MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Welcome Back! I hope everyone had a great summer. As we welcome the start of the new academic year, the department is fully committed to promoting a safe working and learning environment for our faculty, staff and trainees. A reminder that all members of the University community must be fully vaccinated by October 29, 2021 (i.e. final dose no later than October 15, 2021). Proof of vaccination must be uploaded to the University’s UCheck system. For more information on COVID-19 vaccines, please visit https://www.utoronto.ca/utogether/vaccines.

Scott P. Heximer, PhD
Ernest B. and Leonard B. Smith Chair,
Department of Physiology
PHYSIOLOGY SEMINAR SERIES
~ Eligible for PSL1000H/PSL2000H/PSL4000Y Course Seminar Attendance ~

Speaker: Maurizio De Pittà, Ph.D.
Scientist, Krembil Research Institute, Toronto Western Hospital, UHN
Research interests info: https://www.uhnresearch.ca/researcher/maurizio-de-pitta

“Multiscale modeling approaches to harness neuron-glial interactions”

When: September 16, 2021 04:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Webinar: https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81354069362

Hosted by Dr. Scott Heximer

Visit Physiology’s Home Page to see the Full listing of our Seminar Series
First Annual MHSc in Medical Physiology Award

The Department of Physiology has created a new award for students enrolled in the MHSc in Medical Physiology program. This annual award will honour the accomplishments of one student in the program who has achieved excellence not only in PSL4010Y (Mentored Literature Review in Physiology) but also across their entire MHSc program (excluding the practicum). The award will support the costs of publishing their mentored literature review in an appropriate journal.

For this inaugural year of both the program and the award, the competition was incredibly close and the MHSc Advisory Committee (who assesses the applications) decided to give the award to two deserving students, Rebecca Goldberg and Natalie Mercuri. Read on for details on their winning papers.
Congratulations to Physiology's Dr. Cristina Nostro and postdoctoral fellow Dr. Yasaman Aghazadeh who, in collaboration with Dr. Sara Nunes Vasconcelos' lab have "engineered a new method to improve the survival and potency" of transplanted pluripotent stem cells. Researchers have long hoped that transplanting these special cells — that can transform themselves into insulin-producing pancreas cells — will eventually lead to a cure for type one diabetes. This new work may be another crucial step in that direction. As detailed in this article by the University Health Network:

"The researchers isolated and recycled readily available microvessels from fat tissue to support the survival of cells transplanted under the skin....Upon transplanting the cells and microvessels into laboratory models, the team found that the microvessels were able to integrate with the host blood vessels, forming dense connections like the roots of a tree. With these stable and robust networks, the transplants retained up to six times more cells after three months than those without microvessels."

Postdoctoral fellow, Dr. Aghazadeh took a moment out of her busy day to tell us more: Keep Reading...
Physiology PhD Candidate Wins Award for Best Abstract

Congratulations to **Margaret Elizabeth Eng**, PhD student in Professor Stephen Matthews' lab, on winning the Thomas MacDonald Award for best abstract, presented at the Society for Reproductive Investigation's 68th Annual Scientific Meeting which took place in Boston in July.

"I am grateful to the Matthews Lab and all those who have supported me throughout my PhD. I am humbled to receive this recognition for the main findings of my project, especially as the award is in honour of Dr. Thomas McDonald, who made immense contributions to the field of fetal neuroscience."

Congratulations Elizabeth and the Matthews Lab on this wonderful achievement!
CHRISTOPHER PERUMALLA PHYSIOLOGY MAJOR STUDENT AWARD

Congratulations to Catherine Jiaying Chen on receipt of the 2021 Christopher Perumalla Physiology Major Student Award.

GASP Executive 2021-22

We are delighted to announce the GASP Executive Council members for the 2021-22 academic year:

President: Yasaman Mostafaie yasaman.mostafaie@mail.utoronto.ca (Bolz lab)

Vice Presidents  Joseph Lee, MSc, (Connelly lab); Kelvin Fu-Tsuen Lee, (Seed lab); Eman Nishat (A Wheeler lab)

Admin Advisor: Radu Gugustea (Jia lab)

Financial Advisor  Raina Ladha (Horner lab)

We look forward to all of the exciting initiatives and social events that GASP will offer over the coming year!

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Stay safe everyone!

Please continue to visit the central COVID-19 hub for the U of T community

UTogether