A NEWSLETTER FROM

The Snyder Institute for Chronic Diseases

Calvin, Phoebe and Joan Snyder Institute for Chronic Diseases

UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY CUMMING SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

October 2026

Paula Brandt Advances to National Three Minute Thesis Competition

Paula Brandt from the Muruve lab will represent the University of Calgary and Western Canada at the National Three Minute Thesis (3MT) Competition in Regina on November 4th. After placing first in her initial UCalgary Heat and winning the university finals, Paula went on to win the Western Regional competition in May, competing against representatives from 17 universities across British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba.

At the national competition, Paula will compete against seven other finalists from across Canada and the winners of national storytelling and French-language 3MT competitions. Her presentation, “Islet Amyloid Polypeptide: The Biological Velcro Creating Sticky Situations in Type 2 Diabetes,” explores her research in an engaging, accessible format.

The competition will be livestreamed. Learn more and support her.

Celebrating Excellence in Microbiome Research!

Congratulations to Dr. Marie-Claire Arrieta on receiving the prestigious Arthur B. McDonald Fellowship, one of just six awarded across Canada this year! Dr. Arrieta is internationally recognized for her groundbreaking work exploring how the gut microbiome influences infant development and future health. The $250,000 fellowship will help advance her research into the role microbes play in shaping immune and metabolic development, with the potential to inform new approaches to preventing chronic diseases. Read more.

Turning Research into Life-saving Innovation

Led by Dr. Ian Lewis, the Alberta Centre for Advanced Diagnostics (ACAD) state-of-the-art facility is helping bridge the gap between scientific discovery and real-world healthcare solutions. In just four years, ACAD has supported 48 Canadian companies, helped bring

25 new products and technologies to market and contributed to innovations that could transform patient care. Read more.

Inside Calgary's Growing Health and Life Sciences Sector

Calgary is emerging as a hub for health and life sciences innovation, with more than 140 companies developing solutions in human and animal health and a 10,000-square-foot germ-free facility and world-renowned research and clinical programs in neurology, oncology and microbiome. Discover how world-class research, clinical expertise and the University of Calgary's Life Sciences Innovation Hub are helping transform scientific discoveries into real-world health solutions, new technologies and economic opportunities. Read more.

Welcoming Dr. Eugene Krustev as Associate Clinical Director

Dr. Eugene Krustev is a rheumatologist and clinician scientist. He specializes in idiopathic inflammatory myopathies (IIM). His research focuses on biomarker discovery, disease mechanisms and novel therapeutics in IIM. He completed his medical training at Memorial University, residency and rheumatology fellowship at the University of Calgary, and a clinical research fellowship in myositis at Johns Hopkins University.

We are pleased to welcome Dr. Eugene Krustev to his new role as Associate Clinical Director. In this position, Dr. Krustev will help provide clinical leadership and support our continued commitment to advancing research, fostering collaboration and translating discoveries into meaningful improvements.

Save the Date: Calgary International Microbiome Summit 2027

The Calgary International Microbiome Summit (CiMS) will bring together scientists, clinicians, trainees and innovators from around the world to explore the evolving role of the microbiome in human health and disease. Taking place **October 5-7, 2027, at the BMO Centre in Calgary**, CiMS will showcase emerging discoveries and foster collaboration across basic, translational and clinical microbiome science. Scientific themes include microbiome and human health, microbial therapeutics, precision medicine, chronic disease and clinical microbiome research. Learn more here.

