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Issue 22 ~ ObGyn Winter Newsletter
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Wendy Wolfman was the Marlow Lecturer at this year's SOGT Toronto Meeting. She is pictured above with Harold Drutz, head of Urogaenecology.

Our department was well represented at the SOGC meeting in Vancouver. We had a faculty member, a resident, and an undergraduate student (supervised by one of our faculty) win awards at the meeting. Congrats to the winners who did a great job representing our Department!

Dr. Modupe Tunde-Byass travelled to the UK to present her research at the BCOG world conference in Birmingham.

Our residents enjoyed themselves at the Resident Retreat. They went to an escape room and enjoyed a meal together at the restaurant Joey's.

Dr. Barbara Cruickshank retired from our Department this year. We’re sad to lose such an accomplished physician from our ranks. We wish Barb all the best.

We had 2 CIHR team grants awarded to groups led by members from our Department. Congratulations to both groups!

Dr. Jodi Shapiro, Sari Kives and Herb Wong travelled to Guatemala recently as medical volunteers. Thumbs up to all three of them for lots of OR work!

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

Promote our presence!
Use #UofTOBGyn when posting messages and updates about the Department on social media channels.

My best wishes to you all,
John Kingdon
Gordon C. Leitch Chair

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Now you can follow us!
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To have your story included in the next newsletter, contact us at obgyn.communications@utoronto.ca.
Chair’s Summer Studentship Program

This year was the second iteration of our Chair’s Summer Studentship Program, a departmental initiative to provide research funding to faculty members while also facilitating research exposure for students. This year we had 9 successful applicants for the Chair’s Summer Student Award, as well as 5 successful applications to the CREMS Summer Research Program. Congratulations to all the recipients! Below is a list of the faculty and student pairs. Their projects will be featured in our departmental annual report, so be sure to look there to read about their experiences! ●

CREMS
• Dr. Clifford Librach – Annie Qu
• Dr. Prati Sharma – Amanda Billargeon
• Dr. Crystal Chan – Yiwen Liu
• Dr. Amanda Selk – Michal Sheinis
• Dr. Ally Murji – Cassandra DeGasperis

Chair’s Summer Student Award
• Dr. Lisa Allen – Katherine Steckham
• Dr. Rohan D’Souza – Vanessa Nguyen
• Dr. Rohan D’Souza – Danielle Wuebbolt
• Dr. Tomer Feigenberg – Rashida Williams
• Dr. Ann Malinowski – Jacqueline Parrish
• Dr. Kelle Murphy – Hossam Furmli
• Dr. Amanda Selk – Emily Landon
• Dr. Wendy Wolfman – Amara Mathews

Two CIHR Team Grants

In the most recent cycle of grant applications, two groups from our department received CIHR team grants.

Congratulations to Drs. Howard Berger, Nir Melamed, Jon Barrett and Michael Geary who were successful in the Spring 2016 CIHR Clinician-Investigator Team Grant for Obstetrics and Maternal-Fetal Medicine. Drs. Berger (St. Michael’s Hospital) and Melamed (Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre) are the UofT site PIs for this project entitled “Non-communicable diseases in pregnancy.” They are joined by Dr. Beth Murray (a Midwife) and Dr. Sarah McDonal from the department of OBGYN at McMaster University. The grant includes University and Hospital Departmental institutional funding, matched equally with CIHR, resulting in a total budget of $1.5M over 5 years.

Dr. Clifford Librach and Dr. Sergey Moskovtsev are both part of the team which received a CIHR Team Grant for their project: Developmental Origins of Health and Disease – Implications for Men, Women, Boys and Girls. The grant is a 5-year grant for a total of $1,600,000. Pictured are Drs. Moskovtsev and Librach, the key investigators from UofT who work at the CREAtE fertility centre, along with Dr. Hope Weiler (the Canada Research Chair in Nutrition, Development and Aging) and Dr. Sarah Kimmins (the Canada Research Chair in Reproduction, Development and Epigenetics), both from McGill. Congratulations to Dr. Librach, Dr. Moskovtsev, and the team!

