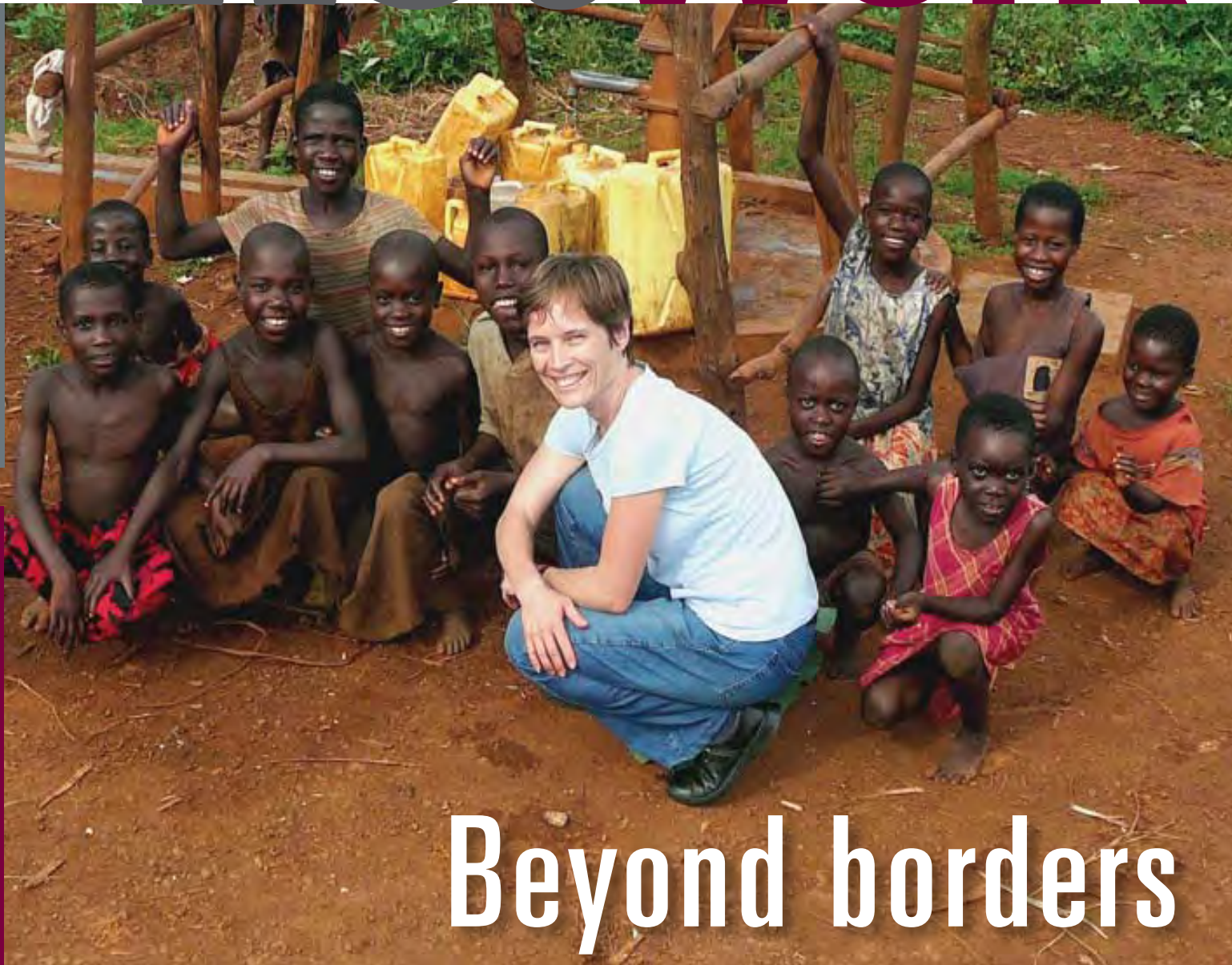


TOGETHER, ADVANCING HEALTH THROUGH LEARNING AND DISCOVERY

# network

Volume 5, Issue 1 | Spring 2011

McMaster Faculty of Health Sciences Newsmagazine



## Beyond borders

**McMaster reaches out to improve health around the world**

Canada's top-ranked digestive health research institute opens

McMaster innovates interprofessional education





**John G. Kelton, MD**

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**Jean Chamberlain**, associate professor of obstetrics and gynecology, poses with a group of children in rural Uganda. Chamberlain founded Save The Mothers, a non-profit organization based in Uganda that seeks to improve maternal health through education and leadership development.

Photo credit: Thomas Froese

# Message from the Dean and Vice-President

**Whenever I walk** through our hallways, I'm always reminded that the foundation of our innovative research and education programs at the Faculty of Health Sciences is collaboration. At times, that collaborative process takes the form of interprofessional exchanges between nurses, physicians, rehabilitation scientists, midwives, physician assistants, researchers and other health professionals. At other times, the innovative partnerships arise from the vision of our funders who seek to invest in the Faculty of Health Sciences to bolster learning and discovery and ultimately improve the health of others.

There is proof of the commitment of our donors from one end of McMaster's Hamilton campus to the other. It's apparent in Michael G. DeGroot's buildings and institutes, as well as other infrastructure and research projects spearheaded by the generosity of Senator David Braley.

In October, we held the grand opening of the Farncombe Family Digestive Health Research Institute. The creation of this unique facility was made possible through a \$15-million gift from the Farncombe family of Oakville. Thanks to their vision, McMaster researchers will continue their world-leading study of the gut as an integrated system. That research, spanning more than 30 years, has resulted in the Farncombe Institute being named the top gastrointestinal research team in Canada and one of the top 10 teams in the world.

Being on the leading edge of discovery is not new to our researchers.

In November, a team in the McMaster Stem Cell and Research Institute made headlines around the world with the discovery of how to turn human skin into blood. The research, led by scientific director Mick Bhatia, was published in the prestigious journal *Nature*. It has since signalled a new era of stem cell research and opened

the door to the possibility of patients needing transfusions for surgery or other treatments to have blood created from a patch of their own skin.

This past year, we also blazed a new trail by graduating the first class of civilian physician assistants in Ontario. These new health professionals are now working under the supervision of physicians across the province from Windsor to Ottawa and helping to provide high-quality care to patients. Twenty-one graduates received their Bachelor of Health Sciences (Physician Assistant) degree this past November. In this issue of *Network*, you'll read more about the work one graduate is pursuing.

This issue of *Network* is themed around our efforts to improve the health of others – not just at home – but around the world. In 2008, we launched the Global Health Office following a large development project in Pakistan that signalled the need for us to be involved in training a highly skilled global health workforce. In 2010, we built on this initiative by establishing a master's program in global health. We'll graduate our first students from the program later this year.

You can also read about some of the accomplishments of our most esteemed alumni. In this issue, we profile Dr. James Orbinski, who reflects on how his time at McMaster helped shape his approach to global health. I'm sure as you'll share many of his fond memories – of faculty and of the commitment we have to train the best and brightest health sciences minds.

**John G. Kelton, MD**  
Dean and Vice-President  
Faculty of Health Sciences





■ Dr. Ivan Wong watches as Ohood Elzibak, one of 21 graduates from the physician assistant program, examines a patient.

## First class of physician assistants graduate

**Ohood Elzibak** was drawn to McMaster's physician assistant (PA) program out of a desire to work in a clinical setting and pioneer a new role in health care.

The 23-year-old Hamiltonian is now living her dream as she joins a new class of health professionals who are working in hospitals and family practices across the province following the completion of their training at McMaster.

"I felt very confident going down this route," said the McMaster alumna. "I felt like this was the right role for me, and I knew I needed to explore that."

Twenty-one graduates received their Bachelor of Health Sciences (Physician Assistant) degree during convocation ceremonies in November. PAs, who work directly under the supervision of a physician, are now employed in a range of specialties including emergency medicine, family medicine, internal medicine, critical care and orthopedic surgery at hospitals and health care centres from Windsor to Ottawa. The McMaster program is the first civilian under-

graduate program for PAs in Canada.

"Our physician assistant graduates are exceptional ambassadors of this new profession," said John Cunnington, assistant dean of the program. "Through their commitment to excellence and collaborative care, they have positioned themselves as essential members of today's interprofessional health-care teams. Their McMaster foundation in problem-based, small-group learning will serve them well as they move forward in their careers."

"It's been a phenomenal two years," Elzibak said. "You develop a really close relationship with your classmates, the facilitators and the staff. We were all in this together. It was a new experience for everyone."

During her clerkship year, Elzibak discovered a passion for the fast-paced operating room environment during a rotation with Dr. Ivan Wong, an orthopedic surgeon and assistant professor at McMaster. Elzibak was hired by Wong as the first physician assistant member of his surgical team.

