

**Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology**  
Faculty of Medicine, University of Toronto

# Ob/Gyn News



*Alan D. Bocking, MD, FRCSC Gordon C. Leitch  
Professor and Chair  
Obstetrics and Gynaecology*

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

July marks the end of another successful academic year for the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology and over the summer months, we now have the opportunity to rejuvenate ourselves. I hope that you enjoy reading this newsletter which highlights many of the accomplishments of our faculty, trainees and staff over the last six months.

I would like to welcome Arleen Morrin as our new Business Manager and Jeannette Moniz, Coordinator of Undergraduate Programs and congratulate Dr. Guylaine Lefebvre on her re-appointment as Chief of the Department of Ob/Gyn at St. Michael's Hospital. It was a privilege for me to have recommended five members of the Department for promotion this past year, all of whom have been received favourably by the Provost. (See page 6)

Shortly, on the heels of the Undergraduate Medical Education Accreditation, will be the External Review by the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada. The Royal College will be reviewing the Residency Training Program in Obstetrics and Gynaecology as well as our three subspecialty programs, Maternal-Fetal Medicine, Gynaecologic-Oncology and Reproductive Endocrinology and Infertility in April 2013. Much of the preparation is being done now through pre-survey questionnaires.

As many of you are aware, I will be stepping down as Chief of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology at Mount Sinai Hospital, University Health Network and Women's College Hospital, effective August 31 of this year. I will continue on as Chair until June of 2013. Dr. Mathew Sermer will be taking over as the Interim Chief while a search process begins. In preparation for the end of my second five-year term as Chair, the Department will undergo an External Review on October 4-5, 2012. I would like to thank all members of the Department and our Executive and staff, in particular, for all their hard work in preparing the quite comprehensive Self-Study documentation for this review.

I would also like to congratulate Drs John Kingdom and Andrea Jurisicova for their success in the recent CIHR operating grant competition. This is a very competitive time and an outstanding accomplishment on their part.

I would draw your attention to Paulina Cybulska's letter describing her involvement in the Clinical Investigator Program. We are very proud of Paulina and Crystal Chan, who has also just recently completed the CIP Program. Dr. Knox Ritchie has written a letter from Malaysia, where he is a Professor of Ob/Gyn in undergraduate education and we wish Knox well in this phase of his professional career.

Lastly, I will draw your attention to the notice on page 6 describing the plans for our Alumni 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration & Faculty Professional Development Day which will be a wonderful opportunity to reconnect with old acquaintances and to celebrate the accomplishments of the Department over 125 years. I look forward to seeing many of you there.

Have a safe and enjoyable summer and I look forward to seeing you in the fall.

Yours sincerely,

Alan Bocking

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## 29th Annual Research Day—May 4, 2012

The Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Research Day took place on Friday, May 4, 2012. There were 14 oral and 62 poster presentations by trainees from the Department, covering both basic and clinical work. There was also an informative and thought-provoking Henderson Lecture delivered by Patrick Catalano, MD, professor of reproductive biology in the Metro-Health Medical Center/Case Western Reserve University. His engaging topic was "Maternal Obesity and Pregnancy: Much Ado about Something."

### Award Recipients



From left, award recipients Kimberley Garbedian, Stéphanie Backman and Sascha Drewlo

The **2012 JW Knox Ritchie Research Awards** for best abstract/presentation by trainee category were awarded during the celebratory wine and cheese reception at the end of the day. The winners were:

**Clinical Fellow: Kimberley Garbedian** (Supervisor: Kimberley Liu). *The Impact of Vitamin D Status on Implantation and Clinical Pregnancy Rates Following In Vitro Fertilization*. Kimberley Garbedian, Miranda Boggild, Joel Moody, Kimberley Liu.

**Post-Doctoral Fellow: Sascha Drewlo** (Supervisor: John Kingdom) *The PPAR-agonist Rosiglitazone Reverses sFLT1 Hyper-secretion from First Trimester Placental Villi in a GCM1-Dependent Manner*. Sascha Drewlo, Fergus McCarthy, Khrystyna Levytska, Louise Kenny, John Kingdom.



