



Obstetrics & Gynaecology UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

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Message from the Chair

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to our Winter Newsletter. This is for sure my mildest winter since joining the Department 18 years ago, March 1st, 1998. Just before the December holiday break the Executive and Strategic Planning Team had a mid-cycle update meeting, in tandem with Faculty Development Day. I am pleased to report that all five strategic priority areas are making good progress and you can see our published Update on our site together with our 2014-2015 Annual Report.

As examples of recent research successes, two department members, Annie Malinowski and Mike Seed (recently cross-appointed form Pediatrics) made the front cover of Journals, and their elegant images are shown in this newsletter. Two Department initiatives are helping younger faculty members to establish and progress their research careers. The first, our Junior Merit Award (JMA) program, provides support matched to practice plans for individuals in their initial career phase. Current JMA recipients were celebrated at the first Annual Dinner, with the Chair and Research Committee at Massey College in November, 2015. July, 2016 will see the launch of the next research support program, the bi-annual Merit Award Program, providing \$40,000 annually to support mid-career faculty, using an application modeled off the CIHR Foundation scheme. Application details can be found [here](#) with a closing date of March 31st, 2016.

Please mark your calendars for two key events. First is Research Day, May 13th, 2016 at Victoria College. Our Henderson Lecture, to be given by Dr. Emmanuel Bujold from Laval University, will be on the subject of

pregnancy following a prior Cesarean Delivery. Second, we will return to Hart House on June 23rd, 2016 for our annual Graduation and Alumni event.

Our 123E Team encourages you to send in suggestions for news items, so we continue to celebrate the types of successes described here. Many thanks indeed to Andrew Greig for his patience and skills to produce both our 2014-5 Annual report and this newsletter. Best wishes to you all,

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Gordon C. Leitch Chair

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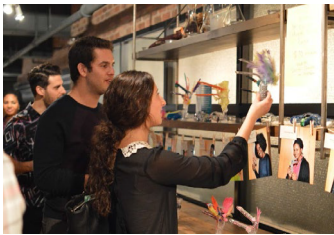
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To have your story included in the next newsletter, contact us at obgyn.communications@utoronto.ca.



Congratulations to Dr. Karen Glass, who was awarded the Biljan Memorial Award from the Canadian Fertility and Andrology Society!

There have been many changes in our education programs in the last 6 months, from a new fellowship application process, the expansion of our undergrad program, and the implementation of DEEFs in our residency program.



A group of our residents led by Mathew Leonardi organized the inSpeculum 2015 event. The event was a hit, and we hope to continue with initiatives like this.

We are in search for a creative newsletter name. Submit your ideas to obgyn.communications@utoronto.ca for review!

Dr. Heather Millar, a former resident and current faculty member, is featured in this issue for her great work as Team Leader for AMPATH. Congrats Heather!



Dr. Modupe Tunde-Biyass recently completed the Family Nurse Practitioner Program at the D'Youville College School of Nursing in Buffalo. She also received an award for excellence in preceptory during her time there.



Congratulations to Dr. Sarah Ferguson, who received a \$600,000 Prevention Research Grant from the Canadian Cancer Society.

Welcome to Irisz and Kristen Gane! They joined our administrative team in the summer and have been great additions!



The first annual Junior Merit Award dinner celebrated the work and progress of the JMA recipients. Well done! We look forward to welcoming 2016's JMA cohort.



Our Faculty Professional Development Day was held at Estates of Sunnybrook on November 11th, 2015. The event was a huge success! Thanks to Filomena Meffe and Alissa Moody for putting on a great event!

Dr. Al Covens has been appointed as the Head of the Division of Gynaecologic Oncology, replacing Dr. Joan Murphy who filled in as Interim Head following the departure of Dr. Barry Rosen.



Congratulations to Drs. Yolanda Kirkham and Dini Hui, who were promoted from Lecturer to Assistant Professor this year.

Photo credits go to Mr. Joe George, our talented photographer, who is always there to snap the most embarrassing and intriguing photos.



Research Day Update

As one of our biggest events, our Annual Research Day showcases our department's strength in research, and serves to encourage new collaborations and partnerships within our department and affiliated institutions. This year, Research Day will be held on May 13th, 2016 at Victoria College, in the Goldring Student Centre, Isabel Bader Theatre, and Burwash Hall.

This will be the first year we will have the Isabel Bader theatre for our oral presentation sessions and the Henderson Lecture; and it promises to be an excellent venue. The Henderson Lecture will be given by Dr. Emmanuel Bujold, who will address the common and important topic of "Prediction and prevention of uterine scar defect: 20 years of research."

We are also excited to join Wayne State University (WSU) in hosting a joint OBGYN Collaboration Day on May 12th! This half day (12:00pm - 6:00pm) will include oral and poster presentations from WSU and UofT trainees, breakout sessions geared towards discussing potential areas of collaboration and exchange between WSU and the University of Toronto, as well as a keynote WSU lecture from a senior member within the field of Obstetrics and Gynaecology. Select WSU research posters on collaborative projects will be included in the Collaboration Corner on May 13, 2016.



We hope to see everyone on both days to support trainees from UofT and WSU, and to explore new collaborations!

For those interested in presenting at Research Day, registration and abstract submission will be open on March 1st, 2016. You must register before you can submit an abstract!

Here are some important dates:

Registration:

March 1, 2016 – May 4, 2016
(Penalties will apply to late registrants!)