"In the future, I see just about every orthopedic surgeon working with PAs, and sometimes multiple ones," said Wong, who previously worked with PAs during his fellowship training. "In the United States, it's already been shown many times that PAs improve the cost-effectiveness of practice, increase patient care as well as patient satisfaction."

Physician assistants work under the supervision of doctors to provide care. PAs take histories, conduct physical examinations, order and interpret tests, diagnose and treat illnesses, counsel on preventive health care and may assist in surgery, depending on the specialty of their supervising physician.

Launched in September 2008, McMaster's consecutive 24-month PA program was founded upon the problem-based learning model of the Michael G. DeGroote School of Medicine. The first year of study focuses on the clinical sciences supporting health-care delivery. In the second year, PA students rotate through clinical placements.

# Education wi McMaster shares its approach to res



■ Andrea Baumann, associate vice-president, global health, with Yasmin Amarsi, the first instructor from Aga Khan University (AKU) to receive her BScN and PhD from McMaster. She is now the founding dean of the AKU School of Nursing and Midwifery, East Africa.

**In the electronic** seminar room of the Michael G. DeGroot Centre for Learning and Discovery, McMaster University students from Burundi, Ghana and Canada listen to a global health lecture beamed in from Zanzibar, Tanzania. Other students are linked in from their homes around southern Ontario. Halfway around the world, students at Maastricht University in the Netherlands listen too.

The students are tomorrow's global health leaders and trailblazers. They are part of McMaster University's inaugural Master of Science in Global Health Program, an innovative partnership launched in 2010 with Maastricht University.

"Between McMaster and Maastricht we have 73 students and we will be sending 73 people out into the world who can function – and are work ready – in complicated international situations. That is quite unique," said Andrea Baumann, associate vice-president, global health, and director of the program.

Global health – formerly called international health – emerged in recent years because organizations such as the World Health Organization (WHO) and Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors Without Borders) couldn't find the productive workers they required. WHO estimates there is a shortfall of 4.2 million health workers worldwide, including 1.5 million in Africa alone.

The global health program is an initiative of the Global Health Office, established in 2008 following McMaster's large development project in Pakistan where the need for a highly skilled workforce was recognized.

"Higher education is of great importance and there is great thirst for that around the world. McMaster is playing an important part in realizing this," Baumann said.

McMaster's long history in interna-

tional health and humanitarian assistance dates back to its early years when the medical school was known as the young upstart because of its unique problem-based learning (PBL) approach. Since then, numerous landmark initiatives have earned the university a reputation as an international leader.

The International Clinical Epidemiology Network (INCLIN), established in 1982 with funding from the Rockefeller Foundation, was designed to strengthen the research capacity of medical schools in the developing world through the development of Clinical Epidemiology Units (CEUs). McMaster's Department of Clinical Epidemiology and Biostatistics was the first of five training centres. Peter Tugwell, then department chair, was one of the network's key founders. Under Kathryn Bennett, director of INCLIN from 1991-97, McMaster went on to become a major player. INCLIN grew into a unique network of more than 1,800 clinical epidemiologists, biostatisticians, social scientists and other health-care professionals now affiliated with academic health care institutions in 34 countries.

Under the program, 10 fellows from developing countries arrived at McMaster each year for advanced research training, staying for 15 to 18 months. Graduates have become leaders in their own right and include Ugandan physician Nelson Sewankambo, recognized as a global leader in the fight against HIV/AIDS in Africa, and Jaime Mañalich, the Chilean minister of health who successfully led the recent rescue of trapped miners.

McMaster's Centre for International Health (CIH) was born in 1990, under the leadership of Vic Neufeld, with activities that included a course on international health in the Health Research Methods (HRM) master's program, new projects in Chile and

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## earch and scholarship with the world

Indonesia and the launch of Peace Through Health project in collaboration with the Centre for Peace Studies.

Health Reach, a joint project of CIH and peace studies, investigated the health of children in war zones. Field projects were mounted in the former Yugoslavia, Sri Lanka and Gaza to survey the impact on children's health.

One of the fellows offered a CIH placement was Afghan-Canadian physician Seddiq Weera. He now divides his time between Canada and Afghanistan where he plays a leading role in reshaping the country's future.

Research on PBL undertaken by professor Geoff Norman paved the way for the current relationship between McMaster and Maastricht and the development of the global health program. For his major contributions to PBL, Norman received an honorary doctorate from Erasmus University in The Netherlands in 2010.

A major global health initiative of the Faculty of Health Sciences was the Development of Women Health Professionals project in Pakistan with Aga Khan University (AKU). The seven-year project, led by Baumann, received \$16.6 million in funding from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), making it the largest social sector project funded by CIDA in the Canadian university system.

The multi-site intervention looked at the education of women in rural and urban areas, including Karachi, specifically focusing on nurses and 'lady health visitors' (LHVs), the 'foot doctors' of Pakistan. McMaster formalized their education, particularly in key areas of maternal health, set up a census to find out the number of nurses in the country, established a chief nursing office in Islamabad for the Ministry of Health, and worked out a pay scale for nurses and LHVs.

"We educated many nurses and provided an educational framework for

LHVs which didn't exist before and continues to this day," Baumann said.

As the AKU evolved from little more than a concept in the 1980s to a full-service university, McMaster gradually withdrew. "Our view of capacity building is that ... you build the capacity for sustainability, not for us to be there forever," Baumann said.

On the heels of the Pakistan project, Baumann accepted a request from the ruler of Sharjah in the United Arab Emirates to help build a College of Health Sciences in an area little more than desert. She moved her Pakistan staff to Sharjah in 1999, adding 12 staff from McMaster.

"I had to set up all the by-laws, build the buildings, recruit the people and get the programs started. In the end, I hired 68 people, all the department chairs, and the dean before I left. It all had to be done within a four-year period."

As acting dean in Sharjah, Baumann also continued as associate dean of the School of Nursing at McMaster during the time the nursing program coalition between Mohawk and Conestoga colleges was established. Daytime, she worked for McMaster. Nighttime, she has worked for Sharjah, flying between the two universities every two weeks.

After she returned to McMaster, Baumann and others recognized the need to consolidate international activities and create formal education in global health. "Creating the global health office allowed us to work on projects we were already working on in international arenas, as well as create the new global health master's program."

Today, McMaster boasts an impressive global footprint.

The university reaches over 100 countries and is involved in 820 partnerships, with more than 250 research-based activities worldwide.

All six Faculties of the university undertake international work, and the university offers many opportunities for international education through independent study abroad, exchange programs and field trips.

McMaster has signed international exchange agreements with 118 institutions in 30 countries that are available to both graduate and undergraduate programs. The only North American host site of a United Nations University has more than 40 exchange agreements around the globe.

Faculty and staff are involved in numerous international activities and cross-cultural collaborations in North America, Europe, Australia and Asia:

- After a tsunami hit Banda Aceh, Indonesia, in January 2005, Lynda Redwood-Campbell, global health coordinator in the Department of Family Medicine, began working to improve the health of vulnerable people through medical education, capacity building and self-reliance. She has also provided aid in Haiti and Rwanda with the Red Cross.
- The Department of Surgery recently formed the international surgery desk with Brian Cameron as its director to co-ordinate clinical, research and educational activities related to improving health care in the developing world.
- Following Haiti's earthquake in January 2010, Alez Dauphin, clinical professor in the Department of Anesthesia, offered ongoing help in rebuilding the country's physical, human and technical resources along with university physicians, nurses and staff from Hamilton hospitals.
- Many international clinical trials underway around the world today are

*continued on page 6*





■ Lynda Redwood-Campbell, global health co-ordinator for the Department of Family Medicine, stands with Red Cross workers in an internally displaced camp in Haiti.

*continued from page 5*

led by McMaster's Population Health and Research Institute (PHRI), including the EPIDREAM genetics trial which is studying 22,000 DNA

samples from people in 21 countries to determine which genes or clusters of genes predispose individuals to developing Type 2 diabetes and lifestyle factors associated with its development.

- In December 2010, the McMaster Health Forum, led by John Lavis, Canada Research Chair in Knowledge Transfer and Exchange, was designated a World Health Organization (WHO) Collaborating Centre for Evidence-Informed Policy, the second at McMaster. The WHO Collaborating Centre in Primary Care Nursing and Health Human Resources was established at the university in 1992.

Understanding of the need to move away from the North American style of managed research in developing countries to one which encouraged them to assume responsibility led to the creation of the Canadian Coalition for Global Health Research (CCGHR). McMaster is an institutional member. "The nice surprise is

that we are finding a lot of young people at McMaster who do want to do global health research," said Neufeld, the coalition's national co-ordinator and a professor emeritus of medicine at McMaster.

