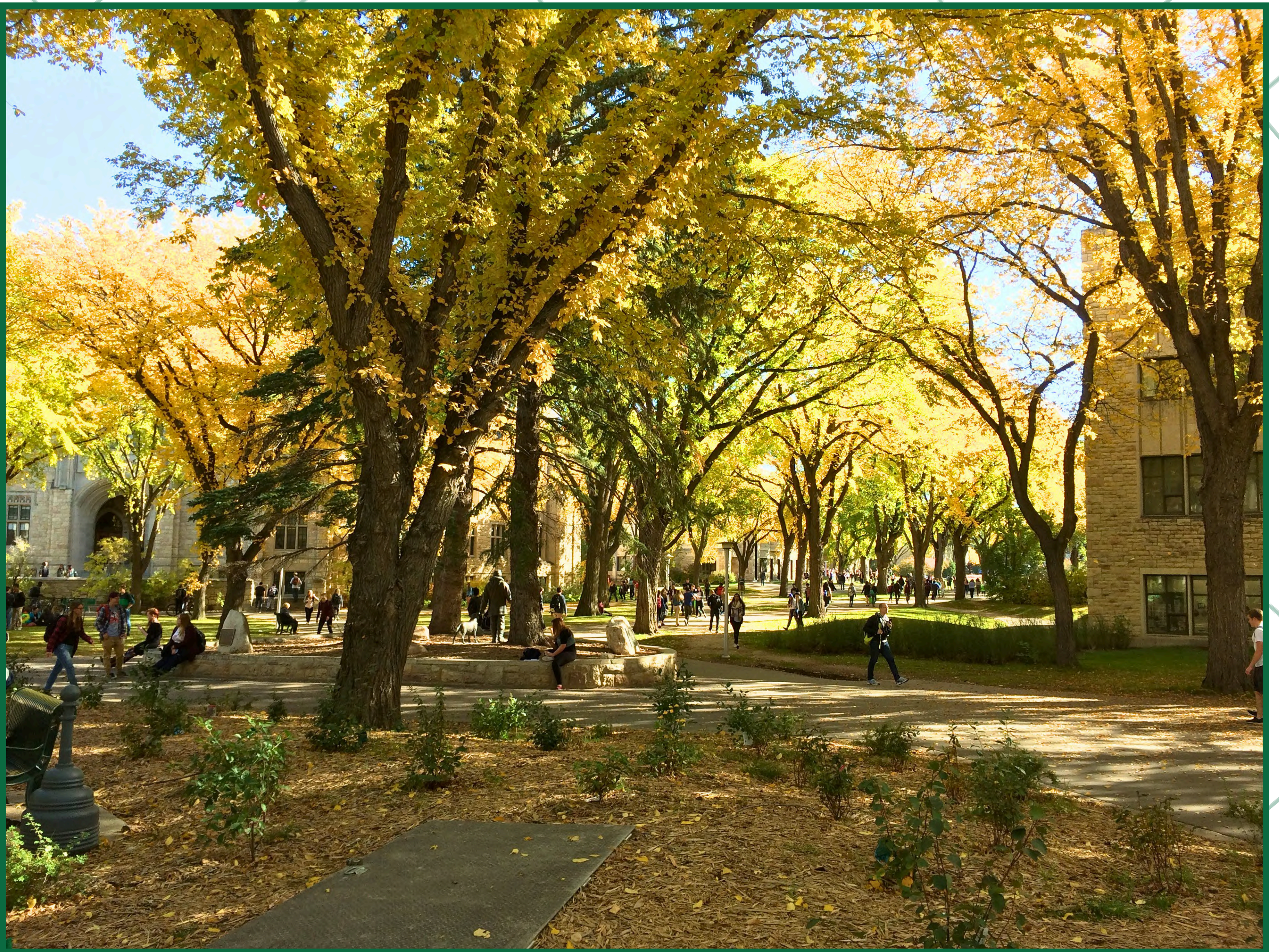


DEPARTMENT OF ANATOMY, PHYSIOLOGY, & PHARMACOLOGY

ANNUAL NEWSLETTER

Issue II • Fall 2024



BE WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS

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Message from the Department Head

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

The Department of Anatomy, Physiology, and Pharmacology is pleased to present the second edition of our departmental newsletter.

APP continues to experience remarkable evolution, and we are excited to share some of our recent achievements in teaching and research.

This year, we successfully recruited two accomplished researchers: Dr. Sebastien Gouvrit and Dr. Yi-Chun (YCC) Chen. Dr. Gouvrit is a vascular biologist focused on understanding the processes that allow the vasculature to develop distinct properties in our tissues, while Dr. Chen investigates the insulin-releasing cells, exploring how functional changes in these cells contribute to obesity and diabetes. We are thrilled to welcome these outstanding colleagues to our faculty and look forward to seeing their academic careers flourish.

We also welcomed Dan McElroy as a laboratory instructor for our third-year laboratory course. His contagious enthusiasm for teaching and learning makes him a fantastic addition to our teaching team.

Additionally, we welcomed Stacey Schleicher as our new Department Head Assistant. Stacey joined us this summer and is already doing an outstanding job, including taking on much of the work to bring this newsletter to life. (Thank you, Stacey!)

Our students continue to inspire us with their brilliance and dedication. We are pleased to celebrate some of their exceptional achievements with you.

