

# Council of Science Editors International Scholarship Program: The 2007 Recipients

**Rebecca M Barr, Rebecca S Benner, Pam Erickson, Kenneth F Heideman, Mark Hoffman, and Lynelle Korte**

The five CSE International Scholarship recipients for 2007 received an enthusiastic welcome to Austin and the 2007 annual meeting from CSE members. International Scholars Clement Oladapo Adewunmi (Nigeria), Bernard Appiah (Ghana), Abdul Nasser Kaadan (Syria), Nancy Kamau (Kenya), and Tharwat Sulaiman (Iraq) attended short courses and annual meeting sessions and shared riveting and sometimes poignant insights during a session devoted to their experiences as editors in the developing world. CSE again congratulates the 2007 International Scholars and thanks them for sharing their experiences.

Funded through generous contributions from sponsoring organizations and individual CSE members, the CSE International Scholarship Program provides means for journal editors from abroad—especially those from developing nations—to attend, contribute to, and benefit from CSE meetings. CSE and the International Scholars sincerely thank the donors who made the 2007 CSE International Scholarship Program possible (see box on page 206).

In advance of the 2007 annual meeting, 44 applicants submitted scholarship applications via CSE's Web site. Applications were evaluated by members of CSE's Education Committee. The candidates responded to questions that gauged their interest in attending the annual meeting and their plans for applying what they learned. The committee's final decision was based on review of the responses.

Volunteers from the CSE Education Committee met with and interviewed the International Scholars. The scholars' stories are provided below so that CSE

members and other readers have a chance to meet these remarkable colleagues.

## **Clement Oladapo Adewunmi**

Reported by Rebecca M Barr

Almost every journal editor worries about keeping up with technology, maintaining journal prestige to attract high-quality authors and reviewers, increasing submission and subscription rates, and being indexed in major online indexes.

In a presentation titled "View from the Developing World: AJTCAM's Contribution in a Global Village", Clement O Adewunmi, of the Drug Research and Production Unit of the Faculty of Pharmacy at Obafemi Awolowo University in Nigeria, described his work as cofounder and a chief editor of the *African Journal of Traditional, Complementary and Alternative Medicines (AJTCAM)* and made it clear that those issues are no less important in Africa than in America.

The AJTCAM, an English-language journal published by the African Ethnomedicines Network (AEN), was launched in 2004 to publish research on the applications of medicinal plants, traditional medicines, complementary and alternative medicines, and food and agricultural technologies and to promote healthy use of new and traditional medicinal products. An international journal, about half of whose authors are outside Africa, the AJTCAM is distributed primarily online with a small accompanying print run and is indexed in MEDLINE, *Chemical Abstracts*, African Journals Online, the Health InterNetwork Access to Research Initiative (HINARI), and Boline International.



**Adewunmi**

Aside from the universal challenges common to all journals, the AJTCAM experiences complications more peculiar to the developing world, centering on financial issues—ranging from the journal's limited budget, which among other things dictates frequent changes in print vendors, to authors' difficulties in paying the page charges that are its chief revenue source—and access to technologic expertise, which complicates the creation and delivery of article XML files. Yet the AJTCAM has also benefited greatly from the Internet: Submission and review are now run largely via electronic means—e-mail and, increasingly, the journal Web site—at considerable savings of money and time.

Adewunmi first became active in scientific publishing as an associate editor of the *Journal of American Academy of Tropical Medicine and Surgery* in the middle 1980s and has since served on several other journal editorial boards. Originally trained as a veterinarian, he later studied zoology and pharmacology and has pursued a variety of research interests in parasitology and tropical diseases. His extensive publications deal with the biologic activity of natural products against insects, mollusks, schistosome parasites, and helminth worms; tropical-disease epidemiology; and the pharmacology of anti-infective agents.

In 2003, Adewunmi helped to create the AEN, which arose in the wake of a workshop on bioprospecting, marketing, and benefit-sharing at the local level in West Africa in Johannesburg on 11-15 June 2001. AEN is devoted to research and dissemination of local or indigenous knowledge and methods of caring for, healing, and managing human lives and livestock. The organization is expanding its publication program: When this article went to press, a new journal, the *African Journal of Infectious Diseases*, was scheduled for an October 2007 launch.