The future looks promising.

For example, Ugandan Lydia Kapiriri, a graduate of Makerere University in Uganda, was recruited to teach global health in McMaster's Department of Health, Aging and Society. "That department created this position. That, in itself, is visionary," Neufeld said.

This June, for the sixth year in a row, students from around the world will arrive at McMaster for the annual International Interdisciplinary Summer Institute organized by the Global Health Office. Last summer, health professionals from South Africa, Japan, South Korea and Botswana learned about problem-based learning, exchanged ideas, and gained insight into the "McMaster Approach" to health sciences education.

## Faces of tomorrow's global health workforce

**Alyshah Kaba**, 24, set her sights on a career in developing countries where she intends to work on the front-lines managing maternal and child health projects within non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Her long-term goal is to run a maternity hospital in East Africa. While



■ Alyshah Kaba

earning a Nursing (BScN) degree at McMaster University, she did her fourth year clinical nursing placement at the Aga Khan University Hospital in Nairobi, Kenya, implementing family planning education seminars for young girls living in the urban slums of Kibera. More recently, the Aga Khan University invited Kaba back to present her views on McMaster's nursing curriculum, as the university prepares to expand into Aursha, Tanzania, where it will introduce a curriculum for medical, nursing, arts and

sciences students.

"I think what is really opportune about this particular master of global health program is that I am able to work with such an eclectic group of leaders," Kaba said. "The program is unique in that there is an opportunity to learn from students who have backgrounds in social science, nursing, health science, international relations, occupational therapy and pharmacy who will one day be my colleagues as we become pioneers leading the forefront of the global health workforce."

**Pharmacist Eustace Orleans-Lindsay** has lived and worked in Africa and Canada. At 39, it's with "unbridled enthusiasm" that he looks forward to becoming an agent of change and serving the health and needs of vulnerable people around the world. As a student leader with substantial insight, many believe he will make major contributions to the understanding of international health in both his homelands.

"Partnering with students from Maastricht University in a collaborative learning environment is exciting and provides first-hand experience in alliance

building, team-oriented problem resolution and the opportunity to incorporate different ideas, principles and methodologies to ultimately produce the best project outcome," he said.

Orleans-Lindsay, who received a Bachelor of Pharmacy (Honours) from the University of Science and Technology in Kumasi,



■ Eustace Orleans-Lindsay

Ghana, has a unique perspective on how disease, political instability and the lack of social support systems affect the health of individuals. He believes a graduate education in global health will provide him with further insight into the inner workings of global politics and its effect on populations around the world, along with valuable leadership skills.

"The global health program at McMaster is providing me with the requisite skillset vital in charting vulnerable populations into the unfamiliar territory of change," he said.

# Partnerships train nurses in 'McMaster approach'

**As a nurse**, Shirley Benjamin always wanted to specialize in the care of cancer patients, a passion fueled by observing how many health professionals in Trinidad and Tobago left those patients' needs unmet.

Her passion for finding better ways to improve care led her to enroll in a three-year post-diploma, BScN-linked Oncology Nursing Program in Trinidad developed by McMaster University's School of Nursing in partnership with the School of Advanced Nursing Education (SANE) at the University of the West Indies (UWI).

The goal of the capacity-building program was to prepare Trinbagonian nurses for leadership roles in cancer care nursing in Trinidad and Tobago where cancer is a significant health problem among its 1.2 million population. The program builds on an earlier eight-month experience in 2001 when 12 Trinbagonian nurses participated in McMaster's on-site oncology nursing program and became "formidable advocates" for nursing and cancer care in Trinidad and Tobago.

Over the past three years, the program was delivered at SANE through a blend of face-to-face and distance learning. At the start and end of each semester, McMaster faculty traveled to Trinidad for two weeks to teach. For the balance of each semester, McMaster faculty taught from Hamilton using distance modalities.

In May 2010, Benjamin and three of her nursing colleagues visited McMaster where, for four weeks, they were exposed to the latest advances in cancer treatment along with first-hand experience in advanced patient care.

In keeping with its capacity-building goal, the UWI assumed full responsibility for the program and began to run it independently this past fall.

The School of Nursing continues to work with several other universities and governments as part of research, education and capacity-building projects. A 25-year partnership with the Aga Khan University in Pakistan was renewed in 2008. The collaboration resulted in the



■ Kathy Ann Graham (from left), Paula Washington and Shirley Benjamin, students of the oncology nursing program of the University of the West Indies, work in the McMaster Health Sciences Library.

first undergraduate level academic nursing program of its kind in Pakistan. The two universities are now partnering to support nursing initiatives in select countries of Africa and Asia.

In 2009, the School of Nursing signed a memorandum of understanding with South Africa's North West University (NWU). The partnership has brought the McMaster approach of problem-based learning to the nursing school as McMaster faculty assist NWU in developing master's and doctoral degrees, as well as opportunities for postdoctoral studies. In February, two School of Nursing faculty members visited NWU to offer curriculum development workshops to nurse educators from across South Africa.

McMaster's School of Nursing has also been involved in offering an eight-week internship experience for recent graduates of the nursing program at Sultan Qaboos University in Oman.

In January, the School of Nursing and the Canadian Nursing Students' Association (CNSA) partnered in supporting two nursing students from Haiti to attend the CNSA national conference in Hamilton. Braving Hamilton's winter, these students shared their experiences

of living through the devastating earthquake of 2010.

The students' visit built on the relationships formed through the McMaster-Haiti women's health project taken on by the McMaster schools of nursing, medicine and the midwifery program a few years ago, and a visit to Haiti last fall by Anita Fisher, an associate professor of nursing.

Plans are also underway to bring a group of Haitian nurses to McMaster later this year for a workshop focusing on nursing education and practice.

"The opportunity to be able to model our approach to education in another part of the world and help them to develop the capacity to become independent is incredibly rewarding for the School of Nursing and its faculty," said Catherine Tompkins, associate dean, health sciences (nursing).

"We have the ability to make contributions to countries that really want to advance nursing and patient care. It's a wonderful opportunity for us to create an international community of nurses who share the McMaster approach of self-directed and problem-based learning."



# Changing minds to improve maternal health

*“Since I was a child, I always thought that I would be a missionary doctor in a missionary hospital working in the middle of nowhere.”*

— Jean Chamberlain Froese

**Few people noticed** when obstetrician Jean Chamberlain Froese established an organization dedicated to making childbirth safer for thousands of women living in developing countries.

After she personally witnessed women dying in childbirth or losing a child in labour, the associate professor of obstetrics and gynecology at McMaster founded Save The Mothers, a non-profit organization based in Uganda.

At the time, maternal and child health wasn't even a footnote in politicians' speeches. But now, because of Chamberlain Froese's advocacy efforts, that is changing.

In October, Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni said his government will give priority to the health of women and children. “To me, that's an important step for people to hear a politician say he is going to invest in maternal health,” said Chamberlain Froese. “Twelve years ago, nothing was said. The issue barely got the attention of politicians.”

Today, politicians seek out Chamberlain Froese as an advisor. Last summer, the Canadian government asked her to speak on maternal health issues at the G8 meeting in Muskoka.

The focus for Save The Mothers is education and leadership development, said Chamberlain Froese, director of the International Women's and Children's Health Program at McMaster.

Some experts argue more women's lives could be saved with additional hospitals,



■ Jean Chamberlain Froese has dedicated her career to advocacy of maternal and child health.

doctors and facilities. She believes what's needed is also a mindset change so that people in developing countries look at women differently.

More than 525,000 women in the developing world die each year from preventable complications of childbirth and pregnancy. Chamberlain Froese said most are needless deaths caused by lack of medicine, money, transportation, awareness of the need for medical help and the cultural practice of women requiring their husband's permission to undergo surgery.

In 2005, Save The Mothers launched its first partnership program at Uganda Christian University, just outside of Uganda's capital, Kampala. The program is aimed at reducing the obstacles to safe childbirth and leads to a master's degree in public health leadership. The program equips professionals —members of Parliament, journalists, teachers, clergy, military, micro-financiers — with the tools and skills they need to become strong advocates for change in their communities.

Chamberlain Froese plans to expand the program to Kenya, Tanzania and

Rwanda and eventually India and Afghanistan. Uganda will remain as the central teaching hub for East Africa.

There are now 150 students enrolled in the program. At the recent graduation ceremony for Save the Mothers students, a male student told Chamberlain Froese he views women differently since joining the program. “It was one of those moments I want to hear. Ultimately, I want to see attitudes change and our graduates become agents for change in their communities,” she said.

