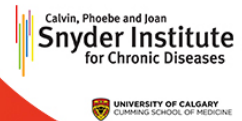




A MESSAGE FROM
**The Snyder Institute
for Chronic Diseases**



Dear Snyder Institute Members,

We are pleased to launch our Snyder Institute newsletter, a place where you can share your news and successes and hear about those of your colleagues. Do you have news? Studies publishing? Awards and funds being granted? Events you'd like to promote? Let us know! Email holly.kerr@ucalgary.ca by January 19 with any news you'd like to be included in the next newsletter.

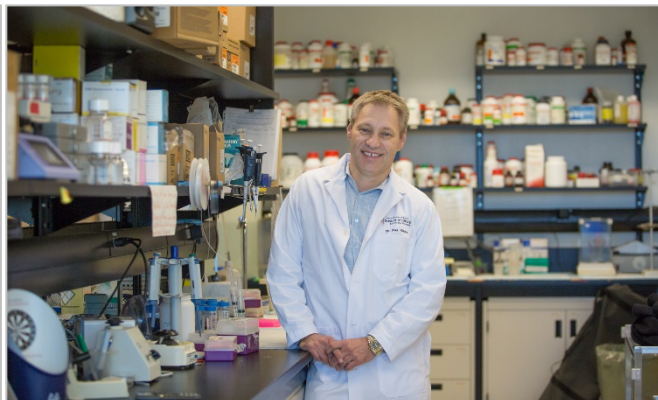
Research news

Snyder Institute member Dr. Michael Parkins is part of a team of researchers from UCalgary and UAlberta collaborating to track evidence of COVID-19 in wastewater of 3.2M people across Alberta



Funding provided by the Government of Alberta supports a provincial monitoring network and an online tracking tool.

“Genetic material from SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, is excreted in the feces of those who are pre-symptomatic, asymptomatic, as well as those with overt symptoms,” says Dr. Michael Parkins, MD, project co-lead, associate professor at the Cumming School of Medicine (CSM). [Read more.](#)



Drs. Kathy McCoy and Paul Kubes awarded funding for their Wild Microbiome and Immunity Centre

The Wild Microbiome and Immunity Centre is one of 11 projects in health science and engineering at UCalgary receiving a portion of \$22M through the province's Research Capacity Program, a program providing support for cutting-edge infrastructure and technology development. [Read more.](#)

Dr. Bryan Yipp (Snyder Institute) and Dr. Jeff Biernaskie and their research team uncover why a drug used to treat critically ill COVID-19 patients may only benefit males



Research into the way our immune systems respond to COVID-19 reveals the sex of a patient may affect how well drugs work. A new study shows how dexamethasone, the main treatment for severe COVID-19 lung infections, alters how immune cells work, which may help male patients, but has little to no benefit for females. These remarkable findings are the result of a multidisciplinary study **published in *Nature Medicine***, led by Dr. Bryan

Yipp, MD, associate professor, Department of Critical Care Medicine, Cumming School of Medicine, and Dr. Jeff Biernaskie, PhD, professor, Comparative Biology and Experimental Medicine in the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine (UCVM). [Read more.](#)

Snyder member Dr. Pere Santamaria named one of Canada's Top 25 Immigrants for discovery of new drugs to treat autoimmune diseases



Hundreds of nominations were received, and the 25 winners were chosen based on a combination of 70,000 online votes and judges' merit scores. Dr. Santamaria's scientific discovery at UCalgary of a new class of drugs called Navacims has the potential to open new doors to treatment for a range of autoimmune diseases, including Type 1 diabetes, celiac disease and inflammatory bowel disease. [Read more.](#)

Dr. Maitreyi Raman awarded the 2021 Outstanding Researcher, Women in IBD Award



This award, co-presented by Crohn's and Colitis Canada and Pfizer Canada, recognizes valuable contributions of outstanding female leaders in Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD) research.

Dr. Raman is a gastroenterologist and physician nutrition specialist. She is also an Associate Professor in the Department of Medicine at UCalgary's Cumming School of Medicine and a member of the Snyder Institute for Chronic Diseases. Dr. Raman is known for balancing expert care of her patients with a world-class research program. [Read more.](#)

\$2.6M gift accelerates bold new precision medicine approaches for Crohn's disease



Snyder Institute researchers (from left) Drs. Simon Hirota, Cathy Lu, Antoine Dufour, Derek McKay and (missing from photo) Remo Panaccione are investigating new screening tools and immunotherapy to improve quality of life for Crohn's disease patients. Recent philanthropic gifts from The Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust, totalling nearly C\$2.6 million will support this research. [Read more.](#)

Education news

The Snyder Institute Trainee Committee (SITC) is composed of a broad range of trainees from across the Snyder Institute at the Masters, PhD, and Post-Doctoral levels, whose mandate is to foster a sense of community amongst Snyder Institute trainees, enhance their training experience within the Institute, and represent the interests of trainees within the Snyder Institute. The SITC is tasked with identifying and executing opportunities to achieve these goals as they align with the Snyder Institute Education Committee and the Institute's overall vision and mission.

