

Biography:

I was born in Pretoria and raised in Cape Town, where I attended Jan van Riebeeck High School in Gardens, Cape Town. After matriculating in 1986, I commenced with my MBChB studies at Stellenbosch in 1987. In 1988, I took a gap year and enjoyed 12 months of backpacking through Europe at the age of 18, before continuing with my medical studies. In 1991, I again took a break from my medical studies to complete a BMedSc degree, specialising in physiology and pharmacology, and it was here that my passion for physiology received a jump-start! After my medical studies, I practiced as a doctor in the UK and in South Africa before taking up a lecturer's position at the Division of Medical Physiology in 1998. I obtained my PhD in 2006, and served as the head of the Cardiovascular Research Group in the division, until 2019, when I helped with the founding of the Centre for Cardio-metabolic Research in Africa (CARMA), of which I am the co-director. Apart from research, my other passion in life is of course teaching physiology! In my free time, I am the acting chair of the international board of a large educational exchange programme called Youth for Understanding (YFU) operating in more than 50 countries globally. I am also on the Board of the local YFU organisation in South Africa. We send 10-15 young South African high school learners from all walks of life to a foreign country where they live with a hostfamily and attend the local school for one year. We also receive 25-30 foreign exchange learners who live and attend school in South Africa for one year. Other useless information: I love gardening, I travel as much as possible, I can speak German fluently, I do my own cooking, am passionate about my Sunday afternoon naps, and am of the firm belief that Cape Town is simply the most beautiful city on the planet!