Congratulations to both groups! These grants are significant accomplishments and highlight the research potential of our department. ●

Research Presented at SOGC Vancouver

Michal Sheinis, a medical student who just finished second year at UofT, presented 2 abstracts (1 oral and 1 poster) from her work with Dr. Amanda Selk last summer at the SOGC meeting in Vancouver in June. Michal also was selected for the CREMS Summer Research Program to work with Dr. Selk again this summer. Congrats Michal! ●

PSI Grant Success

Dr. Han Keunen (pictured here on the left) and Dr. Mike Seed recently had a major grant success, receiving $120,000 over 2 years from Physician Services Inc (PSI) Ontario, for their pioneering work together using MRI “oximetry” to define blood flow and oxygen delivery to the human fetus in various situations where the fetus is at risk of anaemia or hypoxia, such as in rhesus disease or twin-twin transfusion syndrome. The grant builds on a series of successes by Mike Seed, an international leader in advanced MRI methods in pregnancy, who was cross-appointed to OBGYN in 2015. This success is a great example of how a small collaboration between interested clinicians can grow into a ‘grant success’. Well done chaps! ●

Women’s Health Scholar Program

The Women’s Health Scholar Program is designed to provide research training opportunities for residents who wish to pursue a career as a clinician investigator or 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. For those interested, application forms are due December 15th. For more information on the program and how to apply, visit our website!

A Masters and a Publication

Dr. Elyse Lackie has recently returned to Toronto after her year away doing an MPH at Columbia University, NYC. Building on this success, Elyse had her paper, titled “The Birth Control Pill, Thromboembolic Disease, Science and the Media: A Historical Review of the Relationship” published online in the journal Contraception.

UofT achievements at the national summer 2016 SOGC meeting in Vancouver

By Jon Barrett

This year’s annual SOGC meeting was an outstanding event.

Two years ago the SOGC changed the mandate to emphasize the “science of our specialty”. In addition to the traditional roles of education and production of clinical practice guidelines, it was felt that the organization should reflect and promote science and research in the specialty. The name of the annual conference name was changed from Annual Clinical Meeting Meeting (ACM) to Annual Clinical and Scientific Conference (ACSC). In addition, a scientific Director was appointed to the SOGC, Dr. Jocelynn Cook, who brings a long and established research, academic, government and CIHR history to the meeting and to the Society.

All those who attended ACSC 2016 were aware of a change in the meeting content; the quality of the abstracts presented were world-class with excellent keynote lectures by international faculty on pre-term birth, the microbiome and the effect of environmental toxins on reproductive outcomes, to name a few.

Congratulations to the SOGC for meeting the needs of both the clinical and scientific community, and a special congratulation to UofT members of our Department, Dr. Elad Mei-Dan (NYGH) and the Research team at Sunnybrook for winning both an oral and a poster prize and to Marta Wais for best trainee oral presentation. Here’s to ACSC 2017 in Ottawa! ●

Best Poster at ISPD Berlin

Dr. Nimrah Abbassi has won a best poster prize for her research entitled “Microarray abnormalities in prenatally diagnosed omphaloceles” at the International Society for Prenatal Diagnosis (ISPD) in Berlin. Nimrah recently graduated from our MFM fellowship program, and is now a clinical associate in the MFM Division at Mount Sinai Hospital, where she completes her 2-year MSc program on quality improvement and patient safety at IHPME.
Faculty Appointments

Congratulations to Dr. Kellie Murphy, who has been appointed our Vice-Chair of Research and Innovation for the 5-year period July 1st, 2016 – June 30th, 2021. Known internationally for her seminal CIHR-funded randomized control trial known affectionately as “MACS,” Dr. Murphy is currently the co-director of the MICARE research program and Director of Research for OB/GYN at Mount Sinai Hospital, with a focus on junior faculty mentorship. Dr. Murphy takes on this role at an exciting time for our Department, where so many people have become genuinely interested in contributing to the wider research mission, embracing new approaches as quality improvement and knowledge translation. We are extremely grateful to Dr. Stephen Lye for leading us to our current enviable strengths in research over the past decade, and we look forward to watching Dr. Murphy expand upon his work with our Department.

