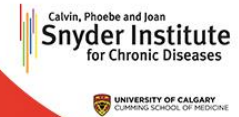




A NEWSLETTER FROM  
**The Snyder Institute  
for Chronic Diseases**



January 2024

## Welcome back!

I hope you all had a restful Holiday break and wish you the very best in the coming months. There are many exciting initiatives in the works for our members and some excellent events on our horizon. Read on for all the info.

Kind regards,

*Derek McKay*

## Research news



### **Advances in Therapy: The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Patients with Ulcerative Colitis – Results from a Global Survey**

The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic created challenges for patients with ulcerative colitis. These challenges included managing symptoms, lifestyle changes, and access to health care. Snyder Institute

member [Dr. Remo Panaccione, MD](#), and his research colleagues asked patients with ulcerative colitis to answer questions about their experience during the pandemic to understand how the pandemic was affecting them.

A total of 584 patients from the United States, Canada, Japan, France, and Finland took part in an online survey. Their responses may offer doctors insight into the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on patients with ulcerative colitis, and may help healthcare providers and patients develop treatment plans that include both in-person and virtual appointments. [Learn more.](#)



## **Video: Children in Cameroon have become the first people in the world to be vaccinated against malaria**

In countries where a mosquito bite can be deadly, the smallest people face the largest threat. The World Health Organization says in 2022 there were 249 million cases of malaria globally; 608,000 deaths; 77% were children under the age of 5; and almost all cases were in Africa.

Now, children in Cameroon have become the first people in the world to be vaccinated against malaria. [Dr. Dylan Pillai](#),

[MD, PhD](#) is a professor at UCalgary's Cumming School of Medicine and a member of the Snyder Institute who says this new routine malaria vaccine program introduced in Cameroon has been a long time coming and is a major step forward in preventing the disease.

As another prevention tool beyond nets, this vaccine program is 40 years in the making, and it is projected to save tens of thousands of lives each year. [Watch the interview](#).



## **Travelling the globe developing expertise: Snyder Institute member Dr. Raynell Lang, MD, and other UCalgary medical trainees are bringing new global knowledge, networks and experiences to UCalgary**

[Dr. Raynell Lang, MD](#), **PGME '18**, an infectious disease specialist, assistant professor and member of the Snyder Institute, has benefitted recently from international training.

This University of Calgary Medical Group member was selected to complete a two-year fellowship at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health in Baltimore from 2020 to 2022.

While there, she worked with the North American AIDS Cohort Collaboration on Research and Design (NA-ACCORD) to complete a postdoctoral fellowship in HIV epidemiology. In all, the global network involves more than 200 sites and serves 130,000 people living with HIV. Lang was first author of research published in *JAMA Network Open*, the journal *AIDS* and the *Journal of the American Heart Association*. [Read more.](#)



## An interview with Dr. Mark Swain: Offering cutting-edge innovation to liver and inflammatory disease patients

[Dr. Mark Swain, MD](#), is a professor in the Department of Medicine at the Cumming School of Medicine, former head of the Division of Gastroenterology and Hepatology, holds the Cal Wenzel Family Foundation Chair in Hepatology, is a founding member of the Calgary Liver Unit, and is a member of the Snyder Institute. We spoke with him about some of the latest innovative research and treatments he is working on. [Read more.](#)

## Published papers

[Dr. Jan Storek MD, PhD](#), and his research team have been exploring hematopoietic cell transplantation (also called blood or bone marrow transplantation), which is routinely used for hematologic malignancies, as treatment for autoimmune diseases. They have several papers published:

- Woo MMK, Levin D, Li DY, David J, Buresi M, Gupta M, Nasser Y, Andrews CN, Durand C, Osman MS, Jamani K, Weatherald J, Johannson KA, Howlett JG, Hemmati I, Kim H, Curley M, **Storek J**: [Esophageal motility in systemic sclerosis before and after autologous hematopoietic cell transplantation](#). *Clinical Rheumatology* 42:3267-3274, Dec 2023.
- Beland B, Hahn C, Jamani K, Chhibber S, White C, Atkins H, **Storek J**: [Autologous hematopoietic stem cell transplant for the treatment of refractory myasthenia gravis with anti-muscle specific kinase \(MuSK\) antibodies](#). *Muscle and Nerve* 67:154-157, Feb 2023.