Our undergraduate programs have expanded rapidly, attracting an increasing number of students. Last year, we graduated nearly 150 students from our two majors, making these among the largest programs.

Since our creation in 2018, the Department of APP has made tremendous strides, and we are excited about what lies ahead.

We hope you enjoy reading our newsletter.

With kind regards,



Thomas Fisher
Professor and Head
Department of Anatomy, Physiology, and
Pharmacology
College of Medicine, University of Saskatchewan



Our People

Faculty

Dr. Asmahan AbuArish	Assistant Professor	Dr. John Howland	Professor
Dr. Landon Baillie	Assistant Professor	Dr. Juan Ianowski	Professor
Dr. Stan Bardal	Associate Professor	Dr. Anand Krishnan	Assistant Professor
Dr. Lane Bekar	Associate Professor	Dr. Paul Lee	Assistant Professor
Dr. Justin Botterill	Assistant Professor	Dr. Lixin Liu	Associate Professor
Dr. Julia Boughner	Professor	Dr. Adel Mohamed	Associate Professor
Dr. Veronica Campanucci	Associate Professor	Dr. Sean Mulligan	Associate Professor
Dr. L. Dean Chapman	Professor	Dr. Joseph Fomusi Ndisang	Associate Professor
Dr. Yi-Chun Chen	Assistant Professor	Dr. Bogdan Popescu	Assistant Professor
Dr. Jennifer Chlan	Assistant Professor	Dr. Marek Radomski	Vice Dean Research
Dr. Kevin Chuang	Lecturer	Dr. Greg Sawicki	Professor
Dr. Michelle M. Collins	Assistant Professor	Dr. Heather Szabo-Rogers	Assistant Professor
Dr. David Cooper	Professor	Dr. Changiz Taghibiglou	Associate Professor
Dr. Kaushik Desai	Associate Professor	Dr. Valerie Verge	Professor
Dr. Brian Eames	Professor	Dr. John Verrall	Lecturer (part-time)
Dr. Thomas Fisher	Department Head	Dr. Scott Widenmaier	Associate Professor
Dr. Sébastien Gauvrit	Assistant Professor	Dr. Changting Xiao	Assistant Professor

Anatomy Laboratory Staff

Dr. Modawi Abdelrahman	Lab Demonstrator
Dr. Sharon Husak	Lab Demonstrator
Dr. Ayesha Iqbal	Lab Demonstrator
Dr. Shakeeba Mustaan	Lab Demonstrator
Dr. Bala Sekar	Lab Demonstrator
David Shewchuk	Bequeathal Technician
Corrie Willfong	Bequeathal Technician

Administrative Staff

Shannon DeGagné	Financial Analyst
Viella Desepeda	Clerical Assistant
Donna Dodge	Clerical/Body Bequeathal
Robin Parent	Academic Advisor
Maja Redekopp	Manager, Finance and Admin
Stacey Schleicher	Department Head Assistant
Melissa Teed	Graduate Program Admin

Instructional Staff

Dawn Giesbrecht	Laboratory Instructor
Dr. Susan Gilmer	Laboratory Instructor
Dan McElroy	Laboratory Instructor

Research Support Staff

Dr. Bruna Bonavia-Fisher	Research Facilitator
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Associate Faculty

Dr. Michael Kelly	Surgery
Dr. Saija Kontulainen	Kinesiology
Dr. Daniel MacPhee	Veterinary Medicine
Dr. Greg Malin	Family Medicine
Dr. Wendie Marks	Pediatrics
Dr. Meena Sakharkar	Pharmacy & Nutrition
Dr. Maruti Uppalapati	Pathology
Dr. Franco Vizeacoumar	Oncology

New Faculty Members

Sébastien Gauvrit



Sébastien is a vascular biologist with a deep foundation in developmental biology, genetics, physiology, and cell biology. His academic journey began at the University of Pierre and Marie Curie/Collège-de-France in Paris, where he earned his Ph.D. His doctoral research focused on unraveling the role of miRNAs in vascular and hematopoietic development. Through the creation and utilization of various mouse models, he advanced our understanding of these complex biological systems.

Following his Ph.D., Sébastien embarked on a postdoctoral fellowship at the Max Planck Institute for Heart and Lung Research in Bad Nauheim, Germany, where he pioneered innovative models for vascular human diseases using zebrafish, combining molecular biology and genome editing techniques. His work also included the development of a nanobody biosensor, showcasing how technological innovation can be used to understand cell and developmental biology. Sébastien's research aims to provide a starting point to move from fundamental to translational research that could improve cardiovascular disease treatments.