Publications

- **Wheeler M, Bakkaren E**. *Microbiome ecology and antibiotic treatment failure: resistance spread, microbial competition and community engineering*. Microb Genom, 2026

- **Almsoud A**, **Nyaupane U**, Jain K, Hassan G, Lakins JN, Weaver VM, **Kai FB**. *Generation of polyacrylamide and silicone extracellular matrix substrates with defined stiffness for cell biology applications*. J Vis Exp, 2026

- Ayad NME, **Almsoud A,** Lakins JN, Ghagre A, Ehrlicher AJ, Klein OD**, Kai FB**, Weaver VM. *Tissue tension permits beta-catenin phosphorylation to drive mesoderm specification in human embryonic stem cells*. Dev Cell, 2026

- Wong TH, Lima MF, Nagrath A, Li YL, Joshi B, **Kai FB**, Nabi IR. *CLIC-dependent internalization of caveolin-1 to lysosomal vacuoles in response to osmotic regulation*. Cell Rep, 2026

- **Qin, W.**, Brailsford, W., Cromer Berman, S.M., **Thornton, C.S.**, DiGiandomenico, A., and **Kubes, P.** *Targeting virulence factors Psl and PcrV restores host defense in bronchiectasis and cystic fibrosis models*. ***J Clin Invest***. 2026

- Turk M, Rajwani J, Naumenko V, Potts K, Vishnevskiy D, Sinha S, Labit E, **Zemp F**, Van S, Boyko A, **Kaul E**, Todesco H, Colter J, **Biernaskie J**, **Mahoney DJ**, **Jenne CN**. *Pericytes within tumour and other angiogenic microenvironments as potential targets for therapeutic viruses*. Mol Med, 2026

- Carestia A, **Godin LC**, Davis RP, Turk M, **Isidoro CA**, Lee BH, **de Chantal E**, Kaul E, Najimudeen SM, Isham IM, Abdul-Careem MF, **Hindle S**, John C**, Petri B**, Agbani EO, **Kelly MM**, Deniset JF, **Jenne CN.** Thromboinflammation and immunothrombosis drive lung pathology following bacterial and viral infection. In Blood VTH, 2026

Education News

Grad Seminar Series Schedule (November)

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

November 2 | Clara Christie

- **Liam Wilkinson, MDMI PhD Graduate Student**
  Drs. Canton's and Yates Laboratories, Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology

- **Jillian Davies, MSc Graduate Student**
  Dr. Bakkeren's Laboratory, Department of Biological Sciences

November 9 | Clara Christie

- **Anika Arora, MDIM MSc Graduate Student**
  Drs. Peters' and Geuking's Laboratory, Department of Microbiology, Immunology & Infectious Diseases

November 16 | Clara Christie

- **Anjali Kapilan, MDSC PhD Graduate Student**
  Dr. Dufour's Laboratorya, Department of Pharmacology & Physiology

- **Dorian Rojas Villalta, BMB PhD Graduate Student**
  Dr. Arrieta's and Dufour's Laboratories, Department of Physiology and Pharmacology

November 9 | Clara Christie

- **Guilherme Marinho, MDMI MSc Student**
  Dr. Lahl's Laboratory, Department of Microbiology, Immunology & Infectious Diseases

- **Spencer Abbott, MDIM PhD Student**
  Dr. McCoy's Laboratory, Department of Microbiology, Immunology & Infectious Diseases

November 30 | Clara Christie

- **Carmina Isidoro, MDIM PhD Graduate Student**
  Dr. Deniset's Laboratory
  Department of Physiology and Pharmacology

- **Myles Wheeler, MSc Graduate Student**
  Dr. Bakkeren's Laboratory, Department of Biological Science