- In September, we reported that the Hollenberg research team had their paper, [Blockade of proteinase-activated receptor 2 \(PAR 2\) attenuates neuroinflammation in experimental autoimmune encephalomyelitis](#), published in the *Journal of Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics*. The article was selected for a 'Viewpoint' commentary, and congratulations to first author (and Snyder trainee) [Rahil Eftekhari, named Highlighted Trainee](#) for the January JPET journal issue. [Read the Viewpoint article](#). The Viewpoint article is [cited here](#).

## Congrats



- **Dr. Craig Jenne, PhD**, received the Cumming School of Medicine's Distinguished Achievement Award in Social Accountability which recognizes a faculty member who has utilized unique, transparent and effective strategies for community engagement, and whose contributions have made a significant difference to improving one or more of the priority health needs of Albertans.
- **Dr. Marie-Claire Arrieta, PhD**, was awarded the Cumming School of Medicine's Cochrane Distinguished Achievement Award for Research. Dr. Arrieta also received the CAAIF/CIHR-III/CIHR-ICRH Food Allergy Research Grant.
- **Dr. Carla Coffin, MD**, has been appointed Department of Medicine Vice Chair Research & Scholarship as of January 1, 2024
- **Dr. Mona Parizadeh, PhD** (Arrieta lab) was awarded an ACHRI postdoctoral fellowship
- **Dr. Michelle Asbury, PhD** (Arrieta lab) received a 10K CAD travel grant from The International Society for Research in Human Milk and Lactation (ISRHML)
- **Dr. Henry Nguyen, MD**, received the TRIANGLE (**TR**aining **A** New generation of researchers in **G**astroenterology and **LivEr**) Early Career Researcher Award, and was also selected for the 2023 EASL (European Association for the Study of the Liver) and AASLD (American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases) Masterclass
- **Anurag** (PhD student and Snyder Institute staff member) was awarded a 2023 UCalgary Graduate Assistant (Teaching) Award, recognizing outstanding contributions to teaching and learning
- **Shahina Wiehler, MSc**, Physiology & Pharmacology was also awarded a 2023 UCalgary Non-Academic Staff (Individual) Teaching Award, recognizing outstanding contributions to teaching and learning
- **Dr. Karen Poon, PhD**, Director, Nicole Perkins Microbial Communities Core Labs received a Cumming School of Medicine Operational Excellence Award, acknowledging and celebrating the important contributions of staff to the faculty's success

- **Dr. Sruthi Rajeev, PhD** (McKay Lab) successfully defended her PhD in December
- **James Sousa, MSc** (McKay Lab) successfully defended his MSc in December.

Well done everyone!

## Education news

**On behalf of the Snyder Institute membership we are deeply grateful to Beverley and Gordon Phillips for their recent generous donation and continued support of the Beverley Phillips Rising Star Program.**

Congratulations to the newest Beverley Phillips Rising Star 2023 program recipients!

- **Dr. Kenzie Birse, PhD** student (*project area – Fetal fibronectin: deciphering its cryptic connection to the vaginal microbiome and preterm birth*), Sycuro lab; and
- **Dr. Mohamed Abdelnabi, PDF** (*project area – Unraveling The Gut-Liver Axis: Mechanistic Evaluation of Metabolic dysfunction associated steatotic liver disease (MASLD) Progression Through The Lens of Microbiome and Immune Interactions*), Nguyen lab.



**Snyder Institute Endowed Chair Seminar Series:  
Mechanisms of Molecular Resistance and  
Molecular Healing in IBD Presented by Dr. Raja  
Atreya – February 16, from 2-3 pm in Theatre 4, &  
informal post-lecture reception from 3-4:30 pm in  
the HRIC Atrium**

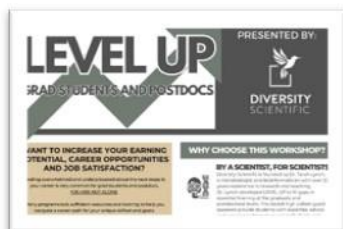
Please join us for the third lecture of the 2023-2024 Endowed Chair Seminar series on February 16, 2024, from 2-3 pm in Theatre 4. This lecture will feature invited speaker **Dr. Raja Atreya**, who will present on **Mechanisms of Molecular Resistance and Molecular Healing in IBD**. Following the lecture, an informal reception will be held in the HRIC atrium from 3-4:30 pm, and members, including trainees & postdocs, are encouraged to attend. **Snyder trainees and postdocs are also invited to a roundtable lunch with Dr. Atreya on February 16, 2024, from 12:00-1:00 PM in HRIC 4AC56.** [Learn more here](#). Register for the lecture & reception [here](#), and the trainee/postdoc roundtable [here](#).