Adewunmi described his attendance at the CSE meeting, and the Short Course for Journal Editors, as highly rewarding both in providing practical advice and in giving him an opportunity to interact with exhibitors and other participants. He also noted another important link between the AJTCAM and CSE: The journal is among the roughly 120 worldwide participants in the CSE-organized global-theme issue on poverty and human development in October 2007.

### Bernard Appiah

Reported by Kenneth F Heideman

When I met Bernard Appiah at the luncheon honoring him and the other 2007 CSE International Scholars, I was immediately taken with the joy and exuberance that he exuded. A

native of Ghana, Appiah is a pharmacist and publications manager and editor for the National Drug Information Resource Centre, part of the Ministry of Health in Ghana.



**Appiah**

Why wouldn't he be a happy guy when in his biography he lists as his *hobbies* some of the activities he must do for his everyday job (reading, writing, and editing)?

Appiah's education history clearly shows an early interest in and aptitude for writing and books; he became his school's librarian at the age of 15. It was in Ghana Secondary School that he concentrated his studies in science and excelled to the extent that he was given the heady nickname "Aristotle" by his peers. Having passed the 1996 Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination with distinction, he gained admission to the Faculty of Pharmacy at Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology in 1998. He earned a bachelor of pharmacy degree with honors in 2002 and passed the 2003 Ghana Pharmacy Professional Qualifying Examination, thus becoming a member of the Pharmaceutical Society of Ghana. He

is now in a master's program in development communication at the University of the Philippines Open University.

Given his full academic load, what Appiah has accomplished outside school is especially impressive. For example, he has been an assistant editor or editor of various magazines and newsletters and was a scriptwriter for "Let's Talk About Drugs—Pharmacists for Public Health", a docudrama serial that appeared on Ghana Television in 2005. Arguably, his crowning achievement to date is authorship of his first published book, *Medicines: Using Them Safely*. It is this book that best reflects the remarkable arc of Appiah's young career because it integrates each of the skills and interests that he developed from a very early age: namely, a love of the written word, a keen interest in science and a desire to help people that led him into the study of pharmacy, and advanced training in editing and various forms of communication. In writing this book and as a peer educator, Appiah understands that personal mastery of a topic, such as pharmacy, is of little or no use unless knowledge can be communicated to others.

In his continuing quest to educate as many people as possible about the most effective and safest possible use of pharmaceuticals, Appiah has turned his attention to the *National Drug Information Journal*, produced in Ghana. That was the main focus of a presentation he gave during the annual meeting. Although it is not yet a peer-reviewed journal, he intends to make it one in the near future. It was the desire to gain knowledge about transforming the journal into a more widely recognized publication that motivated him to apply for the CSE scholarship. In his talk, Appiah identified a number of challenges associated with the journal. Many—such as attracting enough funding, editorial consultants, and quality reviewers and achieving timely publication of contributions—are ones to which we can all relate. But the challenges are magnified when one is trying to produce a journal in west Africa.

There is no question but that Bernard Appiah is a worthy recipient of a CSE

International Scholarship. He has spoken of his job and profession as a "lovely place to be". How appropriate! One cannot meet him or read his book without concluding that the world is a lovelier place for having him in it.

### Abdul Nasser Kaadan

Reported by Mark Hoffman

Abdul Nasser Kaadan is a teacher, historian, and orthopedic surgeon devoted to research and scholarship who shares the role of editor-in-chief for the *Journal of the International Society for the History of Islamic Medicine*.

It was a pleasure to meet and talk with Kaadan at the CSE annual meeting. He is a gentle-spoken person who gleams with energy when given the opportunity to talk about his passion for the history of Islamic medicine and medical ethics.



**Kaadan**

Our conversations afforded me a better understanding of the goals he has as a historian of medicine to teach about the historical and current contributions of Islamic medicine. I also learned that Kaadan takes a stand on the importance of correcting mistaken ideas as to the practice and historical record of Islamic medicine.

