The Ottawa Medical Scene

The Faculty of Medicine at the University of Ottawa is an emerging leader in medical education – we’re bright, we’re strong, and we’re a force that will shape the direction of medical research and discovery in Canada and beyond. By integrating the local medical community and achieving greater interdependence, we can deliver higher quality healthcare – from the labs, to the hospitals, to the classrooms.

Strength in Numbers

In the late 1990s, the Ontario government legislated the merger of the Ottawa General Hospital and the Ottawa Civic Hospital to form The Ottawa Hospital. The University of Ottawa Faculty of Medicine, under the leadership of Dean Peter Walker, encouraged the adoption of a new attitude: “we are them and they are us,” emphasizing the importance of collaboration and the building of new scientific alliances. The various research programs, the University departments and the hospitals’ clinical services, although each had a distinct identity, all became intricately linked.

The collaborative relationships were further cemented soon after the merger of the Loeb Health Research Institute and the Ottawa Hospital Research Institute, which became the Ottawa Health Research Institute (OHRI), the research arm of The Ottawa Hospital and a major part of the University of Ottawa Faculty of Medicine and Faculty of Health Sciences. What started with two dozen or more senior scientists in each institution blossomed to become a multi-campus facility that houses more than XXO scientists and investigators, 300 students and 500 support staff.

All for the Best, and Still Counting

This fundamental reshaping of the academic health care scene in Ottawa provided countless benefits on all fronts. It met the University of Ottawa’s research objectives, improved the quality of care to the population of Eastern Ontario, and helped develop the Faculty’s teaching programs. Our medical residents gained tremendously from the mergers: on a regular basis, they interact with more than 1,200 physicians throughout Ottawa and Eastern Ontario.

People involved gains from the collaboration, in spirit and in fact, between the University of Ottawa Faculty of Medicine and its affiliated hospitals and research institutes – a unique conglomerate allowing for the best in research and in training.

Furthermore, our research institutes and affiliated hospitals attract international recognition to the University and to the city of Ottawa, and play an instrumental role in securing crucial medical research funding. A concentration of efforts has helped the Faculty of Medicine raise $155 million in external funding in 2004-2005 alone, allowing the University of Ottawa to reach the 5th rank in Canada in Canadian Institutes of Health Research peer-reviewed grants.

The Room for Growth

This setting provided by the Faculty of Medicine offers scientists, clinicians and professors terrific occasions for collaboration and for branching out. For example, like many of his colleagues, Dr. Paul Hébert did not hesitate to seize the opportunity to “diversify,” and become a scientist, professor and clinician. The following profile on Dr. Hébert was prepared by the OHRI, and will appear in the July 2005 edition of Research Triumphs.

Working Together To Set Us Apart

Dr. Paul Hébert is a professor of Medicine and Epidemiology & Community Medicine at the University of Ottawa, a physician in the Intensive Care Unit of The Ottawa Hospital, and a senior scientist at the OHRI. Having a hand in each organization has helped him extend his reach to thousands around the world.

The long-standing partnership between the University of Ottawa, the OHRI and The Ottawa Hospital has been a tremendous asset to all the well-respected organizations. And to Dr. Paul Hébert, it has “made all the difference in the world.”

When Dr. Hébert was approached by another high profile university about three years ago with a very attractive package, the University of Ottawa, the OHRI and The Ottawa Hospital combined efforts and sprang into action. Recognizing the valuable contributions Dr. Hébert brought to the Intensive Care Unit and refusing to let him go, the three partners offered to realize one of Dr. Hébert’s biggest dreams:

rather than save one life at a time, he could save thousands. He has never looked back.

By creating a Chair in Transfusion and Critical Care Research, Dr. Hébert could now delve into research and teaching – two new prospects he knew would be mutually beneficial to each other – as well as his existing clinical practice. The new Chair allowed him to increase his research practice from a modest team of one to a highly successful and productive group of 11. And the results of that research are touching thousands around the world.

