

HSV-II Study at the IDI



PHOTO BY BRIDGET HUTTENLOCHER

In 1988 the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) first identified a link between herpes simplex virus type II, (HSV-II) and HIV/AIDS transmission. Since then, research has shown that HSV-II increases an individual's likelihood of transmitting or contracting HIV. As part of the global fight against

HIV/AIDS, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation provided a \$30 million grant to researchers at the University of Washington to conduct a multi-center study on HSV-II treatment and HIV/AIDS transmission rates.

The Infectious Diseases Institute (IDI) is one of twelve sites around the world tasked with finding 400 discordant couples—a couple in which one person is HIV-positive and the other is not—to partake in a 48 week study. This study also requires that all of the HIV-positive individual must also test positive for HSV-II. One half of the dually infected patients are given acyclovir, a drug used to reduce transmission of genital herpes, while the other half receives a placebo. To date, the IDI has recruited fifty-one discordant couples and boasts a 100% retention rate. Thanks to the efforts of numerous dedicated researchers at the IDI, the institute ranks second out of all twelve sites.

The goal of the study is to determine whether or not HIV transmission rates can be reduced by effectively treating herpes outbreaks. Given that at least half of all HIV-infected individuals also are infected with HSV-II, these results will have profound implications for the approach to fighting HIV/AIDS in the future. Only a year after its establishment, the IDI has proven to be a strong leader in the medical world, pioneering a new realm of HIV/AIDS treatment, prevention and care. ☞

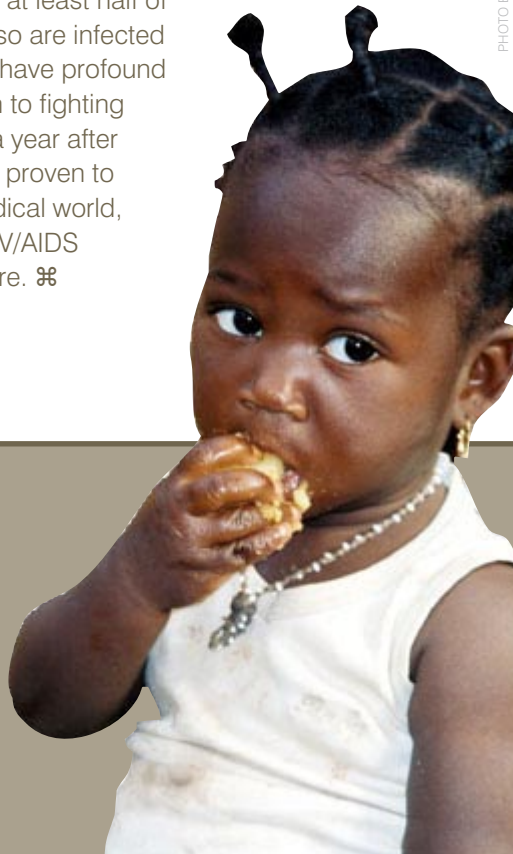


PHOTO BY BRIDGET HUTTENLOCHER

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News from the Academic Alliance Foundation WINTER 2005



PHOTO BY BRIDGET HUTTENLOCHER

Support the Academic Alliance Foundation!

Continued success in the fight against AIDS requires a significant investment of resources on the local, community, and international level. To realize the impact of AAF's training, treatment, research, and prevention programs, its activities must be expanded to reach every corner of the continent.

Your support for AAF will help us move toward effectively treating HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases for generations to come. Please support our programs through a donation to AAF. To contribute, please visit us on our website www.academicalliancefoundation.org/donationsandsupport.html or call us at (703)294-6551.

Message From the President

December 1st is World AIDS Day! This year's theme is, "Stop AIDS: Keep the Promise". We all need to recommit to 'keeping the promise' to meet the challenges of the HIV pandemic and respond to the needs of the communities and families of the millions of people living with HIV.

The Academic Alliance Foundation (AAF) continues its commitment to meet the challenges of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Africa through high quality clinical care, training, and research. We have now trained nearly 600 health care workers. Last month at the Infectious Diseases Institute in Kampala, Uganda, I attended a special scientific gathering of the next generation of clinicians, researchers and public health professionals from Africa, North America and Europe. These young colleagues are poised to be tomorrow's leaders in the war against HIV and other global health crises.