Congratulations

- Congratulations to Dorian Rojas Villalta in the Arrieta lab for winning the Killam Scholar Award.
- Dr. Marie-Claire Arrieta received the NSERC Arthur B. McDonald fellowship.
- Drs. Henry Nguyen, Carla Coffin, Mark Swain, and Craig Jenne have won the Summer 2026 Snyder Research Equipment Grant competition for Fibroscan.
- Alexandria Bartlett, a PhD student in the Nargis Khan lab, received first place in the poster presentation competition at the 7th International Conference on Innate Immune Memory in Montreal.
- Dr. Aline Ignacio was awarded the TRIANGLE Early Career Researcher (ECR) SECURE Award for this year's competition.
- A paper from the Simon Hirota Lab, titled "Dietary Phytic Acid, Dephytinization, and Phytase Supplementation Alter Trace Element Bioavailability—A Narrative Review of Human Interventions," has been selected as a 2026 Q3 Editor's Choice Article by Nutrients. The recognition highlights the lab's research on how dietary factors influence trace element bioavailability in humans. Editor's Choice articles in Nutrients.
- Students from the Malmuthuge lab have published an invited review in Animal Frontiers exploring how colostrum management can support the development of the neonatal calf gut microbiome and promote gut health beyond passive immunity. Read the full publication: Colostrum management to nurture the neonatal calf gut microbiome and promote gut health: moving beyond passive immunity.
- Davis Dickson and Rabia Salmon from the Xiaofan Jin's Lab received first and third place poster awards at the recent Having IMPACTT 6: Advancing Microbiome Research Symposium.

- Sydney Comfort, from Kathy McCoy's lab, received a Master's stream Azrieli Accelerator Graduate Scholarship.
- Congratulations to Dr. Malmuthuge! Following the federal government's announcement of funded Canada Research Chair (CRC) programs, Dr. Nilusha Malmuthuge has been appointed as a Tier 2 Canada Research Chair in Microbiomes of Livestock and Large Animals.
- Md Deen Islam from the Coffin lab was selected for the 2026-2027 cohort of the Canadian Mother-Child Collaborative Platform (CAMCOO-L). As part of the program, Deen attended the fully funded 16th Summer School in Medicine in Toulouse, France, in July 2026.
- Dr. Craig Jenne, in collaboration with Dr. Carla Coffin, Dr. Alexei Savchenko and Dr. Doug Whiteside (UCVM), have won the VPR Catalyst Grant: Engineering Antibodies for Mapping Woodchuck Immune Function.
- Malcolm Walling's, Sidney Gilewich's and Craig Jenne's review, Platelet Diversity and Function: The Emerging Understanding of Platelet Populations in Host Responses, has been accepted for publication in Annals of Blood (2026).

Upcoming Events

Striking Image Competition | October 15 - November 6

This is a friendly competition designed to showcase microscopy excellence at the University of Calgary. Submissions are judged on their technical excellence, artistic merit, scientific merit and communication and colorblind friendliness.

The competition runs from October 15 to November 6, with the award ceremony at the end of November. Competition categories: Single Cell/Sub-Cellular Images, Tissue/Organ/Whole Body Images, Lightsheet Images, and Videos.

Weekly prizes: Starting on October 5, anyone who has submitted their application prior to the draw is eligible! Get your applications in early for the best chance to win! For more information or to submit your entry, click here.

Snyder Invited Speaker Seminar | November 12

Join us on November 12th , from **11:00 am to 12:00** pm in **Theatre Four** for the next lecture in the Snyder Invited Speaker Seminar Series. This session will feature **Dr. Tristan Ferry** presenting on "*Phage Therapy for Biofilm-associated Infections: Real-world experience from >100 Patients Treated in France through the 'PHAGEinLYON Clinic' Programme*." Dr. Tristan Ferry is Infectious Diseases physician at Hospices Civils de Lyon (HCL), France, Head of the reference center for the management of complex bone and joint infections (CRIOAc Lyon) and President of the National CRIOAc Scientific Committee.

Trainees and postdocs are invited to attend lunch with Dr. Ferry from 12:15 to 1:15 pm, RSVP here . The Snyder Invited Speaker Seminar Series is a biweekly lecture series featuring invited speakers hosted by Snyder endowed chairs, research groups, and journal clubs.

Building Together: Networking Beyond Academia and Building Connections That Open doors | November 13

This interactive workshop will help you develop a networking strategy that extends beyond academia. Learn how to create a LinkedIn profile that showcases your expertise, confidently initiate conversations with professionals outside of research and build authentic relationships that lead to collaborations, mentorship and career opportunities.

