

## **2015 SOCIAL RESPONSIVENESS AWARDS**

### **Citation for Roshan Galvaan and Liesl Peters Department of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences, Division of Occupational Therapy**

Roshan Galvaan and Liesl Peters' scholarship has recast occupational therapy beyond its traditional borders towards addressing the sociopolitical realities and pressing social concerns facing South Africans in their everyday lives. Paying careful attention to the way that research serves society has changed what the profession of occupational therapy practices in community development settings and has generated new knowledge.

Galvaan and Peters' authentic partnerships with communities are long-standing, a testament to their commitment to the processes of development. Of particular significance is the emphasis in their work on the collaborative identification of critical areas of health and social needs and the development of practice in collaboration with communities. These partnerships continue to provide scope for student learning while offering interventions that address social exclusion.

Developing and introducing the occupation-based community development practice framework, commonly referred to as OBCD, as a theoretical frame, has provided students and practitioners with a reasoning tool for initiating and designing contextually relevant interventions with communities. This framework introduces students to practices, which are relevant to contexts shaped by challenging social, political, economic and cultural realities. Under Galvaan and Peters' guidance, occupational therapy students have shifted their practice to be able to respond to the pressing needs of individuals, groups and organisations in the education, social development and health arenas as part of their undergraduate course requirements. Teaching has focused on the design of innovative interventions in these contexts and the development and application of participatory methods suited to such interventions. Students have the opportunity to not only apply contextually relevant knowledge, but also contribute to new knowledge development through service learning. This continues to significantly influence the ongoing conceptual development of OBCD.

In summary, Galvaan and Peters' work demonstrates that a compelling commitment to the confluence of research, teaching and service in addressing the social realities faced by communities can advance positive social change for vulnerable groups and much needed change in the profession. Their contribution to the development of occupational therapy graduates who continue to engage with such issues revolutionises occupational therapy practice, ensuring that it responds more actively to the conditions of peoples' lives.