From left, Henderson Lecturer, Dr. Patrick Catalano, Dean Catharine Whiteside and Dr. Boeking at Research Day 2012

**Resident: Stéphanie Backman** (Supervisor: Theodore J Brown) *Interleukin-1 $\beta$  (IL-1 $\beta$ )-Stimulated Inflammatory Gene Expression in Fallopian Tube Epithelial Cells is reversed by Glucocorticoids*. Stéphanie Backman, Alexandra Kollara, Carl Virtanen, Theodore J Brown.

**Graduate Student: Theresa Chow** (Supervisor: Ian Rogers) *Improved Survival of Umbilical Cord Derived Donor Cells in Bone Marrow Transplantation due to Trophocytosis*. Theresa Chow, Jennifer Whiteley, Ian Rogers.

**Student: Sarah Cao** (Supervisor: Andrea Jurisicova) *Role of Bim in Oocyte Survival*. Sarah Cao, Shakib Omari, Andrea Jurisicova.

Congratulations to all the winners. "Thank you" to all the participants, both oral and poster presenters, for their valuable contribution to the continued success of Research Day.

The **Frederick R. Papsin Award** was handed out at the event. Details on page 10.

Research Day photos on page 8

**SAVE THE DATE**  
**30<sup>th</sup> Annual Research Day**

**Friday, May 10, 2013**

## AWARDS, HONOURS, & ACHIEVEMENTS

Dr. **Guylaine Lefebvre** is the recipient of a **Queen's Jubilee Medal** for her work in women's health in Canada. She was awarded the **Enid Johnson MacLeod Award** from the Federation of Medical Women of Canada to be presented at the annual meeting in September. Dr. Lefebvre was re-appointed Chief of Ob/Gyn, SMH, for a two-year extended term to April 2014. In addition to her many recent accomplishments, she is Chair of the Search Committee for the SOGC. This committee oversees the process of governance and will be leading the search for executive leadership at the national office of the SOGC.

Dr. **Mark Yudin** was named Deputy-Head of the Department of Ob/Gyn, SMH, and is also the recipient of the **Fitzgerald Academy Education Award** for postgraduate teaching in the Dept of Ob/Gyn in 2011-12.

Two awards were given to members of our department at the 44th Annual Meeting of the Society for Obstetric Anesthesia and Perinatology in Monterey on May 2-5, 2012:

- 1) the **Gertie Marx Award** for *Carbetocin vs oxytocin: In vitro human myometrial contractions after oxytocin pre-treatment*. Naida Cole, Magda Erik Soussi, **Jose CA Carvalho**, **John Kingdom** and Mrinalini Balki, for best paper presented by a fellow or resident, and
- 2) the **Fred Zuspan Award** for *Carbetocin at elective cesarean delivery: a dose-finding study* (Suresh Anandakrishnan, Mrinalini Balki, **Dan Farine**, **Gareth Seaward** and **Jose CA Carvalho**).

The Fred Zuspan Award was given for best paper originating from the collaboration between obstetric anesthesia and obstetrics.

**CREOG National Faculty Award** — The recipient is selected by the PGY5 residents for promoting high standards of residency education in the field of obstetrics and gynecology. The recipient for 2011-12 is Dr. **Lisa Allen**.

### The Neelam Sierra Resident Advocacy Award

— This award is presented to an individual who has been an exceptional advocate for residents in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at the University of Toronto. The recipient is selected annually by the graduating residents, based on their consistent support for the residents throughout their training. For 2011-12, the residents selected Dr. **Art Zaltz**.



Dr. Zaltz at the Resident BBQ

Dr. **Tara Macleod** (TEGH) is the recipient of the 2012 Toronto East General Hospital **Residents Teaching Award**. She was presented the award at the staff and residents' appreciation dinner hosted by TEGH at the Sunnybrook Estates on June 4, 2012.

Dr. **David Chitayat** is the recipient of the University of Toronto Department of Pediatrics **Richard Rowe Award for Clinical Excellence** for 2012.

Dr. **Melisa Tai** (TEGH) completed her master's degree program in Clinical Epidemiology this year at the University of Toronto.

Dr. **Adrian Brown** (NYGH) received a master's certificate for completion of the OMA-CMA Physician Leadership Program at the Schulich School of Business in June 2012.



