

UNC Chapel Hill CRS by Christopher Tunstall, GCAB Rep.

Second Edition, 2021

A few weeks ago, North Carolina's Governor Roy Cooper lifted mask mandates in most settings except for anyone using public transportation. While many people in our state welcomed the news, others did not. The misinformation and politicization of the pandemic from over a year ago, and arguably still ongoing, continues to have detrimental impacts on efforts to vaccinate at minimum 70% of the population.

As of June 3rd, NC has 53.4% of the adult population vaccinated with at least one dose, and 49.2% of the adult population fully vaccinated.

Some reasons for people not getting vaccinated:

- NC has many rural, off-the-grid communities that are hard to reach through vaccine campaigns.
- Lack of broadband Internet service in rural areas.
- Lack of personal transportation or difficulty in reaching public transportation.
- Distrust in the vaccines.

Although good progress is being made in the US, it personally bothers me knowing that our international CAB members, and their communities, are eagerly requesting help in getting vaccines while the US has an abundance of vaccines and many people still deciding if they want one or not. To our international members, UNC's CAB is doing what we can on many fronts to address fair and equitable access to all—regardless of borders.

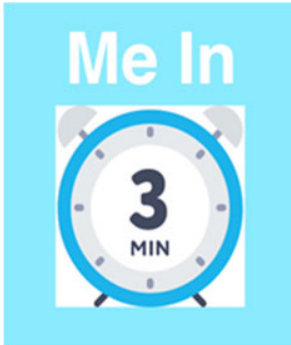
UNC Chapel Hill CRS	1
De La Salle Medical & Health Sciences Institute, Philippines	3
KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) CTU	5
Community Engagement	5
CRU/UH CAB	6
Kisumu AIDS Candlelight Memorial	7
DTTC-CAB WAD	9
DTTC-CAB Elects ACTG Network Rep	10

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Our CAB continues to meet via Zoom and it's always nice to see a group of smiling faces, albeit virtually, to interact with. I asked the CAB if they would be interested in me allocating time to have CAB members update the group on what's going on in their lives. Our members liked the idea because it allows us to get to know one another better in the absence of getting together socially.



UNC Chapel Hill CRS (Cont'd)



Felton, UNC Chapel Hill CAB Member

This new agenda item is called "Me In 3 MIN." For all upcoming CAB Zooms, one rotating CAB member per meeting will have 3 minutes to talk about whatever is going on in their life.

Our first "Me In 3 MIN" spotlight member is **Felton**. For anyone that knows Felton, they would all agree that he is an amazing CAB member who takes an active role in all that he does with our CAB, his community, and life. His smile brightens every room he walks into, pre-pandemic, and now virtually on Zoom calls.

Pursue More Challenging Career Endeavors

In my current full-time job, I have been partaking in project management training. Within a strategically selected cohort of individuals, we acquire a knowledge of the discipline of applying specific processes and principles to initiate, plan, execute, and manage the way that new initiatives or changes are implemented within an organization. This, and being in a primary role of budgeting within the cohort, has expanded and challenged my knowledge and skills that can be utilized in a plethora of other/future job settings.

Relocating / Explore New Places

I have recently moved into a new house in the Meadows at Southpoint area of Durham). Changing my grocery store, home gym, work route (which is now wonderfully shorter), and having more space and quiet in this neighborhood than that of my past residence of 6 years has been a delightful accustoming serving a mental enlightenment in all the processes while enjoying new spaces and attractions the area has to offer. This can also be achieved by simply traveling to places you have yet to visit. I love to travel and intend to continue doing so during more appropriate times given the current pandemic situation.

Remain Healthy

Maintaining positive thoughts and vibes is especially imperative in these trying and uncertain times. I have recently lost 10 lbs and seen fruitful results from more frequent gym visits and healthy eating habits. As for effective mind setting, I have found that giving myself 1-2 hours of time at the end of the day prior to sleeping for television, cooking, Spanish language studies, cleaning, or overall serene activities has been mentally centering.

In closing, we keep everyone within the ACTG Network in our thoughts as the world continues to be impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Together, we will end this pandemic! And we will continue our efforts to finally end the four-decades-old AIDS/HIV epidemic.

CAB Members Trained on the Upcoming Protocols in De La Salle Medical and Health Sciences Institute, Philippines

by Grace H. Diaz - CAB Coordinator

The second quarter of 2021 has been very challenging for us due to the spike of COVID-19 cases, especially the new variants circulating in the country. Despite the health measures being implemented country-wide, the site was not spared by this infectious disease when one of the members contracted the virus and was unlucky not to survive. This has dampened the spirits of our staff, but the promise of new trials has made us push forward.

