

Rede zur Verleihung des 3. Rainer Gross Preis; Gran Canaria, November 2014

Thank you, Erik and Noel, for the vivid reports. But a “legacy” is not reflected by memories alone. It is his curious spirit that we want to keep alive. This is the purpose of the Rainer Gross Award endowed by the “Hildegard Grunow Foundation”. Let me shortly introduce this Foundation to you. It is very small. Funded by the heritage of the late Hildegard Grunow, it was founded in 2007 by Noel Solomons, the tax-lawyer Klaus Naeve, and myself, and with that pedigree is clearly research-oriented. Its task is capacity building in the field of Third-World-Nutrition and to hatch, test and monitor new ideas and concepts in nutrition – to serve as an “incubation aid” for new faces and concepts.

In the 7 short years of its existence HGF was not idle: It supported the career of more than 70 young scientists in and from developing countries by inviting them to Guatemala, it launched over 80 publications to which it contributed with funds, but also with ideas, know-how and personal commitment. More details can be accessed on our web page <www.hgrunowfoundation.org> which is about to re-launched with a new face to provide better access to our present and past projects.

In view of the bulk of problems in nutrition, our efforts – as tedious as they may be - are but the famous “drop in the ocean”. Thinking of how we might help to solve such a wide scope of problems we were thinking how Rainer would have gone about this. Looking for promising approaches Rainer used to invite brain-storming conclaves. So, to tackle a continuous flow of problems Rainer might have invited the community to continuous innovative thinking, e.g. by donating a biannual prize for innovative problem-solving ideas and this was what we did. The scope of submissions helps to assess the array of current of current problems and proposes possible solutions. As in evolution, where mutations propose new concepts we need a mechanism to select the fittest concepts.

This is taken care of by a competent counsel of jurors to make the choice. Let me explicitly thank Irv Rosenberg, Joachim v. Braun, and Richard Deckelbaum for their prestigious support to the “quest” that Rainer’s legacy kicked off.

So, without any further ado, let me introduce this year’s winner, David Thurnham. He is Professor emeritus of Human Nutrition at the University of Ulster and may not be a new face for many of you. His meta-analysis on the impact of inflammation on the assessment of vitamin A status was judged to best convey the mix of rigid scientific analysis to a burning problem of third world nutrition. David, please come to the stage to receive the prize which will be handed over this year by Ulla Gross, Rainer’s wife, who I also ask to please come up to the stage.