

PhysioLINK

October 25, 2022

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

This issue contains a multitude of awards and celebrations. Our trainees, staff and faculty are simply the best! I hope you enjoy catching up with all the news and celebrating all the accomplishments.

Scott P. Heximer, PhD

Ernest B. and Leonard B. Smith Chair,
Department of Physiology
Temerty Faculty of Medicine

WE'RE HIRING – spread the news!

Assistant Professor – Metabolic Diseases / Diabetes Research

Open until November 15th



The Department of Physiology is seeking diverse, leadership-oriented applicants for a full-time, tenure-stream Assistant Professor position in Metabolic Diseases/Diabetes Research. The successful candidate may hold the Banting and Best Insulin Discovery Professorship in Physiology (details below) for an initial term of up to 5 years, renewable following a favorable review. The anticipated start date is July 1st, 2023.

Outstanding candidates with demonstrated research excellence relevant to metabolic diseases as outlined above will be considered for the Banting and Best Insulin Discovery Professorship. An emerging track record of collaborative science, successful program building, and research productivity and excellence, demonstrated through the application materials, is essential. Through research and scholarly activities, the successful candidate will position the Department of Physiology as a global leader in metabolic disease research as was exemplified by the seminal work of Banting and Best.

Please click here for full details and how to apply.

PHYSIOLOGY SEMINAR SERIES

~ Eligible for PSL1000H/PSL2000H/PSL4000Y Course Seminar Attendance ~

“Bionics and natural drugs for treating cardiovascular disease”

When: *Thursday, November 3, 2022 04:00 PM Eastern Time*

Speaker: Dr. Julian Paton

Professor of Translational Physiology
Manaaki Manawa – The Centre for Heart Research
Department of Physiology, University of Auckland, New Zealand.

Join Zoom Webinar:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85037061500>

Hosted by the Bolz Lab

PHYSIOLOGY SEMINAR SERIES

~ Eligible for PSL1000H/PSL2000H/PSL4000Y Course Seminar Attendance ~

“Structural biology of neuromodulation”

When: *Thursday, November 17, 2022 04:00 PM Eastern Time*

Speaker: Dr. Hiro Furukawa

Director of Cryo-EM facility & Chair of Institutional seminar series
Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory

Join Zoom Webinar: TBA

Hosted by the Salter Lab

Visit [Physiology's Home Page](#) to see the Full Seminar Series

CIHR SPRING PROJECT GRANT COMPETITION

Congratulations to following faculty members on their recent success in the **Spring CIHR Project Grant competition**:

Belsham, Denise D. - University of Toronto

Targeting miRNAs in the hypothalamus: Defining their role in obesity and metabolic diseases.

\$1,128,376 - 5 yr term

John Peever – University of Toronto

Behavioural Sciences - C: Behavioural Studies, Neuroscience and Cognition

\$1,005,976 – 5 yr term

Anne Wheeler – Hospital for Sick Children (Primary Status Only, University of Toronto)

The contribution of white matter vulnerability to persistent symptoms after concussion in adolescents

\$573,750 – 5 yr term

HONOURS & AWARDS



Many congratulations to **Professor Denise Belsham** on being elected as the **incoming President of the International Neuroendocrine Federation**, the governing body of the global neuroendocrine community with 28 societies worldwide, at the International Congress of Neuroendocrinology in Glasgow Scotland in August 2022. She will serve as the first woman INF President for the term 2024-2028. Our best wishes in this exciting new role!

Congratulations to **Cristine Reitz and Michelle Di Paola (Gramolini lab)** on their recent successes at the 41st International Society for Heart Research - North American Section (ISHR-NAS) & 9th International Academy of Cardiovascular Sciences (IACS) – Winnipeg conference.

Cristine Reitz

- Early Career Investigator Scientific Symposium Flash Talk Finalist – as one of 12 top-ranked abstract submissions
- 2022 Morris Karmazyn Award for Best Poster in Translational Medicine
For talk titled: "Integrative proteomic and phosphoproteomic analysis identifies etiology-specific phosphorylation patterns in the failing human heart"

Michelle Di Paola

- Gary Lopaschuk Graduate Students Awards Competition Finalist - as one of four top-ranked abstract submissions (among graduate students)
- 2022 Gary Lopaschuk Young Investigator Award in Cardiovascular Sciences
For a talk titled: "Sarco(endo)plasmic reticulum membrane protein REEP5 regulates subcellular structure and function in the heart"

November Convocation

Many congratulations to all of the trainees below on the successful completion of their Graduate Programs. We are so proud of their accomplishments and wish them continued success in the next stage of their careers!

