

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR, DR. JUAN CARLOS ZUNIGA-PFLUCKER

In early April, the biannual Department of Immunology Faculty Meeting took place, and we heard from our student, staff, and academic program leaders. Among the many items presented, there was excitement about the development of new undergraduate and graduate course offerings, and a lively discussion about how to better implement our new graduate course that covers the PhD qualifying proposal process. These items are being addressed, as well as any potential feedback that we will be receiving from the recent Departmental external review process.

There is much to celebrate this Spring. Starting with a new award, which was made possible by the generous support from BD Biosciences, that recognizes the excellent work performed by our graduate students in the Applied Immunology MSc program. In particular, this new award is given to an outstanding *Research Presentation in IMM1650Y*, which is the capstone research course of the MSc program. I am happy to say that the winner of this year's inaugural prize is **Eric Sun** from the Julien Lab.

I am also delighted to announce the recipients of the *Immunology Collaborative Postdoctoral Research Award* (IMM Co-PRA), which goes to Immunology postdocs proposing to carry-out new collaborative projects between two labs. This year the IMM Co-PRA will be given to: **Anthony Altieri** and **Kyle Burrows** (Buechler/Mortha labs) and **Kevin Champagne-Jorgensen** and **Tapas Mukherjee** (Gommerman/Philpott labs). Congratulations, and we look forward to hearing about your exciting work at next year's Immunology Summer Retreat.

Speaking of learning about what our talented Immunology postdocs have accomplished, I encourage our faculty to submit nominations for the *BD Biosciences / Immunology Postdoctoral Lecture Award* (BD/IMM-PLA), and for postdocs to submit their abstracts to be considered for an oral presentation at the upcoming *Annual Postdoctoral Research Day*, which will be held on June 12 (more details below), and culminate with a presentation of the BD/IMM-PLA prize.

## UPCOMING SEMINARS

### [CHARLES GOULD EASTON SEMINARS](#) (Mondays at 11:05 am, MSB 2170)

**Monday, May 1, 2023**

[Dr. Marc K. Jenkins](#)

[Regents and Distinguished McKnight University Professor](#)

[Department of Microbiology and Immunology  
University of Minnesota](#)

**"Towards a general model of helper T cell subset specification and memory cell formation"**

Host: J.C. Zúñiga-Pflücker, Ph.D.

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**Monday, May 8, 2023**

[Dr. Shannon Turley](#)

[VP Senior Director](#)

[Cancer Immunology](#)

[Genentech](#)

**""Stromal Evolution in Cancer, Fibrosis and Immunotherapy""**

Host: Matt Buechler, PhD

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**Monday, May 29, 2023**

[Dr. Dorian McGavern](#)

[Senior Investigator](#)

[Viral Immunology and Intravital Imaging Section  
NIH](#)

**"TBD"**

Host: David Brooks, PhD



## MAY STUDENT SEMINARS

(Monday, 10:00 a.m. at MSB 2172)

May 1, 2023

Development of a Novel CAR-T cell Therapy  
Targeting MPO for Acute Myelogenous  
Leukemia

Evey Zheng (Hirano Lab)

High parameter characterization of autologous  
hematopoietic stem cell products

Cora Geiger (Wall Lab)

[IMMUNOLOGY PDF/RA MAY Seminar](#)

May 3, 2023 (3:30 – 4:30) MSB 7231

"NOD-ing off Crohn's Disease-associated  
manifestations"

Tapas Mukherjee (Philpott Lab)

"Inhibition of Bruton's tyrosine kinase in CNS  
autoimmunity"

Ikbel Naouar (Gommerman Lab)

[POSTDOC Events](#)

## June 12, 2023 – IMM Postdoctoral Research Day – MSB 2170

We are looking forward to our first annual Immunology Postdoctoral Research Day on Monday June 12, 2023. The research day will highlight 12 short talks (15 minutes+5 discussion) from the post docs. This will be followed by the BD Biosciences Immunology postdoctoral award lecture (don't forget to get those nominations in!)

\*\* Open call for Abstracts by May 19<sup>th</sup>.

[Alumni Event](#)

## U of T Immunology Alumni Event in Washington, DC

Thursday, May 11, 2023, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m. (ET)

The American Association of Immunologists' (AAI) [Immunology2023](#) conference will take place at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center in Washington, DC from May 11 to 15, 2023. Dr. **JC Zuniga-Pflucker**, Chair of the Department of Immunology, is pleased to invite you to a U of T Immunology alumni networking event on the evening of May 11<sup>th</sup>.