In recent months, there were community engagements that were executed, but because of the restrictions, we are more focused on enriching our knowledge about the new protocols and guidelines of the forthcoming clinical trials of De La Salle Medical and Health Sciences Institute.

We had a series of protocol trainings led by Dr. Emmanuel Gutierrez, Dr. Dessa Casalme, and Dr. Krystle Fetalvero, our medical officers in the CRS. These series of sessions were under the guidance and supervision of our CRS leaders, Dr. Melchor Victor Frias and Dr. Maria Tarcela Gler. The lectures were very informative and interactive because of the interesting research that we will be partaking in soon. Through the request of the members, we made this a face-to-face session following the infection control protocols of the institution. The institution was very supportive in providing us with a spacious outdoor venue for these activities.

We also had an opportunity to attend the Good Clinical Practice (GCP) Training conducted by the Department of Health-Philippines to inform and prepare us and other health care workers on the COVID-19 vaccine clinical trials in the country. The training was done via Zoom and was attended by many professionals in the medical field.

For our information dissemination program, we have reached out to the participants in one of our studies to make slogans on TB prevention and awareness. This not only enhances their creativity, but is also a big contribution in spreading awareness to the community about the disease. We will be placing the slogans in strategic areas such as health centers and Programmatic Management of Drug-Resistant TB centers.

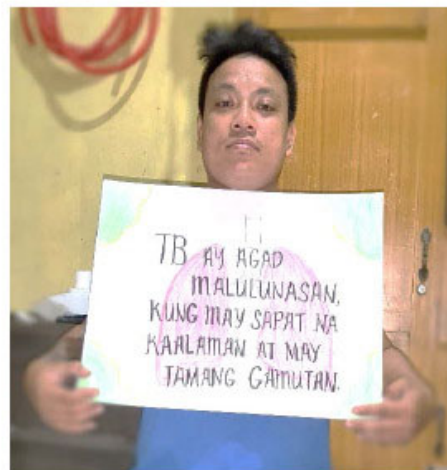
The CAB members have laid out several activities this year, and we hope that our advocacy helps the country in the battle with tuberculosis and HIV.

See the next page for photos taken during the activities. These are submitted with the permission of the CAB members and the participants.

De La Salle Photos



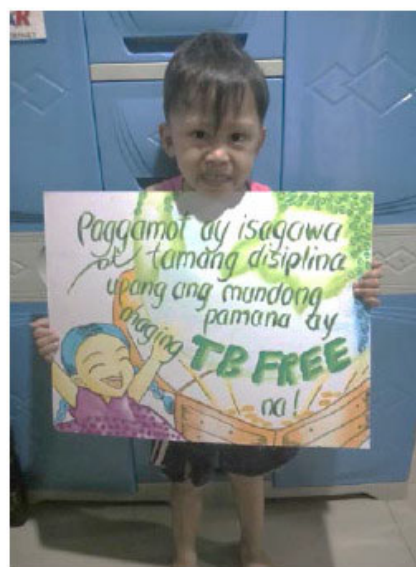
Dr. Gutierrez while discussing the protocol for the upcoming research



Slogan entry
Translation: TB can be cured with adequate knowledge and proper treatment.



Slogan entry of 1 household
Translation: TB is fatal if left untreated



Slogan entry
Translation: Proper treatment and discipline should be carried out, for us to become a TB-FREE WORLD!

KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) CTU Engages Civil Society

By Kogie Naidoo

The Provincial Council on AIDS (PCA), led by the office of the KZN Premier, in collaboration with the Provincial Civil Society, organised a Scientific Research Symposium with KZN Research Institutions on 8 and 9 April 2021.

The KZN PCA provides leadership, coordination, monitoring, and evaluation on the provinces' integrated response to HIV, STI, and TB. Members of the KwaZulu Natal Clinical Trials Unit (Prof Kogie Naidoo, Dr Nigel Garrett, Dr Cheryl Baxter, Dr Reshmi Dassaye, Ms Neeta Morar, Ms Zanele Gwamanda, and Mrs Ivy Kaunda) shared their research activities, and engaged in robust discussion on strategies to meaningfully engage communities in therapeutic and prevention research in HIV, TB, and COVID-19.

"The need to educate communities on the scientific research process and commonly used research lexicon will help strengthen collaboration between researchers and communities, and help improve translation of new scientific advances to affected communities," said Prof Kogie Naidoo, eThekweni CRS leader. Civil society called for more regular updates on progress on research activities, and resolved to lobby for greater recognition of the research sector in the response to AIDS, TB, and COVID-19 at a local, provincial, and national level.