Faculty Awards

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

Dr. Ally Murji, MD MPH, Obstetrics & Gynaecology at Mount Sinai Hospital, has become our first ever recipient of a Dean’s Excellence Award, following his nomination by the Department. This is a 5-year award, supporting Ally’s efforts to create a GTA-wide Gynecologic Surgery Network to study quality improvement measures and to address specific research questions. Many of you have may have seen his inspiring June, 2016 inter-hospital Grand Rounds on fibroid surgery, where he elegantly demonstrated the power of clinical research in a common scenario. The award is equivalent to Ally receiving an initial 3-year Junior Faculty Award, followed directly by a first 2-year Principal Faculty Award, supporting Ally’s efforts to create a GTA-wide network.

In May, Dr. Rohan D’Souza received a travel award to participate in the CIHR National Research Poster Competition in Winnipeg, Manitoba for his paper “Anticoagulation for pregnant women with mecanico-vascular heart valves: A systematic review and meta-analysis.” He won a prize for his presentation - congratulations Rohan!

Dr. Ray Osborne received the International Trophoblast Diseases Society (ISSTTD) gold medal for “outstanding contribution to research on diseases of the trophoblast” awarded at the XVIII World Congress in November, 2015 in Indonesia.

Dr. Barbara Cruickshank’s Retirement

This year, the Department bids farewell to one of the senior members of our REI division, Dr. Barbara Cruickshank. A retirement party was held for her on May 19 at George Restaurant. It was a very warm event, where Dr. Cruickshank was recognized and applauded for her many accomplishments including years of excellent patient care, her work as the Medical Director of the Inception Cord Blood Bank, and her 6 years as the REI Fellowship Program Director.

Dr. D’Souza presenting his poster in Winnipeg

Other News

Our faculty are very involved locally, nationally, and internationally. Below are some other appointments, awards, and news from the last 6 months.

Dr. George Seaward has been appointed as Co-Chair of the Maternal Newborn Advisory Committee of the Provincial Council of Maternal Child Health (PCMCH) and as a member of Council of PCMCH. PCMCH was originally established in 2008 by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care in order to provide unified and strategic leadership and advice on maternal and child health care in Ontario. Working with its partners in a highly collaborative manner, the goal of PCMCH is to support a provincial system of care that provides timely, equitable, accessible, high quality, and family-centred care in an efficient and effective manner.

Dr. Andras Nagy received a Doctor Honoris Causa from the Medical Faculty of the University of Helsinki at their Conferment ceremony on June 10, 2016. Dr. Nagy was also elected as a Foreign Member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences on May 2, 2016.

Dr. Jon Barrett was appointed in June 2016 as Vice President SOGC and President of Canadian Society of Maternal Fetal Medicine.

Dr. Marie Czikk is now doing the Education Scholars Program (ESP) through the Centre for Faculty Development at UofT.

Dr. Anne Berndt received a grant for $99,428 from AFP Innovation Fund as the PI on her project “High Volume Foley’s Increasing Vaginal Birth (High FIVe Birth) Pilot.”

Dr. Wendy Wolfman was the 64th Matlow Lecturer for the Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Toronto. She spoke on “Menopausal Medicine: the Neglected Pillar of Gynaecology.”

Dr. Jackie Thomas received a certificate in Quality Improvement and Patient Safety (QIPS) through the Stepping Stones program at the UofT Centre for Faculty Development.

