

Biomedical Sciences

Newsletter

State of the Department, November, 2017

This semester is just flying by! Midterms are now over, and we are already in preparation mode for finals (or other assessments in the DVM program). Once again, I have the extreme pleasure of finding myself at the center of numerous accolades and compliments about the excellence (and popularity!) of the teaching by our faculty, staff and TA's. The only complaints I ever hear are from students who are unable to access a "very popular" course(s) they wanted because they heard the instructor and course were amazing! This is an enviable position to be in, and your innovative teaching and lab demonstration skills are not going unnoticed or underappreciated.

I am also constantly receiving **success stories** from faculty regarding recent graduates, primarily from the Biomed Major, but also graduate students who have progressed to a PhD or postdoc, from just "down-the-road", to internationally recognized institutions abroad. Please know that your reference letters, advice and referrals are making a difference in the lives of our graduates, and they very much appreciate and recognize this effort! Keep in mind as well, these are the alumni that we will be contacting in the near future for feedback on our undergraduate and graduate training programs for our next iQAP review, *so please keep sharing these stories with me!!*

Thanks again for all your hard work and I wish you all the best for the remainder of the semester.

Updates/happenings from around the Department:

1. **Dr. Jim Petrik's** grant that we announced in the previous newsletter from the Cancer Research Society was actually ranked #1 in the competition! That is amazing news especially since that honor comes with an "extra" stipend for a summer research studentship (*The Andy – Léna Chabot Studentship Fund established by Mr. Chabot and his daughter Léna with the view of contributing to the advancement of cancer research through a \$5,250 annual and perpetual studentship award offered to undergraduate students residing in Canada*). Congrats Jim!
2. **Dr. Alicia Viloría-Petit** was invited to participate in the "5th Latin American Health Week" in Toronto. This is a yearly event organized by Latin American consulates to offer free clinical consultations and to educate the Latin community on key health issues in the Western world. Her talk, presented in Spanish on September 28, was on cancer: origin, risk factors and prevention.

Alicia's cancer-related research career focus was also highlighted in the October issue of the Toronto Hispanic magazine "La Guia" (<http://www.laguiamagazine.com/alicia-viloria>). The article is in Spanish, but I can tell it says wonderful things about Alicia's research!

3. **Dr. Tami Martino's** research continues to gain national attention! Check out her latest CBC print news on her findings regarding the circadian clock working differently in men and women to protect against heart disease:

<http://www.cbc.ca/beta/news/health/heart-disease-female-circadian-1.4317353>

Congrats Tami!

4. Also in the media, there has been increased interest in “**Translational Medicine**” (as Tami's coverage above showed), and our department's research has been highlighted in a National Post article

<http://nationalpost.com/feature/heal-boy>.

This article features research done in Cancer, however, they quote *“It's just one of the diseases our pets may help us treat. Vets are collaborating with researchers in human medicine to study the genetics of a fatal heart disorder shared by dogs and humans. They're working on epilepsy, and stem cell therapy for spinal cord injuries.”* and specifically mention DCM and seizures that Drs. Pyle and LaMarre research in collaboration with faculty in clinical studies (Drs. O'Sullivan and James). **More evidence of the impact of our One Health focus on translational research in Biomed!**

5. Our own **Dr. Tami Martino** was also elected by Senate to participate on the Presidential Review Committee to oversee Dr. Vaccarino's continued interest in remaining as the President of the University. This is a very important role for both the Department and College, and I am confident that Tami will contribute significantly to this review process. Congrats Tami!

6. The Centre for Cardiovascular Investigations (CCVI) hosted its third Cardiovascular Scientist Seminar Series on Oct. 24, 2017, with invited speakers **Dr. Tami Martino** and **Dr. Glen Pyle**.

Tami discussed her research on the circadian clock, and how it coordinates healthy physiology and influences cardiovascular disease, and drives the development of a new field called “Circadian Medicine”. Topics included circadian synchrony, desynchrony, and applications to human medicine, veterinary medicine, and food production.

Glen focused on the relationship between biological sex and cardiovascular disease, which is an integrated aspect of his heart failure research program. He discussed his research on differences in estrogen receptor activation in males and females, and experimental models of menopause, which lead to a better understanding of and treatment for heart disease.

<http://bulletin.ovc.uoguelph.ca/post/166958443820/cardiovascular-scientist-seminar-highlights>



CCVI Introductions with representatives of the CCVI Graduate Student Executive and Biomed students (Tami, Priya, Del, Cristine).



Tami and Glen with Charlotte Yates (Provost).

7. Dr. Tami Martino was invited to participate in the ***CIHR strategic workshop: The Future of Sex and Gender in Health Research Workshop 2017 – innovations in funding and policy***. Hosted by the CIHR Institute of Gender and Health, Montreal QC.

8. The Martino lab recent publication on Cardiac Clocks and Preclinical Translation was also published in the hardcover text “Heart Failure Clinics – Chronobiology and Cardiovascular Diseases.” Congratulations to first author **Priya Mistry**, Biomed MSc student.



Members of Biomed gathered to welcome our latest recruits to the department on **Friday the 13th** (lucky the stairs didn't collapse!).

Since this photo was taken, we have had several “new” additions. Please join me in welcoming the following research staff to the department:

Tarak Khatua - Postdoctoral fellow working for Tami Martino (5 years)

Kevin Kuschke - Research Associate working for Allan King (1 yr)

Tim Carter - Research Associate working for Allan King (6 months)

Andrea Badder - Work Study Student working for Allan King (2 semesters)

Jacques Van Zyl - Technician working for the RHBL lab (1 yr)

Miles Mee - Research Assistant working for Brenda Coomber (1 semester)

Alana Sparks - Research Assistant working for Brenda Coomber (1 semester)

Remember that my door is always open, so pop in anytime for a chat.

Cheers!

Tarek,

Chair, BMS