Catherine Brownlee, the speaker, is President and CEO of CBI Business Solutions and a Calgary-based executive, entrepreneur and community builder with more than 30 years of leadership experience. Throughout her career, she has built extensive networks across industry, government and the non-profit sector while leading initiatives in business development, executive search, stakeholder engagement, advocacy and community impact.

The event is designed for postdocs but open to all!

November 13 | 12:30 pm - 4:30 pm | Clara Christie Theatre and Hippo Mall

Developmental Biology Seminar Series | November 17

The Developmental Biology Seminar Series is hosting Dr. Cecilia Moens from Fred Hutch Cancer Center and University of Washington as the next speaker. Dr. Moens will be presenting on **Think Globally, Act Locally: In Vivo Mechanisms of Axon Guidance.**

Tuesday, November 17th | 11 am - 12 pm | Clara Christie Theatre

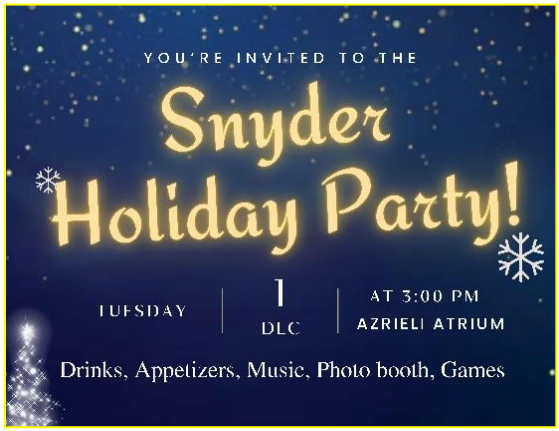
Dr. Moens is interested in the local and global cues that pattern the brain and that guide neurons and their axons to their correct targets. Her specific focus is on the segmented hindbrain and the neurons that reside there, including the vagus motor neurons that are our main route of brain-body communication. The zebrafish, with its combination of genetics and live imaging, is the ideal system in which to study these processes, and it has given the Moens lab new insights into the roles developmental timing and planar cell polarity in axon-target matching.

2026 The Leroy H. le Riche Endowment for Research and Education in Substance Abuse Competition

The Leroy H. le Riche Endowment for Research and Education in Substance Abuse competition is opened to members of the University of Calgary, Cumming School of Medicine, who are developing careers in basic or clinical science relating to substance abuse. The award may be used to attend scientific meetings, purchase equipment or research materials, to set up a course or for other research related activities.

Eligibility: This competition is opened to all faculty members and trainees of the Cumming School of Medicine who are developing careers in basic or clinical science relating to substance abuse.
Deadline for application submission: **November 12th, 2026**
Awards available up to **$15,000 each,** that can be spent over 1 year.
Guidelines & **Application form** at: CSM Endowment Competitions
Submit your application and attachments as ONE PDF file at Office of the Associate Dean Research SharePoint site or go to CSM Endowment Competitions website. *Access the SharePoint site using your UCalgary username and password.*
Questions at: medendow@ucalgary.ca.

Snyder Trainee Research Day and Holiday Party | December 1



Join us for a day of research, connection and holiday celebrations! Kick things off at the Snyder Institute Trainee Research Day, taking place from 9 am to 3 pm in Theatre 4 and the Azrieli Atrium. Celebrate the innovation and discoveries of the next generation of chronic disease researchers through presentations, networking and inspiration. Trainees are encouraged to submit their abstracts by November 10, 2026. Join colleagues at 3 pm for the Holiday Party in the Azrieli Atrium for an afternoon of festive fun, including drinks, appetizers, music, a photo booth and games.

In the News

- **City News**
  Alberta's flu season off to an early start
  Dr. Craig Jenne **|** Read more.