Dr. Dan Farine and his two children (Tali and Jona than) authored a book entitled, “The World’s Shortest Bedtime Stories.” Dr. Farine also became a member of the International Academy of Perinatology, and was appointed as a Professor at Vienna University.

Dr. Modupe Tunde-Byass attended the RCOG world conference in Birmingham, UK in June, 2016 where she presented a poster on documentation after assisted vaginal delivery. She is pictured with Drs. Jennifer Blake and George Carson.

Dr. Eliane Shore won an SOGC award for best oral abstract in gynecology for her project: “Validation of a Standardized Laparoscopy Curriculum for Gynecology Residents: A Randomized Controlled Trial.” This research was also accepted for publication in American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology. She was also awarded an Innovation Grant for “Development of a Retropertioneal Dissection Model.” Congrats Eliane.

Drs. Sari Kives, Jodi Shapiro and Herb Wong (later joined by Dr. Courtney Joliffe), volunteered for Medical Assistance in the Performance of Abortion Services (MAPAS) in Antigua, Guatemala. While there, the surgeons operated at Her- mano Pedro Hospital in Antigua, Guatemala.

Last year, Dr. Suzanne Wong, staff at St. Joseph’s Health Centre, travelled to Kenya to volunteer with a Medcan initiative to improve access to medical care, training, and education in northern and central Kenya. Medcan has two affiliated clinics in Kenya at which Dr. Wong spent 2 weeks last October working as a volunteer physician, helping establish a cancer screening program and conducting workshops to educate local clinicians on women’s health issues. Even after returning to Toronto, Dr. Wong regularly conducts Skype calls with the clinic staff to review cases and offer support for more complex issues. Click here to read more about Dr. Wong’s experience in Kenya.
Residents: Graduates and new additions
Welcome to our incoming residents for 2016! Our new PGY1s are Kailyn Brandon-Sutherland, Shirin Dason, Pavan Gill, Shira Jaclyn Gold, Kinshuk Kumar, Stephanie Lapinsky, Alisha Olsthoorn, Michael Phang, Sara Porisky, Emma Skolnik, Jessica Smith, and Geoffrey Zeni. They are joined by Rebecca Zur who is a transfer student from the Department of Family and Community Medicine and enters our program as a PGY2. We look forward to working with them and seeing them flourish in our residency program! 

Congratulations to the 14 residents who are the graduating class of our residency program for 2016. Nasser Abu Awad, Emily Baker, Jessica Green, David Gurau, Unmi Hibita, Adrienne Li, Chaula Mehta, Rebecca Menzies, Michael Secter, Alison Shea, Andrea Simpson, John Snellgrove, Liane Tan, and Julie Thorne all passed their Royal College exams and were recognized at our graduation ceremony. We are very proud of what they have accomplished so far and we wish them success as they continue with their careers!

The small (and big) things in life
Our faculty, trainees and staff lead busy lives outside of work as well! Here are some highlights.

Congratulations to the 14 residents who are the graduating class of our residency program for 2016. Nasser Abu Awad, Emily Baker, Jessica Green, David Gurau, Unmi Hibita, Adrienne Li, Chaula Mehta, Rebecca Menzies, Michael Secter, Alison Shea, Andrea Simpson, John Snellgrove, Liane Tan, and Julie Thorne all passed their Royal College exams and were recognized at our graduation ceremony. We are very proud of what they have accomplished so far and we wish them success as they continue with their careers!

The small (and big) things in life
Our faculty, trainees and staff lead busy lives outside of work as well! Here are some highlights.

The Schedule of Choice
The majority of residents prefer a 24-hour on-call schedule to a flexible system. The flexi-4 night float system received formal review by the night float committee. Our program has received through the NF surveys. Our program has received approval for the night float system from the Night float committee. The results of the NF surveys have consistently shown the NF system is preferred to traditional 24-hour call, reduces fatigue and improves patient care. Through many iterations, we have achieved levels of resident morale, surgical experience and impact on family relationships comparable to the 24-hour system. We are endeavoring to create a resilient NF call system that does not depend on overworked and fatigued residents and does not compromise clinical experience.