## DEPARTMENT NEWS

As the world changes, the Department changes along with it. Here are a few of the notable events we think you should know about.

Department Chair **Alan Bocking** will be stepping down as Chief of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology at MSH, UHN and WCH, effective August 31, 2012. Dr. Bocking will continue on in his role as Chair of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology at the University of Toronto until June 2013.

"It is remarkable how our university department has grown over the last five years with, virtually, a doubling of our faculty complement as well as the number of residents and fellows," says Dr. Bocking.

"Our community-affiliate sites have expanded and the overall complexities of the university department have lead to my decision to step down from the chief's role," he said.

Dr. **Mathew Sermer**, associate chief of Ob/Gyn at MSH will step in as Interim Chief at the three hospitals during the search for Dr. Bocking's replacement.

Dr. **John Kingdom** becomes the Head of the Division of Maternal-Fetal Medicine, U of T, on July 1, 2012, replacing outgoing division head, Dr. **Dan Farine**.

Dr. Bocking extends his appreciation to Dr. Farine for his many contributions in this role over the years.



**Arleen Morrin** joins the department as the new Business Manager. Arleen comes to us from George Brown College and has very rapidly adapted to the U of T environment. Welcome Arleen.



**Jeannette Moniz** is the new Undergraduate Program Coordinator. Jeannette has joined us from the Department of Medicine at Mount Sinai Hospital and brings to this role an already robust knowledge of the Faculty of Medicine programs.



*Incoming Residency Program Director (RPD) Dr. Donna Steele (right, seated) beside outgoing RPD, Dr. Heather Shapiro, with 92 College staff*



*Above, a surprise for Dr. Shapiro during her final RPC meeting*

Dr. **Heather Shapiro** is the inaugural Vice-Chair of Education, effective March 1, 2012. In this new role, Dr. Shapiro is responsible for overseeing the Fellowship Programs as well as serving as a resource for educational scholarship activities across the department. Her former role as Residency Program Director is now being filled by Dr. **Donna Steel**.

"Many thanks to Heather for her 10 years of exemplary service," says Chair Alan Bocking.

Dr. Shapiro was recognized for her tremendous contribution to postgraduate medical education by the department at the recent Resident BBQ and with a luncheon by the staff at 92 College.

At these events, a warm welcome was extended to Dr. Steele.

## INTER-HOSPITAL NEWS & EVENTS

### Mount Sinai Hospital

**The Joseph and Wolf Lebovic Health Complex** opened six new floors, 130,000 sq. ft. of space, which will primarily house programs from the Frances Bloomberg Centre for Women's and Infants' Health. The new Mother-Baby Floors, 16th and 17th floors, of the Murray Wing have opened and the administrative offices have moved to the 19th floor.

Dr. **John Kingdom** is the new Head of the Division of Maternal-Fetal Medicine.



*David and Stacey Cynamon  
Mother & Baby Unit, MSH*

### St. Michael's Hospital

Dr. **Sari Kives** will become the department's Postgraduate Site Coordinator at SMH starting in October 2012. She also received a promotion to associate professor this year.

Dr. **Rajiv Shah** completes his first of two years as President of the Medical Staff Association of SMH, a group of over 650 physicians. Dr. Shah will become the department's Coordinator for Undergrad Education, SMH, in October 2012.

Dr. **Andrea Lausman** was re-appointed as the Head of Labor and Delivery at SMH.

### Toronto East General Hospital

Dr. **Anjali Aggarwal** replaces Dr. **Melanie Ornstein** as Resident Coordinator, effective August 1, 2012. Dr. Ornstein brought a lot of positive changes and energy to the residents' training program at the site and we will dearly miss her. Thank you to Dr. Ornstein for an excellent job for TEGH, Ob/Gyn and the university for the past 10 years in this role.

