

Phytomedicine students receive prestigious research awards

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Dr Olubukola Adenubi (second from left) receiving her award

The quality of students enrolled in the Phytomedicine Programme offered by the Department of Paraclinical Sciences in the Faculty of Veterinary Science was recently highlighted when three PhD students, Drs Olubukola Adenubi and Abimbola Aro, and Ms Bellonah Sakong, received prestigious research awards.

Olubukola was awarded a fellowship by the L'Oréal-UNESCO for Women in Science Sub-Saharan Africa 2015 Programme. This veterinarian and fellow of the Schlumberger Faculty for the Future is currently researching the tick repellent and acaricidal activities of various plant species. Abimbola received a Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation Global Health Travel Award to attend and present her work at the Tuberculosis Co-Morbidities and Immunopathogenesis Symposium held in Colorado, USA early in 2016. She received her PhD in April 2016 and will shortly be re-joining the Programme as a UP postdoctoral fellow to continue her interesting research on the action mechanism of antimycobacterial and immunomodulatory plant compounds.

Bellonah, a previous National Research Foundation (NRF) intern in the Phytomedicine Programme, was awarded a travel grant by the South African Biochemistry and Informatics for Natural Products Network (SABINA) to attend the 9th Joint Natural Products Conference in Denmark, Copenhagen in July 2016. This conference is a joint meeting organised by five of the top phytochemical societies in the world and will be attended by leading experts in the field. The current leader of the research group, Prof Lyndy McGaw, and the founder of the Programme, Prof Kobus Eloff, as well as other students of phyto medicine, will be attending this conference with support from their NRF scholarships, which include travel grants.

The laboratories of the Phytomedicine Programme are currently being renovated and once the construction work has been completed, research activities are set to reach new heights with the increased space and improved facilities. Five new PhD students and four postdoctoral fellows have joined the Programme in

recent months, and research in this section has received a major boost when it was awarded another three UP postdoctoral fellowships.



Dr Abimbola Aro with Prof Lyndy McGaw



Dr Olubukola Adenubi with two of her co-supervisors

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