“When you are involved in critical care practice, if you do a good job, you can save a life,” notes Dr. Hébert. “But when you do research, in transfusion for example,
THE DEAN’S MESSAGE

Reaching high and reaching out

You have all heard that the provincial government will invest heavily in post-secondary Education over the next few years. That this commitment of $6.2B through 2010 comes in the face of an economic maelstrom is both compelling. In fact, the government is responding to both a complementary and powerful message: The first is that spending on education is a critical investment that creates wealth and social capital for the future and provides for a globally competitive environment; the second is the message from the Rae Review and the specific recommendations for a new system that recognizes the significant resources in medical education and research.

The budget called for an additional $95M to be invested in medical education with a further increase in undergraduate enrolment of 15% (104 places). Government has used the following reasoning for awarding these new undergraduate seats:

1. programs that address system priorities and have taught or mentored our students
2. assistance to students from disadvantaged and underrepresented groups (including Aboriginal students, visible minorities, and francophone students)
3. enhancement and creation of collaborative education models that address needs
4. faculty and institutional leadership
5. innovation in medical education
6. success of school in implementing past initiatives and meeting timelines and deliverables;

It is clear that we have aptly met these criteria for allocation. Hence, the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities and the Ministry of Health & Long Term Care requested that we take on an additional 16 medical students in the first year of the 2005 entry class.

Discussions throughout the Faculty contributed to our decision to reserve half of these positions for the development of an Aboriginal student stream and have engaged Health Canada in discussions towards longer-term support of an Aboriginal student stream and of these positions for the development of an Aboriginal student stream and of these positions for the development of an Aboriginal student stream.

The budget called for an additional $95M to be invested in medical education with a further increase in undergraduate enrolment of 15% (104 places). Government has used the following reasoning for awarding these new undergraduate seats:

1. programs that address system priorities and have taught or mentored our students
2. assistance to students from disadvantaged and underrepresented groups (including Aboriginal students, visible minorities, and francophone students)
3. enhancement and creation of collaborative education models that address needs
4. faculty and institutional leadership
5. innovation in medical education
6. success of school in implementing past initiatives and meeting timelines and deliverables;

It is clear that we have aptly met these criteria for allocation. Hence, the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities and the Ministry of Health & Long Term Care requested that we take on an additional 16 medical students in the first year of the 2005 entry class.

Discussions throughout the Faculty contributed to our decision to reserve half of these positions for the development of an Aboriginal student stream and have engaged Health Canada in discussions towards longer-term support of an Aboriginal student stream and have engaged Health Canada in discussions towards longer-term support of an Aboriginal student stream.

The budget called for an additional $95M to be invested in medical education with a further increase in undergraduate enrolment of 15% (104 places). Government has used the following reasoning for awarding these new undergraduate seats:

1. programs that address system priorities and have taught or mentored our students
2. assistance to students from disadvantaged and underrepresented groups (including Aboriginal students, visible minorities, and francophone students)
3. enhancement and creation of collaborative education models that address needs
4. faculty and institutional leadership
5. innovation in medical education
6. success of school in implementing past initiatives and meeting timelines and deliverables;

It is clear that we have aptly met these criteria for allocation. Hence, the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities and the Ministry of Health & Long Term Care requested that we take on an additional 16 medical students in the first year of the 2005 entry class.

Discussions throughout the Faculty contributed to our decision to reserve half of these positions for the development of an Aboriginal student stream and have engaged Health Canada in discussions towards longer-term support of an Aboriginal student stream and have engaged Health Canada in discussions towards longer-term support of an Aboriginal student stream. 

Dr. Ruth Slack will enter the 2005 Medical School Executive Leadership in Academic Medicine (ELAM) Program for Women, the only indepdend program that prepares senior women faculty in medical and dentistry schools for possible future institutional leadership, by the Faculty’s Office of Gender & Equity. This award is given to individuals who have taught or mentored our students or residents to understand the role of gender as a determinant of health in its broadest sense.