Outside the lab, Sébastien enjoys discovering Canada through outdoor activities like hiking and camping

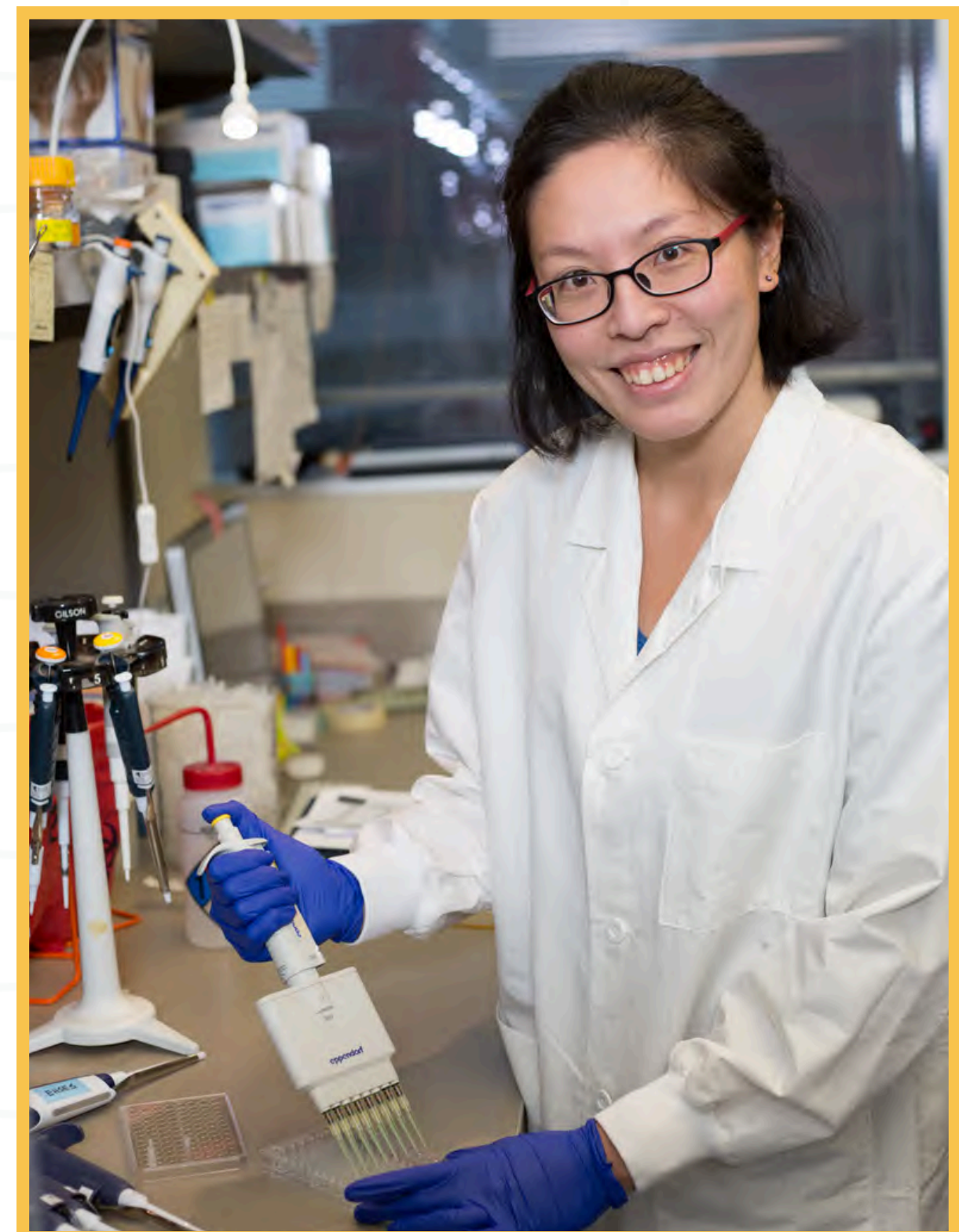
Yi-Chun Chen (YCC)

YCC was trained as a medical laboratory technologist in Taiwan but found herself more interested in exploring biological questions than in performing lab tests. This curiosity led her to pursue post-graduate studies in the United States and Canada, ultimately building a career in research.

Her work focuses broadly on obesity, diabetes, and endocrinology. With a REDI (Research Excellence, Diversity, and Independence) career transition award from JDRF (Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation) and CIHR, she is currently studying pancreatic islet peptide hormone biosynthesis, processing, and clearance during the development of diabetes.

YCC is thrilled by the opportunity to mentor the next generation of scientists and collaborate with researchers in the department and the College of Medicine on both basic and translational research projects.

Outside of work, she enjoys having informal scientific discussions with friends and colleagues (with or without beverages), going for long runs, and engaging in outdoor activities with her husband and their dog, Golgi.



New Employees

Dan McElroy

Dan is a current PhD candidate in the APP department, where he has spent the past six years working in Dr. Howland's lab. His research focuses on the neurobiological underpinnings of episodic memory. Dan brings extensive experience in planning, executing, and supervising research projects, utilizing advanced physiological techniques such as electrophysiology, chemo genetics, stereotaxic surgery, histology, and behavioural testing. He is passionate about communication, recruitment, and public outreach in science, having authored and edited multiple academic papers.



Beyond the lab, Dan has a rich teaching background, with experience instructing diverse audiences—from safety briefings for over 1,000 soldiers during his time as a Captain and Battalion Safety Officer in the US Army, to teaching English to elementary students in rural China. Most recently, he has been the primary instructor for "NEUR 420: Drugs and Behaviour" at the University of Saskatchewan, receiving positive feedback from students and colleagues alike. Dan's commitment to creating an engaging and supportive learning environment is evident in his teaching philosophy and his attainment of a Teaching Preparation Certificate from the Gwenna Moss Centre.

Having lived in five countries and visited over 30, Dan and his wife have now established roots in Saskatoon, where they are eager to continue building their life in the "City of Bridges."



