



**Dr. Sharareh Hekmat impresses Archbishop Desmond Tutu  
at the St. Joseph's Health Care Foundation's Signature Speaker Series event**



[Dr. Sharareh Hekmat](#) of Brescia's Division of Food and Nutritional Sciences met [Archbishop Desmond Tutu](#) at the St. Joseph's Health Care Foundation's Signature Speaker Series event, held May 22, 2009.

Hekmat is pleased to report that, "the Archbishop was impressed with our work on probiotic yogurt in Tanzania." Tutu, born in Africa, earned worldwide acclaim when he played an integral role in bringing an end to Apartheid in South Africa, earning him the Nobel Peace Prize in 1984.

For the past 16 years, Hekmat has been developing dairy products containing probiotics, living bacteria that can be beneficial to human health by helping to treat and prevent infections.

In collaboration with scientists at the Canadian Research and Development Centre for Probiotics at Lawson Health Research Institute, Hekmat has developed a probiotic yogurt containing microorganisms effective in treating and preventing urogenital infections in women.

Hekmat's work on the project includes a team of students. She has trained more than 10 interns for the [Western Heads East Project](#), which have helped to create a sustainable mini-dairy plant in an outlying community of Mwanza, Tanzania. Currently as a part of AUCC-SFD grant, Hekmat is supervising a third-year Foods and Nutrition student in Tanzania. Ashley Motran will be in Mwanza until the end of summer conducting research on the probiotic yogurt.

Dr. Hekmat plans to visit Kenya later this summer to oversee the expansion of Tanzania yogurt project to Kenya as a part of a World Bank Grant.