Dr. Leo Renaud

Dr. Leo Renaud, Medicine, received the 2005 Distinguished Scientist Award of the Canadian Society for Clinical Investigation at the annual meeting of the Society, which will take place in Chicago in September. Dr. Renaud is being recognized for his sustained and substantial contributions to our understanding of hypothalamic regulatory mechanisms.

Dr. William G. Hodge

In May 2005, Dr. William G. Hodge, Ophthalmology, was selected as the University of Ottawa recipient of the 2005 PAIRO Excellence in Clinical Teaching Award. This annual award, given in each of the five medical schools in Ontario, is viewed by the faculties as evidence of significant achievement and honour for their members. Dr. Hodge, donated his $1,200 prize to the Saint-Vincent Hospital, Ottawa’s only resource for long-term hospital care, in support of the hospital’s construction and renovation project.

Dr. Lynne Leonard & Dr. Gary Garber

Dr. Lynne Leonard, Epidemiology and Community Medicine, and Dr. Gary Garber, Medicine and Biochemistry, were recipients of the 2006 Hedwig van Ameringen Executive Leadership in Academic Medicine (ELAM) Program for Women.

Dr. Khadija Bhihmi & Dr. Alison Dugan

Dr. Khadija Bhihmi and Alison Dugan, Medicine, are among the first recipients of the End of Life Care Fellowship from the Associated Medical Services (AMS), aimed at educating physicians and medical students in the principles of palliative medicine with the goal of improving patient care. Holders of the Fellowship will be attending to patients on a clinical teaching ward of a teaching hospital and will be expected to provide a model of care at end-of-life for students and trainees as well as their professional colleagues.

In Memoriam

Dr. Paul A. Charbonneau

On April 2, 2005 Dr. Paul A. Charbonneau, MD ’73 passed away at the age of 64. Dr. Charbonneau lived in Watertown, South Dakota, where he was a well-known otorhinolaryngologist and allergist.

Dr. Pavel Hrdina

Dr. Pavel Hrdina passed away on April 20, 2005 after a long illness. He joined the University of Ottawa in 1969 serving as a long-standing member of the Department of Pharmacology and Psychiatry. In addition, Dr. Hrdina had a long relationship with the Institute of Mental Health Research at the Royal Ottawa Hospital. He is survived by his wife, Judith.

Pedro Muira

PhD student Pedro Muira received an award of excellence (Silver category) at the CIHR National Poster Competition held at the University of Manitoba on June 8, Pedro, who is a student in Dr. Bernard Jasmin’s laboratory, received national recognition for research on the molecular mechanisms involved in renal disease. The title of his poster was “Urtrophin A is Transiently Required during Human Skeletal Muscle via an IRES Dependent Mechanism.”

GENDER AND EQUITY ‘BOUQUET OF ROSES’ AWARD

Dr. Zemin Yao, Chair, Biochemistry, Microbiology and Immunology; is the winner of the 2005 Gender and Equity Award, given by the Faculty’s Gender and Equity Issues Office to a member or affiliate of the Faculty whose actions helped raise awareness of gender and equity issues in all aspects of medical school activity. Dr. Yao was recognized for the climate he created in his Department, which maximizes women’s specific talents of organizational skills and focus.

Medical Scene

you have now told as many as 200,000 physicians how to treat probably hundreds of thousands of patients. You can guide the rest of the world in their care and you do it over, and over again.

The same sort of logic holds true for Dr. Hebert’s role as a professor at the University of Ottawa. He is able to guide the careers of hundreds of students – the future of our health care in fact – with the important lessons he has learned both as a critical care physician and a researcher. The multiple-hipenate titles are equally attractive to students, who are lured to the university thanks to its impressive faculty.