## ALUMNI CORNER

*Dr. Alan D. Bocking, Chair, Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology &  
Dr. Adrian RH Brown, Chair, Alumni Council, Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology*

*Cordially invite Alumni, faculty & friends of the department to join in the*

## OBGYN 125th Anniversary Celebration & Faculty Professional Development Day

**November 7, 2012—12-noon to 10 PM**

at the Vaughan Estate at the Estates of Sunnybrook  
2075 Bayview Avenue, Toronto, ON M4N 3M5

For more information, please contact us at obgyn.deptadmin@utoronto.ca / 416-978-2668

## PROMOTIONS

Our sincere congratulations to the following individuals for the recognition of their academic contributions over a number of years. The following five faculty members were promoted to **Associate Professor**, effective July 1, 2012:

**Dr. Adrian Brown** (NYGH)  
**Dr. Elaine Herer** (SHSC)  
**Dr. Sari Kives** (SMH)  
**Dr. Michael Sved** (MSH)  
**Dr. Arthur Zaltz** (SHSC)

*"I would like to thank  
Dr. John Kingdom, Chair of the  
Promotions Committee for  
his contribution to this  
important process."*

*A. Bocking*

## NEW FACULTY APPOINTMENTS

### PRIMARY APPOINTMENTS IN OB/GYN

#### Assistant Professor

Dr. Xuesen Dong, Status-Only (Non-MD) (Vancouver Prostate Centre, UBC)

#### Adjunct Lecturer

Dr. Jevan Ko (Scarborough)  
Dr. Asha Kurup (Scarborough)  
Dr. Michael Silver (Scarborough)

#### Lecturer, Part-Time

Dr. Erica Mantay (Southlake)  
Dr. Peter Watt (Southlake)  
Dr. Lynne Zolis (NYGH)

### CROSS APPOINTMENTS

#### Professor

Dr. Jack Colman (Department of Medicine)

#### Assistant Professor

Dr. Rachel Wald (Department of Pediatrics)



## RESEARCH CORNER

RD 2012

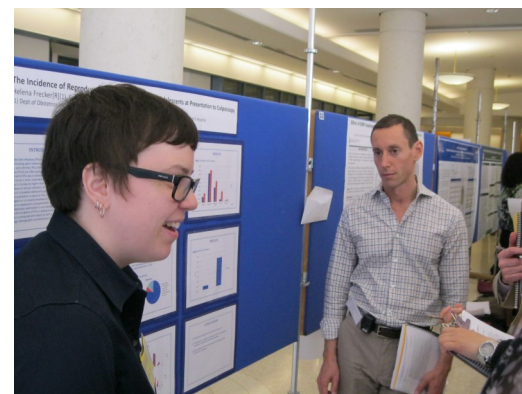
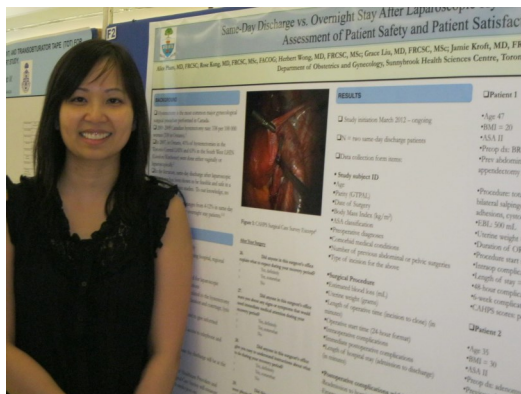
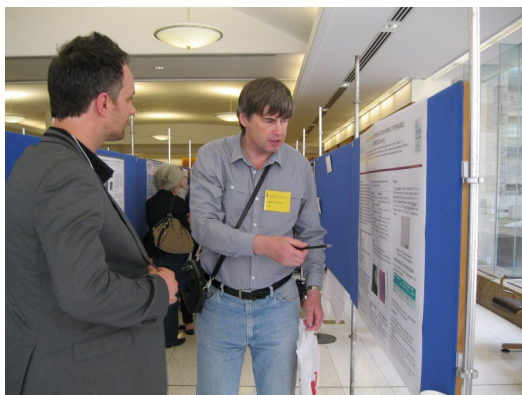
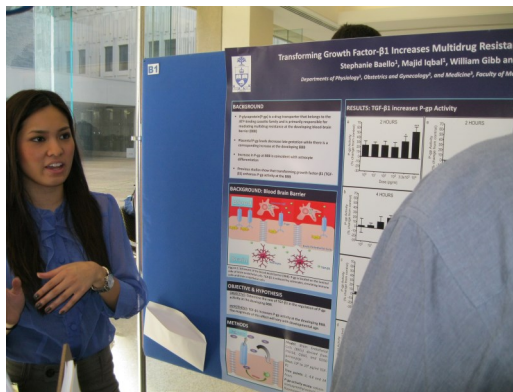
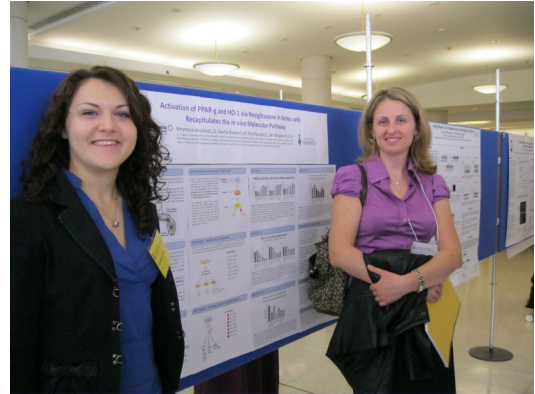