Stacey Schleicher

The APP Department is excited to welcome Stacey as the new Department Head Assistant. Stacey brings a wealth of experience, dedication, and enthusiasm to her new role. She has been an integral part of the campus community since October 2014, having primarily worked within the Veterinary Medical Centre (VMC). Her journey at the VMC began in reception before she had a brief stint at ConnectionPoint. Stacey returned to the VMC as a Client Liaison for Small Animal Medicine, Neurology, and Dermatology, where she was a key player in client interactions. Most recently, she served as the Supervisor for Client Services, overseeing operations in both the Small and Large Animal Clinics.

Beyond her professional accomplishments, Stacey is a self-proclaimed "jack of all trades, master of none." She enjoys a wide variety of creative pursuits, including quilting, painting, drawing, creative writing, home DIY projects, costume making, and drumming.

When she's not immersed in one of her many hobbies, Stacey is a dedicated mother to her two children. Lainey, 15, is a ballerina and high-achieving student, while Felix, 7, follows in his mother's footsteps as a drummer and is proudly neurodivergent. After her mom duties, Stacey enjoys cozying up with her four cats and dog, often with a good book in hand.

Staff Spotlight



Maja Redekopp

Maja Redekopp is the Finance and Administration Manager for the Departments of Biochemistry, Microbiology and Immunology (BMI) and Anatomy, Physiology, and Pharmacology (APP) at the University of Saskatchewan. Since joining the College of Medicine in 2015, she has overseen operations, including finance, HR, and administrative functions, working closely with faculty, staff, and stakeholders across the College and University.

With a background in accounting in the mining industry, Maja now leads a team of administrators who support academic programs. She loves building relationships with colleagues and learning about their work and passions. However, she finds it challenging to see research and health services hindered by financial constraints.

Outside of work, Maja enjoys outdoor activities and makes an annual trip to Victoria, BC, to visit family and explore the area's beauty. Her leadership and dedication continue to support the departments' success while fostering a strong, collaborative community.

Shannon DeGagné serves as the Finance Analyst for both the Anatomy, Physiology, and Pharmacology (APP) and Biochemistry, Microbiology and Immunology (BMI) Departments at the University of Saskatchewan. Her journey within the Biomedical Sciences began in September 2018, when she joined as the Department Head Assistant for BMI. In November 2021, she transitioned into her current role for BMI and, by April 2023, expanded her financial stewardship to include APP. Today, Shannon plays a crucial role in supporting the financial operations of both departments.

Shannon's favorite aspect of working in a large organization like USask is the constant opportunity for learning and growth. She takes immense pride in indirectly contributing to the groundbreaking research carried out by the university's faculty. However, her role is not without its challenges, particularly the need to balance numerous competing demands and deadlines, as well as navigating the sometimes lengthy processes typical of large institutions.

In her personal life, Shannon is a married mother of two daughters, aged 9 and 13, where she spends much of her time as chauffeur and cheerleader for their various activities. She also enjoys being outdoors, especially camping and spending time at the lake with her family.

Shannon DeGagné



Research Excellence

Dr. Julia Bougher

We often identify people and animals by their faces, including their teeth. While teeth can vary greatly across fish, amphibians, reptiles, and mammals including us, they all form through similar genetic and cellular processes. This means we can learn about human teeth by studying animals such as lab mice. Differences between species are also important, revealing how unique sets of teeth evolved. For instance, think of the tiny-toothed, flat-faced housecat versus the sabertoothed, long-faced tiger!



Dr. Julia Boughner's lab explores how jawbones and teeth evolved to fit, grow, and work together. Supported by NSERC and CFI, her research spans from morphology to molecules, studying tooth development in species ranging from fish to primates, including human ancestors. Her students' award-winning projects examine the mechanisms that integrate teeth within jaws, and their research has been published in top international journals. The team works with anthropologists, dentists, paleontologists, genomicists, and developmental biologists to explore the fits and misfits of teeth and jaws, from embryos to adults. They also study why impacted wisdom teeth are common in today's youth.

When Julia isn't doing science, she's enjoying beer and organizing Café Scientifique-Saskatoon (cafescisaskatoon or cafesciyxe on socials), a free monthly series of public science talks. All are welcome!



Dr. David Cooper

Dave has been a faculty member at the University of Saskatchewan since 2007, when he joined the Department of Anatomy and Cell Biology. His research focuses on bone adaptation, aging, and disease, utilizing both 3D and 4D imaging techniques, including conventional and synchrotron-based methods. As a former Canada Research Chair (2010-2020) and Centennial Enhancement Chair in Synchrotron Sciences, Dave plays a key role in developing the BioMedical Imaging and Therapy (BMIT) facility at the Canadian Light Source.

Over the past five years, his research has been supported by CIHR, NSERC, SSHRC, the New Frontiers in Research Fund, the Australian Research Council, and various University of Saskatchewan and College of Medicine programs. His team's most recent work, published in top journals like the *Journal of Bone and Mineral Research* and *Bone* (2020-2024), has established a novel research platform. This platform, which combines rabbit models of osteoporosis with *in vivo* synchrotron imaging, allows for the dynamic tracking of osteoporosis-related bone pores as they form and evolve over time. The platform offers tremendous potential for studying the disease's progression and evaluating the effects of treatments.

This innovative approach has attracted international collaborations with partners in Denmark, Australia, Finland, and the United States.

