

**MESSAGE FROM THE ACTING CHAIR****Dr. Jen Gommerman**

Dear colleagues:

March is supposed to come in like a lion and out like a lamb, but snow on April 1st has fooled us again. Spring will be here eventually, but in the meantime, we will have to take pleasure in small victories. Like a successful hybrid Spring faculty meeting held on March 28th thanks to the very capable Leah Edwards. We heard from all aspects of DoI life starting with a moving land acknowledgment from Dr. Nana Lee and finishing with a report from Dr. Eleanor Fish on how our small but mighty Department is having an impact around the world. In particular, Eleanor has shared some exciting news from the Beyond Science Initiative (BSI) highlighting our very own JCZP as the keynote from the last conference. Please see page 5.

Between these bookends, we heard about our successful graduate student recruitment efforts (Drs. Korosh Kianizad and Thierry Mallevaey), our expanding undergraduate offerings (Dr. Jasty Singh), new post-doctoral initiatives (Dr. Tania Watts) and of course, news from our IMMSA (Shaivy Tiwari and Kunal Kolhatkar) and IGSA (Tiffany Kong and Kitty Liu) student leaders. In particular, IMMSA reported on the results of their take-no-prisoners apparel contest (sorry Alberto/Bebhinn, no BCR; sorry Goetz, no VLR) and IGSA reported on all the activities that have been the glue our Department needs during these months of isolation. Of particular importance to all, IGSA reported the details for the upcoming retreat. Mark your calendars: The **Fall retreat will be Sept. 11-12 at Fern Resort**. Check it out, we think you will like what you see. Keynote speakers will be announced shortly. Thanks to Kitt and Tiff for their hard work in securing a venue when there was very little choice available.

Looking ahead, if you are recruiting students, check the dossiers link periodically that was sent out by Kate (graduate.immunology@utoronto.ca) and interested faculty can email Kate for details. Our advertisement for a new Teaching Stream Assistant Professor closes April 14th. We would appreciate if all of you could circulate this [advert](#) through your Social Media connections and academic channels.

That's it from the 7th floor MSB. Next time I speak to you, the daffodils will be in their full glory. I promise!

Jen

Professor Department of Immunology
Canada Research Chair in Tissue-specific Immunity



UPCOMING EVENTS

CHARLES GOULD EASTON SEMINARS

Mondays, 11:05 – 12:00

April 4, 2022 at 11:05 am Hybrid Delivery

Weiguo Cui, PhD

[Associate Investigator](#)

[Versiti Blood Research Institute](#)

[Associate Professor, Microbiology & Immunology](#)

[Medical College of Wisconsin](#)

Title: Single-cell Multi-omics Reveals Cellular and Molecular Mechanisms of T cell “Exhaustion”

Host: David Brooks, PhD

Room: MSB 2172 and Zoom

April 25, 2022 at 11:05 am – Delivery TBD

Maria Ciofani, PhD

[Associate Professor, Department of Immunology, Duke](#)

[University School of Medicine](#)

Title: TBD

Host: Juan Carlos Zúñiga-Pflücker, PhD

TBD – Hybrid or Zoom

*No Easton Seminars on April 11 & April 18, 2022

PHD Research Seminar via Zoom

April 13, 2022 at 2 p.m.

“Investigation of the Serological Changes that Discriminate Asymptomatic Antinuclear Antibody Positive Individuals from Systemic Autoimmune Rheumatic Disease Patients”

Carolina Munoz Grajales

Supervisor: Dr. Joan Wither

Department Special Seminar

April 19, 2022 at 2 p.m. via Zoom

Veronique Miron, PhD

[Senior Lecturer and Principal Investigator](#)

[University of Edinburgh](#)

“Macrophages regulate brain health throughout the lifespan”

Host: Jen Gommerman, PhD

STUDENT SEMINARS

Mondays, 10:00-11:00

April 4, 2022 at – Hybrid Delivery (MSB2170&Zoom)

Investigating the role of macrophages in the pathogenesis of Primary Sclerosing Cholangitis
Diana Nakib (MacParland Lab)

Exploring the determinates of intra-graft Treg potency in lung transplant
Ke Bei (Juvet Lab)

April 11, 2022 at 10 am via Zoom

CSF2 autoantibodies in Crohn’s disease
Ling Ling Tai (Mortha Lab)

Title TBD

Boyan Konstantinov Tsankov (Philpott Lab)

April 18, 2022 at 10 am via Zoom

Title TBD

Sophie Sun (Yeung Lab)

Treating inflammatory bowel disease by developing small molecule inhibitors of a DUSP
Natalia Ogrodnik (Martin Lab)

April 25, 2022 at 10 am – TBD Hybrid or Zoom

Title TBD

Alvin Han (Gommerman Lab)

Title TBD

Maddy Kern-Smith (Watts Lab)

Title TBD

Tianning Yu (Rotation)



Our departmental Wellness, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity (WIDE) Committee cordially invites the members of the Department of Immunology (faculty, staff, fellows, and students) to participate in a short survey to help us better serve you. The survey will be emailed very soon through Immunology Communications. It has 16 questions and should take about 5 minutes to answer.

Your valuable feedback will be kept anonymous and used to help us ensure that principles of WIDE are included in our efforts to sustain excellence in teaching, research, and services. We value your thoughts on how to make the efforts of the WIDE committee more impactful in promoting an inclusive, diverse, and accommodating space in our department. We thank you in advance for your time and cooperation. For any questions or concerns about the survey, please reach out to Rysa Zaman at rysa.zaman@mail.utoronto.ca. We look forward to your insight and input.

IMMSA

Hello Immunologists!

