Happy New Year!

I hope 2018 will be as prosperous and productive as 2017 was for us all. We should all be very proud of how much we accomplished over the past year, and I look forward to working with all faculty, staff and students to continue to improve and enhance your professional development. I wish you all the best for what 2018 has to offer!
Welcome Dr. Jibran Khokhar!

Our latest hire, Dr. Jibran Khokhar arrived over the holidays and has started his position as a tenure-track Assistant Professor in Neuroscience. Dr. Khokhar completed his undergraduate training at Queen’s University, and his Ph.D. in the Department of Pharmacology and Toxicology at the University of Toronto, under the supervision of Dr. Rachel Tyndale. During this time, Dr. Khokhar was awarded a CIHR Tobacco Use in Special Populations Fellowship, as well as a publication award for "Best Publication in Neuropsychopharmacology." He then completed a post-doctoral fellowship in the Department of Psychiatry at Dartmouth College with Dr. Alan Green. In addition to numerous travel and poster awards, Dr. Khokhar held a CIHR Post-doctoral Fellowship as well as NIH K99/R00 Pathway to Independence Award from the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism.

Dr. Khokhar’s research aims to understand the mechanisms underlying co-occurring schizophrenia and substance use disorders, using a variety of behavioural, pharmacological and translational neuroimaging techniques. In addition, his research interests also include assessing the long-term effects of adolescent drug (e.g., cannabis) use, and how these effects might contribute to the risk for serious mental illness and addiction. Lastly, Dr. Khokhar is also very interested in profiling the pharmacokinetic parameters related to different routes of exposure to cannabis, as well as the impact of development and sex on these profiles.

His office is room 2608 and his lab is room 2610. Please swing by and welcome him to the Department.

We look forward to working with you Jibran!
Welcome Lucy Schenk!

Lily Arpa has been seconded for 1 year to the Dean’s Office, and in her place, Lucy Schenk has been hired to assist us with Lily’s former duties (travel, petty cash, etc).

Please Welcome Lucy to OVC!

Also, congratulations to Lucy who won the door prize at the USW 4120 Holiday Luau Lunch on Dec. 13/17. The prize was $1000 from the Flight Center.

Alastair Summerlee's UPE!

The Department got together on Dec 18th to celebrate Dr. Alastair Summerlee's award of the title of University Professor Emeritus (UPE). Congratulations Alastair!
**RBL potluck**

**RBL Annual festive potluck lunch and Foosball tournament**

The annual tradition continues! The RBL group held their potluck event during the holiday season. Once again, very well attended and organized. Great food and even better company! Thanks to Monica, Rob and everyone who chipped in to make this annual event a success.
Holiday Door Decorations

The financial services clerks (Karla De Uslar, Frances Graziotto and Lucy Schenk) went all out for a "snow globe" inspired theme for their door.

Dr. Craig Bailey's lab (Craig, Ashutosh and Beryl) also took their door decoration to a higher "cortical" level. Can you see the neuron and dendritic arborizations?

The top right door was created by none other than our own Holly "the goat whisperer" Illman.

The Bailey door decoration won 1st place and Financial clerk's door won 3rd place! Congratulations on your awesome looking doors!
Annual Departmental Festive Holiday Party

Another successful holiday lunch and United Way Auction was held. With over 60 people in attendance including retirees.

The recipients of the Best MSc and PhD seminars were Rebecca MacDonald (Vickaryous lab) and Allison Tscherner (LaMarre lab). The best TA award went to Allyssa Hooper and the award for Faculty Graduate Teaching Excellence went to Dr. Roger Moorehead. Congrats everyone!

The United Way auction was a HUGE success! With your help and generosity, we raised over $1100!! This amount will go toward our 2018 target.

Way to go BioMed!

The entire event was made possible by Kim Best and her helper elves, Kathy Jakyniak and Anita Liu. Thank you!!
Dr. Viloria-Petit was one of 65 researchers around the world to be invited to attend the International Society for Extracellular Vesicles (ISEV) workshop “Extracellular Vesicles as Biomarkers of Disease”, which took place in Birmingham, UK, on December 13-14, 2017. The workshop brought together world experts in the field to discuss what is known and needs to be improved with regard to the use of extracellular vesicles in body fluids as circulating biomarkers of disease. Dr. Viloria-Petit attended this workshop in representation of OVC’s DOG BONE (Dog Osteosarcoma Group: Biomarkers of Neoplasia), a team of 8 researchers that she and Dr. Geoffrey Wood (Pathobiology) co-lead. The DOG BONE project aims to assess and implement the use of circulating biomarkers as minimally invasive tools to improve diagnosis, prognosis and treatment of canine osteosarcoma. As this project is in early stages, the information obtained in the workshop will be extremely valuable to ensure the most appropriate protocols and quality control with regard to the purification and assessment of extracellular vesicles from canine patient’s plasma.

Tami's paper highlighted in a feature editorial

The Martino lab was very honored to have a recent publication on circadian clock & biological sex & heart aging (PMID: 28927226) highlighted in December with a feature editorial (Cardiovasc. Res. Dec 2017 https://academic.oup.com/cardiovascres/advance-article/doi/10.1093/cvr/cvx243/4721789). The summary of the Editorial is as follows:

"In conclusion, this is the first time that interaction of ovarian hormones and circadian rhythms has been shown to influence cardiac aging. Since the majority of studies in the field of circadian rhythms are done in males, the findings of Alibhai et al.8 highlight the importance of taking the influence of biological sex into the account when it comes to studying circadian rhythms and heart diseases. Taken together, insights provided within this research on difference between male and female ClockΔ19/Δ19 mice may elucidate novel potential circadian targets and interventions in cardiovascular therapy."

Congrats to Tammy and all her lab lab members!

Celebrating Health Research

Dr. Glen Pyle had a busy month of December, serving as a reviewer on peer review panels for CIHR, Heart & Stroke Foundation of Canada, Pet Trust and Canada Research Chairs. His contribution to CIHR's "celebration of health research" as part of the Canada150 celebrations can be found here http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/50662.html#pyle.
Thanks to Amit Khosla and Jim Hare for installing our new Polycom videoconferencing equipment in room 3648. This room is available for booking through Kim. A new computer will be installed mid-next week (sorry PC lovers...its a mac!) as well. Please keep this room locked when not in use.
Thank you!!

Don’t forget...my door is always open, so pop in for a chat anytime!
Tarek Saleh, Chair