For more information, visit: www.cooperlab.ca

Teaching Distinction

Our department is very fortunate to have an exceptional team of faculty members dedicated to the success and growth of our students. While each of our educators consistently goes above and beyond, we want to take a moment to highlight the efforts of three outstanding individuals who have demonstrated a remarkable commitment to fostering a positive learning environment. Their passion for teaching, mentorship, and student success stands as an inspiring example for us all.



Dr. Adel Mohamed

Dr. Adel Mohamed is a distinguished Professor in the Department of Anatomy, Physiology, and Pharmacology, renowned for his impressive academic background and dedication to medical education and research. His career is marked by a profound commitment to the study of pathology and anatomy, as well as the development of innovative curricula for medical and dental students.

Dr. Mohamed is a passionate educator, dedicated to nurturing the next generation of medical professionals. His significant contributions to medical education have earned him several teaching excellence awards from the College of Medicine and the University of Saskatchewan. Additionally, he has been recognized as one of the most popular professors in Canadian universities by Maclean's magazine. His expertise in pathology, anatomy, and education makes him an invaluable asset to his department. His research on Multiple Sclerosis and the effects of steroids on organ function has resulted in several publications. Dr. Mohamed continues to make a lasting impact on both the scientific and academic communities.

Teaching Distinction



Dr. Stan Bardal

Dr. Stan Bardal, a distinguished educator and researcher, was honored on September 21, 2024, with the Pre-Clinical Teacher of the Year award, presented by medical students in recognition of his exceptional contributions to pre-clinical education.

Dr. Bardal's academic background is impressively diverse, holding degrees in the Humanities (BA in History), Business (MBA), and Pharmacy, along with a PhD in Pharmacology. With seven years of experience as a practicing pharmacist, he brings practical insights that enrich his teaching.

His research focuses on enhancing prescribing effectiveness through education and personalized medicine, and he has collaborated with the Canadian Agency for Drugs and Technologies in Health (CADTH) since 2003. Additionally, his 2011 pharmacology textbook, published by Elsevier, has become a vital resource in the field.

Dr. Bardal has received numerous teaching awards from students and peers, reflecting his ability to inspire and engage the next generation of healthcare professionals. The Pre-Clinical Teacher of the Year award highlights his dedication to fostering curiosity and a love of learning, solidifying his status as a respected and beloved educator.

Dr. Sean Mulligan

Dr. Sean Mulligan's educational journey reflects a strong foundation in neuroscience (PhD) and neurobiology (MSc), underscoring his commitment to understanding the intricacies of the brain and nervous system. His academic career culminated with a postdoctoral fellowship in Psychiatry at the University of British Columbia before becoming a faculty member at the University of Saskatchewan

Sean is recognized as an exceptional educator in the field of neuroscience. He has been honored twice with the University of Saskatchewan Students' Union Teaching Excellence Award (2020, 2013), an accolade that highlights his ability to inspire and engage students.

Additionally, he received the University of Saskatchewan Provost's College Award for Outstanding Teaching in the College of Medicine (2011), cementing his reputation as a dedicated and effective instructor.



Research Funding & Awards

We are proud to announce several prestigious awards and grants received by members of our department. These accolades highlight their innovative research, their commitment to teaching, and their pursuit of equity, diversity, and inclusion.

Celebrating USask's Heart & Stroke New Investigator Success



With three recent New Investigator awards from the Heart & Stroke Foundation, including two of the five awarded across Canada in 2023/24, our department continues to demonstrate leadership in cardiovascular research!

On June 11, 2024, the APP Department hosted the inaugural *Saskatchewan Research to Life* event in collaboration with Heart & Stroke. The event featured a panel discussion moderated by Carolyn Cyr, the provincial Director of Health Policy and Systems for Heart and Stroke, with **Dr. Michelle Collins**, Dr. Dylan Olver (another Heart and Stroke funded researcher at USask), and an individual living with a serious congenital heart defect. Attendees learned how Saskatchewan-based research is driving innovative treatments and transforming patient care.

Following the discussion, guests toured the labs of **Dr. Scott Widenmaier** and **Dr. Changting Xiao** to experience firsthand the cutting-edge cardiovascular research happening in Saskatchewan. The event underscored the impact of local cardiovascular research and reinforced the importance of continued investment in this vital field, demonstrating the outstanding progress of USask's New Investigator awardees in advancing cardiovascular health across Canada.

We are proud to announce that **Dr. Justin Botterill** has been awarded the prestigious 2023 Excellence Award from SHRF. As the recipient of the Top 2023-24 Establishment – Biomedical Grant, Dr. Botterill is being recognized for his groundbreaking research focused on unraveling the complexities of temporal lobe epilepsy (TLE). His work not only advances our understanding of TLE but also explores innovative treatments that could significantly impact patient care. This achievement highlights Dr. Botterill's valuable contributions to the field of biomedical research and to health in Saskatchewan.



Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Faculty Fellow

Congratulations to **Kevin Chuang**, who was selected as an Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Faculty Fellow by the Office of Teaching and Learning at the University of Saskatchewan. As part of this fellowship, Kevin will actively engage in fostering EDI and Indigenization initiatives while promoting open educational practices within his courses and throughout our department and college. Kevin has been awarded \$7,000 to support the completion and dissemination of his curriculum redesign, a significant contribution to advancing EDI in teaching and learning across the university.