Prior to establishing Save The Mothers, Chamberlain Froese worked as an obstetrician in Yemen, Zimbabwe, Zambia and Pakistan. Her first international experience with mothers in need was in Uganda in 1998, where she worked as a clinical director of a project with the Society of Obstetricians and Gynecologists of Canada and the Association of Obstetricians and Gynecologists of Uganda.

Chamberlain Froese was awarded the Teasdale-Corti Humanitarian Award by the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada. The award is named in honour of Canadian surgeon Lucille Teasdale and her physician husband, Piero Corti, who dedicated 35 years of their lives to bringing medical services to the Gulu region of Uganda.

Today, Chamberlain Froese spends eight months in Uganda and four months in Canada working at St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton where she takes over locums for vacationing physicians.

She initially went overseas on unpaid leave and is now grateful for the funding support she receives from McMaster. “When you live overseas — and I've got a family here with three small children and my husband — it's great to know there is a body of people and scholars who support what you are doing and are interested in it.”

She continues to be “amazed” at how many people in the developing world know McMaster, its problem-based approach and pioneering work in evidence-based medicine. “When you say you are from McMaster University, it helps to open doors for you.”



# Art appreciation helps family doctors improve practice

**An innovative program** launched this fall at McMaster University moved medical residents out of the clinic and into the art gallery with the aim of making them better doctors.

The Art of Seeing, a visual literacy course for residents of the Michael G. DeGroot School of Medicine, was offered through the McMaster Museum of Art in conjunction with the Department of Family Medicine. The course, which ran through December, culminated in an exhibit called Landscape, Memory, Desire that featured artworks selected by the residents from the museum's collection.

"Research has shown that doctors can improve their observation and diagnostic skills by studying works of art," said Carol Podedworny, director of the McMaster Museum of Art. "When students – or in this case family medicine residents – learn to appreciate fine art on a deeper level, our hope is they will translate those skills into medical practice and become better communicators, particularly with their own patients."

Eight second-year family medicine residents participated in bi-weekly sessions led by art educator Karen Scott Booth. The group examined original works of art from the museum's vast collection and participated in discussions to explore meaning within the imagery.

"As a family physician, it can be easy to make assumptions about a patient but we're trying to train our residents to look deeper, to really understand the patient's



■ An innovative visual literacy course for residents of the Department of Family Medicine was offered last fall in conjunction with the McMaster Museum of Art. The course sought to help family doctors hone their observation and communication skills.

experience of illness and to improve their understanding of the complex nature of human beings," said Joyce Zazulak, an associate professor in the Department of Family Medicine and co-leader of the program.

"One of the goals of this program is to promote self-awareness, which the residents will take into their professional lives as physicians. This will truly give new meaning to the term 'I'm going to see my patient now'."

A paper published by the Harvard Medical School in 2008 found that medical students who were assigned to take an art appreciation course – who


examined various works of art to hone their observational, analytical and communication skills – were 38 per cent more successful in making accurate medical diagnoses than those who didn't take the course.

"Innovative programs such as these are a priority for the Department of Family Medicine," said David Price, chair of the Department of Family Medicine. "By expanding our curriculum to include non-traditional training methods, we are able to graduate physicians who are not only excellent clinicians, but strong communicators with understanding and compassion for their patients."

**The Michael G. DeGroot** School of Medicine graduated its first class of 15 students from the Waterloo Regional Campus last spring. Four graduates remain in the Waterloo Region for their family medicine residency. Meanwhile, construction is ongoing for the permanent home of the medical school's Niagara Regional Campus. Currently located at the St. Catharines General Hospital, the regional campus will move into Brock University's new \$111.4 million Cairns Family Health and Bioscience Complex in 2012.

**A new teaching unit** opened in Burlington in May 2010. The Halton McMaster Family Health Centre on Harvester Road is a community-based family practice teaching unit which will provide care for Halton residents while training new doctors and other McMaster health sciences students. The centre is the result of collaboration between four community physicians, McMaster University, the City of Burlington and Halton Region. The new teaching unit is in response to the need for more health care workers in the region.

**A new medical admissions** tool known as CASPer (Computer-Based Assessment for Sampling Personal Characteristics) was introduced this fall by the Michael G. DeGroot School of Medicine. The web-based test is the result of seven years of work at McMaster to design an instrument that will screen for exemplary medical school applicants and make it easier to narrow down to the number who receive interviews. The test, based on the successful Multi-Mini Interview (MMI), assesses interpersonal skills and decision-making ability.



# Together through learning

■ Physiotherapy student Kristina Chavez (left) and medical student Alexander Kaplan participate in an anatomy class.

## McMaster innovates approach to interprofessional education

**It's not** your typical anatomy class. High on a step ladder, a fine arts student sketches anatomical details of a body while students in various programs – medicine, nursing, rehabilitation science, midwifery and physician assistant – explore different nerves, arteries and muscles. For three hours, once a week, for eight weeks, they are together on the balls of their feet, staring and straining to be involved.

“It's remarkable. You just don't see it very often. It is almost hyper-engaged,” said Bruce Wainman, director of the Anatomy Education Program who leads the interprofessional education (IPE) program on structured dissection. “I don't get a lot of classes where students are really fighting to get into the class. It happens here all the time.”

The program is unique to McMaster. Typically, students in health science programs at North American universities don't rub shoulders with each other. Here, working side-by-side, students learn together.

Stephanie Chan, an engineering graduate in second-year medicine with plans to become a surgeon specializing in ophthalmology, said most medical students have no idea about other professionals' skills until they're in practice. “Then, it's too late,” she said.

Wainman said the anatomy lab's environment is closely related to a clinical situation. “The point of it all – in the best McMaster tradition – is to come together to problem-solve around a particular dissection, not just to find out the structure, but how to get there as a team.”

Interprofessional education is not a new concept. It dates back to the early 1900s and gained popularity again in the United States – and at McMaster – in the 1960s.

By the mid-1970s, McMaster had an integrated Faculty of Health Sciences with different schools and departments.

At the administration level, communication and collaboration were fostered in both education and research.

But no formal program for interprofes-

sional education existed.

In 2003, Susan Denburg, then associate dean, education, established a task-force to investigate how McMaster could increase its interprofessional education activities, recognizing the university already had some champions and strengths. The question was how to pull it all together, promote it further, and develop a profile.

Ultimately, it was recommended that IPE be mandatory for all health professional students and offered through one umbrella program, a different approach from other universities.

“The novelty we developed was a menu of multiple and different opportunities for first through to fourth years. Students would start at the beginning of the year and navigate their way through a range of interprofessional opportunities so as to graduate with competence at different levels of mastery,” said Denburg, now associate vice-president, academic, for the Faculty.

The next step, she said, was to create



and co-ordinate opportunities.

In 2007, faculty executive approved formation of PIPER (Program for Interprofessional Practice Education and Research) within the Faculty of Health Sciences with Patty Solomon as its inaugural director.

Initially, PIPER was the sole entity developing all IPE events. Today, practically all programs develop IPE experiences. They range from quick and frequent experiences where students observe other health professions in action, immersion experiences, such as an interprofessional communications skills lab, and clinically-based experiences. Among other experiences, MD students participate in two homecare visits with health professionals from two different fields, such as occupational therapy, physiotherapy or social work.

PIPER has funded a number of projects, such as McMaster's Peace Through Health initiative which studies how health interventions in war zones may contribute to peace, as well as a faculty development program which offers a series of workshops to help faculty promote IPE.

Since her appointment, Solomon has rapidly grown the IPE program, receiving more than \$1 million from Health Canada to develop an interprofessional e-learning module and a large grant from Health Force Ontario to look at developing a variety of educational modules.

One of the major challenges lying ahead is moving IPE from the educational realm to the ultimate goal of patient safety, said Alan Neville, associate dean, education.

"True IPE involves working with people who understand human factors, the psychology of team function."

New opportunities for IPE are emerging. The medical school's regional campus in Waterloo is located beside the University of Waterloo's pharmacy school. IPE events have started between pharmacy and medical students.

Neville envisions IPE as the way of the future. "The solitary health-care practitioner is a thing of the past. Health care will be increasingly delivered by individuals working as part of a team because health care has become too complex for individual health care professionals to manage."



■ Physician assistant, midwifery, rehabilitation science, medical and nursing students discuss human anatomy as part of an interprofessional structured dissection class.

## Students lead the PIPER

**Students themselves** are driving force in spearheading interprofessional education at McMaster University through the Interprofessional Education Students Council (IPSC).

Patty Solomon, inaugural director of PIPER (Program for Interprofessional Practice, Education and Research), said students are insisting that they want to learn each other's roles and not be siloed in their learning. "Through the IPSC they are really promoting and fostering it."

Wide-ranging initiatives showcase the council's ability to build collaboration between students in different health professional programs.

