

## DEPARTMENT COVID-19 UPDATE #19 - June 16th, 2020

*On behalf of Nick Kates, Chair, Department of Psychiatry & Behavioural Neurosciences –*

Although the number of new cases of CoVID-19 continues to drop, both provincially and locally, and our University and Hospital services are starting – carefully – to resume some of their previous activities, we know that for the time being many of these will need to happen in very different ways. One example was our **annual summer celebration** last week, which brought us together via Zoom to acknowledge the achievements of our learners, faculty and staff over the last year, and which turned out to be a surprisingly intimate and very enjoyable gathering.

Congratulations to all our award winners (see below) and thank you to all our graduates, many of whom will be remaining with our Department. And thanks also to **Joanne Milne, Margaret McKinnon** and **Cheyenne Reid** for their work in arranging the evening. Here is a link to the Celebration in case you missed it - [department celebration](#); password: 9P\*%8\*7Z

And to keep this Update as brief as possible, I will be sending out the latest Research Update in a separate email later this afternoon.

### VEGA IN THE NEWS

For those of you who may have missed it, it was great to see Dr. Theresa Tam refer to the work of **Harriet MacMillan** and her colleagues in her daily news briefing yesterday. When talking about the development of online educational resources for healthcare workers to help them identify instances of family violence, she made specific reference to **VEGA** (Violence, Evidence, Guidance, and Action) the project Harriet has led, and the resources that are publicly available on the McMaster University website.

And this was followed up this morning with the exciting announcement that the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) are going to provide \$750,000 for **Melissa Kimber** to lead the evaluation of VEGA through a project called RISE (Researching the Impact of Service provider Education) PHAC also announced the public launch of the VEGA educational resources and more information about both projects can be found [here](#). Congratulations to Melissa and Harriet on their achievements.

### DEPARTMENT NEWS

Congratulations to **our 2019-20 Award winners** who are: **Natasha Snelgrove** (2 awards), **Joanna Jarecki**, **Cheyenne Reid**, **Karen Daca**, **Ann Gisborn**, **Daisey Sun**, **Andrea Alvarez**, **Katherine Ramsden**, **Jessica Vanderveen**, **Jennifer Brasch**, **Holly Raymond**, **Sophiya Benjamin**, **Pri Weerasekera** (2 awards), **Sebastien Prat**, **Ava Muir**, **Darren Chai**, **Sang Ik Song**, **Jordon Charlebois**, **Benicio Frey**, **Sandra Westcott**, **Ana Hategan**, **Marlene Trificante**, **Joe Ferencz**, and **JoAnn Corey**.

### Our (Virtual) Department Meeting June 17<sup>th</sup>.

This Wednesday, at 09.00 – 10.00 we will be holding our scheduled **Department Meeting**, and I hope you will be able to join us. The major Agenda items will be a discussion led by Suzanne

Archie and Bev Pindar-Donick on what we can be doing as individuals and as a Department to combat anti-black and systemic racism, prejudice and intolerance. Other items will be a summary from Karen Saperson of findings from the Department's 3<sup>rd</sup>. Wellness Survey, which is attached, and my regular 6 monthly financial update. I hope you will be able to join us and here is the Zoom link: [Zoom link](#)

The “**Future uses of Technology**” working group, which now has 11 members, will be meeting on Thursday, June 25th from 3:00-4:00pm, and you are welcome to join us. Zoom link: [here](#) Can you let me know if you will be attending.

And a reminder that **Sunday June 21st is National Indigenous Peoples Day** and some great ideas for ways to celebrate the day can be found [here](#)

**MacART** After six years, **Terry Bennett** has decided to step down as Co-Director of MacART, as she takes up her new responsibilities as the Jack Laidlaw Chair in Patient-Centred Health Care. Caroline Roncadin, clinical neuropsychologist and clinical director of the autism program at McMaster Children's Hospital, will take over as Co-Director. Our thanks to Terry for her role in the development of such an outstanding and influential Program.

#### **WELLNESS RESOURCES**

There is a very useful article in **Medical Teacher** on tips for optimizing resilience and wellbeing for healthcare professions trainees and healthcare professionals during public health crises. Full article [here](#) and tip number 10 is particularly relevant.

And here is a link to the recent **Webinar put on by FHS's Program for Faculty Development on Prioritizing Wellness**, which included Karen Saperson, Randi McCabe and Bode Akintan as 3 of the 4 panelists. Link [here](#)

#### **CONGRATULATIONS TO...**

**James MacKillop** who is the recipient of a one year CHIR COVID-19 grant of \$491,264, entitled, “Utilization of an Existing Longitudinal Observational Cohort of Community Adults to Characterize the Mental Health and Substance Use Impacts of COVID-19”.

**Ellen Lipman** who is part of a group that received a \$300,000 CIHR grant entitled, “A multi-disciplinary, patient-partnered pan-Canadian, comparative effectiveness evaluation of an innovative acute pediatric mental health and addictions care bundle”.

**Sawayra Owais**, a student in our MD Program, who received a prestigious Mach-Gaensslen Foundation Medical Student Summer Research Grant, a major accomplishment. Sawayra will be examining the effectiveness of Online 1-Day CBT-based workshops for postpartum depression under the supervision of **Ryan Van Lieshout**.

**Anita Acai** who received an Ontario Graduate Fellowship - Doctoral Award.

**Karen Zhang** on receiving a Health Professional Investigator grant from HHS for her study entitled, “Coping with the COVID-19 pandemic while living with cancer: an exploratory cross-sectional study examining psychological adjustment and social determinants of health”.

### **SADLY.. Stuart Smith**

As you may have seen in yesterday’s Hamilton Spectator, Stuart Smith passed away last week. Stuart was a psychiatrist and the former leader of the Ontario Liberal Party but he was also one of the founding members of our Department, who came from Montreal with Nate Epstein to work on the inpatient unit at St. Joe’s before being elected as MPP for Hamilton West. The Spectator article about his career is [here](#) and a link to his obituary in the Globe and Mail can be found [here](#)

### **IN THE MEDIA**

**Jenn Brasch** did an interview for the National on opioid use disorder during COVID-19. Watch her interview [here](#)

**Laura Duncan** and **Michael Boyle** appeared in another piece in the Spectator on what all parents should know about school closures and COVID-19. Full article [here](#)

**Shawna Thompson**, a student of **Jane Foster’s** in the Neuroscience Graduate Program, had an editorial on COVID-19 published in Canadian Science Policy Centre. Full article [here](#)

**Jean Clinton** was quoted in a Hamilton News article on how the coronavirus has delayed Hamilton’s school bullying report. Full article [here](#)

**Randi McCabe** and **Sid Stacey** were interviewed on Cable 14’s show “Keeping it Together” last month. Watch interview [here](#)

McMaster Daily News included an article on a course **Catharine Munn** has developed for any McMaster students entitled “Teaching the Pandemic.” Full article [here](#)

**Research Update to follow...**