

# NEWSLETTER

## CHAIR'S REPORT

So much good news, it's hard to decide where to start.

### **Five Year Review of the Department of Paediatrics and the Chair**

Alan Schwartz, Chair, Washington University in St Louis, and Cheryl Greenberg-Rockman, Chair, University of Manitoba, visited our department in April to review our status at the end of my first five-year term of office. They were remarkably laudatory about the state of our department and made some excellent comments and suggestions which will help to serve us well during the next five years and beyond. Their report validates the ongoing exceptional performance of our faculty – congratulations and thank you all again and again. I look forward to the ongoing evolution of our department in the years to come. The renewal of my position at the University calls for a “refreshing” of our Strategic Plan developed in 2006/07.

### **Promotions 2011**

Please join me in congratulating the following 21 members of our faculty who will be promoted effective July 1st, 2011.

#### **To Full Professor:**

Ann Jefferies – Neonatology, Mount Sinai Hospital  
Jamie Hutchison – Critical Care Medicine  
Pat Parkin – Paediatric Medicine  
Hilary Whyte – Neonatology

#### **To Associate Professor:**

Cardiology: Tim Bradley, Mark Friedberg, Beth Stephenson  
Gastroenterology: Peggy Marcon  
Haematology/Oncology: Annie Huang, Walter Kahr, Melanie Kirby, Paul Nathan  
ID: Ari Bitnun  
Nephrology: Christoph Licht  
Neurology: Elizabeth Donner  
Emergency Medicine: Stephen Freedman  
Paediatric Medicine: Mark Feldman, Sanjay Mahant, Michelle Shouldice, Miriam Weinstein  
Rheumatology: Shirley Tse

Congratulations are also due to Mel Freedman and the members of the Departmental Promotions Committee for their stellar efforts. This year's group brings to 75 the number of individuals successfully promoted in the past five years.



### **Welcome to New Faculty**

Peter Kannu joined the Division of Clinical and Metabolic Genetics on April 1st. Peter comes to us from Queen's University, but is originally a New Zealander. His major interest is in the molecular mechanisms of bony disorders.

Tanja Gonska, originally from Germany, has joined the Division of Gastroenterology, Hepatology and Nutrition after completing her fellowship here. Her interest is in translational research in cystic fibrosis.

Jason Fischer is the newest member of the Division of Paediatric Emergency Medicine, joining us from Oakland, California where he did his residency in Emergency Medicine and a fellowship in ultrasound.

### **Other Faculty News**

Once again, members of our faculty have reached important academic milestones or received important awards. Here are just a few:

- Upton Allen was awarded the Harry Jerome Award of the Black Business Bureau for the Health Sciences.
- Chris Tomlinson (Neonatology) and Dan Roth (Paediatric Medicine) successfully defended their PhD thesis in the Department of Nutritional Sciences at UofT and the Johns Hopkins School of Public Health, respectively. Both are now itching to move on with their research.
- Norman Rosenblum is the 2011 recipient of the Kidney Foundation of Canada Medal for Research Excellence.
- The Neonatology Division celebrated their 50th Anniversary on April 28th with a symposium and gala dinner, with great attendance at both.
- The Neurology Division celebrated their annual Pritchard Day on April 29th with a tribute to the leadership of Carter Snead who will be stepping down as Division Head in the next few months.
- Upcoming symposia will celebrate the careers of Victor Blanchette (May 16th) and Peter Durie (May 13th).

### **Important Dates**

Please note the following in your calendars:

*Resident Research Day:* Tuesday May 31st from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

This year's invited lecturer is Roger Glass, Head of the Fogarty Institute and a world leader in rotavirus research and global health

*Awards Day 2011* is on Wednesday June 22nd:

9-10 a.m. awards ceremony followed by reception in the Main Rotunda.