Women living  
• Almost 20 million women  
• 15,000 in Canada  
• > 80% are childbearing age  
• 25% risk of vertical transmission (treatment)





RD 2012





## Grants

### CIHR Research Grants to Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology Faculty

Announced July 2012

**Feig, Denice S (PI)**; Armson, Brian A, Asztalos, Elizabeth V, Fantus, Ivan G, Hamilton, Jill K, Haqq, Andrea M, **Lee, Shoo K**, Lipscombe, Lorraine, **Murphy, Kellie E**, **Ohlsson, Arne**, **Ryan, Edmond A**, Tomlinson, George A, Zinman, Bernard (CIs). MiTy Kids (Metformin in Women with Type 2 Diabetes in Pregnancy Kids Trial). Operating Grant, CIHR, \$1,299,072, 2012 – 2018.

**Juriscova, Andrea (PI)**. Mcl-1 as a regulator of ovarian reserve. Operating Grant, CIHR. \$708, 613, 2012 – 2017.

**Kingdom, John C (PI)**, COX, Brian J (CI). Placental Response to Heparin: Implications for the Prevention of Pre-eclampsia. Operating Grant, CIHR, \$521,660, 2012 – 2016.

Liu, Geoffrey (PI); Kim, Richard B, Mackay, Helen J, Marsh, Sharon, **Oza, Amit M**, Xu, Wei (CIs). The Pharmacogenetics of Bevacizumab: A Companion Correlative Study of the Ovarian Cancer Clinical Trial, ICON7. Operating Grant, CIHR, \$390,342, 2012 – 2015.

**Narod, Steven A, Murphy, K. Joan (PIs)**; Cheung, Angela M; Finch, Amy P; Harvey, Paula J; **Rosen, Barry P**. The effect of prophylactic salpingo-oophorectomy on markers of health in women who carry a BRCA mutation. Operating Grant, CIHR, \$382,243, 2012 – 2015.

Retnakaran, Ravi R; Connelly, Philip W; Hanley, Anthony J; **Sermer, Mathew**; Zinman, Bernard (PIs). Postpartum Progression to Type 2 Diabetes in Women with Recent Glucose Intolerance in Pregnancy: Pathophysiology, Biomarkers, and Clinical Implications. Operating Grant, CIHR, \$685,470, 2012 – 2017.



RD 2012

## RESIDENT & FELLOWS' CORNER

### Congratulations to our 2012 Graduates!



*From left, Drs Mara Sobel, Claire Jones, Susie Pakenham, Dan Nayot, Siobhan Mark, Kalpana Sharma, Beth Cruickshank, Karthika Devarajan*

CONGRATULATIONS to our Obstetrics and Gynaecology year-5 residents on their successful completion of the recent Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada certification exams. We wish them well in their future endeavours.

**Beth Cruickshank  
Karthika Devarajan  
Claire Jones  
Siobhan Mark  
Dan Nayot  
Susie Pakenham  
Kalpana Sharma  
Mara Sobel**

We extend our appreciation to our faculty members who helped to prepare our residents, throughout their training, for this very important milestone in their academic careers.

### AWARDS for Trainees—congratulations!

**Helena Frecker** was awarded a **Resident Teacher Award** by the Fitzgerald Academy in June 2012 in recognition of her passion, enthusiasm and sustained excellence for teaching and support of undergraduate medical students.