## Paul Kubes Trainee Award of Excellence – applications due February 23, 4 pm MST

The Paul Kubes Trainee Award of Excellence is designed to encourage a multidisciplinary approach involving PIs (other than the supervisor)

from within or outside the Snyder Institute, who bring complementary but distinct perspectives and methodological approaches to interrogate the proposed research project. This award is open to trainees who have been accepted into a full-time graduate program at the University of Calgary under the supervision of a full member of the Snyder Institute. Successful applicants will receive an annual stipend of \$10,000/year plus a research allowance of \$2500/year. **Application deadline is February 23, 4:00 pm MST.** [Find out more & apply here.](#)



## Level Up Workshop Series | Wednesdays from February 28 to April 3 | 3 pm to 5 pm | Foothills campus & Zoom – Register by February 9

Open to Snyder trainees and postdocs, the Level Up Workshop is a six-week workshop series designed to empower participants to navigate a career path and promote networking amongst peers and professionals to foster connections that may lead to career opportunities. Course fees for up to ten students will be covered by the Snyder Institute. **Spots are limited – apply by February 9.** [Find out more & register here.](#)



## Snyder Graduate Seminar Series – February

All lectures begin at noon. Pizza (2 pcs. per person please) provided first come first served; best to arrive by 11:50 am.

**February 5, Theatre One:**

- Jordan La, MDBC MSc Graduate Student, Dr. Savchenko's Laboratory, Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology

- Lindsey Orthner, MDMI MSc Graduate Student, Dr. Surewaard's Lab, Dept. of Microbiology, Immunology & Infectious Diseases

**February 12, Theatre One:**

- Lauren Smith, MDGI MSc Graduate Student  
Drs. Hirota & MacNaughton Laboratories, Department of Physiology & Pharmacology
- Alexandria Bartlett, MDMI MSc Graduate Student  
Dr. Khan's Laboratory, Dept. of Microbiology, Immunology & Infectious Diseases

**February 19, Family Day Holiday, no seminar**

**February 26, Theatre One:**

- Adley Mok, MDIM MSc Graduate Student  
Dr. Mody's Laboratory, Department of Microbiology, Immunology & Infectious Diseases
- Rory Mulloy, MDMI PhD Graduate Student  
Dr. Corcoran's Laboratory, Department of Microbiology, Immunology & Infectious Diseases



**SITC Postdocs and Research Associates Seminar Series – Friday, February 23, 2 to 3 pm, HSC Theatre One**

Our next Postdocs & Research Associates Seminar Series lecture will be ***"The fate of antimicrobial resistance determinants in the interfaces between human and environment – from the One-Health perspective"***, presented by Jangwoo Lee, PhD.

As part of the series of events on professional development and education for members within the Snyder Institute, the Snyder Institute Trainee Committee (SITC) holds a seminar series dedicated to Postdocs and Research Associates seeking an opportunity to present their research or improve their teaching skills by giving a chalk talk for the Snyder community. The seminars take place monthly. If you are interested in joining this and further opportunities, please provide your contact information [here](#).



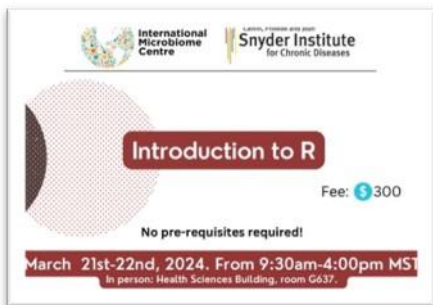
## February 26, 2024 – Dr. David M. Kovitz Visiting Professorship Lecture, 1 – 2 pm Theatre 4

Jointly hosted by the Arnie Charbonneau Cancer Institute and the Snyder Institute for Chronic Diseases, we are pleased to welcome **Dr. Michel Sadelain, MD, PhD**, as this year's speaker for the 2024 Dr. David M.

Kovitz Visiting Professorship Lecture on February 26 from 1 - 2 pm.