A major event has been its gender and health workshop, modeled on the emerging "narrative medicine" movement in the United States which helps clinicians listen to patients' stories and understand the role they play in their health care.

For over a year, the council has

partnered with The Well, a transgender organization in Hamilton, to produce a video on the stories of transgender individuals. The goal is to help students reflect on how such stories will play out in their own practices.

"The way I see it, our council is about implementing a cultural shift in health care where people move toward working as a team and understand the roles different professionals play, and how this enables more optimal patient care," said Joshua Smalley, IPSC co-chair.

Six years old, council organizers have moved from formal lunch-and-learn sessions to more clinically-oriented events, such as the patient as educator. For this interprofessional event, parents of children who have been hospitalized share their experiences with students. In the works, is a global health simulated disaster on campus, networking and organizing a fundraiser for McMaster hospital.



# Canada's top-ranked digestive disease institute has a new home as polished as its accomplishments

■ The centrepiece of the Farncombe Family Digestive Health Research Institute is a two-story atrium that functions as multi-purpose space for researchers to share ideas and generate new collaborations.

## Farncombe Family Institute opens to applause



■ John Wallace

**The reception and ribbon** cutting for the Farncombe Family Digestive Health Research Institute was held Oct. 14 to officially open the institute's unique atrium, new offices and laboratories on the third floor of McMaster's Health Sciences Centre and to thank the donors, the Farncombe family of Oakville.

The 1,800 square feet of space also contains a unique facility, the new metagenomics platform, for the study of the intestinal microbes. However, it is the atrium which is the centerpiece for the renovations. A two-storey, open-concept space with comfortable seating areas, conference tables, a lectern and screen along with dynamic stone and glass art, the space will host both formal and informal meetings, seminars, lectures and get-togethers.

"We realized as our group became bigger and more diverse we were forming

silos and not interacting across disciplines," said Stephen Collins, the associate dean, research, for the Faculty of Health Sciences and founder of the institute.

"We needed to restore our tradition of interdisciplinary research that has served us so well in the past and this facility will achieve that."

He explained that the institute made a name for itself over the past 30 years by studying the gut as an integrated system. As a result of that research, the Farncombe Institute has been ranked one of the top 10 gastrointestinal research teams in the world for more than 20 years.

At present, the Farncombe Family Digestive Health Research Institute has 15 faculty members, 14 associate members and more than 76 students, research fellows and staff.

"The Farncombe Institute is ranked





■ Patrick Deane, president and vice-chancellor of McMaster University, addresses the official opening of the Farncombe Family Digestive Health Research Institute.

number one in Canada in digestive disease research,” said John Wallace, scientific director of the institute.

“We plan to stay there. To do that, we need to not rest on our laurels, but to continue to build a stronger team.”

Formed in 1983 as the Intestinal Disease Research Unit, the Farncombe gradually grew into a research centre before becoming a full-fledged institute in 2008.

The establishment of the institute was made possible by a \$15-million gift from the Farncombe family. The gift builds on a previous contribution of \$3.5 million to establish a sterile laboratory and an endowed chair.

In addition to providing start-up funding for researchers and capital and operating funding for the institute, the most recent gift also supports several endowed chairs, including the Farncombe Family Chair in Digestive Health Research, held by Wallace.

## Top microbiologist recruited

**One of Canada’s** top microbiologists has been recruited to McMaster University to lead an initiative aimed at better understanding how bacteria contribute to inflammatory bowel diseases and respiratory infections.

Michael Surette, recognized internationally for his landmark discoveries of key bacteria that trigger lung infections in cystic fibrosis, has been appointed a professor in the Department of Medicine with a joint appointment in the Department of Biochemistry and Biomedical Sciences. He has also been named a primary investigator at McMaster’s Farncombe Family Digestive Health Research Institute.

“Mike Surette has been able to significantly improve the lives of individuals afflicted with cystic fibrosis,” said John Wallace, director of the Farncombe Institute. “He will continue that work at

McMaster, and he will now apply his skills to identifying the bacteria that trigger episodes of Crohn’s disease and ulcerative colitis.”

Coinciding with the Surette’s arrival, the Canadian Institutes of Health

Research announced that he will be the lead investigator of a new Emerging Team Grant valued at \$2.5 million. The project will investigate the role of bacteria in the respiratory tract in order to better understand how bacteria interact with each other and the immune system.

Surette joined McMaster from the University of Calgary, where he spent 12 years.



■ Michael Surette

# Three trailblazers join Community

**Three pioneers** who each blazed a path in Canada to establish midwifery education; psychosocial care for ill children and respiratory physiology have been honoured by the Faculty of Health Sciences.

The three former faculty members who brought recognition and distinction to McMaster University through their innovative scholarship and research success joined the Faculty's Community of Distinction at a celebration in November.

Karyn Kaufman, called the mother of midwifery in Canada; Norm Jones, whose work defined the field of respiratory physiology, and the late Ruth Snider, renowned for developing play therapy for children in hospital, were honoured with a reception at the Ewart Angus Centre in the Health Sciences Centre.

Plaques for each member joined the wall display in the Ewart Angus lobby.

## **Norman L. Jones, MD**

Norman L. Jones, a physiologist and clinician scientist, arrived at McMaster in 1968 from the United Kingdom with his friend and colleague, Moran Campbell. They transformed McMaster into an international powerhouse for research, education and clinical programs in respiratory medicine. Jones became renowned for his development of the science of exercise physiology.

With his quiet style, scholarly approach and strong leadership, he served as a mentor and a role model, inspiring the next generation of clinician-scientist leaders. He retired as professor emeritus in 1991.

Jones was founding editor of the *Canadian Respiratory Journal*, which established an annual award in his honour.

## **Karyn Kaufman, DrPH**

Karyn Kaufman helped establish midwifery as a regulated health profession in Canada and served as the inaugural assistant dean of McMaster's midwifery education program from 1993 to her retirement in 2006.

With an education in nursing, midwifery and public health, she arrived in Hamilton in 1972 and worked first as a clinical nurse specialist, later becoming a professor in McMaster's Department of Family Medicine.

She was appointed by the Minister of Health to a taskforce on the implementation of midwifery in Ontario and then she established the first midwifery education program in Canada.

Her visionary leadership and advocacy have resulted in safe, effective and compassionate midwifery care across the country.

## **Ruth Snider, BA**

Ruth Snider developed internationally recognized standards for the psychosocial care of children in hospital and established Canada's first education program in child life studies.

The founding director of the clinical child life program at the McMaster University Medical Centre, she joined the Department of Pediatrics as a clinical lecturer in 1977 and retired as an associate clinical professor in 1992.

Graduates of her postgraduate child life diploma program work around the world, improving the lives of children by giving them a voice during their illness.

A tireless advocate, she was instrumental in establishing the Canadian Association of Child Life Leaders. Her awards include the Child Life Council's Distinguished Service Award.



■ Norman L. Jones, MD



■ Karyn Kaufman, DrPH



■ Ruth Snider, BA

## Call for nominations

**Nominations are now being** accepted for the 2011 Community of Distinction. The gallery honours former faculty, staff or alumni of the Faculty of Health Sciences whose accomplishments in health sciences have brought worldwide renown to the Faculty and McMaster University.

For nomination criteria, visit: <http://fhs.mcmaster.ca/main/nominations.html>

The deadline for nominations is June 8, 2011. For more information and to submit nominations, please contact Ruth Mullin at [mullinr@mcmaster.ca](mailto:mullinr@mcmaster.ca) or (905) 525-9140, ext. 22162.



# Scientist achieves 'lifelong dream' with new endowed chair

**As a child** growing up in rural Ethiopia, Joseph Beyene dreamed of one day attending university and becoming a scientist.

"The place I grew up did not even have access to electricity. No running water. No television," he said. "The first time I watched television was in my first year of university. That can tell you I've come, indeed, a very long way."

Now an associate professor in the Department of Clinical Epidemiology and Biostatistics, Beyene was named the inaugural John D. Cameron Chair in Genetic Determinants of Chronic Diseases in September. The chair was established with a \$2.5 million gift from the estate of Marjorie Cameron Foucar in tribute to her father.

"My research focuses on developing statistical methods for an integrative analysis of genomic, clinical and environmental data," said Beyene, a biostatistician who came to McMaster from the University of Toronto and the Hospital for Sick Children.

"McMaster's culture of interdisciplinary collaboration means we'll find practical applications. And, along with developing methods of computational tools, my research group is committed to building capacity in methods for statistical bioinformatics and integrative genomics through educational and training activities."

Beyene joins the new Population Genomics Program, led by Sonia Anand, a professor of medicine. The program brings together major components of the university including its capacity in super computing and links to expert mathematicians, biostatisticians and physicians. The focus will be to analyze and ultimately to influence the effect of our own genes and how environmental factors impact on the development of disease.