Abstract submission:

March 1, 2016 – March 27, 2016

For more details, please visit [our website!](#)

NIH Human Placenta Project

Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology investigators were shared recipients of a \$2.5M USD research grant from the NIH Human Placenta Project to develop new ultrasound technology for the early detection of placental dysfunction. This study, which brings together investigators from SickKids, Mount Sinai, UHN, and Johns Hopkins as well as the Ontario Ministry for the Environment, will focus on wave mechanics in the umbilical artery to detect downstream abnormalities in the placental vasculature. Dr. John Sled, speaking for the group, said "It is a privilege to be part of this major initiative to advance our understanding of placental disease. I am also very excited to see new technologies first developed using experimental mice translated for clinical application."

For more information, [click here.](#)



The research team for the placental health study

Prevention Research Grant

Congratulations to **Dr. Sarah Ferguson** and her colleagues who have recently secured four years of funding (\$600,000) from the Canadian Cancer Society Research Institute, through a Prevention Research Grant, for their prospective multi-centre study entitled "Maximizing Cancer Prevention through an Enhanced Genetic Uptake Program for Lynch Syndrome Detection in Women with Endometrial and Non-Serous Epithelial Ovarian Cancer."

The main aims of the study are to: (1) assess the



Dr. Ferguson, and her team, including Drs. Marcus Bernardini and Danielle Vicus (not pictured) from our department

impacts of an enhanced universal immunohistochemistry program for Lynch Syndrome on the uptake of genetic testing and cancer incidence, (2) determine, for the first time, the frequency and characteristics of Lynch Syndrome in women with non-serous ovarian cancer, (3) determine age and sex-standardized incidence ratios of colorectal, endometrial and ovarian cancer in relatives of patients with mismatch repair-deficient tumours but no evidence of a pathogenic germline mutation or MLH1 methylation, and (4) model the cost-effectiveness of an enhanced genetic uptake program in women with endometrial and non-serous ovarian cancer.

To read more about the project, [click here.](#)

Resident Research Grant from PSI

Jason Elliott, a subspecialty fellow in REI, received a \$19,500 resident research grant from Physician Services Incorporated (PSI) for his project "Non-invasive genomic analysis of human endometrial receptivity in women with polycystic ovarian syndrome." Dr. Ellen Greenblatt is his supervisor for this project. Congratulations Jason, and keep up the good work!

Chair's Summer Studentship Program

As many of you know, last year, one of the new initiatives for the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology was the Chair's Summer Student Program. This program aims to empower the research capacity and productivity of our faculty members, while promoting training excellence and research exposure for students across the full breadth of the OBGYN specialty. The program encompasses the University of Toronto CREMS Summer Research Program as well as the Chair's Summer Student Award.

We are happy to announce that this program will be continued into a second year! For more information on how to apply, please visit our webpage at <http://www.obgyn.utoronto.ca/departement-obstetrics-and-gynaecology-chairs-summer-student-program>.



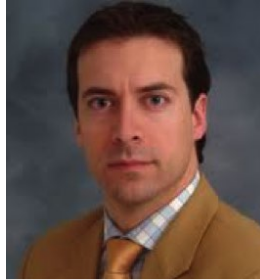
Dr. Rohan D'Souza with students from Summer 2015

Please note that there are several changes in the funding structure. Moving forward, the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology will fully fund ONE CREMS student for any faculty who is able to obtain a CREMS Summer Research Award. The faculty member will no longer be required to provide any matching funding.

For the Chair's Summer Student Award, the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology will fund up to \$3500 per award with a match requirement of \$1500 from the faculty member. Please note that all deliverables have to be met. The purpose of these changes are to encourage faculty members to fully leverage the CREMS program as well as to promote more research opportunities for University of Toronto trainees.

Faculty Appointments

Congratulations to **Dr. Marcus Bernardini**, who has been appointed as Head of the Division of Gynecologic Oncology at the combined MSH/UHN Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology effective October 1, 2015. Dr. Bernardini has an outstanding research and education track record and has received numerous department Research and Teaching awards. We are confident that with Dr. Bernardini's commitment to innovation and exemplary quality of care, the MSH/UHN Division of Gynecologic Oncology will continue to grow. ●



Dr. Marcus Bernardini

Dr. Allan Covens has been appointed as the Head of the Division of Gynaecologic Oncology, effective January 1st, 2016. Dr. Covens has been a significant part of our department for many years. He has been Division Head for the Odette Cancer Centre at Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre since 1992, and has played a major role in establishing a fellowship training program in Gynaecologic Oncology at Moi University, Eldoret in Western Kenya. Dr. Covens assumes this position at a time of exciting change in the Division of Gynaecologic Oncology via the addition of a third site at Credit Valley Hospital, Trillium Health partners, and the recruitment of several new junior faculty members.



Dr. Allan Covens

Congratulations to Dr. Covens! We wish him success as he takes on this important leadership role in our department. ●

Journal Covers

Two faculty members appointed to our department had their research projects featured on the front covers of their respective journals.

Congratulations to Dr. Ann Malinowski and the rest of the team whose research "Pheochromocytoma in a Pregnant Woman With Prior Traumatic Aortic Injury" is featured on the front cover of the November 2015 issue of Obstetrics and Gynaecology. You can read the case report on our website [here](#).