We hope everyone's midterm season went well and everyone gets a little bit of a break before finals start! This is the final stretch before the semester is over and everyone can relax for a bit. It's definitely been raining a lot but keep in mind, April showers bring May flowers!! Hang in there and we can't wait for the warm weather!! You got this guys!!

The March IMMSA events were so fun and successful! We had a great seminar with our Intro to Immunology Techniques Series about a new method called Seahorse. We also had a great turnout for our Neuroimmunology Seminar with Dr. Wilson from the University of California, San Francisco. We also had our final Mentorship Meetup, and it went so well! We're so happy to have successfully run mentorship this year and we hope those who participated learned a lot from their mentors! We hope you guys stay in touch and for those who have yet to participate, keep an eye out next semester for more news on our mentorship program. These events may be our last one in a while and we're so glad people were able to come out and join us.

As for IMMSA events this month, we'll be taking a break and letting everyone get their grind on. Classes are ending soon and that exam study period we know and love so much is about to start. Make sure to be mindful of your mental health and study habits in this stressful period. Take breaks, exercise, and be sure to eat healthy!

Coming up, we have our annual Ontario-Quebec Undergraduate Immunology conference occurring on May 7th and 8th. We have over 20 amazing undergraduate students presenting the various research they've done along with keynote speakers from schools across Canada. We hope to see you guys there virtually and can't wait for one of our favorite events of the year.

Have a lovely April!

Shaivy Tiwari & Kunal Kolhatkar

Immunology Students' Association (IMMSA) Co-Presidents 2021/22

Website: <http://immsauoft.com> | Instagram: @immsta



Hello Immunologists!

Spring is finally blooming through the residual winter frost, so we're very excited to announce some of the things that we've been up to in order to keep everyone's spirits in step with the season change! We've seen the continuation of our monthly virtual yoga sessions, which have been organized by our wellness representative Baweleta and led by Feng Cao. Baweleta has also organized our incredibly popular therapy dog event, where we got to meet Doongie and Mylo, a Siberian husky and corgi, alongside their human friends. We heard that this was a big hit, so keep your eyes out for their return!

In accordance with provincial public health guidelines, the department experienced its first in-person St. Patty's pub night in nearly three years! This popular event was well-hosted by social reps Robyn, Meggie and Kameel, who ensured graduate students had a great and safe time through meticulous planning of food and drinks.

It has been over half a year since our mentors and mentees have paired up. We thank the mentors for their ongoing incredible mentorship as they help our first-year students navigate in the department. To help further facilitate this, our mentorship representative Bobby has organized coffee chats that were guided by meaningful questions and discussion points. We hope both our mentees and mentors benefited from this valuable experience.

In the last two weeks of March, our outreach representative Baweleta has organized our annual Immunology Day event virtually, where immunology graduate students hosted virtual workshops in high school classrooms across Toronto. We would like to thank the volunteer presenters: Salma Sheikh-Mohamed, Baweleta Isho, Natalia Ogrodnik, Douglas Chung, Boyan Tsankov, Anthony Wong, Tina Luo, and Siu Ling Tai.

This month concluded with the end of intramurals, led by Natalia, our sports representative. We also wanted to give a special shout-out to the team captains of our volleyball, dodgeball, and ultimate frisbee Immunodominator teams, which have been led by Natalia, Daniel, and Lawrence. Thank you for all the support, and we hope to see everyone again for intramurals in the Fall term!

If you didn't get a chance to come out to our events this month, don't worry! We have a lot in store for you, with our annual Spring Run-Off being right around the corner. Please check your emails for additional details on how to register to run with everyone in the department. We will also be starting our immunology apparel sale this month with IMMSA, featuring a design created by one of our very own immunologists! Keep an eye out for that email because you certainly do not want to miss it!

Finally to close off our newsletter this month, we forward you a message from Yasman from GLSE:

The Temerty Faculty of Medicine is committed to supporting students to academically thrive throughout their graduate training. An important component of this training involves your supervisory experiences as a research stream Master or Doctoral student. As such, a survey was developed to capture key aspects of a student's graduate supervisory experience. The purpose of the Graduate Supervisory Experience Survey is to explore the supervisory experience of our thesis based graduate students. The results will help ensure the best educational experience for our graduate students. Please click the link below for more information and FAQ: <https://glse.utoronto.ca/graduate-supervisory-experience-survey>

Stay safe and well,

Tiff & Kitt - IGSA Co-Presidents 2021-2022.

Website: igsaimm.com Instagram: @igsa.uoft



Beyond Sciences Initiative (BSI) Update

The DoI's continued support of BSI contributed to the success of this year's 7th Annual virtual BSI Conference: Science & Society. The conference was held on February 26 and 27, and on March 5. This year there were over 1000 registrants from 77 countries participating. Notably, our very own Dr. J.C. Zuniger-Pflucker was a keynote speaker at this year's conference, his presentation on February 26 entitled 'From stem cells to T cells: applications and implications,' and Dr. Nana Lee facilitated an interactive career session on March 5: 'Creating your dream career.' DoI graduate students Bettina Camara, Robbie Jin and Robyn Loves and undergraduates Aliya Izumi and Jacqueline Wong assumed leadership roles on the BSI Executive, organizing this year's conference.

PUBLICATIONS

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DEPARTMENT OF IMMUNOLOGY

NEWSLETTER



Rujas E, Cui H, Burnie J, Aschner CB, Zhao TT, Insausti S, Muthuraman K, Semesi A, Ophel J, Nieva JL, Seaman MS, Guzzo C, Treanor B, Julien JP. 2022. Engineering pan-HIV-1 neutralization potency through multispecific antibody avidity. *Proceedings Of The National Academy Of Sciences Of The United States Of America*. **119(4)**.