To complete the circle, Dr. Hebert can take the important strides made in research as well as those taken as a professor back to the bedside, where patients at The Ottawa Hospital can rest assured they are in very capable and highly productive hands. The innovations he brings forth continue to benefit all three organizations daily. Dr. Hebert is certainly a great example of this ongoing collaboration, as are many of his colleagues.
Robert Kriz, David Simon, Danielle Stothart

you choose to pursue a career at the
technician in 1973. You've since become one
then joined the University of Ottawa as a
from Guru Nanak University in India and
an MSc from Punjab University, a BEd

700 members of the audience, the

Bonin and Linda N. Peterson

Our Ambassadors Celebrated

Ceremony of Professional Engagement and Convocation 2005

Teaching: One Man’s Passion

Vijay Kapal, professor of histology and embryology at the University of Ottawa Faculty of Medicine, is awarded a 2005 Capital Educator’s Award for 2005.

The Faculty of Medicine is as strong as the extraordinary professors it attracts, the extraordinary accomplishments of its researchers, and the extraordinary students in which it invests. Meet one such pillar, Vijay Kapal, who was recently awarded the Capital Educators’ Award, which celebrates the impact of successful and talented educators on students’ lives.

MedScène (MS): Mr. Kapal, you received an MSc from Punjab University, a BEd from Guru Nanak University in India and then joined the University of Ottawa as a technician in 1973. You’ve since become one of the Faculty’s most loyal tenants. Why did you choose to pursue a career at the University of Ottawa?

Vijay Kapal (VK): I came to Canada in 1972 and soon started working as a lab technician in the Department of Histology and Embryology. I liked the job but inside had a dream to teach these subjects to the medical students.

However, I did not possess a PhD or an MD degree. I started a PhD in Biology in 1975 but for various reasons, had to interrupt my studies. In 1991, I became head technician of the Department.

« My journey from technician to teacher was tedious and tortuous, so it was very satisfying to win this prestigious award that recognizes my contribution to medical student education. »

Vijay Kapal, Faculty of Medicine

My new job responsibilities included preparing and distributing teaching lab materials. Students increasingly asked me for help in histology and embryology labs; they seemed to like the way I explained certain concepts, thus the small groups eventually became full-fledged class review sessions. I taught first-, second- and third-year medical students for 11 years. This work was done in an unofficial and official capacity. My students showered me with respect and regard. I think as a result of their positive feedback, I stayed in this university hoping that I would one day have the opportunity to become a recognized teacher. Mentoring, not money, was my mission.

MS: In 1995-96 you were elected honorary president of the Aesculapian Society, in 1998 the graduating class (Meds ’98) made you their honorary president, in 2000 you were honoured with the Friend of the Canadian Federation of Medical Students Award. Obviously, students hold you in high regard but from my students more than from my teachers, more from my colleagues than from my students. What does the Capital Educators' Award mean to you?

VK: It means a lot. My journey from technician to teacher was tedious and tortuous, so it was very satisfying to win this prestigious award that recognizes my contribution to medical student education. I am very thankful to Dean Peter Walker and Chief Administrative Officer Mr. Levac for listening to the students’ repeated requests to allow me to develop and deliver the knowledge. I also thank Drs. Dungy, Peterson, Tolnai, Hardy, Santerman, Jasmin, Krantis and Hincke for their continuous and constructive support. Above all, I am thankful to my students who played a pivotal role in the making of me. They saw the teacher in me. They liked me, accepted me and applauded me.

MS: Any advice for the future generations of medical professors? A successful teacher has to be sympathetic, sincere and hard-working. He or she must fully grasp the subject, ensure effective delivery and be open to question-answer sessions. When I give lectures, I go less as a teacher more as a learner. The more questions I ask, the better I become. I am guided by these wise words from the Talmud: “Much I have learned from my teachers, more from my colleagues but from my students more than from them all.”

More than 600 nominations were received by the Ottawa Centre for Research and Innovation, who coordinated the 4th Annual Capital Educators’ Awards and Ed Gala, held at Algonquin College on May 11, 2005. Sixteen candidates were recognized.