Research Funding & Awards

Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation (SHRF) 2023-24 Solutions - Impact Grants

We are thrilled to celebrate two research teams that have been awarded SHRF 2023-24 Solutions - Impact Grants, supporting transformative research in healthcare:

Principal Investigator: **Dr. Changiz Taghibiglou**

Project Title: *"Screening eyes of people in Saskatchewan with non-invasive imaging technologies and artificial intelligence for early detection of Alzheimer's Disease"*

Co-Principal Investigators: Drs. Kirk Andrew, Kerry Bishop, Francisco Cayabyab, Melody Wong, Ravikrishna Nrusimhadevara, and Sara Mardanisamani

Grant Amount: \$150,000 for two years



Co-Principal Investigators: **Dr. Heather Szabos-Rogers, Dr. Michelle Collins** and Dr. Bit Hashemi

Project Title: *"A personalized medicine team for craniofacial and cardiovascular disorders affecting Saskatchewan's pediatric population"*

Grant Amount: \$150,000 for two years



NSERC Discovery Grant

Principal Investigator: **Dr. Heather Szabo-Rogers**

Project Title: *Genes, proteins and tissue interactions shaping the snout and beak*

Grant Amount: \$170,000.



Biomedical Research - CoBRIDGE Fund Awards

Congratulations to **Dr. Michelle Collins** and **Dr. Anand Krishnan** who have been awarded \$50,000 through CoBRIDGE funds. Their work will continue to contribute to bridging biomedical research and clinical practice, furthering advancements in healthcare.

We are also proud to announce that **Dr. Anand Krishnan** has been awarded tenure!



Research Funding & Awards

Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) Project Grant

We are proud to announce that two of our researchers have been awarded the prestigious CIHR Project Grant, designed to support ideas with the greatest potential to advance healthcare research.



Project Title: *Cannabinoid-dependent effects of gestational Cannabis smoke exposure on behaviour and neurophysiology: implications*

Principal Investigator: **John Howland**

Co-Principal Investigator: Dr. Robert Laprairie

Collaborators: Professor A. Chan, Dr. Y. Dong and Dr. I Winship

Amount: \$960,076 over five years



Project Title: *Regulation of intestinal lipid storage and release of metabolic health and disease*

Principal Investigator: **Dr. Changting Xiao**

Amount: \$772,650 over five years



Cancer Research Society (CRS) Operating Grant

Principal Investigator: **Dr. Scott Widenmaier**

Project Title: *Blocking SOAT1 to prevent obesity-linked hepatocellular carcinoma*

Amount: \$130,000 over two years

Congratulations to the CoMRAD Awardees

Nine APP faculty members received College of Medicine Research Awards in the fall competition!

- **Dr. Asmahan AbuArish** and Dr. Chung-Chun Tyan
- **Dr. Julia Bougher** and **Dr. Heather Szabos-Rogers**
- **Dr. Veronica Campanucci**
- **Dr. Dean Chapman**
- **Dr. Michelle Collins**
- **Dr. Juan Ianowski**
- **Dr. Valerie Verge**
- **Dr. Scott Widenmaier**

Student & Trainee Success

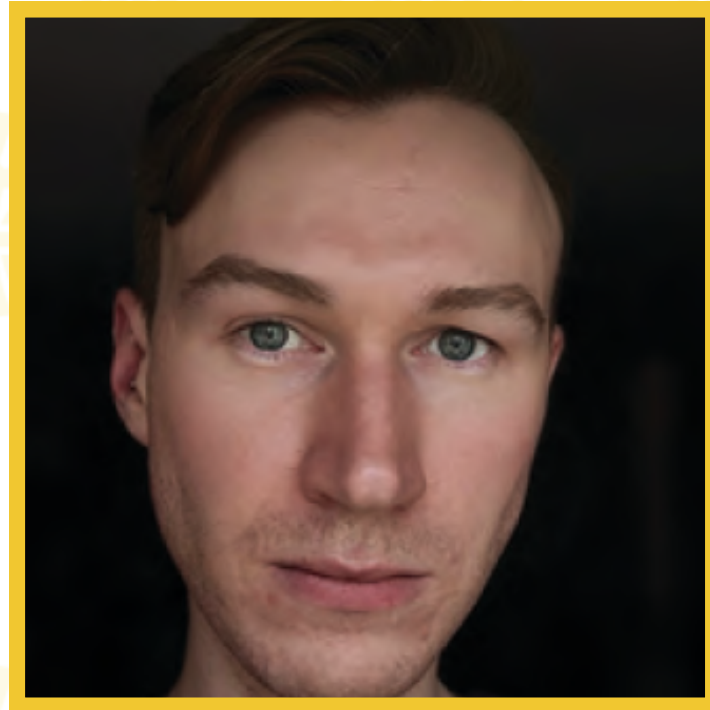
The department is proud to celebrate the achievements of several outstanding graduate students who have been recognized with prestigious awards this year. Their dedication to research, academic excellence, and their contributions to the scholarly community continue to highlight the high caliber of our graduate programs.