Community Engagement Highlights

By Tshepo Kabuto

We have been anticipating the release of the TB song performed by various local artists and written and arranged by Tshepo Kabutu, Applied Science (TASK) CRS's Community Engagement officer. The song's purpose is to create awareness, educate, and most importantly fight against the stigma around TB.

The TB song team was on Cape Town TV to launch the song. The song is available for download on Soundcloud and will be available on all music platforms very soon.

The team was invited by the school teachers to talk to kids about COVID-19 and other infectious diseases. There's so much fear instilled in school kids, and they need clear information in order for them to keep each other safe.

We provided the teachers with informative educational material that have facts vs. myths on infectious diseases.



CWRU/UH Community Advisory Board (CAB) Brings CROI 2021 Highlights to Cleveland Community

By Robert Bucklew

The CWRU/UH Clinical Research Site CAB held its annual post-Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections (CROI) community update on International Clinical Trials Appreciation Day, May 20, 2021. The event, which has traditionally involved a dinner for the attendees, was held via Zoom because of the COVID-19 pandemic. CAB members Julie Patterson and David Jax Kelly, who attended CROI 2021, provided Cleveland's HIV community with their top highlights from the conference.

Jax started the evening with a discussion of the Martin Delaney presentation by Gregg Gonsalves and Fatima Hassan on Vaccine Nationalism. Both presenters were justifiably highly critical of the methods by which the COVID-19 vaccines have been distributed overwhelmingly to high-income countries who have effectively shut out access to middle- and low-income countries. COVID-19 has (further) unveiled existing white supremacy/apartheid in health care access, with deeply entrenched political structures that permit pharmaceutical companies to act like God—doling out life-saving vaccines to the highest bidder. Gonsalves and Hassan ended their presentation by holding up a small banner proclaiming: "A People's Vaccine: Everyone, Everywhere, Access for All."

In addition to Vaccine Nationalism, Jax reviewed Dr. Tony Fauci's presentation, which highlighted the similarities between the AIDS and COVID-19 epidemics. Unfortunately, many of these similarities demonstrate continued health disparities experienced by communities (and countries) of color. Finally, Jax reviewed updates on broadly neutralizing antibodies (bNABs) and their treatment of COVID-19 and for their potential treatment of HIV infection.

Julie focused the second half of the community update on Linda-Gail Bekker's presentation, Sustained Delivery and Long-Acting Agents for Prevention of HIV. Julie reviewed the first half of the presentation, which highlighted proven HIV prevention agents, primarily oral PrEP and barriers to successfully using these agents. The update attendees then watched the second half of Dr. Bekker's presentation, where she provided a detailed description of the new potential technologies in the HIV prevention research pipeline. The presentation ended with Dr. Bekker's call for HIV prevention options so that all people have a real choice on how to protect themselves from HIV infection.

Thanks to both Julie and Jax for their time and commitment to HIV research and the HIV community.



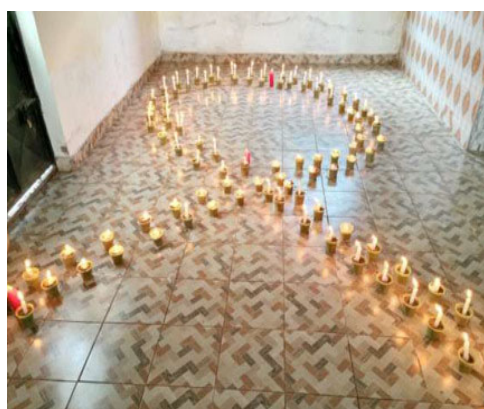
AIDS Candlelight Memorial, Kisumu, Kenya

by Anne Wambui, Eldoret CAB, CSS Rep. International

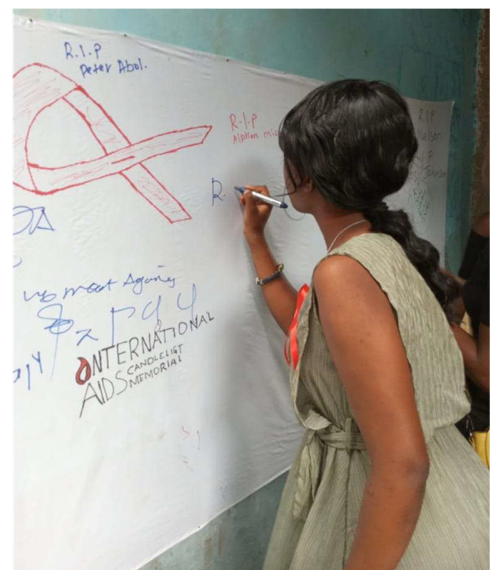
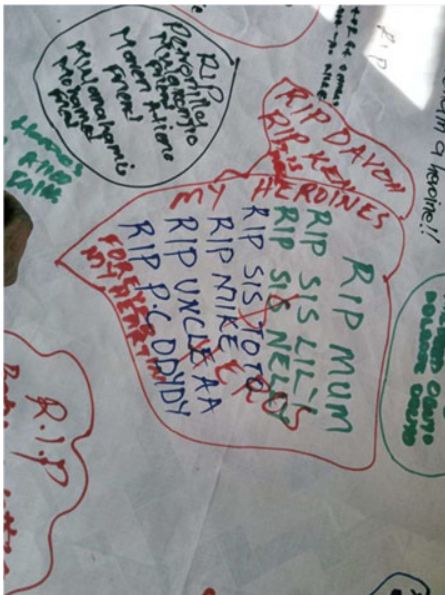
We remember the lives we have lost so we take action that keep us safe, healthy, and alive. We live beyond HIV. Eldoret CAB always strives to join community-based organizations and any other groups that help raise awareness about HIV and, more importantly, that may help to bring down HIV-related stigma in our community.