Faculty Awards

Our Faculty have distinguished themselves in many areas this year, including research and education.

Dr. Karen Glass won the Biljan Memorial Award at the Canadian Fertility and Andrology Society (CFAS) meeting in Halifax in October, 2015 for her abstract titled "Surgeon and Patient Oncofertility Knowledge Enhancement (SPOKE): a Baseline Qualitative Study of Canadian Breast Cancer Surgeons." As part of this award, Dr. Glass was given the opportunity to present at the next British Fertility Society (BFS) held in the United Kingdom in January.

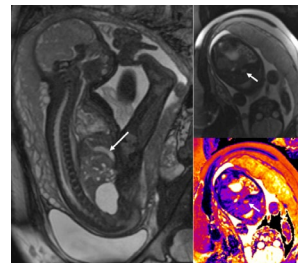


Dr. Glass receiving the Biljan Memorial Award

Dr. Glass was also honoured by the Fertile Future Charity for her work in the field of Oncofertility. She was honoured at their fundraising event "An Evening of Hope," which was held on October 29th, 2015.

Dr. Eliane Shore received the Best Oral Abstract in Gynaecology for her study "Validation of a Comprehensive Evidence-Based Laparoscopic Curriculum for Gynaecology Residents" at the SOGC meeting in June, 2015. ●

Dr. Mike Seed, who is cross-appointed to our department from SickKids, had his paper "MRI reveals hemodynamic changes with acute maternal hyperoxygenation in human fetuses with and without congenital heart disease" featured on the front cover of Prenatal Diagnosis.



Congrats to Dr. Malinowski, Dr. Seed, and everyone else involved in these studies! Making the front page of a journal is a huge accomplishment!

Faculty Profiles

In this section we feature some of our faculty members who have been very active in the past 6 months. We want to acknowledge their hard work and dedication.

Dr. Eliane Shore joins our Faculty as an Assistant



Dr. Eliane Shore

Professor in the Division of Minimally Invasive Gynaecology at St. Michael's Hospital. She completed medical school and residency at the University of Toronto, followed by a fellowship in minimally invasive surgery at St. Michael's Hospital and an MSc through the Institute of Medical Sciences. Her research interests include clinical gynaecology, simulation, and surgical education. Her research on validating a laparoscopy curriculum for gynaecology residents won the 2015 award for best oral abstract in gynaecology at the SOGC meeting in Quebec City.

Congratulations to **Dr. Modupe Tunde-Byass**, who recently received an Award for Excellence in preceptorship for the Family Nurse Practitioner Program from D'Youville College School of Nursing in Buffalo, New York. This program allows students to learn under the supervision of expert Nurse Practitioners and physicians, and includes preceptorships in paediatrics and women's health. Graduates are then able to become certified as a Family Nurse Practitioner. Dr. Tunde-Byass is an Assistant Professor in our department, and works at North York General Hospital, teaching medical students, residents, and obstetrics fellows. We look forward to seeing her new skills and knowledge integrated into her work in our department! ●



Dr. Modupe Tunde-Byass (left)

Senior Promotion

If you would like to be considered for a Senior Promotion, please contact our Academic Appointments and Promotions Administrator, Kristen Gane (kristen.gane@utoronto.ca), for more information. ●

Grow Your Knowledge and Your Practice with NASPAG

By Sari Kives

For clinicians interested in pediatric and adolescent gynaecology, the answer is the North American Society for Pediatric and Adolescent Gynecology's 30th Annual Clinical and Research Meeting. This year I am happy to be acting as Program Chair for this national meeting and it will be held in our great city on April 7-9, 2016.

This year's meeting offers a number of sessions and workshops that will provide practical information for the adolescent-focused practitioner. Workshops will cover professional and clinical topics such as providing care to transgender youth, dealing with early-onset puberty, body acceptance, managing ovarian masses, breast disease, challenging surgical cases as well as navigating academic promotion and developing a successful clinical practice.

Visit www.naspag.org to view the entire meeting program and register for the event. ●

Junior Promotions

Congratulations to Dr. Yolanda Kirkham and Dr. Dini Hui on being promoted this year from Lecturer to Assistant Professor!

Dr. Yolanda Kirkham practices at both Women's College Hospital and St. Joseph's Health Centre with subspecialization and research interests in Pediatric and Adolescent Gynaecology. She is the Quality Improvement lead at both sites and Assistant Site Coordinator of the Undergraduate Program at St. Joseph's Health Centre.



Dr. Yolanda Kirkham

Dr. Dini Hui practices at the Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre, and is part of the Maternal Fetal Medicine division in our department. She is also the Site Coordinator for the CBME program for MFM at Sunnybrook. ●

Spotlight on a Recent Grad

Dr. Heather Millar completed her residency training in Obstetrics and Gynaecology at UofT in June 2015. Shortly thereafter, she began a position through our department, which has given her the opportunity to fulfill a dream of hers – to live and work full time in a developing country as part of a program that is doing development work in a way that is sustainable, ethical, and is making a difference in women's lives. Heather is the current Reproductive Health Team Leader for the AMPATH Consortium in Western Kenya, a position that includes cross-appointments with the Moi University School of Medicine, Indiana University School of Medicine and the University of Toronto Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology.



