ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS - Dankwoord
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

After a 4-year scientific adventure of exploring the secrets of nature to the benefit of human medicine, the journey has come to an end. As great as it feels to see all the chapters of this thesis finished, I feel even much better to look back and reflect over how the journey of my life started in Ghana, West Africa, the good and the bad times, the challenges that seemed insurmountable and some great individuals who inspired me along the journey when I felt like giving up. I want to thank my biological parents for bringing me into this world. May your souls rest in perfect peace. I know that you are very proud of me wherever you are now. I express my heartiest gratitude to Rev. Dr. Ray Johnson and Rev. Dr. Joycelyn Johnson, who raised me and kept my feet on the path of knowledge. I cannot imagine coming this far without the firm foundation and the right training you gave me. Thank you for your love and for believing in me. I am eternally indebted to you. I love you very much. I also thank my auntie Mrs. Angela Evans and Crenshaw Christian Center for their support especially during my undergraduate years.

I am also thankful to Hayford Nti Awere, who has always been there for me. Some friends stick closer than a brother. You are more than a friend. You are a brother - my brother from another mother. That is who you are to me. I wish you success in all your endeavours.

Many thanks to The Netherlands government, who saw the potential in me and invested to develop it to the benefit of human medicine. I couldn’t have come this far without your huge financial investment in the form of a prestigious scholarship from the level of my top master degree program to the end of my PhD program. You have given me a great opportunity to have an enviable career and to serve humanity through medical science research. I am grateful for choosing me out of many equally-deserving candidates and giving me such an opportunity.

I wish to also express my sincere gratitude to my promoter, Prof. Dr. Robert Henning. I am very thankful to you for giving me the opportunity to work with you, and refining me in the process to suit my future medical science career. I have learned a lot of qualities from you both personally and professionally. Each time I had a meeting with you and shared ideas on our projects, one of the many things that almost immediately comes into my mind is that ‘I would like to coach students with your style of coaching’. I admire your personality, your hardwork, your friendly nature, your dedication to your work, your simplicity about life, and how you coach your students. You infused me with such an overwhelming enthusiasm that I was able to finish my PhD thesis within the shortest possible time. Through you I came to realize that enthusiasm is all about believing in yourself and believing in what you do, and the willingness to achieve your goals in the phase of challenges. I enjoyed working with you and I would like to keep collaboration with you. I thank you very much.

To my co-promoter, Dr. Hjalmar Bouma, I would like to thank you for co-supervising my work. I learned
some secrets from your success as a PhD student. In the early years of my PhD, I saw that you are a gifted writer and I was fortunate to be your first PhD student to learn that attribute from you. You also infused me with a sense of urgency as you were so quick in everything you do. There were times when things were not working well for me and I seemed to have lost courage but you encouraged me to go on. I am grateful to you for your encouragement and guidance and helping to improve my planning and organizational skills.

I wish to thank Dr. Fatemah Talaei, whose idea and work served as a starting point for my PhD research. I wish you well in all your endeavours.

To the technicians, Martin, Marry, Maaike, Azuweris, Femke, I would like to say a big thank you for teaching me most of the techniques needed to execute all the projects I undertook in the Department. Thank you for your warmness. It was a pleasure working with you all.

My gratitude also goes to the ‘hibernation team’, who has been of tremendous support to me for the past four years. I will like to single out Dr. Arjen Strijkstra and Dr. Ate Boerema for sharing with me their experience in the hibernation field and the technical support they gave me throughout the period of my research.

To Martijn Salomons and the animal care takers at the CvL and CDP, I say thank you for taking care of my experimental animals and for all other supports during my hibernation and forced hypothermia experiments especially at times when I was absent.

I would also like to thank Prof. Ulrich Eisel, Prof. Wilfred den Dunnen, Dr. Pieter Naude and Dr. Kay Seidel. You were my project supervisors during my master degree programme. Coming from a background with insufficient laboratory experience, you were patient with me and guided me through the two projects I undertook under your supervision. Working with you has reshaped my perception about career in medical science and gave me a new look into a brighter future. In the end you gave me sufficient knowledge to start a PhD research.

Dear Dr. Mate Siakwa, you taught me some medical courses and also supervised my undergraduate project. Through your warmness and kindness, you inspired me and gave me a better focus during my undergraduate years. Interacting with you shaped my career path and affirmed my decision to choose a career in medical science.

To my colleagues, Mahdi, Sjoerd, Nagesh, Arash, Deli, Edwin, Vera, Jojanneke, Marit, all members of the Clinical Pharmacology Department including Ardy, Alexandra, Bianca, Leo, Hendrik, I wish to thank you all for your support and being a part of my success story over the last four years. It was a pleasure knowing you and I enjoyed working with you all.

Acknowledging all members of the Department would not be complete without mentioning a great
friend, Adriaan van Doorn. I drew a lot of inspiration from your wisdom. You are a sexagenarian, yet you look so young and you exude so much youthfulness and enthusiasm. I wish to look young like you when I get to your age. You have always reminded me that a person’s skin color or his religion or background doesn’t matter, and that we are the world, we are the children of the world. It all has to do with how we process information in our brain. Your words built confidence in me. I always remember your words ‘Let’s change the world with pharmacology’. I am glad I met you on the journey of my life.

To my best Iranian friend and colleague and also my paranymph, Marziyeh Tolouee Nodolaghi, and Rick Meijer, her boyfriend, I thank you for your friendship and warmth. I won’t forget those emotional supports you gave me when I needed it most.

A special thanks to my landlord, Jan Rozenveld. You have made my stay in Groningen an enjoyable one. Living in your house was like a home away from home. You have been very nice to me. You were not only a landlord but also a friend. There were times I came home tired after a long day’s work. You cooked for me and served me tea. We shared many jokes and laughter together though you understood your own jokes much better. Through you I came to understand Dutch culture and the philosophy of ‘live simply so others may simply live’. You were very supportive when you offered me some side jobs to earn extra money. I really appreciate your support. I will miss you but remember that you have a room in my house anytime you visit Ghana. It’s a small round world. Living in your house will not be complete without acknowledging Harrit Lamster and his parents, who were so thoughtful that they always sent me Christmas cards in each Christmas season for all the 6 years I stayed in the house. Thank you Harrit, for being a good housemate to me. You were so polite and also kind to me.

To my neuroscience friends, Inge (the alpha female), Melanie (Mama Mela), Karen, Sygrid, Jennifer, Amarins, Erin and Martin. You were my classmates and friends when I first arrived in Groningen. All the lecturers attested that our N-track was the best and the most united compared to all the batches before us. This was due to your warmness and friendliness. You organized trips each year during which I learn a lot of lessons, and today such trips have formed the basis for my adventurous life, having covered several countries across the globe.

To a wonderful person, Brenda. Thank you for all the pieces of advice and support especially during the last two years of my PhD. To Sarah, Lucy, Themble, Bright, Nana Aba, Anani, Fahimeh, Paul, Fany, Adwoa, Marshall, Misghina, Gifty, George, Sieta, Lisa, Joshua, Juliana, Fareeba, Peter, Maggie, Diana, Filip, Andrea, Rita and all my friends across the globe. Thank you all for your warm friendship.

Thank you, Motsum, Medaase, Akpe, Dankjewel

George