It was not different in this year's International AIDS Candlelight Memorial. As we remembered those we had lost, we took actions that are safe so that we live beyond COVID-19 and HIV. Those who dedicated their lives to help people living with and affected by HIV will always be honored, though they have passed on.

In Kisumu, Kenya, Pillars of Hope commemorated the day under the theme: "One Big Fight for Health and Rights for People Living with HIV."



AIDS Candlelight Memorial Photos (Cont'd)



AIDS Candlelight Memorial Photos (Cont'd)



World TB Day at the Desmond Tutu TB Centre Community Advisory Board (DTTC-CAB) on 24 March 2021

by Gwynneth Hendricks, DTTC-CAB Liaison Officer

The Desmond Tutu TB Centre Community Advisory Board (DTTC-CAB) commemorates World TB Day in March of every year, together with the Centre site personnel, in a combined programme for all staff and students at Stellenbosch University Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences.

This year, the event was held virtually via the MS Teams platform, and the DTTC-CAB's inspiring writers composed and recorded the opening scene for the event—a story of a young woman who came to the city from the rural areas and contracted TB.

The dramatized story shared her journey through her treatment, her thoughts, her struggles, her battle with stigma, and her ultimate healing.

Every year, we join in the global “Stop TB Partnership” campaign. This year the theme was, “The Clock is Ticking.” DTTC-CAB members also participated in, and were runners up in, a 2-minute “tick-tock” video competition to demonstrate the theme that time is running out and it is critical that we get TB treatment to everyone to save lives!



DTTC-CAB Members, Stellenbosch FMHS, Tygerberg Campus, 2020. (Photo by CAB member, Liyema Siphoso)

Siphokazi Khonkwane Elected ACTG Network Rep for DTTC-CAB

by Gwynneth Hendricks, DTTC-CAB Liaison Officer

In March 2021, Siphokazi Khonkwane, was elected as the ACTG Network representative for the Desmond Tutu TB Centre Community Advisory Board (DTTC-CAB) at Stellenbosch University, in Cape Town, South Africa.

Siphokazi has been involved in Community Advisory Boards at Stellenbosch University since 2009. She joined the Desmond Tutu TB Centre CAB in 2015 and is currently serving as the co-chairperson. Her previous roles include Secretary and Communications Officer. Prior to joining the DTTC-CAB, she served as a member of the FAMCRU-CAB at Stellenbosch University for 6 years between 2009 and 2015 and also served as Research Councilor and Recruiter for 2 years during this time.

Siphokazi is currently employed full-time as a Clinical Research Assistant at Hatter institute of Cardiovascular research in Africa (HICRA) at the University of Cape Town (UCT). Prior to this, she worked for the Chronic Disease Initiative for Africa (CDIA) at UCT for 4 years as a Research Assistant, conducting gestational studies. Siphokazi has also participated in and conducted numerous focus group discussions within the UCT research environment and she volunteers for Covid-19 contact tracing at the university too.

In her private life, Siphokazi is a single mom, who runs a vibrant household with two energetic sons, aged 19 and 17 years respectively, as well as a vivacious 16 year old daughter. In her spare time she loves reading magazines on style and fashion, and enjoys photography. Her favourite colour is purple as its depth and mystery inspires her. She is also interested in the history of ethnic languages and culture and always makes an effort to support community programmes and events. She is not a fan of cooking, but she enjoys having a good meal together with her family.

Speaking from Cape Town, Siphokazi says that she still has much to offer in the research arena. The prospect of spending time to promote a healthier lifestyle and making a difference in others' lives is what drives her. She says, "To me, Health Research Matters! It will always be my passion to contribute in any possible way."