On Wednesday, May 18, at the Canadian Museum of Civilization, 123 graduates of the Faculty of Medicine were conferred the MD degree, becoming Canada’s latest addition to the medical profession. Masters of ceremony, Drs. Brigitte Bonin and Linda N. Peterson (Assistant Deans, Undergraduate Medical Education), greeted the 700 members of the audience, the graduates, and the University and Faculty officials, all of whom were moved by the impeccable rendition of “O Canada” performed by graduates Lorraine Chow, Melissa Lem, Ariana Muratta and Nadine Yammine, with Philip Lai and Eric Haywood-Farmer at the violins and Michael Ong at the piano.

In his address, Dean Peter Walker reflected on the past four years of these graduates’ lives and how they impressed the Faculty with the qualities they embody—qualities that will help them attain excellence in their chosen paths: spirit of contribution, integrity, empathy, courage, capacity for wonder and confidence in their abilities.

Senator Dr. Wilbert J. Keon, MD ’61, honorary director general of the University of Ottawa Heart Institute, captivated the assembly with an inspiring keynote address. He spoke of the extensive evolution the medical profession has undergone in the past decades and stressed the importance of restoring Canada’s health system to the high level it has once known. He emphasized the overriding need for family physicians in the community care setting and the importance of team approaches to primary health care. The ceremony also saw the implementation of significant leadership role they will be playing in the reform of primary care, as well as their responsibility to care for and comfort the sick and their families with compassion, commitment, grace and heart.

The ceremony concluded with the valedictory speech, delivered by Sayeh Minoopeh, and the presentation of this year’s Honorary co-presidents, Drs. Youssef Wassif and Linda N. Peterson, chosen by the graduating class in recognition of their contribution to the fourth year of medical school. On behalf of the Aesculapian Society, James Wong presented the AE Award to Setareh Ziai, Sayeh Minoopeh, Shane English and Nicholas Rose, graduates selected for their contributions to the student body.

Concluding the evening’s speeches, and as a special honour to all those who guided and supported them throughout their studies, Sayeh expressed the graduates’ heartfelt appreciation to members of staff and faculty who played a crucial role in their success, and to the mentors, professors, family members and friends who supported them throughout their studies.
Mini école de médecine

No doubt about it, Mini-Medical Schools are becoming increasingly popular as each year goes by. This medical education program intended for the public, at large has been offered for more than ten years in a growing number of universities across North America (so far the program is offered in more than 70 institutions!) and was given for the first time in French outside the province of Quebec right here, at the University of Ottawa.

Last April, the Office of Continuing Medical Education (CME) and the Bureau des affaires francophones (BAF) of the Faculty of Medicine offered the inaugural session of the “Mini-école de médecine” – the French version of the Mini-Medical School – to the French population of this region. Dr. Matthew Mulligan, a Faculty of Medicine alumni and internal medicine resident at The Ottawa Hospital, agreed to act as the main organizer of this first session in French. “I accepted this project for several reasons,” he explains. “First, I have a strong interest in teaching, and I took part in several education programs during my training. Second, I had the opportunity to study in French thanks to the French study programs offered by the Faculty of Medicine. The Mini école de médecine is the most recent event involving participation from the BAF that aims at informing the public and create awareness of the importance of accessing health care services in French. I was happy to contribute to this effort.”

Dr. Mulligan appreciated his experience and was happy to see how popular the program turned out to be. “There were about a hundred participants of all ages – the youngest was 16 and the oldest was 84 – and from all walks of life. Their comments, especially on the quality of teaching, were very positive.”

The courses addressed topics such as the development and the various apparatus and systems of the human body and were delivered by some of the best professors of the Faculty of Medicine. Their enthusiasm translated into exceptional presentations, that helped organizers reach their objective.

“We wanted to allow the public to improve their knowledge in the area of health,” explained Dr. Mulligan. “Those who have an interest in health in general are more inclined to look after their own health, as well as that of their friends and relatives.”