| Supervisor | Student | Program |
|-------------------|------------------------|----------------|
| Wheeler M | Al Rijjal, Dana | PhD |
| Brubaker P | Biancolin, Andrew | PhD |
| Collingridge G | Ebrahim Amini, Aeen | PhD |
| Giacca A | Gonzalez Medina, Marel | MSc |
| Kadis D | Khorshid, Niyousha | MSc |
| Levitan R | Kujbid, Nastasia | MSc |
| Tymianski M | Mayor Nunez, Diana | PhD |
| Cox B | Oberterescu, Andreea | MSc |
| Nostro C | Poon, Frankie | PhD |
| Lambe E | Rybnicek, Jonas | MSc |
| Kadis D | Sino, Sara | MSc |
| Pausova Z | Tang, Ariana | MSc |
| Jones N | Xia, Sunny | PhD |
| Billia P | Yu, Chang Yuan (Frank) | MSc |
| Husain M | Zhou, Xueyang (Annie) | MSc |

MHSc in Medical Physiology Pilots Mentorship Program

Physiology Meets Business kicks off its second successful year!



Some of this year's PMB mentees

What is *Physiology Meets Business*?

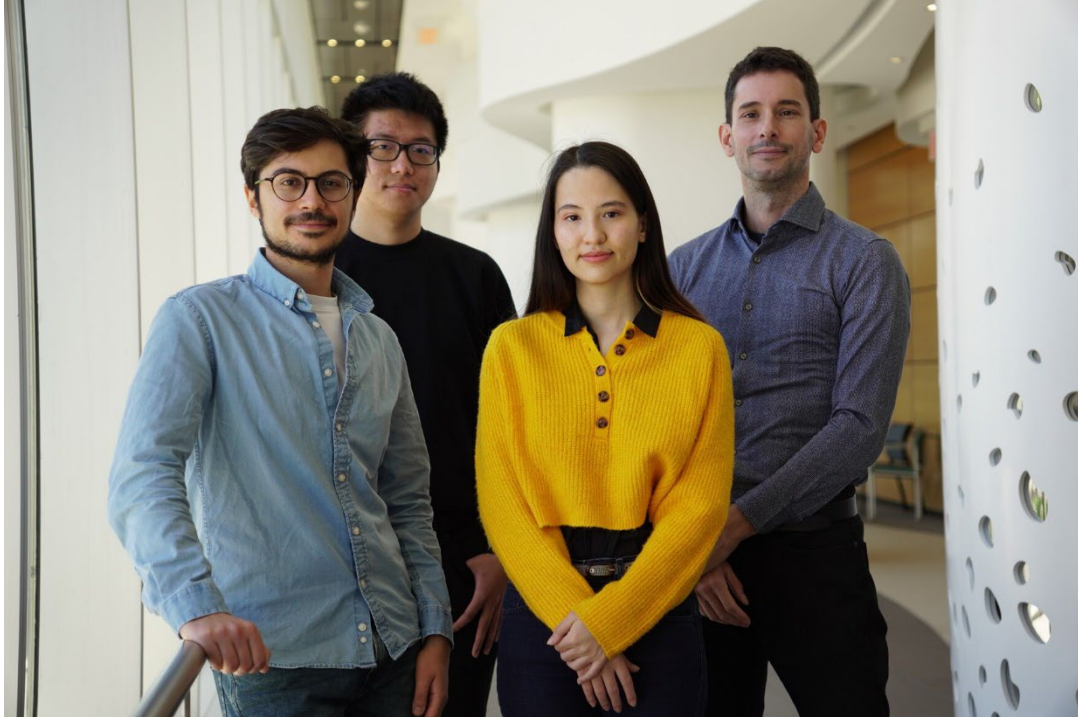
The MHSc in Medical Physiology – our Professional Master’s program – continues to grow and evolve to meet the specific needs of these diverse and talented students. Motivated by feedback from our first cohort, Program Director, Dr. Helen Miliotis introduced a voluntary mentorship program called *Physiology Meets Business* (PMB) for the subset of students who are especially interested in careers in the biotech industry.

“The idea for the program came about in conversation with my friend and colleague, Thomasina Spybey, who worked as a Medical Science Liaison at Biogen last year and now works as a Medical Advisor at Alexion Pharmaceuticals,” Dr. Miliotis explained.

