



**Adelaide Advertiser**  
**13-Oct-2009**  
 Page: 60  
 Education Now  
 By: CLARE PEDDIE  
 Region: Adelaide  
 Circulation: 187908  
 Type: Australian Capital City Daily  
 Size: 323.67 sq.cms  
 Frequency: MTWTFS-

# SCIENCE | Investigators in line for award Now the final test

**CLARE PEDDIE**  
 SCIENCE REPORTER

**R**ESearch to improve fertility treatments, reduce the rates of miscarriage and help ease the pain of inflammatory bowel disease has earned three young scientists a shot at this year's Young Investigator Award.

On Thursday the finalists will share their latest research findings with Health Minister John Hill, a panel of media judges and the public at the newly opened Royal Institution of Australia on Exchange Place.

The \$10,000 award, now in its 10th year, is offered by the Children, Youth and Women's Health Ser-

vice and the Faculty of Health Sciences at the University of Adelaide.

A university spokesman said the award aimed to "reward excellence in South Australia's young researchers in both science and their ability to communicate and 'sell' that science".

University of Adelaide PhD student Kathryn Gebhardt said she hoped to significantly improve the success rates of fertility treatments, such as in-vitro fertilisation.

She looked at the genetics of the cumulus cells that surround the egg to see if there were any differences between eggs

from women who went on to achieve a live birth and those for whom IVF failed.

"If we have tools for determining egg quality, we can help more people achieve their goal of becoming parents, while reducing the chances of twins or triplets by only transferring the single, highest-quality embryo for that patient," she said.

There was a direct correlation between the expression of three genes in the cumulus cells and a successful pregnancy resulting in a live birth following the transfer of a single embryo.

Ms Gebhardt is one of three finalists vying for the

2009 Young Investigator Award.

Alison Care, also from the University of Adelaide, hopes her research in mice will help improve knowledge of the role played by the immune system in miscarriage.

Roger Yazbeck from the Children, Youth and Women's Health Service is concerned about the rising incidence of inflammatory bowel diseases in children. He has tested anti-diabetic drugs known as DP inhibitors for their ability to treat inflammatory disease in mice.

The winner receives \$10,000 and the runners-up \$3000 each.



**HEALTHY INQUIRY:** Award finalists Alison Care, Kathryn Gebhardt and Roger Yazbeck prepare to face the judges.