*From left, Papsin Award winner Karthika Devarajan, Dr. Heather Shapiro and Eliane Shore, the 2011 recipient of the Papsin Award*

The **Frederick R. Papsin Award**, given to a postgraduate resident in their final year of training, based on teaching ability, mentorship activities and leadership, as chosen by peers, was awarded to **Karthika Devarajan**. Congratulations Karthika.

**Resident Awards for Excellence in Clerkship Teaching** — PGY3, 4 and 5 residents are recognized for exceptional clerkship teaching. The Residency



*Claire Jones gives Dr. Zaltz a congratulatory hug while Siobhan Mark hands him a certificate for the Neelam Sierra Award for Advocacy at the Resident BBQ*

Program Director, in consultation with the Educator, Department Chair, and the Undergraduate Program Director makes the selection. The selection is primarily based on teaching ratings provided by the year-3 clinical clerks at the completion of their core rotation in Ob/Gyn. Recipients were **Priya Sharma** (PGY3), **Lami Oyewumi** (PGY4), and **Mara Sobel** (PGY5).



*Beth Cruickshank (l) and Susie Pakenham (r) give a gift to Dr. Thomas in appreciation for all the work she puts into preparing the PGY5s for the Royal College exams*

## RESIDENT & FELLOWS' CORNER CONT'D

### 2012-13 Incoming Residents

July is the time of year where we welcome our new PGY1s to the department. We have 13 PGY1 residents who come to us from coast to coast as well as from international homes. We will be celebrating them at a welcome reception in September.

We welcome the following individuals to the Residency Program, July 1, 2012:

Nasser Abu Awad  
Marie Coroneos  
Lara Gotha  
Lacey Harding  
Ingrid Lai  
Mathew Leonardi  
Pamela Liao  
Carmen McCaffrey  
Chaula Mehta  
Julie Nguyen  
Kirsten Niles  
Aparna Sarangapani  
Lynn Sterling



Dahlia Jane Mooney was born on June 15th, weighing 8lbs, 4oz. Her older brother Charlie is wondering when she'll be interested in playing with his John Deere tractors. Mom **Melanie Campbell** (PGY4) and dad would like to thank **Dr. Herer** and the rest of

the staff at Sunnybrook for providing such excellent care!



Welcome, baby **Sarah Sobel**.

### AWARDS for Trainees Cont'd

**Crystal Chan** (supervisor: Dr. Ellen Greenblatt) was awarded a \$20,000 Physicians' Services Incorporated Foundation grant for her research project, *Non-invasive genomic analysis of human endometrial receptivity*, which looks at ways to "develop a non-invasive technique to obtain cells from the lining of the uterus in order to identify factors that are important in uterine receptivity".

**Paulina Cybulska** (supervisors: Dr. Benjamin Neel & Marcus Bernardini) is the recipient of the \$3,000 **Kristi Piia CALLUM Memorial Fellowship in Ovarian Cancer Research** as well as a \$17,000 **Frank Fletcher Memorial Fund for Research** award toward finding the cause and cure for cancer. Both awards are given out by the Ontario Student Opportunity Trust Fund in the Faculty of Medicine. Her project, *Ovarian Cancer Xenografts: Can We Predict Patients' Response to Chemotherapy?*, will "test whether the xenograft's response to therapeutic agents parallel the clinical response observed in patients".

### Congratulations to the brides & bride-to-be:

- **Jing Qin** got married on May 5, 2012 to Jake Tan and enjoyed a wonderful honeymoon in Hawaii.
- **Emily Baker** got married to her husband Vern on June 23. They are honeymooning in Brazil!
- **Laura Sovran** is getting married to Ryan Matthews on October 27, 2012 in Windsor, Ontario.



## RESIDENT & FELLOWS' CORNER CONT'D

### On the Road to Becoming an Investigator: My first week as an MSc

by Paulina Cybulska



*Paulina (PGY3) even has time to hike  
the Grand Canyon.*

If the words: 'NOD/SCID/IL2R-/- mice', 'glycosylation-sensitive epitope', and 'expression of WT1 and CK7' don't mean too much to you, then welcome to my first week as a master's student!