In the process of conversing about science and medical history, we had the opportunity to talk about the contribution of the Sufi poet Jelaluddin Rumi to our understanding of Islamic culture. Rumi was the 13th-century poet whose writing contains wit, wisdom, and penetrating insights into the human condition. Rumi's writings are as well known in the Islamic world as Shakespeare is in the West.

Kaadan is continuously teaching and bringing light to the contributions of Arab and Muslim physicians to the history of medicine for the benefit of all. But as a CSE International Scholar, he is also a student and was receptive to the publishing concerns of others as well.

## Scholarship recipients continued

Kaadan wrote to me after the meeting, “I learned so many issues related to publishing—mainly those scheduled in the short courses. The ethical issues related to publishing represent the main interest to me as well.”

In addition, he provided the following in reflecting on his overall experience at CSE:

- In the West, publishing scientific papers results from teamwork and not the work of one scholar or two.
- I will put a plan in our journal to expand the working team of publishing to contain some other specialties, such as English literature and statistics.
- We hope in the future we can budget for sending one or two members of our team to attend CSE annual meetings.

I saw many people sit down and talk with Kaadan at the 2007 Annual Meeting. I suspect that some of you reading this have a firsthand insight into the warmth and knowledge emanating from this man. His gift of native Syrian candy to the Education Committee is symbolic of his giving and personable nature.

### Nancy Kamau

Reported by Lynelle Korte

Nancy Kamau is a Kenyan who now lives in Nairobi and serves as chief librarian for the Kenya Medical Research Institute, editorial manager for the *African Journal of Health Sciences*, and president of the Association for Health Information and Libraries in Africa, which is working to make health information accessible by 2015 so that practicing health-care professionals can make informed decisions. In addition, she is affiliated with the Kenya Medical Research Institute and the Forum for African Medical Editors, which was created in 2002 to improve the quality of



Kamau

African journals. As part of her development, Kamau participated in the National Library of Medicine’s Associate Fellowship Program in 2001-2002. That year of post-graduate training provided experience in many of the concepts, skills, and technologies that are shaping the future of health information.

The *African Journal of Health Sciences* is a peer-reviewed journal that was established in 1994. This open-access journal is available through Bioline International and is indexed in MEDLINE, African Journals Online, and African Index Medicus. “The journal is one of the outlets that encourage African scientists to submit their manuscripts,” Kamau said. The editors and reviewers of the journal are encouraged to work with authors, providing guidance on how to improve their manuscripts. “We find that our rejection rate is very low—maybe 30%—because we want to encourage the scientists—and especially the young scientists—to publish,” she said. “So the editors and reviewers act as a training ground for our young scientists.”

Kamau is involved with the journal’s subscriptions and distribution, proofreading, journal management, and indexing. She said that indexing remains a serious challenge. Currently, each article is manually coded in XML and submitted for indexing. The lack of advanced technology affects record-keeping and interaction with authors and reviewers. “When we receive a manuscript through e-mail, we print copies and send them to the reviewers,” Kamau explained. Because the journal is online and authors are not charged fees, the journal must be sustained by the institution. Therefore, the journal is subject to the technologic support of the institution and is forced to compete with other projects, so publication is often delayed. Kamau said that the delays may deter advertisers.

Kamau said that “most of the people who work on the journal—we have four—are part time, and we have other duties.” She said that continuing training for everyone involved is desired. “We have a challenge in training: We would like to train our authors, we would like

to train our reviewers, and we would also like to train ourselves on various aspects,” she explained. Even with limited capacity, “within the last couple of years, we have seen an increased flow of manuscripts, and we also have improved our publication deadlines,” she said. As further measures of success, the journal team is providing assistance to three other African journals, organizing a forum for editors, collaborating with other journals to provide author training, and providing a seminar for reviewers.

After the meeting, Kamau shared her thoughts with me, writing that she “had no idea that the scientific editing and journal management field was so advanced and diverse, attracting so many people to the conference. . . . I had a chance to discuss and interact with colleagues and as a result gained some knowledge of journal management and editing practices in other parts of the world. . . . Overall it was a good experience for me as I came to learn that journal editing and management practices in our settings are very different from the practices in developed economies. In Africa, journals are still the product of academic, professional associations and research institutions and have yet to fully embrace the use of information technology.”