Dr. Millar in her role as Health Team Leader

AMPATH, the Academic Model for Providing Access to Healthcare, is a consortium of North American universities working in partnership with the Moi University School of Medicine and the Moi Teaching and Referral Hospital (MTRH). AMPATH has successfully implemented HIV testing and treatment across western Kenya and has expanded its three pillars - care, education and research - to enact positive change across medical disciplines, primary care, microfinance, and community development programming. The University of Toronto Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology has been a partner in this consortium since 2007.

Heather's position includes clinical care as a staff Obstetrician/Gynaecologist in the Department of Reproductive Health at MTRH, supervision and teaching of North American and Kenyan medical students and residents and research and project management. She is co-supervising a Kenyan research team who are working on projects and programs focused on pre-eclampsia, cardiac disease in pregnancy, group B streptococcus, gestational diabetes, contraception, adolescent pregnancy, neonatal intensive care unit



Working in Kenya is definitely a unique experience!

outcomes, quality improvement in obstetrics/gynaecology, community-based antenatal care and early childhood parenting programming. With a group of Kenyan, Canadian and American collaborators in obs/gyn, paediatrics, and social sciences, she is also helping to develop an adolescent-specific sexual and reproductive health service.

In addition to this busy and exciting work, Heather is enjoying the opportunity to make new friends and see the beautiful country of Kenya. Along with previous visits to Kenya as a resident, she has gone on safari a number of times, has hiked in the Rift Valley, watched the sun set on the shores of Lake Victoria, eaten delicious Indian food in Eldoret, and relaxed near a campfire overlooking the Menengai Crater.

Life has been pretty good! ●

Awards

Aparna Sarangapani (PGY4) won Best Oral Presentation at the Association of Academic Professionals in Obstetrics and Gynaecology (APOG) conference for her presentation "Teaching patient and instrument selection for operative vaginal deliveries: assessment of trainee confidence, comfort, and knowledge after a video-based masterclass in second stage labour assessments." Other investigators include Andrea Simpson, John Snelgrove, Mary Higgins, Rory Windrim and Abeha Satkunaratnam

Hadar Rosen (MFM Fellow) won Best Oral Presentation at the APOG conference for her presentation entitled "Simulator Based Obstetric Ultrasound Training: A Prospective Randomized Single-Blinded Study." The team includes Stefania Ronzoni, Yee Man Lee, Lara Gotha, Sev Perelman, and Rory Windrim.

Congrats to Aparna and Hadar! They both did a great job of representing our department at the APOG conference. ●

The small (and big) things in life

Our faculty, trainees and staff lead busy lives outside of work as well! Here are some highlights.



Leah Margaret was born on September 2, 2015. Daughter of **Dr. Andrea Page** and Graham Slaughter and little sister for Owen and Henry.

Eliane Shore had a baby boy, Max Charles Jabes, on August 8, 2015. A lot has happened for Eliane in the last year! Congrats Eliane! We hope next year is as good as this last one!

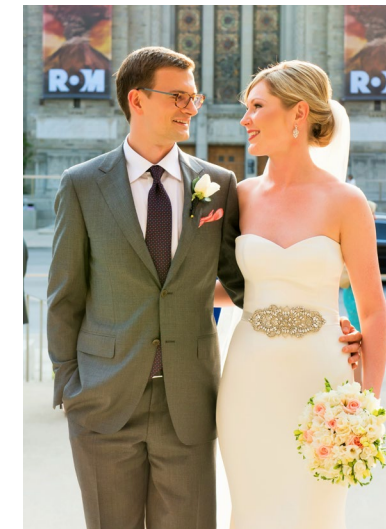
Tom Gotz, a Fellow in REI, had a baby boy Erik in October, 2015. Welcome to the OBGYN family Erik!

Lindsay Shirreff had her second son, Stuart, on November 25, 2015. They look adorable together. Congrats Lindsay!



Jessica Green had a baby boy named Gideon! He was born on September 16th, 2015.

Alison Shea gave birth to a baby boy named Alexander Charles Michael Whisler on September 23, 2015. Here's a picture of him from his newborn photoshoot!



Lynn Sterling married Daniel Faulkner on August 22, 2015, and they enjoyed a lovely honeymoon in Bali and Tokyo. Congratulations Lynn and Daniel!



We are settling into long nights and feeding frenzy full days with our new son, Peder Murray Christoffersen-Dick. He was born November 23rd, weighing in at 3330g. We got to the hospital at 16.30 and he emerged at 18.04. Suffice it to say, we are enchanted and enjoying this moment of honeymoon with him.

What is New in the Residency Program

Our PGY1s attended the new mandatory **Surgical Foundations Prep Camp** in July. All OBGYN residents performed well, and a number distinguished themselves. We can hold our own vs other surgical specialties!

In order to meet the revised Surgical Foundation Requirements, we developed **three new PGY1 rotations**: Anaesthesia, Pain Management, and Psychiatry: Perinatal Mental Health and Addiction / Life Changes. Residents are providing feedback as we tread into these new areas.

We have implemented **Daily Electronic Evaluation Forms (DEEFs)** effective September 28, 2015. As we are all aware, it is a challenge to provide regular, quality feedback to our residents. Steady resident progress toward competency relies on a robust feedback system. Direct observation methods remain the keystone for resident assessment. The "DEEF" provides the opportunity for regular feedback until the program transitions to a formal CBME model. The resident emails the link to their supervisor at the start of their clinical encounter whether in the OR, Labor Floor, On Call or Ambulatory Clinic setting. The supervisor completes the DEEF by the end of the encounter, enters an overall rating, evaluates 2 or 3 CanMEDS roles, and provides constructive formative feedback. The supervisor should review the completed form with the resident face-to-face before submitting the form. The acceptance of using this form/process will involve a culture change in the Department. We are seeing increased use of the DEEF, and trust this trend will continue. We are hoping to be able to identify the resident with challenges, and to positively influence their experience with early accommodation and coaching.

