamad



Dubai Conferring 2019



Malek Atef Mohammad Albeetar, Nazmi Rateb Nazmi Aldabbagh, Sultan Ahmed Mohamed Alshareif Abdulghafour Alawadhi



Noora Mahmood Falih, Bayan Dawood Almohamad, Ana João Da Costa Peliteiro and Sana Morteza Ghobadi



Ala Hussain Mohamed Hussain Alqahhah

CONFERRINGS

BAHRAIN



Nursing, 2019 – RCSI Bahrain: Kawthar Shams, Sameer Ootom, President, RCSI Bahrain and Professor Kenneth Mealy, President, RCSI



Medicine, 2019 – RCSI Bahrain: Nikita Emmanuel, Sameer Ootom, President, RCSI Bahrain and Kenneth Mealy, President, RCSI



Medicine, 2019 – RCSI Bahrain: Hadeel Suliman and Kenneth Mealy, President, RCSI

Graduates recite their declarations



Nursing 2019 – RCSI Bahrain: Haya Busalem, Sameer Ootom, President, RCSI Bahrain and Kenneth Mealy, President, RCSI

MALAYSIA RUMC



Ampere Yiu, Arujanan Santhira Sagarar, Kanyinsola Toyole Akinluyi, Amos Ng, Abdulla Mohamed Alfarzi, Kenneth Ko, Marwa Mohammed, Mohamad Sadegh Moghavelah, Oloruntunmike Otitolola Adetona, Chi Yan Bonnie Cheung and Divya Gautam



Cathal Kelly, Chief Executive, RCSI, Vivian Tan, Valedictorian, and Hannah McGee, Dean, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, RCSI



MALAYSIA PU-RCSI EDUCATION CEREMONY

PU-RCSI Conferring 2019



Prize winners: Jonathan Lim, Divya Gautam, Jason Teoh, Vivien Tan, Oloruntunmike Otitolola Adetona, Yong Ji Fung and Siti Driana Binti Mohd Daniel Jansz

Joseph John Malayapillay Gerald, Michelle Tang Su Yin, Vivien Tan Chern Yong, Associate Professor Yeow Toh Peng, Yong Ji Fung, Denzel Chong Jen-Rei and Tey Shen Liang



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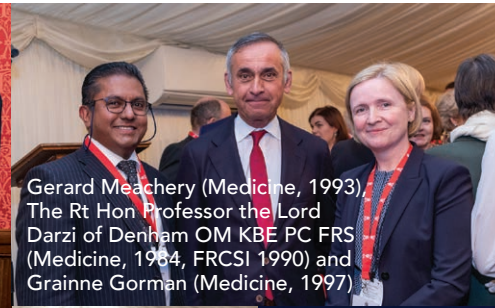
RECEPTIONS



Cónaig Lynch and Dermot Lynch (Medicine, 1953)



Class of 1985



Gerard Meachery (Medicine, 1993), The Rt Hon Professor the Lord Darzi of Denham OM KBE PC FRS (Medicine, 1984, FRCSI 1990) and Grainne Gorman (Medicine, 1997)



Cathal Kelly, Chief Executive, RCSI (Medicine, 1985, FRCSI 1990), Sheraz Daya (Medicine, 1984), Marylyn Poynter (Medicine, 1976), Aine Gibbons, Director, Development - Alumni Relations, RCSI, Nadeem Moghal (Medicine, 1989) and TG Teoh (Medicine, 1987)



Medicine, 1985: Cathal Kelly, Paul O'Reilly and Sylvester Mooney



House of Lords Reception



John Doherty (Medicine, 1971), Angela Doherty (Medicine, 1971), Hannah Doherty and Robyn Lyons



Olivia Daya, Sheraz Daya (Medicine, 1984) and The Rt Hon Professor the Lord Darzi of Denham OM KBE PC FRS (Medicine, 1984, FRCSI 1990)

HOUSE OF LORDS

More than 230 alumni, Fellows, Members and friends gathered for an evening reception at the House of Lords, London in early March. Such was the success of the event it was booked out for the second year in a row! Kindly hosted by The Rt Hon Professor the Lord Darzi of Denham OM KBE PC FRS (Medicine, 1984, FRCSI 1990), an enjoyable evening was had by all.



House of Lords Reception



Roshida and Massoom Muttalib (FRCSI 1998)



Members of the Class of 1970 and 1971



Darragh O'Doherty (Medicine, 1988) and Olive O'Doherty



Rosemary Lee and Peter Lee (Hon FRCSI 2016)



Barbairé Wynne (Medicine, 1987) and Anne Wynne



Caoimhe Lynch and David Healy, Council Member, RCSI (FRCSI 2008)



Anthony O'Shea (MPharm 2015) and Olujide Alde

THANK YOU

Over the past **12 months RCSI alumni and friends have donated €280,000** to support student programmes across the University.



THANKS TO ALUMNI

64
STUDENTS HAD UNFORGETTABLE EXPERIENCES THANKS TO THE GENEROSITY OF ALUMNI

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMES

CLINICAL ELECTIVES

22 students were given the opportunity to enrich their training by gaining valuable experience in teaching hospitals worldwide.

STUDENT HARDSHIP

The fund is a lifeline for students facing unforeseen financial difficulty during their studies. Gifts from alumni ensure that students are supported to remain in RCSI and continue on their path to become a doctor.

RESEARCH SUMMER SCHOOL

13 In the last year, through alumni support 13 undergraduate students took part in RCSI's Research Summer School spending eight weeks working alongside research leaders.

SCHOLARSHIPS

22 In 2019, 22 students were funded by generous alumni across the Aim High, Consilio Manuque, Kiran Pathak, and Moira O'Brien scholarship programmes. Your support enables them to achieve their dream of becoming healthcare leaders.

And there's more... Last year members of our alumni community signed up to become hosts for students to undertake Clinical Elective placements in their hospitals. The clinical expertise and knowledge of our alumni will be an invaluable asset to students undertaking elective placements. In addition, 118 alumni have registered to become mentors for students in RCSI. Thank you for your support!

If you would like to support our students as part of the RCSI_TOMORROW campaign you can do so by visiting donate.rcsi.ie

If you are from the USA visit friendsofrcsi.com

OR call Paul in the Alumni Office on **+353 (0) 1 402 2729** or email alumnioffice@rcsi.ie

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