**Dr. Michel Sadelain** is the Director of the Center for Cell Engineering and the incumbent of the Stephen and Barbara Friedman Chair at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, New York. His research focuses on the mechanisms governing transgene expression, stem cell engineering, and genetic strategies to enhance immunity against cancer.

Dr. Sadelain will present **“CD19 CAR T Cells: Paradigm for the living drug concept.”** After the lecture, there will be a reception in HRIC Atrium from 2 - 3 pm. [More info here.](#)



## Introduction to R – March 21/22, 9:30 am – 4 pm

R has become one of the most popular programming languages globally and is used in diverse research areas, including bioinformatics, physics, math, social sciences, and many more. Join Sahar Bagheri, MSc, and Dr. Ewandson Luiz Lameu, PhD, as they smoothly guide you through the most fundamental

and some other more advanced capabilities of R. Brought to you by the Snyder Institute and the International Microbiome Centre. For more info and to register, [visit here](#). And if you have questions, please email [Sahar.bagheri1@ucalgary.ca](mailto:Sahar.bagheri1@ucalgary.ca) or [ewandsonluiz.lameu@ucalgary.ca](mailto:ewandsonluiz.lameu@ucalgary.ca).

[More upcoming SITC events](#)

## Save the Date!

- **April 18, 2024** – Snyder Institute Endowed Chair Seminar Series featuring Dr. Jay Kolls (hosted by Dr. Margaret Kelly)
- **May 16, 2024** – Snyder Institute Endowed Chair Seminar Series featuring Dr. William Agace (hosted by Dr. Kathy McCoy)



## Other news



### Researcher Spotlight: Visiting scientist Dr. J. Efraín Olguín, PhD, National Autonomous University of Mexico

The Snyder Institute's Visiting Scientist Grant was launched to facilitate Snyder Institute members in hosting project-based visits by senior postdoctoral fellows or early- to mid-career faculty from less developed geographic regions at the Snyder Institute. Ideally, visiting researchers will acquire skills to help with their research program, career advancement and capacity building upon return to their home region.

The grant is also intended to facilitate Snyder researchers and visiting scientists in gaining an experiential advantage that will lead to external research grant and funding opportunities. An additional goal is to build research collaborations between the Snyder Institute and research programs from less-developed regions.

**Dr. J. Efraín Olguín, PhD**, one of our visiting scientists, is an Associate Career Professor at Faculty of Higher Studies Iztacala (FES-I), National Autonomous University of Mexico, and Coordinator of the Flow Cytometry Core Facility at FES-I. He also belongs to the National System of Researchers by the Mexican Council of Science in the category 1. Dr. Olguín was based in the McKay lab at UCalgary in November/December. [Read more](#).

### CIHR travel awards available

CIHR-III is committed to supporting the next generation of infection and immunity researchers in Canada to achieve the highest possible level of scientific excellence. Earlier this year they announced the upcoming [New Investigator Forum \(NIF\)](#) in **King City, Toronto Ontario** from **April 2 – 4, 2024**. The objective of the NIF is to provide practical information and learning opportunities to promote the professional development of early career researchers, as well as late-stage postdoctoral fellows or research associates, whose research is relevant to III's mandate. CIHR-III and the CIHR HIV/AIDS and Sexually Transmitted and Blood-Borne Infections (STBBI) Research Initiative have partnered to provide additional funding for travel support to the NIF through the [CIHR-III Spring 2024 New Investigator Forum Travel Award](#). Application to the CIHR-III Spring 2024 New Investigator Forum Travel Award is mandatory to be eligible to participate in the NIF. Successful applicants will be invited to attend. The application deadline is **February 2, 2024 at 5 pm EST**.

## UCalgary educators are invited to apply for 2024 Indigenous Curriculum Grants – apply by February 28

The **Indigenous Curriculum Grants**, launched in 2022, aim to bring Indigenous knowledge into more UCalgary academic courses and programs. Offered by the Office of Indigenous Engagement, with support from the Vice-Provost (Teaching and Learning) and the Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning, the grants provide up to \$10,000 to support initiatives that will advance Indigenous engagement and Indigenous perspectives in the curriculum. [Learn more.](#)

## International Neutrophil Institute Grant Opportunity

A [grant opportunity](#) is being offered through the [Society for Leukocyte Biology](#). The focus of their FY2024 grant cycle is on research that evaluates whether or not neutrophils have an exclusive “don’t eat me” signal. Grants are for \$100k/year over 4 years with a maximum of 12% indirect costs. Applications will be accepted until June 30, 2024.

