

# International Scholars Down Under

**H**HHMI international research scholars from 29 countries converged in June on Cairns, Queensland—the tropical north of Australia—for a unique set of face-to-face scientific exchanges.

Russian, South African and Mexican researchers compared notes on tuberculosis research while Argentine and Swiss scientists conferred on pathogen-survival mechanisms. Scientists from Canada, Hungary and the Czech Republic discussed their respective studies of signaling pathways. An Israeli who investigates trypanosomes learned about the work of a Venezuelan and a German directly from those scientists, who study similar parasites.

Hosting the meeting were HHMI's 11 Australian research scholars: Deidre Carter, Ross Coppel, Alan Cowman, Brendan Crabb, Simon Foote, William Heath, Gunasegaran Karupiah, Malcolm McConville, Geoffrey

*Hungarian scholar László Nagy (left) and Marie Lipoldová from the Czech Republic (right), present their research. Australian organizing committee chair Ross Coppel (center) chats with Indian scholar Chetan Chitnis and his wife, Amika Mehndiratta.*



McFadden, Magdalena Plebanski and Louis Schofield. Coppel, a professor at Monash University (Victoria), chaired the local organizing committee.

The international scholars also gave formal presentations on their latest work. Marcelo Rubinstein of Argentina, for example, described a novel mouse model for testing the role of dopamine D4 receptors in attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder. Australian Louis Schofield discussed his animal-model studies of a synthetic antitoxin vaccine that protects against the most severe effects of malaria.

While they were in Queensland, the research scholars also managed to see some of the locale's exotic environment. They visited a rainforest habitat where they met kangaroos, crocodiles, pythons and other

*Russian international scholar Alexander Konstantinov makes friends with a mother kangaroo at a rainforest wildlife sanctuary in Queensland.*

native creatures, and they spent an afternoon exploring the Great Barrier Reef.

To help maintain research efforts around the world—in many countries, under difficult economic circumstances—HHMI supports the research of competitively selected biomedical scientists in their home countries in the Baltics, Eastern and Central Europe, the former Soviet Union, Canada and selected countries of Latin America. The program also supports scientists throughout the world who are studying infectious diseases and parasitology.

—JENNIFER BOETH DONOVAN



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