While in Uganda we also held our 2nd annual AAF Board Meeting on October 15th. I would personally like to thank Her Excellency Janet Museveni, the First Lady of Uganda, for hosting this important event at the State House in Kampala. At this meeting Mr. Tommy Thompson, Former Secretary of the US Department of Health and Human Services, was elected to our board.

As we head into the New Year we are excited to announce that Rosann Wisman has joined the Foundation as our first Executive Director. Rosann brings an impressive background in the non-profit sector including significant experience in international programs. We look forward to her leadership in 2006 as we 'keep the promise' in our fight against HIV/AIDS.

Happy Holidays and a Happy New Year!

Sincerely,

Merle A. Sande, M.D.
President

Profile: Dr. Andrew Kambugu

For Dr. Andrew Kambugu, the mentoring and training programs at the Infectious Diseases Institute (IDI) "literally changed [his] life." Andrew was the first graduate of the Academic

Alliance (AA) Fellowship Program in Kampala, Uganda where he was mentored for three years by the members of the AA. Upon completion of the Fellowship Program in September 2005, Andrew Kambugu was appointed Head of Clinical Services at the IDI after a competitive international search.



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Andrew was born in the Rakai district of Kampala, Uganda. His favorite subject in high school was biology which led to his interest in medicine. Andrew pursued his dream and earned a medical degree (MBChB) and an Internal Medicine degree (M/Med) from Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda.

Andrew first heard about the AA at the end of his residency in 2002 when he was doing a study for his M.Med degree in the area of infectious diseases. During this time, the AA members, comprised of senior academic physicians from North America and Makerere University, were working to identify young Ugandan physicians who had the potential of becoming academic leaders. Andrew received an AA Fellowship that offered him professional training in infectious diseases at the IDI and the opportunity to do research.

The AA Fellowship Program helped shape Andrew into a lead candidate for the Head of Clinical Services position at the IDI. Andrew is enthusiastic about his new appointment because it is a “great opportunity to contribute to the growth of the clinic and to continue to pursue an academic career through research.” Through his work at the clinic, Andrew witnesses the benefits of treating patients with Anti-Retroviral Therapy (ART), but also realizes how much work still needs to be done to combat HIV/AIDS. He relates the story of a “patient [who] evokes mixed feelings every time I see her. On the one hand we have done a great job treating and providing her with ART but on the other hand we have not been able to deal with the social issues she faces. This patient suffers from partial blindness; a result of an HIV related eye infection. This visual impairment means she can no longer hold her secretarial job, and therefore cannot support her children in school.”

Andrew finds his work at the IDI to be challenging and full of opportunities for future growth. The demand

for the clinic’s services is growing exponentially, but there are limited resources. Despite this challenge, Andrew strives to follow the slogan of the IDI as a “center of excellence.” He would like to continue to see the high caliber of HIV clinicians trained at the IDI disseminate their knowledge in their home communities throughout Africa.

Andrew states that he would not be where he is today if it wasn’t for the mentoring of the AA. He is particularly grateful for Dr. Allan Ronald, an AA member from the University of Manitoba. “I cannot begin to tell you how much I am indebted to him. Allan has been a great mentor, father figure and a great clinician with a large heart. It is a pleasure to watch him interact with young clinicians and pass on some of the essence of being a physician which you will not find in books. Above all, he cares deeply about the patients. I want to thank him. His investment in us all will not be in vain.” Andrew hopes that IDI will continue to support young Ugandan physicians and give them the opportunity to help Africans fight against HIV/AIDS. ☺

Department of Defense Training



In early 2005 the Academic Alliance Foundation (AAF) and the Infectious Diseases Institute (IDI) embarked on an exciting new partnership in Kampala, Uganda, with the United States Department of Defense (DOD) through funding from the President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). Through this partnership, the IDI has been conducting training courses for African physicians,

nurses and clinical officers who work in military hospitals treating military and non-military personnel with the goal of building capacity among care providers for providing high-quality HIV care in Africa. The trainees are selected partially based on their ability to return to their individual hospitals and train other healthcare providers in advanced HIV care, increasing the impact of the program. As of October 31st, this endeavor has enabled 50 physicians, 29 nurses, 21 clinical officers and one lab technician to be trained at the IDI from eleven African countries.

