Summer 2026

Three Snyder Researchers Named New Research Excellence Chairs

Congratulations to Dr. Gilaad Kaplan, Dr. Joe Harrison and Dr. Tamara Bodnar, who have been named among the 15 new UCalgary Research Excellence Chairs (UCREC) for 2026.

Dr. Kaplan, Dr. Harrison and Dr. Bodnar bring diverse expertise spanning chronic infectious disease, microbiome research, population health and neurodevelopment. Dr. Kaplan is a leading researcher in gastroenterology and population health, while Dr. Harrison's research focuses on biofilms and chronic infectious diseases. Dr. Bodnar's work examines the connections between the gut, brain and immune system in neurodevelopmental disorders. Read more.

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, AI and multi-omics, chronic disease and clinical microbiome research. Learn more here.

LINK Grant: Launching Innovative Novel Knowledge Translation

The LINK Grant supports new collaborations between clinicians and basic scientists to transform important clinical observations into early-stage translational research. Postgraduate trainees including postdoctoral trainees, residents and fellows are strongly encouraged to apply! Funding helps teams generate preliminary data, investigate disease mechanisms and therapeutic opportunities, and build a strong foundation for future external funding and partnerships.

Funding: Up to **$30,000 in matched 50/50 funding** for 12 months, with **3-4 grants awarded annually**. One grant each year is reserved for an early-career researcher or postgraduate trainee.

Eligible expenses include pilot data generation, research supplies, research/student assistant stipends, participant recruitment and publication costs. Matching funds must be confirmed at the time of application. One grant each year is reserved for an early-career researcher with **applications now open to postgraduate trainees (PDFs/PGYs). Apply here.**

Publications

- **Mirza S**, Fine L, McClure JA, Kim J, Conly JM, Zhang K. Staphylococcal Cassette Chromosome mec (SCCmec) Natural Excision Frequencies and Its Contributing Factors in Variant SCCmec Type Prototypic Strains. Antibiotics, 2026
- **Mirza S**, McClure JA, Conly JM, Zhang K. Caenorhabditis elegans as an In Vivo Infection–Rescue Model for Early-Stage Antimicrobial Screening Against Gram-Positive and Gram-Negative Bacteria. Antibiotics, 2026
- **Godin L**, Davis RP, Turk M, **Isidoro CA**, Lee BH, **Chantal ED**, 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. Blood Vessesls, Thrombosis & Hemostasis, 2026

- **Mulloy RP**, Evseev D, Sharlin N, Bui-Marinos MP, Lacasse É, Dubuc I, Flamand L, Corcoran JA. Evolution of a truncated nucleocapsid protein enhances SARS-CoV-2 fitness by suppressing antiviral responses. PLOS Biology, 2026
- **Kleer M**, Mulloy RP, Bui-Marinos MP, Johnston MJ, Khan MF, Schriemer DC, Corcoran JA. Nuclear body assembly by a viral repeat RNA promotes Kaposi's sarcoma-associated herpesvirus gene expression. Molecular Cell, 2026

Education News

Grad Seminar Series Schedule (October)

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

October 5 | Clara Christie

- **Joshua Tourigny, MDBC MSc Graduate Student**
  Dr. Savchenko's Laboratory, Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology

October 19 | Clara Christie

- **Alexandria Bartlett, MDIM PhD Graduate Student**
  Dr. Khan's Laboratory, Department of Microbiology, Immunology and Infectious Diseases

October 26 | Clara Christie

- **Ayman Iqbal, MSc Graduate Student**
  Dr. Sycuro's Laboratory, Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology

- **Dasiel Castellanos Pérez, MDMI MSc Student**
  Dr. Lahl's Laboratory, Department of Microbiology, Immunology and Infectious Diseases

Congratulations

- Congratulations to Dr. Srijak Bhatnagar on receiving the CAFA Distinguished Academic Early Career Award from the Confederation of Alberta Faculty Associations. The award recognizes Srijak's contributions to community-engaged One Health research and his work advancing research that connects human, animal and environmental health. Read more.