The Ultrasound rotation has become involved in CBME since November, 2015.

Santa visited our residents. All residents received the gift of Baskett's "Essential Management of Obstetric Emergencies." ●



Fellowship Update

Important information for anyone wanting to apply for a fellowship! As of August, 2015 our department implemented PGME's **Online Appointment Tracking System** (OATS) to process fellowship applications online. OATS is designed to centralize the management and approval of appointment documents for accepted Clinical/Research Fellowship (non-RCPSC) trainees only. The process begins after a trainee has accepted an offer from a fellowship program and ends when the PGME Office approves the appointment package (the appointment is then processed in POWER).

If you have any issues relating to OATS or would like to schedule training sessions, please contact Nathan Harrison (nathan.harrison@utoronto.ca), Systems Coordinator at PGME. ●



Undergraduate Update

In October, 2015, the Ob/Gyn 'HUB' was launched. This online teaching module for students contains information on topics that they are expected to encounter during their six-week clerkship rotation. The topics include cases, videos, images, articles, and guidelines. Many thanks to Dr. Rajiv Shah (Course Director), and students Michaela Mayer, Kaitlyn Carson, and Noelle Ma for assisting in the creation of this resource. We encourage all staff, residents, and students to check out the HUB at thehub.utoronto.ca/obgyn.

The Longitudinal Integrated Clerkship (LInC) program has expanded and is now being offered at all academies - FitzGerald, Peters-Boyd, and Wightman-Berris. Thanks to all those who were involved in this tremendous endeavour as it required a lot of work and dedication. Students are enjoying the longitudinal learning opportunity that they are experiencing.

As of December, 2015, The Scarborough Hospital-Birchmount Campus has started to offer a 3 week sub-rotation for Fitzgerald Academy students. We are delighted by the commitment of the TSH staff to undergraduate education and thank all those who helped make this opportunity a possibility! ●

New Initiatives in OBGYN QIPS

By Helen Robson

The GTA-OBS Network continues its work, publishing guidelines on screening in diabetes and planning a Delphi consensus meeting on the management of invasive placentation and a consensus meeting to standardize management of patients with a short cervix in pregnancy.

The QIPS Committee has communicated with Salus and MORE OB to join forces in pushing for the widespread adoption of this CME program in all hospitals in Ontario providing obstetric care.

The QIPS program continues to build capacity as physicians from affiliated university hospitals complete the University of Toronto C-QIPS certificate program and others complete the Masters degree in QIPS either at Queen's University or the University of Toronto. ●

Merit Award

The Merit Award Program is a new bi-annual initiative designed to provide clinical faculty, who have passed their 3-year review, with an opportunity to build upon their research expertise and achievements to date. Successful award winners will thereby be financially supported in order to prepare them for the important medium-term goal of successfully obtaining external peer-reviewed grant funding to pursue their research agenda on a long term basis. The award is only open to Clinically-appointed faculty members holding primary appointments in the Department of Obstetrics & Gynaecology.

Below is the timeline for the application process:

Application opening date – January 1, 2016
Application closing date – March 31st, 2016
Evaluation and Adjudication – April, 2016
Decision and notification – May, 2016
Commencement of Award – July 1, 2016

Applications should be sent to: Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, 123 Edward Street, Suite 1200, Toronto, ON, M5G 1E2 or via email to obgyn.research@utoronto.ca.

For more information [click here!](#) ●

Women's Health Scholar Program

The purpose of the Women's Health Scholar Program (WHS) at the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology is to provide excellent research training for

Obstetrics and Gynaecology residents who wish to pursue a career as a clinician investigator/clinician scientist. Resident trainees who are interested in a career as a clinician investigator/clinician scientist are encouraged to apply during PGY3 for entry into the program at the start of PGY4. Degree programs at UofT with a mandatory thesis requirement in the areas of biomedical research, clinical research, population health, health economics and policy, and social determinants of health are eligible.

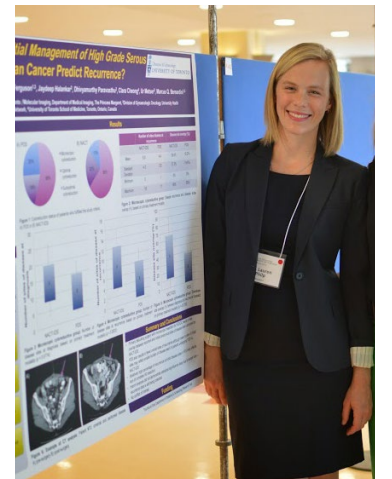
Application forms are due annually on **December 15th**. Applications should be sent via email to obgyn.research@utoronto.ca or by mail to Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, 123 Edward Street, Suite 1200, Toronto, ON, M5G 1E2.

For more information on this new program, visit [our website!](#) ●

GTA-OBS Network Update

The GTA-OBS network established itself in the minds of all Obstetric leaders in the GTA as the means for collaborative quality of care. The last 6 months has seen the progression of our network beyond that of a data platform, although this is still a valued and often requested metric, to at least two major quality intervention projects, research papers at international conferences, the subject of at least two major CIHR grant submissions and a Provincial Collaboration.