- **CBC News**
  1 dead, more than 400 confirmed flu cases ahead of vaccine availability in Alberta
  Dr. Craig Jenne **|** Read more.

- **Canadian Cattlemen**
  Vaccine aims to protect cattle that small farms can't afford to lose
  Dr. Anthony Schryvers **|** Read more.

- **American Medical Journal**
  Beyond Individual Pathogens: Interview with Christina Thornton
  Dr. Christina Thornton **|** Read more.

- **Menopause Research**
  From Brain Fog to Weight Loss: 5 Menopause Research Updates | Excessive Bloating and Gas Plague Women Throughout the Menopause Transition
  Sanjana Solomon| AARP |The Menopause Society|Healio

Opportunities

2026 The Koopmans Memorial Research Fund Competition

The allocation made available from the Fund will be awarded annually to a junior faculty member with a preference for the Gastrointestinal Research Group of the Snyder Institute, but awards can be made to any junior faculty member with a full-time appointment in the Cumming School of Medicine or a cross-appointment in the Cumming School of Medicine (preference will be given to highly ranked applications of those with a primary appointment).
For additional clarifications regarding CIHR Early Career Researcher please see the guidelines.

Deadline: November 9, 2026
Amount available: one award up to $23,200 for one year
Guidelines and Application at: CSM Endowment Competitions
Questions to Dr. Shan Liao at liaos@ucalgary.ca or to medendow@ucalgary.ca

2027 London Drugs Libin Wears Red Catalyst Grant

The 2027 London Drugs Libin Wears Red Women's Cardiovascular Health Initiative (WCHI) Catalyst Grant — a new partnership between the London Drugs Foundation and WCHI to spark innovative research and advance cardiovascular health for women.

Whether you're developing a new idea, testing an innovative approach, or generating the preliminary data needed to pursue larger funding opportunities, this is an opportunity to turn an idea into action.

2027 WCHI Catalyst Grant:

Funding: Up to $50,000
Number of grants: One
Eligibility: Open to all LCI members
Application deadline: Monday, November 16, 2026

Award announcement: Libin Wears Red Symposium — Thursday, February 11, 2027

The Catalyst Grant will support collaborative, innovative and multidisciplinary projects that advance women's cardiovascular health research and care across the lifespan — including mechanistic, clinical, translational, population health, community-based and health services research.

Have An Idea? This Could Be Your Catalyst

All eligible LCI members are eligible to explore the opportunity and consider how up to $50,000 in catalyst funding could help move your work forward.

View Terms of Reference here
Click here to apply

Questions? We'd love to hear from you: libinwchi@ucalgary.ca

Looking for Healthy Volunteers!

Dr. Choi's AI.Dx lab is looking for fellow Snyder staff, faculty and trainees to volunteer to donate blood, urine and saliva for healthy control samples. If interested, then please contact the lab at mailto:sajida.alkadri@ucalgary.ca. The University of Calgary Conjoint Health Research Ethics Board has approved this study (REB24-0282).

Other News

A Follow up from the Banff 2025 Pandemic Evidence Collaboration Meeting with the full program, abstracts and seminars from all the attendees and presenters (who agreed to have their material in) has been published in BMC Proceedings.

Abstracts, workshops and seminars from the Pandemic EVIDENCE Collaboration 2025 International Conference | BMC Proceedings | Springer Nature Link

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

Awareness Information

Disinfectant Solutions: Efficacy, Use, And Expiry

- Not all disinfectants are made equal
- Follow required contact times!
- Check disinfectant expiry dates

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)
- X, LinkedIn, Instagram and Facebook channels

Do you want help publicizing your event/lecture/workshop? Send us the details **one month before the event date.** Please contact Mary Siliveru (mary.siliveru@ucalgary.ca). if you have any questions.

For the latest news and information, visit us at snyder.ucalgary.ca, and at

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Snyder Institute for Chronic Diseases
Cumming School of Medicine

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