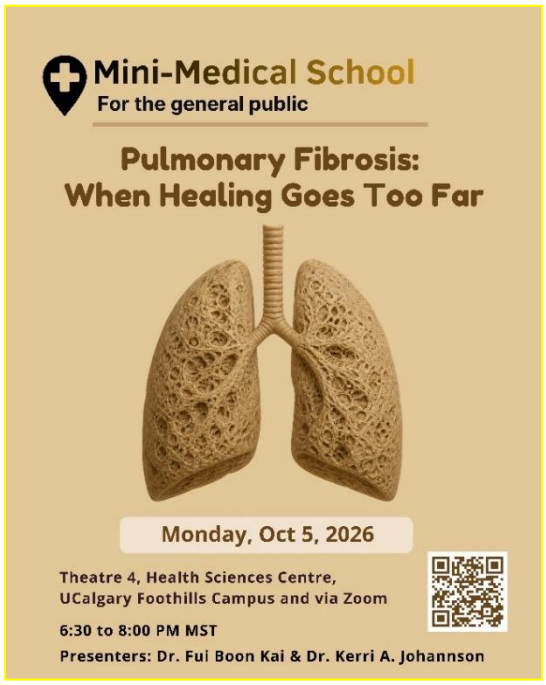
- In August 2026, the BIM research team, inlcuding Dr. Marc J. Poulin**,** welcomed approximately 200 study participants and Brenda Strafford Foundation board members to a community engagement and knowledge exchange evening at the campus. With generous support from the Brenda Strafford Foundation Chair in Alzheimer Research, more than 500 older adults from the community have completed the 18-month Brain in Motion (BIM) exercise intervention. Participants have shared how taking part in the program and incorporating exercise into their lives has positively influenced their health and well-being.

- Congratulations to Darasimi Kola-Ilesanmi (Hirota Lab), for winning the TRIANGLE CIHR Amplify award. She also secured a MITACS Globalink Research Award to work abroad at the University of Melbourne for 6 months.

- Congratulations to Simon Hirota, Gerald Zamponi (HBI), Shigeki Tsutui (HBI), and Jim Rogers (former HBI trainee) for winning the Metal Recording of the Year at the YYC Music Awards (Band - Hellrazer; Album - Serve the Machine). Read more here.

Upcoming Events

Mini-Medical School Lecture Series | October 5



The Snyder Institute's Mini-Medical School returns for another year of engaging public lectures exploring chronic, infectious and inflammatory diseases. The 2026-2027 series kicks off on **October 5** with *Pulmonary Fibrosis: When Healing Goes Too Far*, featuring Snyder researchers Dr. Fui Boon Kai and Dr. Kerri Johannson. The lecture will explore how the lungs heal after injury, what happens when healing goes too far and the latest research into pulmonary fibrosis and potential new treatments. Lectures are open to the public and offered in a hybrid format, both in person and online. Register here.

Snyder Research Day 2026 | October 6

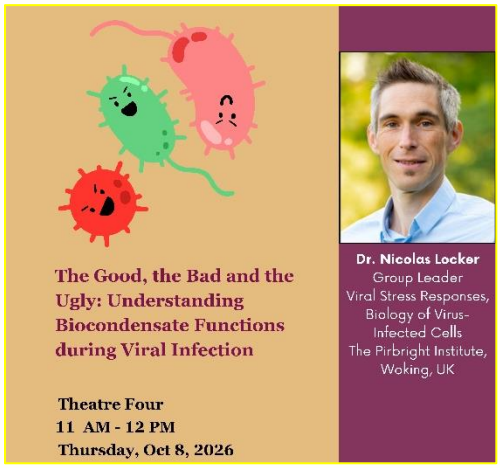
Join the Snyder Institute for Research Day 2026, *Road to CIMS: A Gathering of Local Microbiome Leaders*, bringing together researchers, trainees and collaborators to showcase the breadth of research across the Institute.

Research Day 2026 will highlight research from keynote speaker **Dr. Eugene B. Chang, MD**, Martin Boyer Professor of Medicine at the University of Chicago, as well as local microbiome leaders. Dr. Chang will present **"**Paths to restoring gut microbiome health through the lens of ecological and evolutionary principles." The event will also mark the one-year countdown to the Calgary International Microbiome Summit (CiMS). Learn more and register here.

ASOC & Illumina Lunch & Learn | October 7

The Applied Spatial Omics Centre (ASOC) invites researchers to an upcoming Lunch & Learn on Wednesday, October 7th, 12-1:30 pm at HSC 1405B, exploring advances in proteomics and SomaLogic technology. Join ASOC and Illumina to learn how emerging proteomics approaches can support and advance research. Register here.

Snyder Invited Speaker Seminar | October 8



Join us on October 8th, 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. Nicolas Locker** presenting on "*The Good, the Bad and the Ugly: Understanding Biocondensate Functions during Viral Infection*." Dr. Locker is a Group Leader at the Pirbright Institute. Over the years he has developed a competitive research program at the interface between Diseases, Virology and RNA biology. The Locker lab is interested in unravelling new mechanisms contributing to the multifaceted regulation of gene expression by microbial pathogens, and how they impact on the antiviral response, focusing on economically important human and animal viruses but also other conditions associated with neurodegeneration. Dr. Locker has a particular interest in the role of biocondensates and translational control in these processes.