The new provincial collaboration is between the GTA-OBS Network, the BORN Ontario, and PCMCH, which has resulted in the GTA-OBS Network linking with two other provincial networks: the Champlain Maternal Newborn Regional Program and the Southwestern Ontario Maternal, Newborn, Child and Youth Network. Both networks share many of our interests and welcome the clinical research and physician input into many of our shared agendas. We are thankful to both Anne Sprague at the BORN and James Melloche at PCMCH for welcoming us and facilitating our integration into the provincial landscape.



Faculty Professional Development Day

By Filomena Meffe

The 2015 Faculty Professional Development Day, Enhancing Skills and Achieving Success, was held on November 11th at Vaughan Estates, and was attended by up to 100 faculty members. The day was aimed at optimizing our faculty members' knowledge and skills in their chosen areas of academic focus and included presentations and workshops on a broad range of topics. Dr. Joshua Tepper gave the opening lecture on quality improvement, entitled "Driving the Flywheel of Quality." A series of workshops followed: Simulation Scenario Writing (Drs. Bruce Ballon and Tatiana Freire-Lizama), Benefits and Challenges of Competency-Based Medical Education (Drs. Nicolette Caccia and Filomena Meffe), the Resident in Difficulty (Dr. Heather Shapiro), Publish or Perish (Drs. Ted Brown and Kellie Murphy), and Preparing for Successful Promotion (Dr. Avrum Gotlieb). The keynote lecture was given by Dr. David McKnight on faculty professionalism entitled "Professional Behaviour and the Learning Environment."



In addition to a fantastic lunch at the beginning of the event, three 15-minute networking breaks with refreshments were added throughout the afternoon to give faculty members the opportunity to catch up on both their professional and personal lives in between workshops. The event wrapped up with a reception and awards ceremony led by our Chair, Dr. John Kingdom, during which faculty members had another chance to connect while enjoying some tasty treats and a glass of wine. Faculty members who submitted an evaluation form at the end of the day were entered in the gift card raffle and the winner was Dr. Adrian Brown. Thanks to all of you who participated in evaluating the event!



The theme of our next Faculty Professional Development Day 2016 is faculty mentorship and wellness. The Faculty Professional Development committee is currently planning an exciting agenda. If you have any ideas for that day that you would like to share with us, please contact me at filomena.meffe@utoronto.ca. •

inSpeculum Art Night

The residents of the University of Toronto, led by Mathew Leonardi, held an innovative cervical cancer awareness event directed at Toronto's diverse refugee population. The initiative was called inSpeculum: An Art Exhibit for Cervical Cancer Awareness. During Cervical Cancer Awareness week, an "art meets education" event was held at the Christie Refugee Welcome Centre where women were given an interactive talk on cervical cancer and an opportunity to handle and decorate speculums.



The residents brought ample art supplies and guided the women in painting speculums with cytobrushes and decorating them with crafty items such as stickers, pompoms, feathers, and glitter. Fifteen women participated in this event. At its conclusion, the women and their families were invited to present their work at an Art Exhibit that was planned to further promote cervical cancer awareness. This was held at a venue in downtown Toronto and over 50 attendees joined us to celebrate the speculum art created by the refugee women.

The event was a huge success for both the residents and the women from the refugee centre, and we are so excited to be a part of this advocacy program! •



Matt Leonardi and the Squad

Junior Merit Award Dinner

The inaugural Junior Merit Award Dinner was held at Massey College on November 30th, 2015 to celebrate the achievements of six clinician-investigators, practising across the full spectrum of our Department. Congratulations to Drs. Marcus Bernardini, Anne Berndl, Crystal Chan, Rohan D'Souza, Taayma May, and Colleen McDermott!



Each year, two new junior faculty, or recently-appointed faculty, are given joint salary support awards for a 3-year duration, supported by the University Department and the faculty member's Hospital practice plan. •

Grad 2016

The Graduation Ceremony is one of our most significant and best-attended events! In 2015, we gathered at the University of Toronto's Hart House to celebrate the successes of our newly-minted specialists in Obstetrics & Gynaecology together with their colleagues completing clinical fellowships in our subspecialties. This year's grad ceremony will again be held at Hart House on June 23rd, 2016. Save the date!

[Check here](#) for updates about Grad! •



Our graduating residents at the 2015 Graduation Ceremony and Alumni Event

Other News

Staff, residents and fellows from Sunnybrook attended the AAGL (look up) meeting in Las Vegas in November, 2015. They presented 2 video posters, 1 video and 2 oral presentations. In attendance were Drs. Grace Liu, Rose Kung, Pat Lee, Pieter Kruger, Jamie Kroft, Leslie Po, Brian Liu, Adrienne Li, and Margaret Mene-gon. Additional congratulations to Dr. Kroft, who won a research award for her study! •



Sunnybrook residents, fellows and staff enjoying a nice steak dinner in Vegas!