One of the main reasons that I chose the University of Toronto to do my residency in obstetrics and gynaecology, was the well-developed and well-supported ability to pursue a graduate degree during the residency program. Through the Clinician Investigator Program (CIP), I am able to step away from clinical duties (or at least 80 per cent of them), to pursue basic science research.

Many people, particularly my new lab colleagues, ask me, "why would you want a master's degree if you're already an MD?" Excellent question – and certainly one that I was asked at my interview with the Institute of Medical Science. The question is best answered when I ask myself, "How do I envision my career in the next 5-10 years?"

My dream would be work as a gynecologic-oncologist, ideally in an academic centre, sharing my time between research and clinical work. There is no better way to support this goal than by pursuing a graduate degree; it will keep me informed, interested and innovative. And, by pursuing a graduate degree while in residency, I can really tailor my research to an area of science that I'm passionate about: oncology.

But, while pursuing a graduate degree certainly seems like the right decision, it comes with HUGE adjustments:

- 1) no one needs to know where you are at all times (if you don't show up for rounds at 7am, someone will be paging you);
- 2) you are (fairly) independent (no one makes your schedule or tells you when you need to be in the lab – you just have to make sure the work gets done!) and
- 3) you actually (in general) have time to pee, have lunch and maybe even work out! Sounds like a fairly 'normal' life.

My first week in the lab can be compared to being a first year medical student on the ward: lost, confused and feeling useless. Thankfully, the terrific graduate students are showing me much more patience than I ever showed the poor medical students. Currently, I'm still in the process of figuring out what a NOD/SCID/IL2R -/- mouse is, how it's made and how it will help me to 'cure cancer'. I can't reveal too much more because my supervisor's first rule is: Trust no one. Don't you just love science?

Printed in the winter 2012 issue of *Progress Notes*, PAIRO's newsletter

## UNDERGRADUATE NEWS

### Accreditation

This past six months have been highlighted by the accreditation process for the Faculty of Medicine Undergraduate Medical Education (UME) Program under the leadership of UME Director Filomena Meffe, Professional Educator Katherine MacRury, and members of our UME Committee.

By all indicators, it appears that the Faculty fared well and that there will be a full report forthcoming in the fall.

### Integrated OSCEs

Examiners from our department are required for the integrated OSCE on August 27 and 28. If you are interested in becoming an examiner, please contact Jeannette Moniz at [obgyn.ug@utoronto.ca](mailto:obgyn.ug@utoronto.ca).

A detailed schedule will be made available closer to the exam date.

### Mandatory Observed History and Pelvic Exams

Starting with the May 2012 clerkship rotation, it is now mandatory for third-year students to have completed an *observed history and pelvic examination evaluation form* by the end of the obstetrics and gynecology rotation in order to fulfill the requirements of the course.

### Mississauga Update

In 2012-13, we are doubling the number of students doing a two-week sub-rotation at the Mississauga Campus to eight per rotation; two students per site during weeks 2-3, and another two during weeks 4-5.

Video-conferencing of seminars will be expanded to four weeks, from two, in order to facilitate student seminar program attendance.

Plans are underway to organize a fully-independent obstetrics and gynecology clerkship at the Mississauga Campus for the 2013-14 academic year that will accommodate a total of 54 students (nine per rotation).

## GLOBAL HEALTH

### *Greetings from Penang!*



by Dr. Knox Ritchie

As some of you know, I accepted the position as Head of Ob/Gyn at Penang Medical College for two years and started in January this year.

I must admit I had to look up exactly where Penang is - so for those of you in the same boat, it is an island in the north-west of the Malaysian peninsula about 100 km south of the Thailand border.

Malaysia obtained its independence from the U.K. in 1967 and has had a pro-western stable government since then. The population is just short of Canada's and it is culturally very diverse - it's just like being in Toronto!

The main groups are Malay, Chinese and Indian but, unlike the rest of Malaysia, the majority in Penang are Chinese, lending it a very business-like approach to life.

The former Sultans adopted Islam so the country is Islamic but everything else is here too: Buddhism, Hinduism, Christianity, etc., and all seem to get along well.

There was considerable economic growth in the 1990s based on oil but there has been wealth here in the past based on tin, rubber and palm oil (if you remember your geography!).

