



Dr. Avinash Shetty speaks about HIV/AIDS.

Photos by Todd Luck

Medical Center details global health efforts at symposium

BY TODD LUCK
THE CHRONICLE

International health challenges and possible solutions to them were the focus of the Fourth Annual Global Health Symposium at Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center.

The WFU School of Medicine Office of Global Health, which facilitates an exchange program for medical professionals and fosters alliances with medical schools and institutions around the globe, hosted the symposium last Friday and Saturday.

"For those that are practicing here in North Carolina, whether urban, rural or otherwise, you need to understand that there's nothing separating that concept of global health within North Carolina on a global scale because there are no boundaries," Global Health Associate Dean Dr. Bret Nicks told attendees, who included both medical professionals and lay people from the community. "What can happen in an avian flu outbreak in Tokyo can very well be in one of our airports before anyone is able to identify it's been transmitted across."

"Innovations in Global Health" was the theme. On Friday, Nicks pointed out such innovations and the impact they are having in poor countries. They include a prosthetic leg in India that only costs \$60. Nicks said such an innovation may one day be useful in the United States.

Don Holzworth, the executive in residence at the University of North Carolina's Gillings School of Global Public Health and the former founder and CEO of the global health consulting firm the Constella Group, said a failing health system can have far-reaching ramifications for a nation.

"Global health is one of the primary underpinnings for political and civil stability for economic growth and sustainability as well as human rights and development," said Holzworth, who sold his company in 2007 and now helps researchers at UNC turn their research into a marketable reality.

"The health problems today, I believe solving them requires as much a business discipline as they do a scientific discipline," he said.

One example he cited was the Compartment Bag Test (CBT). Developed by UNC Professor Dr. Mark Sobsey, the CBT is an inexpensive way to test the safety of drinking water. Holzworth helped Sobsey start Aquagenx,



Don Holzworth speaks about his work at UNC.



Liberian Organization of the Piedmont's James Hunder and Rev. Sharon McKinney.

which sells the CBT around the world. The Philippines ordered 20,000 of the tests after it was hit by a typhoon last year.

James Hunder, a long-time member of the Liberian Organization of the Piedmont, attended the symposium and expressed an interest in the CBT, as drinking water quality has long been an issue in his native Liberia, which is still recovering from a long civil war that ended in 2003.

"The city doesn't have real good running water, in Monrovia, which is the capital," said Hunder, "... so that idea that Dr. Don mentioned, it would be helpful to some people, especially in the villages."

Hunder said Liberia also has understaffed hospitals as a result of doctors and other professionals fleeing the country during the war. He hopes to begin a partnership with the WFU School of Medicine to help change that.

Dr. Avinash Shetty, a pediatric infectious disease specialist at Brenner Children's Hospital and WFU School of Medicine professor, talked about the optimism in the medical community about the future of HIV/AIDS.

"Due to tremendous scientific discoveries and advancements over the past 30 years, we have people actually seeing

some light at the end of the tunnel," said Shetty.

While there is still no cure, advances in medications that are now available can not only treat the disease but vastly decrease the possibility of transmission between partners and mother and child. There are still places where new infections are on the rise, but overall there's been a 22 percent decrease in new infections between 2001 and 2011.

"This is what has led people to really talk about an AIDS free generation," said Shetty, who regularly visits Africa to tout HIV prevention, especially to African women.

Several Wake Forest doctors/professors talked about their experiences abroad, including Dr. Adele Evans, who addressed the challenges she faced on a trip to a "low resource" hospital in the Dominican Republic. Dr. Sean Ervin gave a presentation on the over diagnosis of malaria at a Ghanaian hospital he visited. Everyone who had a fever was prescribed antibiotics to treat it, a waste of limited resources and a means of creating drug resistant viruses, Ervin said.

Saturday's presenters included Dr. Medge Owen, a professor of anesthesiology at the Medical Center and founder of the Kybele Inc., a nonprofit that works in 11 countries to make childbirth safer. She addressed Kybele's work in Ghana, where the organization has helped to establish a number of obstetric centers and is

credited with drastically lowering the country's maternal mortality and stillborn rates.

N.C. Black lawmakers to host local town hall

CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

Members of the North Carolina Legislative Black Caucus will be in Winston-Salem on Friday, April 4 to hold a town hall meeting to discuss poverty and economic development. The meeting will be held in the Dillard Auditorium in the Anderson Center on the campus of Winston-Salem State University from 1-3 p.m.



Parmon

Sen. Earline Parmon, the first vice president of the N.C. Legislative Black Caucus, is expected to be on hand with other legislators from Forsyth County and around the state.

The North Carolina Legislative Black Caucus is an unincorporated association comprised of Senators and Representatives of African American heritage and Native American heritage. The caucus' primary mission is to operate as a vehicle through which blacks, Native Americans and other minorities in the state can exercise their political power in a unified manner; to ensure that the views and concerns of blacks and other communities of color are carried out by their elected representatives; and to work to develop the political consciousness of black people.

Rep. Garland E. Pierce, a Democrat who represents Hoke, Richmond, Robeson and Scotland counties, is the chairman of the caucus.

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FRI 4/4 @ 7pm	Post-Game Fireworks & Kids Run The Bases
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