CGPS 75th Anniversary Awards

The CGPS 75th Anniversary Awards are among the most prestigious recognitions for graduate students, celebrating academic excellence, leadership, and research innovation. This year, four of our students have been awarded this significant honor:



Bisrat Bekele (PhD)



Connor Johnson (PhD)



Sarah Ha (MSc)

Muskan Sharma (MSc)
no photo

CoMGrad Awards

Several of our students were also recognized through the College of Medicine Graduate (CoMGrad) Awards, further underscoring the department's excellence in fostering research across medical and scientific disciplines. These awards not only provide financial support but also recognize the promising future leaders in medical research.



Jay Larga (MSc)
(Michael Levin)



Mary Lazell-Wright (MSc)
(Franco Vizeacoumar &
Andrew Freywald)



Oscar Omar Morales (PhD)
(Veronica Campanucci)



Farnoosh Tabatabaieian (MSc)
(Changting Xiao)

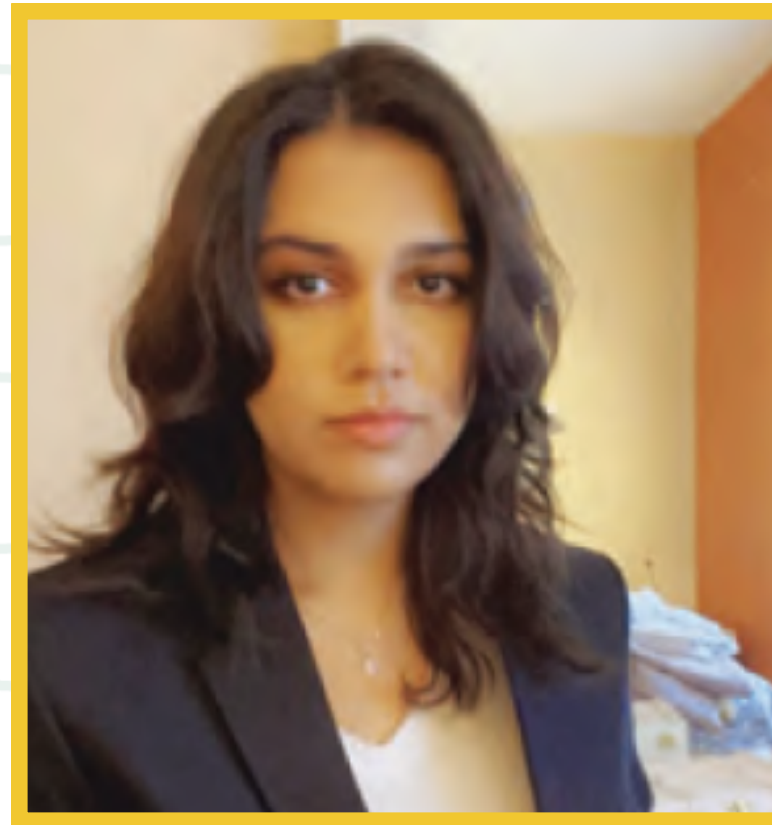
Mousumi Bhowmik PhD -
Asmahan AbuArish
no photo

Student & Trainee Success

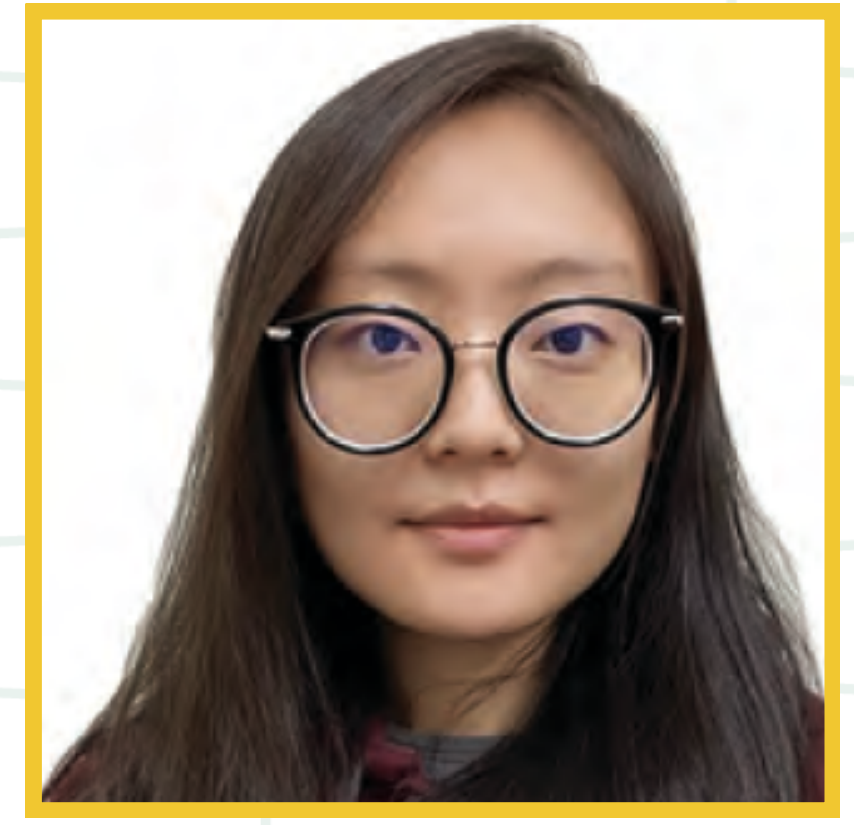
These individuals have demonstrated exemplary research skills and a commitment to advancing knowledge in their respective fields.