Beyene earned his undergraduate degree from Addis Ababa University in Ethiopia. He also holds a master of science from the University of Guelph and a PhD from the University of Toronto.



■ Joseph Beyene

"To be named to this prestigious endowed chair position at this great university is another proof that lifelong dreams can indeed become a reality," he said.

# Crowther named Leo Pharma Chair in Thromboembolism

**Mark Crowther's** appointment as the inaugural holder of the LEO Pharma Chair in Thromboembolism is seen as a stepping stone for discovering new ways of treating and managing deadly blood clots.

The appointment to the position, supported by a \$2-million investment from the Canadian division of the Danish-based pharmaceutical giant, Leo Pharma, was announced in February.

"The chair is a great gift because it provides me with some freedom to explore different areas in the treatment and prevention of blood clot complications," said Crowther, a professor of medicine, pathology and molecular medicine in the Michael G. DeGroote School of Medicine and director of the division of hematology and thromboembolism.

Crowther is currently testing the hypothesis that daily, fixed, small doses of Vitamin K may improve the quality of the commonly used blood thinner,



■ Mark Crowther

warfarin, an advance which might mean both fewer laboratory tests and few complications for patients.

He is also working on the development of warfarin guidelines which will be accompanied by a summary with evidence-based recommendations.

"The chair provides funding for salary support while building research capacity at McMaster and St. Joseph's Healthcare.

Hopefully, it will lead to improvements in the way we diagnose and manage DVT (deep-vein thrombosis)," Crowther said.

DVT occurs when a blood clot forms in the deep veins of the pelvis, leg or arm. It can lead to a life-threatening pulmonary embolism if the clot blocks the blood supply to the lung. DVT occurs in more than 50,000 Canadians every year.

# Faculty welcomes three new CRCs

The Faculty of Health Sciences has three new Canada Research Chairs in its ranks.

**Parminder Raina**, a professor of clinical epidemiology and biostatistics, was named the Tier 1 Canada Research Chair in Geroscience. Raina is leading the Canadian Longitudinal Study on Aging (CLSA), which brings together experts in the physical, psychological and social health domains to unlock some of the mysteries of aging that have the greatest impact on the health of Canadians over time. He also holds the Raymond and Margaret Labarge Chair in Research and Knowledge Application for Optimal Aging.



■ Parminder Raina

**Michael Surette**, who joined McMaster in the fall of 2010 from the University of Calgary, was named to the Tier 1 Canada Research Chair in Interdisciplinary Microbiome Research. The professor of medicine, biochemistry and biomedical sciences is studying the relationships between microbes and humans in health and disease. Surette's research has the potential to transform the ways to prevent, diagnose and treat a wide range of conditions.

**David Meyre**, the new Tier 2 Canada Research Chair in Genetic Epidemiology, joined McMaster from the Institut de Biologie de Lille in France. The associate professor in the Department



■ David Meyre

of Clinical Epidemiology and Biostatistics studies the genetic determinants of obesity and Type 2 diabetes. His research focuses on the interaction of genes and ethnicity, and genes and the environment, with the goal of better genetic prediction of high-risk individuals.

CRC renewals were awarded to **Michael Boyle**, a professor of psychiatry and behavioural neurosciences, and **Parameswaran Nair**, an associate professor of medicine.

Tier 1 CRCs are awarded to outstanding researchers acknowledged by their peers as world leaders in their fields. Tier 2 Chairs are for exceptional emerging researchers, acknowledged by their peers as having the potential to lead in their field.

McMaster now boasts 64 Canada Research Chairs, an allocation that ranks the university ninth in Canada and third in Ontario.

## McMaster scientists turn skin into blood

In November, Mick Bhatia, scientific director of the McMaster Stem Cell and Cancer Research Institute, and his research team made headlines around the world after showing for the first time how human adult skin cells can be converted directly into blood stem cells. The discovery, published in the prestigious journal *Nature*, was named the top scientific leap of 2010 by the Toronto Star and one of the top 10 research stories of 2010 by the Canadian Cancer Society.

**Oncology professor** Tim Whelan, working with the Ontario Clinical Oncology Group, led another McMaster study that topped the Canadian Cancer Society list. His research showed that a shorter, three-week course of higher-dose radiation may be just as effective as the standard five-week course for women with early-stage breast cancer. The study was published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*

in February 2010. It was also named one of the top clinical cancer advances of 2010 by the American Society of Clinical Oncology.

**A McMaster research** study showing the community benefit of child vaccination has been chosen as the 2010 research paper of the year by the prestigious science journal *The Lancet*. Mark Loeb, a professor in the Michael G. DeGroot School of Medicine, led a study of Alberta's Hutterite community investigating the benefits of vaccinating children and adolescents in rural areas against influenza. The study was originally published in March 2010 in the *Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)*.

**Research from** the Michael G. DeGroot School of Medicine has been cited as three of the top 10 cardiovascular research advancements in 2010

by the American Heart Association. As well, another study from the school was cited among the top 10 research advancements in stroke treatment for the year by the American Stroke Association. Top findings include:

- Two McMaster studies headed by Stuart Connolly were credited with providing more options for reducing stroke risk in atrial fibrillation.
- A study led by Shamir Mehta has helped health-care providers better understand the right anti-clotting (anti-platelet) therapy.
- Hertzler Gerstein's study on tailoring treatment for people with diabetes shed light on how to reduce their risk of cardiovascular disease.
- Research led by Salim Yusuf and Martin O'Donnell was ranked among the top 10 advances for the year in stroke research. Their study identified 10 risk factors associated with 90 per cent of the risk of stroke worldwide.



# Physician awarded for medical training focus

**Pick any place** on a map of the world and you will probably find Karl Stobbe has been there, lending a helping hand to physicians — both internationally and at home.

In July, Stobbe led a team of 10 Canadian rural family doctors to the East African nation of Rwanda, a country which is recovering from genocide in 1994. This year, he returned to Nepal, where he helped develop a rural medical school, and the Philippines, adding more air miles to his international experiences which have taken him to countries as diverse as Laos and Kurdistan to develop medical education.

At home, Stobbe continues to play a key role in educating future physicians as the regional assistant dean for McMaster University's Niagara Regional Campus of the Michael G. DeGroote School of Medicine.

For his contributions at home and abroad, he was named the 2010 recipient of the John C. Sibley Award, presented



■ Karl Stobbe in Rwanda

annually to a part-time faculty member in the Faculty of Health Sciences who has made outstanding contributions to the education of health professionals.

At McMaster, Stobbe developed a rural

stream of training for family medicine residents and later established and served as director of the McMaster Community and Rural Education Program (Mac-CARE). He led the expansion-planning team for the Michael G. DeGroote School of Medicine, developing all aspects of the medical campuses in the Waterloo and Niagara regions.

Of his international work, Stobbe said the education is not all one way. For example, in the Philippines he saw firsthand how medical students were encouraged to develop learning initiatives on their own, then wondered how he could develop the same concept here.

“We now work hard to include student input,” he said. “Students are encouraged to sit on all committees on the Niagara campus. Quarterly, I meet with each class to get their feedback and suggestions for improvement. We solicit students’ advice and tell them they are part of developing their own experience.”

## Educators receive top marks for teaching

**The teaching excellence** of several faculty members and residents was recognized in 2010:

**James Bain** of the Division of Plastic Surgery in the Michael G. DeGroote School of Medicine has received the 2010 PAIRO Excellence in Clinical Teaching Award for McMaster University. The award acknowledges the essential role that clinical teachers play in the training of new physicians.

**Kirsten Culver**, an assistant professor in the School of Nursing, was named the winner of the 2010 McMaster Student Union (MSU) Teaching Award for the Faculty of Health Sciences. She is currently the basic sciences coordinator for the Undergraduate Nursing Education Programs. She joined the School of Nursing in 2004 and completed her PhD in Medical Sciences from McMaster in 2006.

**Christian Kraeker (MD '06)** of the

Division of Internal Medicine in the Michael G. DeGroote School of Medicine has received the 2010 Resident Leadership Award from the Royal College of Physician and Surgeons of Canada. The award is given annually to a resident who has demonstrated leadership in Canadian specialty education and encourages the development of future leaders in medicine.

**Alan Neville**, associate dean, education, was honoured during spring 2010 convocation ceremonies with three awards for his educational leadership.

He received the President's Award for Exemplary National Leadership in



■ Alan Neville

Academic Medicine from the Association of Faculties of Medicine of Canada; the President's Award for Excellence in Educational Leadership from McMaster University; and the Ari Shali Teaching Award from the graduating MD class. Neville served as assistant dean for the undergraduate MD program for 13 years before taking his new position in July, 2010.