At this year’s kick-off panel, Spybey – who is also an alumna of Physiology's MSc program – told the group how continuous conversation with a mentor strongly benefited her career. “What we’re hoping to achieve with this program is to establish that continuous relationship with someone, to build a relationship that could lead to a mentor being a thorough reference for you, to support you in the future,” she said.

[Keep reading to learn more about Helping Learners Craft their Career and Opening New Doors!](#)

Professor Maurizio De Pitta's Lab Pursuing New Frontiers of Neurobiology



Dr. Maurizio De Pittà and his interdisciplinary team

Krembil Brain Institute researcher and Department of Physiology faculty member, **Professor Maurizio De Pittà** has developed the first computer model predicting the role of cortical glial cells in cognition in collaboration with a team at Duke University.

As noted in the [University Health Network's press release](#), De Pittà's paper presents the first theory of the role glia play in cognitive processing, in the brain.

"The type of glial cells that we study – known as astrocytes – can modify the activity of our brain circuits and influence the way we behave," says Dr. De Pittà.

The study looked at the role of astrocytes in working memory, which is the ability to store information for ongoing tasks, such as following the storyline of a movie or counting to 10.

[Keep reading - Full details on this exciting study.](#)

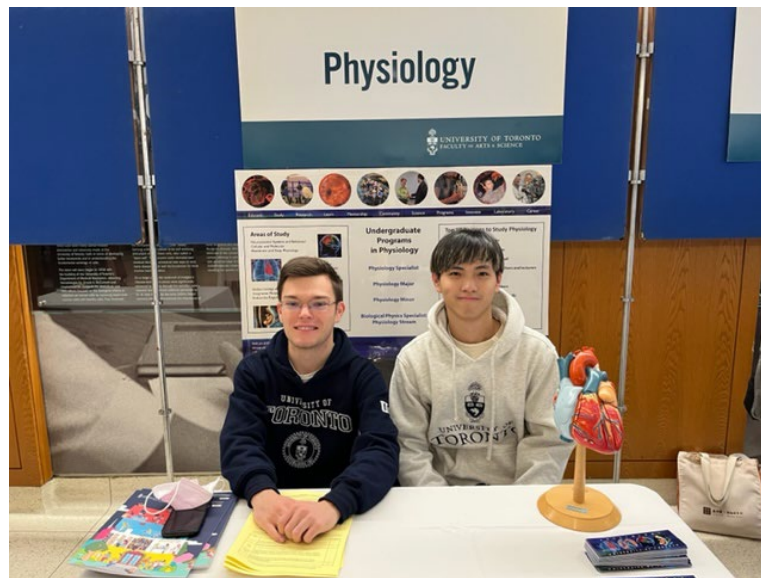
2022 LONG SERVICE AWARDS CEREMONY

"The University thrives because of fabulous individuals who spend years working with us and who have been an integral part of our growth and development as an institution. In recognition of this commitment, the University annually recognizes those individuals who have reached the continuous service milestones of 25, 35 and 40 years". The 2022 ceremony was held on October 7th. Congratulations to **Dr. Stephen Matthews**, and **Dr. Denise Belsham** on celebrating 25 years of service, and to **Jenny Katsoulakos** on her 35 years of service.



U of T's FALL CAMPUS DAY UPDATE

The Department of Physiology participated in U of T's Fall Campus Day on October 22. Undergraduate PSL students volunteered to answer questions from visiting high school students and their parents about our courses and programs and U of T in general. Thanks to undergraduate students **Adrian Tanjala, Adrian Lee, Anthony Wong, and Guyyunge Woo** who each completed 3-4 hour shifts and enthusiastically represented the Department of Physiology.



Adrian T. and Anthony at the start of the day



GASP News

We have a really strong council this year and I want to thank each member of the GASP Council for their dedication to their roles and I hope we will make this a really productive year. I am excited to have the privilege of working with these amazing individuals and of representing graduate students in Physiology. In the year ahead, the GASP General Council and I have some goals we would like to achieve from increasing social engagement to improving academic support. We will continue raising awareness about graduate student-specific concerns and hope to retain our Dodgeball Intramural Champions title. Let's continue supporting our wonderful graduate student community and promoting our inclusive culture. With that being said, if you have any ideas, questions, or concerns about GASP, please feel free to reach out to me at raina.ladha@mail.utoronto.ca. New ideas on how we can improve the student experience are always welcome and I am willing to listen!

Raina Ladha (PhD candidate, Horner Lab)
GASP President

Do you have a news item for the next PhysioLINK?
Please send it to Jenny e.katsoulakos@utoronto.ca

Keep staying safe everyone!

**Please continue to visit the central hub
for the U of T community**

UTogether