Oscar Omar Morales
CONAHCyT Scholarship



Sehrish Khan
Dean's Award



Xuan Wei
NSERC INSPIRE to CREATE



Amalya Babayan
NSERC Canada Graduate
Scholarships-Master's



Sarah Shaban
CIHR Canada Graduate
Scholarships-Master's

Funding and Scholarships

The department is proud that 18 graduate students from our department have received funding from a variety of sources. These awards provide vital support to students in advancing their research projects and contributing to the broader scientific community.

Application Mentorship

Many thanks to **Dr. Justin Botterill** and **Dr. Bruna Bonavia-Fisher** for organizing two workshops and reviewing many applications to help our MSc and PhD students prepare for Tri-Council graduate student scholarship competitions!



At the USask Fall Convocation on November 13, **Amélia Katherine Gagnon** will be honored with the **President's Medal**, recognizing her as the graduating student with the highest academic average across all undergraduate programs at USask. In addition, she will receive the University Medal in BSc, Biomedical Sciences, for her outstanding achievements in the Bachelor of Science in Cellular, Physiological, and Pharmacological Sciences. These awards reflect her exceptional dedication and academic performance throughout her studies.

Department Events

APP Retreat



The APP Department's annual retreat, held at Crossmount on June 10, 2024, focused on collaboration, student success, and future growth. Dr. Fisher highlighted key achievements, including faculty recognition, while Dr. Howland confirmed that funding for 2024/25 will ensure all eligible graduate students receive support, which is especially crucial amid rising living costs.

Drs. Eames, Ianowski, and Howland presented strategic research initiatives aimed at fostering collaboration and advancing the department's research. Discussions also centered on revising the doctoral candidacy process and encouraging the introduction of new courses, particularly in statistics, to enhance academic offerings.

The retreat wrapped up with a review of the past year's accomplishments, including student engagement, research productivity, and graduate support, as the department looks to build on these successes for continued growth and innovation.



Department Events

Grad Student Year-End Party

On May 3, 2024, the APP Grad Committee hosted an end-of-year celebration for students and faculty. Dr. Brian Eames provided an overview of the program, highlighting student accomplishments throughout the year, and presented awards to recognize outstanding achievements.

We were delighted to welcome a special guest, **Dr. Hui Wang**, an APP alumnus who graduated from the Department in Pharmacology in 2009 and is currently an Assistant Professor in Pathology and Laboratory Medicine. Dr. Wang made generous gifts last year and this year to support the success of our graduate students!



Grad Student Welcome



The APP Graduate Committee hosted a welcome gathering for graduate students, featuring refreshments and offering an opportunity for students, faculty members, and staff to connect and enhance communication within the department.

Co-chairs of the Graduate Student Committee, Dr. Brian Eames and Dr. Scott Widenmaier, played a central role in the event. Dr. Eames, as one of the faculty speakers, warmly welcomed new and returning students and provided updates on key departmental changes, including revisions to the candidacy format and graduate handbook.

Throughout the event, Dr. Eames and Dr. Widenmaier emphasized the importance of building a supportive and engaged graduate student community, reinforcing the gathering's role in fostering a strong sense of belonging within the department.

Other Events

Undergraduate Student Welcome Week

On September 9th, 2024, Dawn Giesbrecht and Dr. Landon Baillie hosted the annual Welcome Event for first and second-year Bachelor of Science in Biomedical Sciences (BSc (BMSC)) students, attended by an estimated 120-150 students. The event introduced students to the program's history, key faculty members, and important campus resources.

Students learned about the distinctions between advising for BMSC and Arts & Science students, the majors available within the BMSC program, and the process for applying to a major. Research opportunities were also highlighted, encouraging early involvement.

Representatives from the APP and BMI Student Associations shared their plans for the year, fostering community and engagement. The event effectively welcomed students and provided valuable insights to support their academic journey.

High School Open House

On Friday, September 20th, the University of Saskatchewan hosted an Open House, giving high school students a glimpse into the future of healthcare and research. Robin Parent, Academic Advisor, represented APP & BMI and spoke to potential students. Attendees engaged in hands-on demonstrations like lab experiments and medical simulations, providing a firsthand look at the BMSC programs. Conversations with current students provided insight into academic life and opportunities in the field. The event highlighted the department's role in shaping future healthcare leaders and innovators through its rigorous programs and practical learning experiences.



Donuts with the Dean

On October 31st, students and staff of the College of Medicine donned on their creative Halloween costumes and had donuts with Dean Forgie.



Other Events

Pie-a-Prof

On March 27, 2024, the student association hosted a fun-filled "Pie-A-Prof" fundraiser, where students got the chance to throw shaving cream pies at their professors to raise money for the Pink Wig Foundation. The event was a hit, with students and faculty alike coming together to support the foundation, which assists cancer patients with medical expenses and wig provisions.

The lighthearted atmosphere and generous donations helped the fundraiser surpass its goal. The student association hopes to make this an annual tradition, blending fun with a great cause.



Special Thanks

On October 23, 2024, Dr. Gary Grover and his wife, Janis, visited with graduate students to help them forge careers in the pharmaceutical industry and academia. They offered valuable insights for both students and faculty.

Here they are visiting Prince Albert National Park the following day.



For any suggestions on future newsletters, please contact
stacey.schleicher@usask.ca or thomas.fisher@usask.ca