### Tharwat I Sulaiman

Reported by Lynelle Korte

Tharwat I Sulaiman is an assistant professor and consultant surgeon at Baghdad Medical College in Iraq. He has been editor of the *Journal of Faculty of Medicine Baghdad* since 2003. Previously, he was the editor of the *Hammad Shihab Teaching Hospital Bulletin* from 1997 to 2000, a member of the *Iraqi Medical Association Bulletin* Editorial Board from 2001 to 2003, and a member of the *Journal of Faculty of Medicine Baghdad* Editorial Board in 2003.



Sulaiman

The *Journal of Faculty of Medicine Baghdad* was established in 1936 and has maintained a strong reputation; however, Sulaiman said that the journal started to deteriorate in 1991 after the first Gulf War and during the era of sanctions. In fact, “the journal was about to stop during the early months of 2003 after the invasion, and the whole offices of the medical college were looted or [destroyed], and the journal, in fact, suffered the worst,” he said. “At that time, there was no financial support at all. All the people in Iraq, including the doctors, including the college, were in a fugue state because nobody [knew] what [was going to] happen.” Despite the challenges and uncertainty, “we decided to rebuild everything, and one of these things was the journal,” he said. The journal received financial support from friends outside the country, which helped the team to publish two issues. The journal had to refurbish the office, find an efficient secretary, and identify a new editorial board, since most of the former members now lived outside Iraq. Also as part of this initial rebuilding, a new cover and style were developed, a new publisher was selected, financial support was rearranged, and a high standard of peer review was enforced. The journal was produced every 3 months on a regular basis in 2004.

However, in 2005, the journal began another decline, which worsened in 2006 when the civil war started in Iraq. “The conditions in the country deteriorated in every aspect, which had its implications on our work in the journal,” Sulaiman said. “Most of the editorial board now are outside the country, and some of them were killed. Most of the publishers disappeared because most of them were killed or were threatened and left the country.” The number of articles declined. “Who will write?” he asked. “There is nothing except death, so who will write?” In 2004, about 500 articles were waiting to be published; in 2007, only 50 articles were waiting to be published, and the number was declining. Staffing became irregular because of the security problems. “They

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cannot leave their houses and reach the area of work,” he said.

Also at that time, Sulaiman experienced personal health challenges, including renal failure in 2005 and lung cancer in 2006. Despite those challenges, Sulaiman believes that it is vital to continue this work and that nothing is impossible. “As long as I can live, I can publish this journal,” he said. “The message of my talk is that nothing is impossible. We can do everything if we have the will.”

Looking back at the annual meeting, Sulaiman wrote, “From the first day when I entered the hall of the course for editors, I felt that this experience is going to be quite different. They were serious in delivering information and friendly in behavior in such a way that I felt as if I had known them for a long time.” He added: “The conference was so successful for me because I have learned plenty of things that will help in editing our journal.”

### **Future of the CSE International Scholarship Program**

In 2008, the Council will again offer the CSE International Scholarships. Donations to the scholarship program may

be made via CSE’s Web site ([www.CouncilScienceEditors.org](http://www.CouncilScienceEditors.org)) and are gratefully appreciated. The Education Committee will continue to evaluate and recommend ways to improve the program, with focused discussions on how to enhance the participation of past and new scholarship winners in the Council. Questions or comments are welcome and may be directed to Pam Erickson ([perickson@lilly.com](mailto:perickson@lilly.com)).

The scholarship program would not be possible without the hard work of the Education Committee’s scholarship subcommittee, which was responsible for evaluating the applications and choosing the recipients. We thank those who served in this capacity in 2007: Rebecca Benner, Virginia Bourgeois, Pam Erickson, Kenneth Heideman, Mark Hoffman, Suzanne Smith, Iain Taylor, and Nancy Wachter.

REBECCA M BARR, REBECCA S BENNER, PAM ERICKSON, KENNETH F HEIDEMAN, MARK HOFFMAN, and LYNELLE KORTE are members of the CSE Education Committee.