The African military has been identified as a high-risk group largely due to its mobility. The DOD program in Uganda began in late 2002 with the mission to support African governments in an effort to reduce transmission and mitigate the impact of the disease among African

soldiers through care and support schemes. Although the exact prevalence rates in the military are unknown, they are assumed to be higher than in the general population. Due to the increasing demand for HIV/AIDS care and treatment services at military health care facilities, the DOD-AAF/IDI partnership was launched to build capacity among the care providers to ensure that proper care is given to patients, with special focus on the needs and demands in a military setting. AAF/IDI was chosen as a partner for this endeavor because of the IDI’s existing focus on training health care providers in sub-Saharan Africa in enhanced AIDS care and prevention. IDI’s training program was launched in May 2002 and, to date, has trained 531 health care professionals from 21 African countries in HIV/AIDS care and other infectious diseases. ☺

A New Hope

Initially Rose received care at The AIDS Support Organisation (TASO), which referred her to the Infectious Diseases Institute (IDI). Her life turned around in 2003, when she was placed on anti-retroviral therapy as part of a Development of Antiretroviral Therapy (DART) study at the IDI.



“I was getting weaker and weaker... Even traveling 20 kilometres in a taxi would make me feel worn out.”

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Initially Rose received care at The AIDS Support Organisation (TASO), which referred her to the Infectious Diseases Institute (IDI). Her life turned around in 2003, when she was placed on anti-retroviral therapy as part of a DART study at the IDI. This study examined innovative ways of delivering anti-retroviral therapy that would reduce the cost of treatment without compromising quality. “Now I’m OK; I have strength. I do things which I used not to do. I can walk a long distance. Even running, I can manage. There is a great change,” says Rose.

Despite such obvious benefits of therapy, at that time Rose faced hostile rumours from ill-informed community members. “They said those drugs would kill me. I had to close my ears. I told them that I was already infected with HIV. We would see if taking drugs meant dying faster,” she recalls. Though Rose still grapples with the daily challenges of earning an income and paying school fees for her four children, her outlook has been transformed. ☼

In Sub-Saharan Africa, 14.5 million women live with HIV/AIDS. Already challenged by poverty, these women face the stigma of the disease and often have few resources to seek medical attention. A few years ago, Rose Kaweesi, a 40 year old woman living in Kampala, Uganda, thought she was about to die. She lost her husband to AIDS in 1994 and by 1999 she too was sick. “I was getting weaker and weaker. I had a lot of complications – fever, headaches, sores, and



ExxonMobil Malaria Expansion

The Academic Alliance Foundation recently secured a \$1.4 million grant from ExxonMobil, which will be distributed over a three year period. This grant supports the development of an evidence based curriculum that addresses malaria prevention, diagnosis, and treatment in Africa; expansion of an impact analysis program; and support for the AIDS Treatment Information Center. These programs will be based at the Infectious Diseases Institute (IDI) in Kampala, Uganda.

Although malaria is easily treated and prevented, more than one million people die of this disease each year. Nine out of ten malaria deaths occur in sub-Saharan Africa, mostly in young children and pregnant women. To combat this disease, ExxonMobil established the Africa Health Initiative in 2000 to fund and support activities related to the prevention, control and treatment of malaria in Africa. Since then, the Corporation has donated more than \$10 million to help fund programs to tackle malaria at an individual community level, programs to promote the research and development of new drugs, and projects to advocate for awareness and support internationally.

In partnering with ExxonMobil’s Africa Health Initiative, the IDI will be able to provide a more comprehensive approach to fighting Africa’s deadly diseases. ☼

World AIDS Day



PHOTO BY BRIDGET HUTTENLOCHER

The theme for this year's World AIDS Day is: "Stop AIDS: Keep the Promise". World AIDS Day is an important reminder of the global HIV/AIDS crisis and the work that still lies ahead to combat the epidemic.

World AIDS Day began in 1988 and occurs every year on December 1st. In addition to raising money for the fight against AIDS, World AIDS Day strives

to increase awareness and education and fight prejudices associated with those affected by the virus.