Thank you to the SITC committee members for their commitment and "above and beyond" efforts:

President: Zahra Kiani, **Education Co-Directors:** Karen Lithgow and Julianna Svishchuk, **Social and Community Outreach Co-Directors:** Diana Changirwa and Nishi Patel, **Communications Co-Directors:** Michelle Love and Priyoshi Lahiri, **General Members:** Aline Ignacio Silva, Daniel Lee,



Deepak Patel, Grace Baruta and Grace Yoon.

If you have questions for the SITC, please email us at sitc@ucalgary.ca.

Trainee Research Day, with oral and poster presentations and social activities, was held on December 10, and it was a resounding success! We congratulate the recipients of judged and people's choice presenter awards:



Judged:

Dr. Matthew Stephens (Post Doctoral Fellow; von der Weid Research Group)

“Ironing out the Mincles in inflammatory disease”

Josefien Hommes (PhD Student; Surewaard Research Group)

“ArlRS Two-Component System of Staphylococcus aureus is required for Intracellular Bacterial Replication in Kupffer Cells”

Jared Schlechte (MSc Student; McDonald Research Group)

“Enterobacteriaceae Overgrowth in the Gut Microbiome of Critically Ill Patients Promotes Immune Dysfunction and Susceptibility to Nosocomial Infections and Adverse Outcomes”

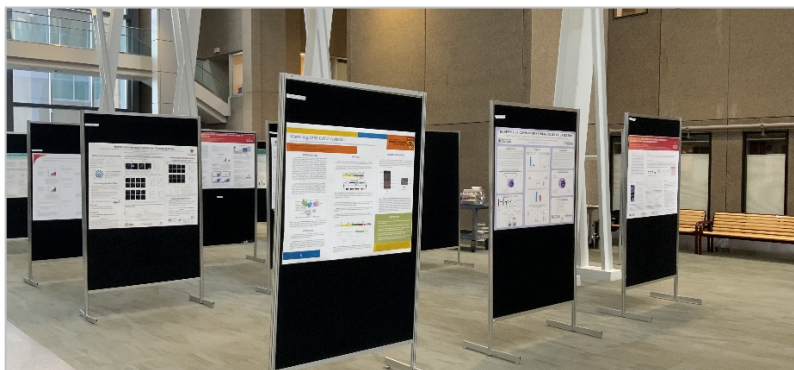
People’s Choice:

Oral Presentation: Dr. Rahil Eftekhari (Post Doctoral Fellow, Kuipers Research Group)

“Pepducin P2pal-18S: attenuates neuroinflammation in a murine experimental autoimmune encephalomyelitis”

Poster Presentation: Kevin Muirhead (MSc Student, Sycuro Research Group)

“Elucidating the Role of Pullulanase Genes in Lactobacillus Dominance of the Vaginal Niche”. [Read more.](#)



Journal Club Series

- Immunology, Tuesday, January 4, 9 – 10 am [Register here.](#)
- Host-Microbe Interactions, Wednesday, January 5, noon – 1 pm [Register here.](#)

Community outreach news and upcoming events

Covid-19 Reflections, presented on November 23 by Alberta's Chief Medical Officer of Health Dr. Deena Hinshaw, was very well attended. Dr. Hinshaw talked about her experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic and provided advice to Snyder Institute trainees and faculty about mentorship, career development, and answered many questions about health care in Alberta. We hope to have Dr. Hinshaw present again soon.

Mini-Medical School

Drs. Mark Gillrie and Simon Hirota presented ***Precision Medicine and Exploring Human Disease Using Organs on a Chip*** on December 6 via Zoom. This interactive lecture was extremely well attended with over 170 viewers tuning in. [Listen to the podcast.](#)

Join us on January 10 for ***Nutrition: Its Impact on Inflammatory Bowel Disease and Fatty Liver***, with presenters Dr. Maitreyi Raman (Snyder Institute) and Saumya Jayakumar (UBC). [Register here.](#)

Call for Applications: From Lab to Fulfillment (FL2F) workshop

This workshop is open to any female Snyder Institute faculty member or postdoc. We are inviting applications to participate in the From Lab to Fulfillment (FL2F) workshop being offered from March 14 to April 7, 2022. Please apply by January 10. [More information here.](#)

The Cumming School of Medicine Staff Excellence Awards

Across the Cumming School of Medicine (CSM), our staff and partner employees make an essential contribution every day to the success of the medical school. New CSM Staff Excellence Awards have been created to acknowledge and celebrate this important contribution.

Whether it is an individual who goes above and beyond in service to students and faculty, or a collaborative team who strives to improve processes and systems to be more efficient and effective, please nominate outstanding staff for these new awards. The deadline for nominations has been extended to **Jan. 31** and winners will be recognized at the annual CSM Celebration of Excellence. [Submit a nomination.](#)

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Snyder Institute for Chronic Diseases
Cumming School of Medicine

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