Given the French community’s interest in this first session of the Mini école, the program will be offered once again in the fall, from October 22 to November 24. In addition, CME, the BAF and the Consortium national de formation en santé (CNFS) are considering the possibility of extending this program to the Collège universitaire Saint-Boniface, through videoconferencing, as soon as next fall.

For more information on the French or English Mini-Medical Schools, please call (613) 798-5555, ext. 19551, or visit the program’s Website at www.minimed.uottawa.ca.

Research Facilitation at the Faculty of Medicine and Affiliated Research Institutes

The Faculty of Medicine has among its staff two knowledgeable and experienced research facilitators who offer a wide range of services to our scientists. Catherine Armour and Wayne Campbell offer assistance in the preparation of research grant applications addressed to funding agencies that support large projects (e.g. Genome Canada, CFII, NSERC, CIHR, SSHRC, etc.). They provide advice on agency requirements (such as project content, management, budget, and financial aspects), and assistance in hands-on writing and proposal editing.

Our Research Office is currently assessing the need for these services in the Faculty of Medicine and affiliated research institutes. On June 9, diverse groups were invited to address these topics during a successful workshop focused on grant applications, writing tips and scientific summaries. This was the first in a series of workshops that we plan to schedule throughout the year. For more information, please contact Mrs. Armour, carmour@uottawa.ca, (613) 562-5643, or Mr. Campbell, wcampbell@uottawa.ca, (613) 562-5800 ext. 5416.

Attention Faculty of Medicine Alumni!

The Faculty of Medicine has more than 4,000 alumni around the world. We often have your addresses but don’t know your specialties. We would like to invite you to receptions at medical conferences when we are in your city, or invite you into classrooms through video-conferencing, thus fostering your interest in the Medical School of today and encouraging your involvement. Dr. Carl Nimrod, Chair of the Department of Obstetrics & Gynaecology, and Dr. Homer Yang, Department of Anaesthesiology, have specifically expressed interest in hearing from alumni from their disciplines. So if you work in the field of Obstetrics & Gynaecology, or in Anaesthesiology, or in any other discipline, please contact us at the coordinates below. We are looking forward to hearing from you.

Heather Pardon Alumni and Development Officer Alumni and Development Faculty of Medicine hpardon@uottawa.ca (613) 562-5800 ext. 8106

Alumni Reception in Windsor

We would like to invite you to the Alumni Reception in Windsor, hosted a cocktail reception for our Medicine Alumni and internal medicine resident at The Ottawa Hospital, agreed to act as the main organizer of this first session in French. “I accepted this project for several reasons,” he explains. “First, I have a strong interest in teaching, and I took part in several education programs during my training. Second, I had the opportunity to study in French thanks to the French study programs offered by the Faculty of Medicine. The Mini école de médecine is the most recent event involving participation from the BAF that aims at informing the public and create awareness of the importance of accessing health care services in French. I was happy to contribute to this effort.”

Dr. Matthew Mulligan, the man organizer of the first session of the Mini-Medical School in French, noted that over 50% come from communities with populations smaller than 50,000. This percentage reflects the origins of Faculty of Medicine students, graduates who pursue a career in family medicine. Referring to the demographic survey of the Medical School of today and encouraging your involvement. Dr. Carl Nimrod, Chair of the Department of Obstetrics & Gynaecology, and Dr. Homer Yang, Department of Anaesthesiology, have specifically expressed interest in hearing from alumni from their disciplines. So if you work in the field of Obstetrics & Gynaecology, or in Anaesthesiology, or in any other discipline, please contact us at the coordinates below. We are looking forward to hearing from you.

Heather Pardon Alumni and Development Officer Alumni and Development Faculty of Medicine hpardon@uottawa.ca (613) 562-5800 ext. 8106

MedScene

Next issue October 2005

Canadian Publications Mail Product Sales Agreement No: 40040018
MedScene is produced by the University of Ottawa’s Faculty of Medicine 451 Smyth Road, Ottawa, Ontario, K1H 8M5 T (613) 562-5643 F (613) 562-5457
Design and Editing: Llama Communications llama@llamacom.ca