Dinner to recognize members of the faculty reaching important milestones:

Those being feted this year include: Keith Tanswell, Victor Blanchette, Sheila Weitzman, Peter Durie

*25 Year Club:* Clive Schwartz, Joanne Rovet, Gilbert Miller, Michelle Farine

### **News from the Office of Faculty Development**

Shelly Weiss is fully established as Director of Faculty Development within the Department of Paediatrics and is hard at work.

Her first two significant accomplishments have been:

1. To run focus groups regarding the development of a mentorship program followed by two sessions to establish the program and match mentors with mentees. An evaluation process is built into this program.
2. Working with the OMA, Shelly has set up the first course in physician wellness (three session series), which will be concluded by the end of June. This will be followed by a single session for Division Heads and Training Program Directors. These sessions deal with recognizing and treating stress in oneself and one's colleagues, plus building resilience.

More to come as the year progresses.

With best wishes,  
Denis.

**Division of Clinical and Metabolic Genetics**

Dr. Peter Kannu is a medical graduate of the University of Otago, New Zealand. He completed his Fellowship in General Paediatric Medicine with the Royal Australasian College of Physicians before proceeding with Clinical Genetics training at Starship Children's Hospital in New Zealand and the Royal Children's Hospital in Melbourne, Australia. At the end of his training, he worked at the Victorian Clinical Genetics Service which is based in Melbourne before joining Queen's University, Kingston in 2009. He joined the Division of Clinical and Metabolic Genetics at the Hospital for Sick Children in 2010 on a part-time basis and has been full-time with the division since April 2011. Peter is in the final stages of writing his PhD on the 'Molecular Genetics of Arthritis'. He has an interest in human chondrodysplasias and works in the Bone Health Clinic. He is also a Team Investigator in Professor Ben Alman's research laboratory where his research concentrates on Wnt and Hedgehog signaling in cartilage and bone.

**Division of Gastroenterology, Hepatology and Nutrition**

Dr. Tanja Gonska started her academic career at Sickkids in 2005 when she joined the fellowship program in the Division of Gastroenterology, Hepatology and Nutrition. Trained at the Centre of Paediatrics and Adolescent Medicine in Freiburg, Germany, her motivation to come to Sickkids was driven by her wish to continue research training in Cystic Fibrosis with the CF team that is world renowned for clinical and research excellence in this field. In November 2010 she was appointed to a staff position in the division and soon after, she was appointed as Associate Scientist in the Research Institute. Tanja is an enthusiastic paediatric clinician and teacher and her research passion lies with Cystic Fibrosis. As a translational researcher, she is interested in understanding more about the underlying pathophysiological mechanisms that explain the clinical presentation of a very heterogeneous disease. Secondly, as a member of the Sickkids CF team, she wants to be part of the current efforts to overcome the basic defect in CF disease, focusing on the development of in vivo biomarker assays to monitor drug efficacy in future clinical trials. With her experience in the pulmonary and gastrointestinal aspects of CF disease, as well as in functional studies of the CFTR protein, Tanja is ideally poised to conduct bench-bed bridging research that has an immediate impact on patient health – helping CF risk assessment in adults and in positively screened newborns with diagnostic uncertainty on the one hand, while helping the drug discovery process to cure CF with the design of new functional assays that allow early detection of the success of such novel drugs.

**Division of Paediatric Emergency Medicine**

Dr. Jason Fischer completed his Emergency Medicine training at Alameda County Medical Center in Oakland, California. His subspecialty training included a Pediatric Emergency Medicine Fellowship at Children's Hospital and Research Center Oakland and an Emergency Ultrasound Fellowship at Alameda County Medical Center. Dr. Fischer has lectured and instructed physicians internationally on the evolving use of ultrasound technology in Pediatric Emergency Medicine, with a focus on the use of ultrasound-guided regional anesthesia in the emergency setting. He has joined the Division of Paediatric Emergency Medicine as a Staff Physician and Physician Lead for the new Emergency Ultrasound Program.