**The Cancer Research Institute** is offering three tracks of postdoctoral fellowships providing career development, training, and diversity building in cancer immunology and immune-informatics. [Learn more.](#)

## Snyder Institute funding reminder

- Snyder internal funding opportunities can be found on our website under [Membership & Funding](#)
- Snyder internal scholarship opportunities can be found on our website under [Education & Scholarships](#)

## Do you have new trainees or new staff working with you?

If you do, please send us their contact information so we can add them to our mailing list and ensure they receive all pertinent Snyder news. Email [snyderadmin@ucalgary.ca](mailto:snyderadmin@ucalgary.ca).

## Upcoming events



**The Snyder Institute presents Mini-Medical School: The effect of climate change on public health, ecosystem health, wildlife, and food security in the Arctic, February 5, 6:30 – 8 pm, in-person and online**

Join us for the Snyder Institute’s Mini-Medical School, presented in person and also online by **Dr. Susan Kutz, DVM, PhD**, and Ms. Amanda Dumond, traditional knowledge keeper.

Learn how new research aims to bring local, Indigenous and scientific knowledge together to understand the impacts of a warming Arctic on the health of muskoxen and caribou, and the consequential effects on food security in the Arctic. This interactive lecture will be presented in person at Health Sciences Centre Theatre 4, UCalgary's Foothills campus, and also online via zoom. Mini-Medical School lectures are free, but you must register to attend. [Register here](#).



### **Snyder/MIID Coffee Meet-ups for Faculty: Next meet-up February 6, 2 – 3 pm, HRIC 4AC56**

Snyder Faculty members, come and get to know your Snyder/MIID colleagues! Please join us for coffee and treats in an informal setting on **February 6, 2 – 3 pm**. \*We'll provide the coffee and treats; please bring your own mug or cup if possible. Back to our original location: HRIC 4AC56. [More info here](#).



### **Snyder EDI Action Group next meeting March 25, 10:30 – 11:45am, HSC G382**

[Dr. Laura Sycuro, PhD](#), is the Portfolio Lead of the Snyder EDI Action Group. Launched in Fall 2022 by Snyder trainees Dr. Karen Lithgow and Diana Changirwa, the Group currently has ~30 members working

to initiate policies and advance practices that address structural inequities, celebrate diversity and promote an inclusive environment for all.

Three sub-committees have formed and will be managed by Action Leaders: one faculty member and one staff or trainee member for each group.

***\*\*Open to all faculty, trainees & staff who want to get involved\*\****

There are opportunities to join as a member-at-large or sub-committee leader.

Remaining regular meetings are held on the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of **every other month**, 10:30-11:45 am, in HSC G382

- March 25, 10:30 am in G382
- May 27, 10:30 am in G382

Learn more about the [Snyder Institute EDI Action Group](#).

## Would you like to contact someone at the Snyder Institute?

On our website, our [Contact Us page](#) has some useful contacts.

## We want to hear from you! Send us your news

We invite all Snyder members, trainees and staff to send us your news about successes, lectures, workshops... anything that you would like to share with the membership. We will make every effort to post it, and the best ways for us to share your news are through our:

- [Snyder newsletter](#)
- [Snyder website](#) (as long as your news fits the site's guidelines)
- Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram and Facebook channels

Do you want help publicizing your event/lecture/workshop? Send us the details **at least one month before the event date**. Please contact Holly if you have any questions ([holly.kerr@ucalgary.ca](mailto:holly.kerr@ucalgary.ca)). Thank you.

For the latest news and information, visit us at [snyder.ucalgary.ca](https://snyder.ucalgary.ca),  
and at



If you have news to share, please send it to Holly Kerr,  
[holly.kerr@ucalgary.ca](mailto:holly.kerr@ucalgary.ca)

[snyder.ucalgary.ca/](https://snyder.ucalgary.ca/)

This message was sent to you because you are a  
Community Member of The Snyder Institute for  
Chronic Diseases.

To unsubscribe, please reply "unsubscribe".

Snyder Institute for Chronic Diseases  
Cumming School of Medicine

University of Calgary  
3280 Hospital Drive NW  
Calgary, Alberta, T2N 4N1

© University of Calgary 2024