**Parveen Wasi**, director of the Internal Medicine Residency Training Program, was named the 2010 Program Director of the Year by the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada. The award is given annually to a program director who has demonstrated a commitment to enhancing residency education as evidenced by innovation and impact beyond the program. The internal medicine residency program was also named the winner of the 2010 PAIRO Residency Program Excellence Award.

# Health sciences researchers honoured for accomplishments

**The following** McMaster researchers have been honoured for their achievements:

**Stephanie Atkinson, Deborah Cook and Alba DiCenso** were elected fellows of the Canadian Academy of Health Sciences for their significant contributions to health services research in Canada. Atkinson is a professor and associate chair, research, for the Department of Pediatrics. Cook is a professor of medicine, clinical epidemiology and biostatistics. DiCenso is a professor in the School of Nursing.

**John Bienenstock**, a Distinguished University Professor, was named a 2011 laureate to the Canadian Medical Hall of Fame. The McMaster scientist pioneered the concept of the common mucosal system — the means by which the body's mucosal surfaces, such as the gut, the respiratory tract and the reproductive system, share information to fight infection. His landmark studies have led to new approaches in immunization and also to a better understanding of the links between the brain and body.



**Brian Haynes**, a professor in the de-

partments of medicine, clinical epidemiology and biostatistics, has been named an Officer of the Order of Canada. The appointment recognizes a lifetime of outstanding achievement and merit of a high degree, especially in service to Canada or to humanity at large. Haynes is recognized for his contributions as a world leader in medical information research, and for advancing evidence-based medicine in Canada and abroad.

**Nick Kates**, a professor in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioural Neurosciences, has been named an honorary member of the College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC) for his leadership in building bridges between mental health and primary care services in Canada.

**Lori Letts**, associate professor in the School of Rehabilitation Science and assistant dean of the Occupational Therapy Program, has been named the 2011 Muriel Driver Memorial Lecturer by the Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists (CAOT). The award is given to a CAOT member who has made an outstanding contribution to the profession through research, education and the practice of occupational therapy.

**Cheryl Levitt**, a professor in the Department of Family Medicine, won the prestigious World Organization of National Colleges, Academies and Academic

Associations of General Practitioners/Family Physicians (Wonca) Fellowship. The award is given to individuals who have rendered outstanding service to Wonca and its mission to improve the quality of life of the peoples of the world by fostering high standards of care in general practice and family medicine.

**Paul O'Byrne**, professor and chair of the Department of Medicine, has been elected a fellow of the prestigious Royal Society of Canada. As a world-leading asthma expert,



O'Byrne is internationally recognized for his seminal contributions into understanding the causes and treatment of asthma, including the first studies of the central role of airway inflammation.

**Eva Szabo**, a postdoctoral fellow in the McMaster Stem Cell and Cancer Research Institute, received a MITACS Elevate Strategic Fellowship for her research investigating the reprogramming of adult skin cells into stem cells. The Elevate awards are a part of a province-wide program in which postdoctoral fellows at Ontario universities partner with local industry.

## Faculty of Health Sciences staff win President's Awards

**The President's Awards** for Outstanding Service provide annual recognition for employees or groups of employees who have made an outstanding contribution to the mission of McMaster University by going above and beyond the requirements of their jobs.

Several staff members in the Faculty of Health Sciences were honoured for their achievements:

**Teresa Basilio** of the Bachelor of Health Sciences Program and **Todd Murray** of the Computer Services Unit

were part of the group receiving the team award for their work with the McMaster University Quits Talking Trash: Sustainable Solutions group. The team of nine managers from across campus worked with various faculties and departments to develop strategies to reduce waste across campus. As a result, there are fewer supplier deliveries and less landfill waste, as well as more eco-friendly products in use on campus.

**Claire Kostyshyn**, program administrative assistant in the Department of

Psychiatry and Behavioural Neurosciences, received an individual award for her outstanding dedication and contributions to the psychiatry residency program. Recognized as a resource, mentor and confidante to residents and new faculty, Kostyshyn was instrumental in bringing online evaluation to the program. She also devised innovative and useful tracking documents, some of which have been submitted for publication and are now used by others outside her program.



# Midwifery dean accepts prestigious appointment

**Eileen Hutton**, assistant dean of McMaster's midwifery program, is the first midwife to hold an endowed professorship in The Netherlands.

She has been appointed to the new role as professor of the Midwifery Science Division at Vrije University (VU) and VU Medical Centre in Amsterdam for a five-year term. She will maintain her McMaster roles as assistant dean and director of the McMaster Midwifery Education Program and associate professor in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology of the Michael G. DeGroot School of Medicine.

The obstetrics system in Canada is similar to the Dutch system. In both countries women with a low-risk pregnancy are able to choose a home birth or a hospital birth under the supervision of a midwife. The newly formed Midwifery Science Division at VU has undertaken a major national study into primary midwifery care in the Netherlands. Hutton will collaborate on this project, and will facilitate research into midwifery practices in the country.

"I'm involved in working with the researchers within the division to further midwifery research and to help develop and supervise faculty who have undertaken PhDs," she said.

"The time is ripe for systematic scientific research into the unique Dutch obstetrics system. Research is important to ensure continuous improvement of the care of women and babies during pregnancy and birth."

Hutton has acted as an advisor to midwifery educators in the Netherlands since 2007. Over the past four years, she has assisted with the transition of the profession's education programs from polytechnic institutes to universities, and helped formalize midwifery research in academic settings.

"It's really about moving midwives into the forefront of their own profession by undertaking research that is meaningful and will guide clinical practice," she said. "The midwifery model of care in Canada is modelled after the Dutch model. There's really a good fit between the two jurisdictions."



■ Eileen Hutton

"I think there will be a good opportunity for Canada to now influence a system that it was initially influenced by."

Hutton called her appointment "a remarkable and unexpected opportunity." Her official inauguration was held in February.

## Faculty appointed to senior roles

The following faculty members have been appointed to senior positions within the Faculty of Health Sciences:

**Marcel Doré**, an assistant clinical professor in the Department of Family Medicine, has been appointed the acting assistant dean of the Continuing Health Sciences Education Program.

**Lennox Huang**, an associate professor in the Department of Pediatrics, has been appointed chair and chief of the Department of Pediatrics at McMaster University, Hamilton Health Sciences and St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton.

**Nicholas Leyland** has been appointed chair and chief of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at McMaster and Hamilton Health Sciences.

**James Mahony**, a professor of pathology and molecular medicine, has been appointed assistant dean of the Medical Sciences Graduate Program.

**Alan Neville**, a professor of oncology and former assistant dean of the undergraduate MD program, has been named associate dean, education.

**Patty Solomon**, a physiotherapist and professor in the School of Rehabilitation Science, has been appointed associate dean, rehabilitation science.

**Rob Whyte**, an assistant professor in the Department of Anesthesia, has been appointed assistant dean for the undergraduate medical education program.

The following faculty members have received reappointments:

**Susan Denburg** has been named to a second term associate vice-president, academic. She previously served for two terms as associate dean, education.

**Del Harnish** has been reappointed assistant dean of the Bachelor of Health Sciences (Honours) Program.

## FHS faculty receive honorary degrees

Members of the McMaster community were presented with honorary doctorates during convocation ceremonies in 2010:

**Michael Gent**, a professor emeritus of the Department of Clinical Epidemiology and Biostatistics, received an honorary Doctor of Science during spring convocation ceremonies for the Faculty of Health Sciences. A renowned biostatistician, Gent helped to advance the general methodology and organization of clinical trials.

**Geoff Norman**, a professor in the Department of Clinical Epidemiology and Biostatistics and the director of the Program for Education Research and Development, received an honorary doctorate from Erasmus University in Rotterdam, The Netherlands, for his contributions to problem-based learning (PBL).



# Humanitarian reflections

## James Orbinski on his global health reach

■ James Orbinski visits a patient at his home in the rural village of Chipini during a recent trip to Malawi.

**As political turmoil** engulfs the Middle East, other corners of the world are of equal concern for James Orbinski, particularly countries where climate change is affecting the daily lives of ordinary people.

The larger political issue, he says, is the impact floods, hurricanes, heat waves and failing crop yields are having in Pakistan, Australia, and the African continent – and the implications this has for global health, political stability, and our long-term viability as a species.

Orbinski, 50, is recognized internationally as a physician, humanitarian, scientist and author. The McMaster medical alumnus is a recipient of the Order of Canada and he was recently selected as one of 25 Transformational Canadians. His career reads like a road map of hot spots around the globe – Somalia, Afghanistan, Rwanda, Zaire.

As a medical student at McMaster in the late 1980s, he spent a year in Rwanda researching HIV in children. He went on to co-found the Canadian chapter of the medical aid organization Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF).