Awards
Mathew Leonardi won Most Innovative and Unique Project for the 2nd year in a row (GOC-APOG PAP Challenge) for “inSpeculum: Art night for Cervical Cancer Awareness.” This is the second year in a row that Mathew has won this award!

Helena Frecker received a 2016 Postgraduate Medical Trainee Leadership Award from Postgraduate Medical Education at UofT.

Lynn Sterling completed her Masters in Health Sciences through McMaster University.

Rebecca Rich passed her thesis defense for her M.Sc in Clinical Epidemiology at iHPME.

Undergraduate Awards
Congratulations to the following students who won an OB/GYN award at the Faculty of Medicine, Convocation Awards Reception on May 31st, 2016:

Christine Edwards - Dr. Jacob Goldstein Scholarship
Catherine Brown - Hendry Memorial Scholarship
Louai Musa - Dr. Frederick R. Papsin Award

On September 13th, 2015 Colleen McDermott gave birth to Miles Anderson Herzong, her third child. He was delivered by Dr. Andrea Lauman.

Ob/Gyn Winter Newsletter – Issue 22
The small (and big) things in life
Our faculty, trainees and staff lead busy lives outside of work as well! Here are some highlights.

Congratulations to Amanda Michael and Rami Eliaus, who got married on May 21st, 2016!

Congratulations to Car- men McCaffrey who gave birth to her son, Emmett James Pitton on June 29th.

Wedding announcement: Mathew Leonardi and Ben got married on May 21 and spent two weeks exploring Iceland in a campervan on their honeymoon.

Marian Leung married Brian Buchanan on June 11, 2016. Congrats Marian and Brian!

Emily Baker had a daughter, Evelyn Rose Schneider on June 19th, 2016. Emily still made it out (with Evelyn in tow) to our Graduation Ceremony just 3 days later! It was lovely to see both of them there!

Theo Berndtl Wilson on May 9, delivered by Dr. Daini Hu and Jon Barrett. His father Murray Wilson, brother Liam and sister Lucy are overjoyed!

Dr. Danny Kriech- man, Dr. Kathinka Deverajan, Dr. Lynne Zolits, and Dr. Nicholas Paaradne celebrating Dr. Pairadne's 40th year in practice on June 6th, 2016.

Dr. Anne Berndtl gave birth to her third child, Benjamin Theo Berndtl Wilson on May 9, delivered by Dr. Daini Hu and Jon Barrett. His father Murray Wilson, brother Liam and sister Lucy are overjoyed!

Kirsten Niles participated in the WUGC (Worlds Ultimate and Guts Championships) as a member of Team Canada, who came in second place!
Brown as Chair, and to Dr. Stephen Lye as Vice-Chair, Research, who will be stepping down from this role as of June 2016 after a decade in this leadership role.

The 2016 J.W 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. Congratulations to the following award recipients:

**Clinical Fellow:** Helena Frecker
**Post-Doctoral Fellow:** Monique Rennie
**Resident:** Rebecca Rich
**Graduate Student:** Vaslis Moisiadis
**Medical/Undergraduate Student:** Justin Wang

People’s Choice Award: Sruthi Alahari

Additionally, we had 4 awards presented at Wayne State University Collaboration Day for best poster presentation and best oral presentation from each school. The award winners were:

**Best Oral Presentation (UofT):** Alex Pittini
**Best Poster Presentation (UofT):** Theresa Chow
**Best Oral Presentation (WSU):** Yu Yang
**Best Poster Presentation (WSU):** Diana Diaz

The evening was filled with lots of fun for adults and kids alike, with an outside patio area dedicated to children’s activities. Adults got to enjoy music by Gus-tai & Puente del Diablo, followed by the ceremony and reception. We were honored by the presence of Dr. Glen Bandiera, Associate Dean of Postgraduate Medical Education, who welcomed our graduates to the alumni community. The graduates also received words of wisdom from one of their favourite highly-experienced OB/GYNs, Dr. Nicholas Pairaudeau from North York General Hospital. Nick reflected on the past, present, and future of obstetrics and gynaecology care and gave wise life advice to our newly-minted OB/GYNs! The event wouldn’t have been such a great success without our superb administrative team at 123 Edward and our MC, Dr. Adrian Brown.