The Department of Immunology will be honouring alumna Dr. **Akiko Iwasaki** (PhD '98), a Sterling Professor of Immunobiology and Molecular, Cellular, and Developmental Biology at Yale University and the next President of the AAI. We look forward to celebrating all graduate alumni from U of T Immunology.



## HELLO FROM THE W.I.D.E. COMMITTEE

May is upon us and is full of important dates and communities to be recognized and celebrated.

- May is [Asian Heritage Month in Canada](#), a time to reflect on and recognize the many contributions that Canadians of Asian heritage have made and continue to make to Canada. Asian Heritage Month has been celebrated since the 1990s. UofT's ARCDO has [many events on offer](#) for the month, and the Munk School has compiled an [excellent set of resources](#) to help us all respond to anti-Asian hate. The Temerty Faculty of Medicine's Office of Inclusion and Diversity (OID) has also highlighted many [resources, events and student groups](#) you can get involved with. For some interesting local history, read about the [displacement of Old Chinatown](#) in [Toronto](#).
- May is also [Canadian Jewish Heritage Month](#), when we recognize and celebrate the inspirational role that Jewish Canadians have played and continue to play in communities across the country. The Faculty of Medicine's OID has put together a great collection of [resources and events](#). Among them are this in-person exhibit celebrating Jewish suburban life in the Toronto neighbourhood of [Bathurst Manor](#), developed and built by Jewish community members after WWII, and a [virtual walking tour](#) through the Jewish history of Kensington Market and Spadina Ave.
- In May we also recognize **Sexual Violence Prevention Month**. UofT's [Sexual Violence Prevention and Support Centre](#) supports trainees, staff, and faculty who have been affected by sexual violence or sexual harassment, and works to end sexual violence on campus through training and education. They also host the [Healing Hearts Survivor Group](#) for survivors of all genders.
- May 5<sup>th</sup> is the **National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and Two-Spirit People**, also known as [Red Dress Day](#). This day honours the victims that have been lost, recognizes the incredibly disproportionate amounts of violence experienced by Indigenous women, girls and members of the 2SLGBTQQIA in Canada, and [calls us all to take action](#) to stop this gender- and race-based violence.
- On May 17<sup>th</sup> we recognize the [International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia](#). Originally commemorated in Quebec, this day is celebrated in many countries around the world, and reminds us of the need to stand with our 2SLGBTQQIA communities against discrimination and hate. May 17<sup>th</sup> marks the date on which the World Health Organization removed homosexuality from their list of mental disorders, in 1990. 1990! We have come a long way, but [we have so much more work to do](#).
- On May 21<sup>st</sup> we will celebrate the [World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development](#), recognizing the richness of the world's many cultures and the crucial need for intercultural dialogue and understanding.
- And this year from May 28<sup>th</sup> to June 3<sup>rd</sup>, we will recognize [National AccessAbility Week](#) – a celebration of the contributions and leadership of Canadians with disabilities, and a time to recognize those who work to make public and private spaces more inclusive for everyone. [UofT's Accessibility Services](#) team supports students in navigating disability-related barriers to academic success. If you are a student with an accommodation need, please check them out!



And as always, we encourage all members of the department to educate ourselves about ways in which we can all advance equity, diversity, and inclusion. Some helpful [upcoming workshops](#) offered for the UofT community include:

### **Dismantling Anti-Black Racism in Post-Secondary Environments**

[Virtual, May 4, 1-3pm](#)

Facilitated by: Dr. Joseph Smith, Educator, Community Worker and Researcher

### **Understanding Antisemitism on Campus**

[Virtual, May 15, 10am-12pm](#)

Facilitated by: Jacqueline Dressler, Manager of Advocacy at Western Hillel and Hillel

Wishing you all a warm and sunny May.

-Your WIDE Committee

Follow us on Twitter [@IMM\\_WIDE](#) for more updates!

## **GRADUATE PROGRAM UPDATE**

### **Congratulations PhD grads!**

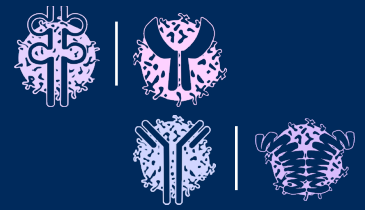
Dr. Jessica Bruce (Philpott/Girardin labs) – April 12, 2023

Dr. Sabrin Mishel (Danska lab) – April 19, 2023

Dr. Mengdi Guo (Brooks lab) – April 20, 2023

### **Happening now: Graduate Student Experience in the Research University Survey (gradSERU)**

The University of Toronto is currently participating in one of its most important institutional surveys for graduate students – the Graduate Student Experience in the Research University Survey, or gradSERU. Complete the survey by May 9 to help us improve graduate education at U of T and get a chance to win one of our prizes! Check your inbox now for a survey invitation. The survey is open to all degree-seeking grad students who began their programs in Fall 2022 or earlier.