Penang Medical College was set up in Penang by the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland 15 years ago as a private undergraduate program awarding an Irish university medical degree which is overseen by the Irish Medical Council. The college now has a high ranking in Malaysia.

We have 120 students per year and 30 come for Ob/Gyn teaching for eight weeks in their final year.

I do a fair amount of teaching - bedside, tutorials and lectures - and set their exams. The students get 50 MCQ questions, four short essays and 10 OSCE stations at the end of their rotation worth 20 percent and then have to do that all over again in another exam at the end of final year worth 80 percent. So they are rigorously examined but all are keen since they are paying quite a bit to be here.

The students spend two-and-a-half years in pre-clinical studies in Dublin and then get their two-and-a-half years of clinical education here in Penang - I think I would pay a fair bit for that too!

Best wishes to all,

Knox Ritchie





**REGISTER NOW:** [www.obgyn.utoronto.ca/divisions/mfm/Perinatal.htm](http://www.obgyn.utoronto.ca/divisions/mfm/Perinatal.htm)

We are very excited to start off the program with the “**Preeclampsia Research Symposium: Heterogeneity & Progress Towards Personalized Biomarkers of Disease**”. The symposium will be on November 14<sup>th</sup>. It will be an all day event with a cast of fabulous national and international speakers, including **Dr. Asif Ahmed** and **Dr. Ananth Karumanchi**.

On November 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>, we'll turn the stage over to our trainees for oral and poster presentations. This year the program will also feature three short talks by local investigators researching important questions in fetal, placental, maternal, and neonatal medicine using a variety of basic and clinical approaches. We look forward to a great mix of clinical and basic research, covering all aspects of “perinatal”. We encourage all clinical and basic science trainees to get ready to **submit your abstracts by October 9th, 2012**.

All are welcome.

Program Chair: S. Lee Adamson, PhD

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Sept 7, 2012

**U of T OBGYN Interhospital Rounds: New Cervical Screening Guidelines**

Speaker: Dr. Joan Murphy

Location: Mount Sinai Hospital, 18th Fl Auditorium  
7:45 AM to 8:45 AM

[www.obgyn.utoronto.ca/cme/IHRounds](http://www.obgyn.utoronto.ca/cme/IHRounds)

Sept 27-29, 2012

**Investing in Mothers and Children: Developmental Trajectories, Health, Learning and Society**

Connaught Global Challenge International Symposium to mark the official opening of the Fraser Mustard Institute for Human Development

For more information, visit:

[www.investinginmothersandchildren.ca](http://www.investinginmothersandchildren.ca)

Oct 12, 2012

**U of T OBGYN Interhospital Rounds**

Speaker: TBC

Location: Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre, Harrison Hall, EG21

7:45 AM to 8:45 AM

Nov 2, 2012

**U of T OBGYN Interhospital Rounds**

Speaker: Dr. Donna Steele

Location: St. Michael's Hospital, Paul Marshall Lecture Theatre

7:45 AM to 8:45 AM

Nov 7, 2012

**OBGYN 125th Anniversary Celebration & Faculty Professional Development Day**

12-noon to 10 PM

at the Vaughan Estate at the Estates of Sunnybrook, 2075 Bayview Avenue, Toronto, ON M4N 3M5

For more information, please contact us at

[obgyn.deptadmin@utoronto.ca](mailto:obgyn.deptadmin@utoronto.ca) / 416-978-2668

Nov 14-16, 2012

**36th Annual Eastern Canadian Perinatal Investigators Meeting & Preeclampsia Research Symposium**

Li Ka Shing Knowledge Institute, 209 Victoria St., SMH

[www.obgyn.utoronto.ca/divisions/mfm/](http://www.obgyn.utoronto.ca/divisions/mfm/)

[Perinatal.htm](http://Perinatal.htm)

Dec 7, 2012

**APOG/Cannell Lecture**

Speaker: Dr. Thomas Basket

Location: Marriot Hotel, Eaton Centre

7:45 AM to 8:45 AM

May 10, 2013

**SAVE THE DATE—Research Day 2013, Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology**

**Send your submissions and feedback to Cheryl Bird.**

Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Faculty of Medicine, University of Toronto

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