Trainees and postdocs are invited to attend lunch with Dr. Locker from 12:15 to 1:30 p.m. 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.

Learn How to Write for The Conversation Canada | October 21

Join an editor from The Conversation Canada for a 90-minute in-person workshop on Wednesday, 21st October, designed for faculty, postdocs and graduate students. The session will explore how to pitch stories, share your expertise and turn your research into an engaging article for a wider audience. Learn how publishing with The Conversation can amplify your research, reach a global readership and position you as a trusted expert. The workshop will be held at **Theatre One** (G504), Health Sciences Centre. Register here.

Azrieli Accelerator Research Exchange | October 14

This exchange is bringing together researchers, thought leaders and partners that have helped shape the Azrieli Accelerator. Attendees will hear from investigators about their Azrieli Accelerator-funded research, learn about the progress of the priority research areas, and connect with experts from across UCalgary who are exploring neurodevelopment and neurodevelopmental conditions across the lifespan.

Wednesday, October 14, 2026 | Time: 9:00 am - 1:00 pm |Azrieli Atrium and Theatre 4
Learn more and register to attend.

Snyder Postdoc and Research Associates Seminar Series | Oct 15

Join us on October 15th, at 11:00 am in Theatre 4, where Dr. Atena Sombolestani will be presenting on: "What do we know about wildfire microbes?". If you are interested in presenting at this seminar series, please email at sitc@ucalgary.ca.

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.

Owerko Family Distinguished Lecture | October 27

Dr. Emeran A. Mayer will join from the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA is presenting at the lecture. Dr. Mayer is a Gastroenterologist, Neuroscientist and Distinguished Research Professor with a career long interest in clinical and scientific aspects of brain gut microbiome interactions in health.

Tuesday, October 27, 2026 | 11:00 am - 1:00pm (Lunch served at 12:00 pm) at Theatre 4 and Azrieli Atrium, Health Sciences Centre. Learn more and register to attend.

Opportunities

2026 The Rozsa Endowment for Auditory Research Competition

The award is intended to support the research of a faculty member in the field of auditory research.
The competition is open to all faculty members with primary appointment at Cumming School of Medicine at University of Calgary

Eligible use of funds and award criteria: CSM Endowment Competitions
Deadline: November 4, 2026
Amount: up to $27,500/year for one year
Guidelines and Application form at: CSM Endowment Competitions
Questions: ask at medendow@ucalgary.ca

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, 20256
Amount available: one award up to $23,200 for one year
Guidelines & Application at: CSM Endowment Competitions
Questions? To Dr. Shan Liao at liaos@ucalgary.ca or to medendow@ucalgary.ca

Reminder to the Membership

When publishing your research, please remember to include the Snyder Institute in your affiliation or acknowledgements, where appropriate. This is an important way for us to accurately track and showcase the research contributions of our Institute members.

Thank you for helping us ensure your research and the Institute's collective impact are recognized!

Other News

Flu Shot Clinics | October 19 – November 3

Occupational Health, Student Wellness Services and the Students' Union are once again partnering to offer free flu shot clinics across UCalgary campuses from October 19 to November 3. Visit here.

Foothills campus: Azrieli Atrium - October 29-30, 9 am - 3 pm

Main campus: MacEwan Student Centre - October 19-23, 9 am - 3 pm

Spy Hill campus: Veterinary Learning Commons 201 - October 27, 9 am - 3 pm

Downtown campus: DTC 234 - November 3, 9 am - 3 pm

ISSSI 2026 Brings The Global Staphylococcal Research Community To Banff

Dr. Bas Surewaard and Dr. David Heinrichs (UWO) co-organized the 20th International Symposium on Staphylococci and Staphylococcal Infections (ISSSI 2026) in Banff, Alberta, this September.

The four-day meeting brought together more than 250 scientists, clinicians, trainees and industry partners from six continents to share the latest advances in *Staphylococcus aureus* biology, pathogenesis, antimicrobial resistance, host immunity, clinical management and emerging therapeutics.

Drs. Surewaard and Heinrichs extend their thanks to the scientific advisory committee, speakers, sponsors, volunteers, trainees and administrative team, as well as everyone who travelled from around the world to make ISSSI 2026 a memorable and successful meeting.

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

Calvin, Phoebe and Joan Snyder Institute for Chronic Diseases

snyder.ucalgary.ca/

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