The graduating fellows together with their supervisors

We look forward to seeing you next year, save the date – June 15, 2017!
Introducing our new Business Manager

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

A new face is now at the helm of our admin team at 123 Edward Street. We would like to welcome Nelson Cabral, who is the new Business Manager for our Department. He was thrown right into the fire, as he started with the Department shortly before two of our biggest events, Research Day and our Graduation Ceremony. Nelson has acquitted himself quite well and has transitioned smoothly into his new role. Welcome Nelson!

The Obesity Forum

The Obesity Forum, a research event intended to spur research and collaboration within our Department, was held on June 8th at the Li Ka Shing Knowledge Institute. The event was headlined by Dr. David Macklin, a family physician who specializes in obesity. We also had Drs. Ellen Greenblatt, Kristen Connor, Cindy Maxwell, Marcus Bernardini, and Colleen McDermott give talks on how obesity impacts the different areas of OB/GYN. The event was a success and we look forward to having more research forums in the future. Stay tuned for details of the next event!

Sponsors

The Department would like to thank Dapasoft, Ferrering, and Hologic who participated in our Educational Partnership Program for 2015-2016. Their contributions have helped our Department with our Research Day, the Research Day mobile app, our Interhospital Rounds lectures, and many other things. We are very grateful for their support!

City-wide MIS Journal Club

The second city-wide Minimally Invasive Surgery journal club was held on June 29th, 2016. It was organized by the Sunnybrook MIS group. Drs. Leslie Po and Grace Liu led a discussion about various morcellation techniques with a focus on practical tips and latest research. A stimulating discussion followed where all the various sites shared local best practices.

Interhospital Rounds

Our Department hosts monthly Interhospital Rounds, a live lecture which is webcast via OTN to our affiliated hospitals. In 2016, these lectures have been on topics from all parts of obstetrics and gynecology, including quality of care, new techniques, and the Zika virus. These lectures offer our faculty a chance to participate from their site or watch on their own via the webcast link, with questions being answered via email as well as at the lecture. Additionally, the broadcasts are archived on the OTN website so those who are unable to participate on the day can still view the lecture. The 2016-2017 schedule and information on how to access the archive can be found on our website here. Speakers and topics will be updated for the 2017 lectures closer to the dates. Check back for updates!

Senior Promotions

The 2015-2016 Academic Year has been very successful one for our Promotions Process. Thank you to Dr. Dan Farine, Chair of our Promotions and Awards Committee, all individuals who served on this committee, and Kristen Gane our Department Appointments and Promotions Administrator for their work to ensure the following senior promotions were successful.

Congratulations to the following faculty members, who have been promoted effective July 1st, 2016.

To Full Professor:

- Lisa Allen Division of Paediatric & Adolescent Gynaecology SickKids Hospital
- Kellie Murphy Division of Maternal-Fetal Medicine Mount Sinai Hospital
- Nanette Okun Division of Maternal-Fetal Medicine Mount Sinai Hospital

To Associate Professor:

- Lilian Giem Division of Gynaecologic Oncology Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre
- Raymond Osborne Division of Gynaecologic Oncology Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre

News

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.

- Donna Barnwell Adjunct Lecturer The Scarborough Hospital
- Andrew Kotaska Adjunct Lecturer Stanton Territorial Hospital - Yellowknife

Congratulations to the following faculty members, who have been promoted effective July 1st, 2016.