Dr. Amanda Selk was invited to speak in India at AOGIN, the Asia Oceania HPV conference held in August, 2015. Her presentation was on vulvar terminology. She had a great experience at the conference, as well as seeing some of India with her 8 year old. •

Dr. Dan Farine became a member of the Academy of Perinatal Medicine in November, 2015. •

New Research Listserv

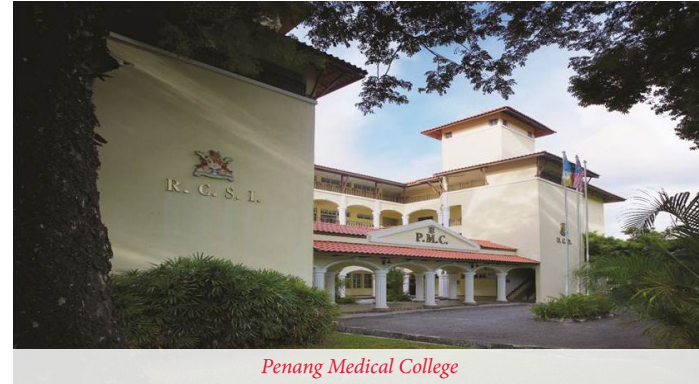
By Mark Yudin

I wanted to let you all know about an exciting new research endeavor that we are starting in our Department. We have created a departmental research listserv. The purpose of the listserv will be to encourage ongoing research conversation and collaboration across the city. People can post information about ongoing or upcoming studies needing enrolment, ideas for research projects, or anything research-related. Our hope is that this will help to foster better communication and collaboration at the different sites. •

A Former Chair in Penang

By **Knox Ritchie** (former chair, OBGYN)

I write this piece as I enter my fifth and, I have decided, final year in Penang. As many of you know, in 2011, I took up an appointment as head of OB/Gyn at Penang Medical College which is the top private medical school in Malaysia. It is jointly owned by the Royal College of Surgeons of Ireland and University College Dublin. There are now 150 medical undergrads a year and over 1,000 doctors have graduated since the College was established 20 years ago.



Penang Medical College

Penang is an island on the west coast of Malaysia just short of the border with Thailand. It has come a long way since Francis Light developed a duty free port there in 1785 on behalf of the British East India Company. It grew rapidly because of its location on the monsoon trade routes from India to China and everything from spices to opium passed through. The island attracted a large population of Chinese from Southeast China to work the tin mines on the mainland - later they began to own them! Also many Tamils came from Southeast India to work on the rubber plantations and to help administer the area while the local Malays mainly fished or farmed. Modern Penang (pop. 1.5 million) is a fascinating cultural mix with food to match. The fine old colonial architecture is steadily being restored and Georgetown is now an UNESCO World Heritage site.



Dawn over the Straits of Melacca, between Penang and Malaysia

Malaysia, with the same population as Canada, has been a very successful country since it got independence from Britain in 1965, who at the time threw in the Protectorates along the northern third of Borneo where most of the oil is. The majority of the population is Muslim (converted by the Arab traders in early days) and despite being governed since independence by the same party, it is surprisingly modern, progressive, tolerant and safe - so far.

Travelling in SE Asia is also very safe (the locals are very friendly and polite) and there is much to see. Five star hotels are reasonably priced and the service is superb. So far, we have managed to get to Myanmar, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Indonesia, Singapore, Hong Kong and China - and of course nearby Thailand. The area is a long way from Canada but well worth the effort because of its history and diverse cultures -- and very hard to leave.

Women's College Hospital Second Phase

By **Lisa Allen**

With the opening of the second phase of Women's College Hospital on September 28, 2015, the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology moved into the new building. The move provided dedicated and expanded clinic space and coincided with the introduction of a new electronic medical record, EPIC. Tremendous amount of change in a small amount of time.



AMPATH Exchange in Kenya

By **Nan Okun**

After 2 successful cycles of gynaecological oncology fellowship completions, we continue to develop and refine a curriculum for Maternal Fetal Medicine clinical fellowship training. This past year has seen the enthusiastic engagement of academic faculty at Moi University and we are actively engaging UofT faculty to participate in this partnered program to train skilled subspecialists in further improving pregnancy outcomes for high-risk pregnant women in Western Kenya. The goal is to recruit the first fellow in September, 2016. We need interested faculty in MFM, Obstetric Medicine, Anesthesia, neonatology, genetics, lab pathology, diagnostic imaging. Please contact Nan Okun (nokun@mtsina.on.ca) if you are interested.



Resident Testimonials

By **Michael Selter** and **John Snelgrove**

For six weeks in the Summer of 2015, we (John Snelgrove and Michael Selter) participated in the AMPATH exchange in Eldoret, Kenya. The exchange was a superb experience in international collaboration, education and research. Our experience working within a different health system was enlightening. As residents approaching the end of our training, we felt that the exposure to conditions and procedures that are less common in Toronto was extremely valuable. We were grateful for the experience and knowledge of the local midwives, nurses and physicians who taught us about the management of acute events in a setting very different from our own.



Furthermore, we enjoyed contributing to the education of junior trainees in Kenya. We were able to teach medical students and residents in the OR and labour and delivery on a daily basis. We also presented teaching rounds and lectures on a weekly basis. Other highlights included travel to satellite sites in rural communities as well as involvement in local research and outreach projects. Overall, the experience was enlightening and enhanced our understanding of women's health care within a global framework. We are so thankful for the hospitality and warmth we received from our Kenyan hosts.

If you would like more information on AMPATH, please [click here](#) to access the website and [here](#) to view the latest AMPATH newsletter.