In early 1991 Visual AIDS in New York created the idea for a global symbol, the red ribbon, in the fight against AIDS. Following the style of the yellow ribbons, which were popular in the United States at the time as a symbol for awareness of those soldiers fighting in the gulf war, the Red Ribbon was born. Visual AIDS attempted to promote the red ribbon at the Tony Awards. In a spontaneous campaign, volunteers sent letters and Red Ribbons to all attendees. Unfortunately, movie actor Jeremy Irons was one of the very few celebrities wearing the Red Ribbon that night and the TV audience was not informed about the meaning of the new symbol. Today, however, the red ribbon is an

international symbol of AIDS awareness. People wear the ribbon year round and particularly on World AIDS Day to demonstrate care and concern about HIV and AIDS, and to remind others of the need for their support and commitment.

There are many ways in which you can support World AIDS Day. Raise awareness of HIV and AIDS in your area by wearing a red ribbon and asking others to do the same, protect yourself and your partners or put up some posters to get people talking. ☘

*World AIDS Day
occurs every year on
December 1st.*

PROFILE: Executive Director AAF ROSANN WISMAN

We are delighted to welcome Rosann Wisman to the Alliance team as Executive Director of the Academic Alliance Foundation (AAF). Rosann assumed her responsibilities in early November.

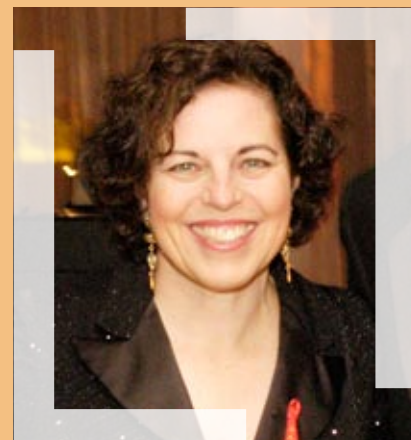
President Merle Sande noted "I am so pleased that Rosann is joining the AAF and I am certain that she will be a major asset to the important work of the Alliance. I have been so impressed with the reputation she has earned in leading organizations from start-up to ongoing success. She is very much the right person, in the right place and the right time."

Rosann's strong leadership skills and extensive experience in fundraising, operational administration and strategic planning are major assets for the Foundation. With a degree in public health, she has had extensive experience in women's health issues including international programming. Most recently, Rosann was the Senior Vice President at the Centre for Population and Development activities (CEDPA).

Rosann also comes to the Foundation with a well-deserved reputation for sound judgment and solid management skills within complex organizations. She will be taking the reins for day-to-day management of the Foundation's staff and activities based in Washington, DC.

Rosann will apply her extensive background successfully developing and expanding the donor base of organizations and diversifying their funding sources for programming to the challenges and opportunities facing AAF. AAF will benefit from her successful experience leading organizations to clarify and focus their strategic mission and will be well-served by her people skills and her tenacity in solving problems.

"I'm excited to be joining the AAF and look forward to working with all those involved in the important work of the Alliance including the programs at the Infectious Diseases Institute in Africa," says Rosann. ☘



NYC Gala Review



Oleta Adams entertains guests

Held in New York City on October 27, AAF's A Celebration of Partnership Gala raised over \$600,000 to support the programs at the Infectious Diseases Institute (IDI). This mile-stone

event recognized the outstanding accomplishments of the IDI during its inaugural year and honored Dr. Peter Piot, the Executive Director of UNAIDS, with the Global Health Leadership Award.

Over 450 guests attended the event, including Congresswoman Donna Christensen, Ambassador Edith Ssempala, and John McLaughlin. Speakers emphasized the urgency of the global AIDS epidemic and applauded the life-saving work of the IDI. A short video gave a face to those afflicted with the disease, and highlighted the IDI's treatment and training programs. The evening ended on an up-beat note with a special performance by Oleta Adams, a four-time Grammy Nominee.

We thank our many sponsors, including Pfizer, Inc for this successful gala!

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(left to right) Presenting the Global Leadership Health Award to Dr. Peter Piot- Dr. Merle Sande, Dr. Fred Wabwire, Dr. Hank McKinnell, Dr. Peter Piot



(left to right) Dr. Keith McAdam, Dr. Jenny Lo, Dr. Merle Sande, Dr. Fred Wabwire



(left to right) Ambassador Josefina Pitra Diakite (Embassy of Angola), Ambassador Edith Ssempala (Embassy of Uganda), Dr. Hank McKinnell



(left to right) AAF Staff- Carly Sigafus, Dr. Merle Sande, Rosann Wisman, Alissa Patrick, Cory King