



Watts Medal

Watts Medal and poster competition winners 2005

Real time measurement of out of hospital cardiac arrest was the subject of the winning presentation for the Watts Medal 2005. Brian Hayes, a fifth year medical student from UCD, designed a user-friendly database system for the resuscitation room in the Emergency Department of St Vincent's Hospital. The aim of the study was to create a system that would gather real time information about resuscitation following out of hospital cardiac arrest. Patient survival after out of hospital cardiac arrest varies widely between emergency medical systems worldwide. Studies have shown survival rates from 1.4 to 28 per cent. The database collects information according to the internationally recognised Utstein criteria and allows rapid analysis, as well as facilitating comparisons with other hospitals internationally. The intention is now to implement the database and carry out a follow up study with staff to assess its usefulness.

The winners of the HRB Summer Student Poster Competition were:

First prize: Maria Twomey (Screening of candidate genes for restless leg syndrome in a newly identified locus). This project was carried out in the Department of Pathology in UCC under the supervision of Dr Collette Hand.

Second prize: Ronan O'Leary (The role of box protein in the normal and inflamed colon). Project conducted in the Department of Academic Surgery, Cork University Hospital under the supervision of Mr John Coffey.

Third prize: Conor Lahiff (Chemotherapeutic responses in different staged colorectal cancer cells). This project was carried out in St Vincent's Education Research Centre with Professor Diarmuid O'Donoghue.

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The HRB's Watts Medal and Prize for 2004 was awarded to Aisling Ní Ruairc from the Department of Biology, NUI Maynooth, for her project Collation of datasets for the analysis of adaptive evolution in HIV. Aisling, who is a third year student in NUI, Maynooth studying Computational Biology and Bioinformatics, carried out her project with Dr James McInerney. Aisling used sophisticated computer programming techniques to study the HIV genome and its evolution through the years. This sort of analysis allows researchers to identify those parts of the genome that change over time and also those areas that remain relatively unchanged. This is important in helping us to understand the structure of HIV better and how that structure changes as it interacts with a person's immune system. It can also highlight possible targets for vaccine development.

The first prize in the poster competition went to Michael O'Reilly, a fifth year medical student in NUI, Galway. Michael's project was The uterorelaxant effects of THG113, a novel specific PGF2 receptor antagonist, on contractions of isolated human myometrium. It was carried out in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology in NUI, Galway with professor John Morrison.

The second prize in the poster competition went to Laura Thompson for her project Evaluation of the multiplex ligatable probe amplification assay for detecting deletions and duplications in medically important genes. Laura, who is a third year science student in UCD, carried out her work with Professor Andrew Green and Dr David Barton in the National Centre for Medical Genetics, Our Lady's Hospital for Sick Children, Crumlin, Dublin.

The third prize in the poster competition went to Niamh Moran, a fourth year medical student in NUI, Galway. Niamh's project, Detection of Extracellular Matrix Metalloproteinase in primary tumour and local recurrence in breast cancer patients, was carried out in the Department of Surgery with Mr Jack McCann.