## UPDATES FROM IGSA

Happy May fellow Immunologists!

Spring is in the air as the weather warms up, and we're ready to soak up some sunshine on our first-ever Wellness Spring Hike at the beautiful Scarborough Bluffs! As a collaborative event hosted by our lovely Sports and Wellness reps, we're looking forward to a fabulous Saturday where we can wander out from the lab and enjoy some fresh air and great company. Feel free to join the hiking group or explore the scenery at your own pace. A picnic lunch will be provided in the afternoon and transportation to and from the bluffs will be covered by IGSA. As this is an off-campus event, there is a cap on the number of attendees. If you missed the sign-ups this time but still want to go, shoot us an email and we'll look into hosting this event again next year!

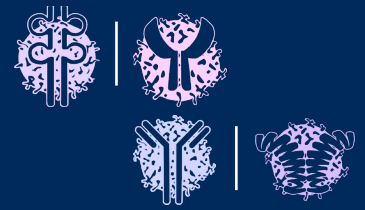
Not an outdoors person? We've got you covered too. Join us for a cozy night later on this month as we battle it out in a game of IMM Jeopardy! Who needs regular trivia when you can have IMM trivia? Come test your knowledge of all things immunology and form alliances and enmities in this final showdown. Also coming up fast is a return of the much-loved Dog Therapy Night! If you missed it last time or simply want a second helping, two new furry friends will be joining us on Monday, May 1st at 6:30pm in the Medical Sciences Building. Come de-stress and impress at a paw-sitively fantastic bonding session with Penny and Mare, two professionally trained therapy pups! Some light refreshments will also be available, but please note that these will be for human consumption only.

Last but definitely not least - summer intramurals! Sign-ups will begin soon so keep an eye out on your emails. Summer is traditionally the time for Ultimate Frisbee, but we're always open to trying out other sports as long as there's enough interest and enough people to make a team. If you have something specific in mind, send us an email as soon as possible before intramural sign-ups end and the season officially begins!

As we slowly move into the summer months, we want to offer a sincere congratulations to all of our graduating MSc students whose final presentations are wrapping up at the end of this week. In addition, best of luck to all the second-year PhDs who will be undergoing their qualifying exams this month! And no matter if you've got upcoming vacation plans or you're determined to push out more data at the lab, you should all be proud of yourselves for another academic year accomplished. The next one is sure to be even better!

Lastly, remember to fill out the graduate supervisor experience survey that has been e-mailed. There are prizes to be won!

Bobby and Meggie  
IGSA Co-Presidents 2022-2023



## UPDATE FROM IMMSA

Hi Immunologists,

It's Vicky and Momo, your 2022-23 IMMSA Co-Presidents! With our term coming to an end, we would like to express our thanks to all of you for giving us the opportunity to work on your behalf in this academic year. From research seminars to movie nights to apparel sales, we really enjoyed seeing all of you interacting with faculty members and your peers. With that being said, we would like everyone to get to know our new executive teams for the 2023-2024 school year:

Co-Presidents: Catherine Chi & Jason Yang  
Vice-President: Josh Janevski  
Administrative Director/Secretary: Gabrielle Ramesar  
Technical Director: Allison Chan  
Director of External Affairs: Sarah Varughese  
Deputy Director of External Affairs: Jeya Scott  
Finance Director: Michelle Wong  
Deputy Finance Director: Emily Shin  
Events Director: Ananya Gupta  
Deputy Events Director: Jasmine Zhang  
Graphic Designer: Jenny Chen  
4th-Year Representative: Yinhan Dechi Castro  
3rd-Year Representative: Victoria Sephton

Before we graduate from IMMSA and UofT, we have our final and most important event of the academic year - **OQUIC 2023**. OQUIC is our annual undergraduate immunology research conference, where students from across Canada present their work for the chance to showcase their presentation skills and win cash prizes. You can register for OQUIC 2023, which will be held in-person in MyHal on Saturday, May 6th and Sunday, May 7th using this [link](#).

Congratulations on finishing your final exams! We hope everyone gets to relax a bit and enjoy the nice weather and the pretty cherry blossoms. And with that, we will wrap up this message and our time as your IMMSA Co-Presidents!

Cheers,

Vicky Xie and Momo Lin

IMMSA Co-presidents 2022-2023 Immunology Students' Association (IMMSA) Co-Presidents 2022/23

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



## PUBLICATIONS

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Khan AB, Robbins CS. 2023. Macrophage niche availability enables local monocyte proliferation in peripheral tissues. *Nature Immunology*. Online ahead of print.

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