Research Centre for Women's and Infants' Health (RCWIH) BioBank

We are delighted to share with the Department the exciting news that the Research Centre for Women's and Infants' Health (RCWIH) BioBank has moved into new, custom-designed clinical investigation labs on the 15th floor at Mount Sinai Hospital. These state-of-the-art facilities support the tissue collection program of the "placenta BioBank," which provides a critical link between patients with high-risk pregnancies and the researchers dedicated to understanding these complications.

Within the University Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, the RCWIH BioBank is a unique resource providing open access to perinatal specimens in support of Research Ethics Board approved research by investigators at UofT and beyond, nationally and internationally. Together with custom collection services, the BioBank's large and growing archive contains cases from all weeks of pregnancy. With over 8000 unique cases archived, the BioBank enables projects involving residents, fellows and graduate students to get off to a quick start. New users are welcome.

More information about our cost-recovery program is available at our website <http://biobank.lunenfeld.ca> or email us at biobank@lunenfeld.ca.



New Appointments and Recruits

Several new members have joined our hospitals as well as the Faculty of Medicine, University of Toronto. Here are the newest appointments and hospital recruits.



Dr. Alice Pham has joined our Department as an Assistant Professor, effective July 1, 2015. She will be practicing at St. Joseph's Health Centre, specializing in Minimally Invasive Surgery.

Dr. Elad Mei-Dan was appointed as Assistant Professor in the Department of Obstetrics & Gynaecology. He recently completed a fellowship in Maternal Fetal Medicine within our department, and will be joining the team at North York and Sunnybrook.

Dr. May ElHajj has been appointed as Lecturer effective August 1, 2015.

Dr. Heather Millar has been appointed as Adjunct Lecturer in our department as of October 1, 2015. She is a recent graduate of our residency program, and receives this appointment as part of her position as AMPATH Team Leader. You can read more about her on page 8.



Dr. Anne Walsh has been appointed as Lecturer, effective July 1, 2015.

Dr. Jing Qin has been appointed to Adjunct Lecturer. She specializes in Minimally Invasive Surgery, and is based out of the Birchmount campus of The Scarborough Hospital.

Dr. Eliane Shore has joined our Faculty as an Assistant Professor in the Division of Minimally Invasive



Gynaecology at St. Michael's Hospital. She did her residency in our department, followed by a fellowship in MIS and a MSc from the Institute of Medical Sciences.

Dr. Salikah Iqbal joins the Faculty as an Adjunct Lecturer effective August 1, 2015. A former resident, she practices at The Scarborough Hospital.

Dr. Matthew Laskin has joined our department at the rank of Lecturer, effective August 1, 2015. He practices Obstetrics at the Southlake Regional Health Centre in Newmarket.

Dr. Scot Hamilton has been appointed to the department as Lecturer.

Dr. Sarah Sinasac is now appointed as a Lecturer in our department, effective as of October 1, 2015.

Dr. Ambika Aneja joins the faculty as a Part Time Lecturer. Ambika recently finished a fellowship at McMaster University, and will be practicing at The Scarborough Hospital. ●

New Cross-Appointments

Welcome to Faculty of Medicine members who have joined our Department as cross-appointed members.



Dr. Adalsteinn Brown is the director of the University of Toronto Institute for Health Policy, Management and Evaluation, the Dalla Lana Chair in Public Health Policy, and the Head of the division of Public Health Policy at the Dalla Lana School of Public Health. His research interests include Public Health Policy and Outcomes and Evaluations of the health system.

Dr. Elena Kolomietz is a geneticist at Mount Sinai Hospital, where she is the Co-Head of the Division of Diagnostic Medical Genetics in the Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine, and is appointed as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Laboratory Medicine and Pathobiology at the University of Toronto. Her research focuses on using genomic technologies to study the causes of reproductive failure.



Dr. John Sled is an Associate Professor in the Department of Medical Biophysics and a researcher at the Mouse Imaging Centre of SickKids. His research interests include placental circulation and disorders, and how imaging can be used to study them. ●



Other News

UofT Ob/Gyn faculty and residents led the CME Forceps Training Curriculum at the recent SOGC Ontario CME Event held in Toronto December 3-5, 2015. Presenting the workshop were Drs. Abeha Satkunaratanam, Rory Windrim, Andrea Lausman, Sari Kives, Jon Barrett, Aparna Sarangapani and Andrea Simpson. ●

Changes to the Admin Team

Our team at 123 Edward has changed this year. We'd like to welcome our new additions!



Irisz joins our administrative staff as the Department Executive Assistant. She has already made significant contributions to our department, coordinating our Inter-hospital Rounds and organizing many events and meetings for our department among other things. Her energy and positivity foster a great atmosphere at 123 Edward.

Kristen Gane has taken on the role of Academic Appointments and Promotions Administrator. She joined us right during the busiest time of year for promotions, and was put right to the test. She showed her organization and adaptability, learning the systems quickly and conducting the promotions process efficiently. We are very fortunate that she has joined our team at 123 Edward.



Joe George has become our Fellowship Programs Coordinator and Assistant Residency Program Coordinator. Joe had previously been the Departmental Assistant, and he continues to be our unofficial department photographer. All our residents and fellows are familiar with Joe and the good work he has done for our department. Keep it up Joe! ●



Please submit entries for the next newsletter to obgyn.communications@utoronto.ca!



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*Photo credit: Khrystyna Levytska
Toronto Skyline*

