

## 2009 RCPA Media Awards – Winners Announced Today

The Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia (RCPA) has announced the winners of its fourth annual media awards for excellence in journalism relating to pathology, at the opening of its annual Pathology Update Conference, being held in conjunction with the 25<sup>th</sup> World Congress of Pathology in Sydney.

This year's submissions focused primarily on increasingly important area of genetic testing and personalised medicine, which are rapidly revolutionising medicine and healthcare globally.

Judges were impressed by the high quality of print submissions and therefore decided to award two Print Media category awards; one to Julie Robotham, Medical Editor for the Sydney Morning Herald and Jill Margo, Health Writer with the Australian Financial Review.

Julie Robotham was honoured for her series of articles which highlighted discrepancies of access for genetic testing across Australia, and the disadvantage and potentially adverse affects on Australian patients and healthcare delivery. The series, which ran during October and November 2008, included the articles '*When law is patent nonsense*' and '*Australia needs genetic test plan: doctors*'.

Jill Margo was recognised for her two part series on prostate cancer, highlighting the essential role of pathologists, not only in diagnosis, but in diagnostic innovation and in extending the use of existing tools.

The winners were announced at the RCPA's Annual Pathology Update Conference, and were presented with a \$2000 first prize each for their portrayal of issues in Pathology.

The CEO of the RCPA, Dr Debra Graves says although pathology is the basis of medicine, it is generally not well understood, by either the public or the politicians who have such influence over its delivery.

"Julie's series eloquently highlighted the issues surrounding genetic testing – including its potential, the need for equitable access and the need for governing legislation – issues that are at the foundation of why the College has been calling repeatedly for the Federal Government to work with the profession to develop an overarching National Genetics Framework to deal with the plethora of issues it presents," says Dr Graves.

"Jill's exposé into the work of an individual pathologist, Ronald Cohen's daily routine and his ability to push the boundaries of knowledge around the complex disease of prostate cancer provided an unusual insight into the science and art of pathology.

"In both series, the journalists skilfully translated complex and often controversial medical and technical issues into real, day-to-day personalised issues.

"Importantly, both series generated debate and further media coverage in their own right."

Past winners of the Awards have included Adam Cresswell (The Australian); Sophie Scott (ABC TV), Janelle Miles (Courier Mail), Martin Johnston (New Zealand Herald), Gabrielle Boyle (Network Ten), Louise Hall (Sun Herald) and Jodi Yeats (NZ Doctor).

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