He credits his career as an advocate for those caught by war, genocide and mass starvation to his roots at McMaster, where he earned his medical degree in 1990.

“I went to Central Africa in 1987 on a Medical Research Council of Canada fellowship to study pediatric HIV with support from faculty at McMaster – Dr. Vic Neufeld, Dr. Jack Rosenfeld, Dr. Thomas Muckle, Dr. Jose Venterelli and Dr. Brian Sealey,” he said. “They

were wonderful, wonderful professors and so knowledgeable. They really guided me through my education and they still do.”

Looking back, Orbinski remembers going to Central Africa as a scientist, “but, my experience, particularly in Rwanda, changed my understanding of what I could be as a physician – from that of an academic scientist-clinician focusing on a very specific problem, such as HIV, to how to deliver the best possible medical care to the most people in the world who needed it.”

The suffering he witnessed was “overwhelming” – one doctor for 110,000 people compared to the Canadian ratio of one per 350.

“I remember being at a clinic at my hospital in Kigali at 7 a.m. and there were hundreds of mothers lined up who had camped with their children overnight. I began seeing children and I’d close by 7 p.m. Hundreds of women were still there, along with several more new mothers.”

Experiences like this made Orbinski realize the necessity of looking at the problem differently.

“No matter how long I stayed, it would never be enough. I could never possibly address all the needs coming to the clinic, never mind the ones who weren’t coming at all,” he said. “I just started to think about health care differently and developed a series of tools for nurses and health care workers to help them do the majority of the clinical work because most of the problems can be easily identified and treated by health professionals

who have the right training.”

With nurses diagnosing and managing common pediatric conditions, Orbinski had more time to look after more difficult cases. “I thought that was a fantastic way to use my mind, time, energy and skill as a physician and a great way to have an impact on people who have no other access to health care.”

The skills and understanding he acquired led Orbinski to change his focus from academic medicine to work with MSF. Now, twenty years later, he combines research with ongoing work internationally with Toronto-based Dignitas International. The medical humanitarian organization, launched seven years ago by Orbinski and his colleague James Fraser, takes a similar approach in increasing access to HIV/AIDS-related treatment in developing countries. In Malawi, Dignitas works with the Ministry of Health and a group of universities to develop simplified treatment protocols for people with HIV, tuberculosis and other primary health-care priorities. Dignitas has trained hundreds of nurses, clinical officers and community health workers in their use.

“We now have 15,000 patients on full treatment for AIDS, and 20,000 more people in 42 remote health clinics under our care. The model is so successful that we are scaling up this year to offer treatment to a population of three million people,” Orbinski said.

His long career with MSF began with his first mission in 1992 to Peru. Following that placement, he served as





James Orbinski, Dignitas International

■ McMaster medical alumnus James Orbinski, internationally recognized as a physician, humanitarian, scientist and author, visits with children in the rural village of Chipini, Malawi.

MSF’s medical co-ordinator in Baidoa, Somalia, during the civil war and famine of 1992-93. During the Rwandan genocide of 1994, Orbinski was MSF’s Head of Mission in Kigali, then the organization’s medical co-ordinator in Jalalabad, Afghanistan, in the winter of 1994. In 1996-97, he held the same position in Goma, Zaire, during the refugee crisis there.

As international president, Orbinski represented MSF in numerous humanitarian emergencies and on critical humanitarian issues in the Sudan, Kosovo, Russia, Cambodia, South Africa, India and Thailand. He also represented MSF at the United Nations Security Council, in many national parliaments, at the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

In 1999, as international president of MSF, Orbinski accepted the Nobel Peace Prize on behalf the organization for its pioneering approach to medical humanitarianism and witnessing. He chaired the working group behind

the now seven-year-old Drugs for Neglected Diseases Initiative (DNDi), a partnership between MSF and medical research organizations in several countries including Brazil, France and India. The initiative has yielded two anti-malarial drugs and a treatment for African sleeping sickness. The project has 17 other drugs and compounds in development.

*“No matter how long I stayed, it would never be enough.”*

Orbinski was also a key player in launching MSF’s Access to Essential Medicines campaign which has helped to change the face of global health.

Today, he passionately believes climate change and global health is an area health practitioners, academics and universities

need to take seriously, and one in which they should develop “practical expertise” – a view he backs up with initiatives of his own.

Orbinski is working to develop programs in climate change and health at the University of Toronto (U of T) where he is a senior fellow at the Munk School of Global Affairs and chair and professor of global health at the Dalla Lana School of Public Health. “I’m very keen to see similar initiatives emerge around the country, at McMaster and elsewhere.”

He was also involved in developing and launching U of T’s Collaborative Doctoral Program in Global Health.

“Global health is a domain of knowledge and practice that requires a multidisciplinary perspective that is ethically rooted and practically oriented,” he said. “The collaborative PhD program has all these components. It is a partnership between many different departments and faculties across the university, and accepted its first cohort of students last year. We are working to grow and expand the program.”

# FHS alumni: Where are they now?

## 1970s

### **Robert Armstrong, M.Sc. '78, MD '82, PhD '86**

Robert Armstrong has been named the founding dean of medicine at the new Faculty of Health Sciences for East Africa being established by the Aga Khan University. Prior to the appointment, he was an associate professor and head of pediatrics at the University of British Columbia (UBC). He was also chief of pediatric medicine for BC Children's Hospital and BC Women's Hospital. He joined the UBC faculty in 1987, after completing his master's, medical and doctoral studies at McMaster. While in BC, he helped to establish the Provincial Child Health Network and acted as founding chair of the Canadian Child and Youth Health Coalition. Dr. Armstrong began his appointment in Nairobi, Kenya, in July 2010.

### **Judy MacDonnell, BScN '77**

Judy MacDonnell has over two decades of experience as a nurse in public health, hospital and education sectors. An assistant professor of nursing at York University, she received her nursing degree from McMaster, her Master of Education from Brock University, her PhD in Sociology and Equity studies in Education/Women's Studies from the University of Toronto and completed a postdoctoral fellowship at York. Research interests include gender and its intersections with other social relations, such as race, sexuality and age. She has been involved in minority health, especially for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning (LGBTQ) communities, participatory policy development and knowledge translation/exchange. She is co-chair, Rainbow Nursing Interest Group of the Registered Nurses Association of Ontario (RNAO), and affiliated with Rainbow Health Ontario as a researcher and educator.

## 1980s

### **Carolyn Byrne, MHSc '82**

Carolyn Byrne has been named dean and chief executive officer of the University of Calgary – Qatar (UCQ). Prior to joining UCQ, she served as founding dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences at the University of Ontario Institute of Technology (UOIT). Before moving to UOIT, she was an associate professor in the School of Nursing at McMaster University, where she received the President's Award for Educational Leadership. She began her new role in July 2010.



## 1990s

### **Reena Mathew, BScN '93**

Reena Mathew is now a pediatric nurse and an adjunct faculty member in the School of Nursing at Seton Hall University in New Jersey. Upon graduation from McMaster, Reena practiced pediatric nursing at Hamilton Health Sciences for several years while pursuing her master's in nursing at D'Youville College in Buffalo, NY. She moved to Boston after she got married and practiced at Boston Children's Hospital. For the last 11 years, she has been practicing at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital in New Jersey. Along the way, she started doing teaching assignments at Rutgers University and also at Seton Hall University. She lives in Belle Mead, NJ, with her husband, Bobby, and their son, Benjamin.

## 2000s

### **Gregory Knapp, BHSc '08**

Gregory Knapp, 24, developed a passion for global health during his time in

Bachelor of Health Sciences (BHSc) program that culminated in several experiences abroad and led to him working with faculty members Del Harnish, Sheila Barrett and others to help develop the new BHSc global health specialization, which he now co-ordinates. In 2008, Knapp was honoured with the Commonwealth Scholarship and deferred his acceptance to medical school to study international health policy at the London School of Economics (LSE). He earned his master's degree from LSE in 2009. Now a second-year medical student at McMaster, Knapp spent five weeks in Angola last summer completing an elective in general surgery with Stephen Foster, an associate clinical professor at McMaster. Knapp's long-term goal is to combine his interests in global health and general surgery.

### **Christopher Winn, M.Sc. (PT) '02**

Christopher Winn graduated from McMaster's physiotherapy program in 2002 as a member of the inaugural M.Sc. (PT) class. Since then, he has continued to be involved with the



program in a variety of roles including part-time assistant professor and physiotherapy co-ordinator for the Northern Studies Stream. In addition to his academic roles, Chris maintains a clinical practice at Fanti & Associates Physiotherapists in Thunder Bay. Chris has been a member of the Board of the Ontario Physiotherapy Association since 2006 and was elected president of the association in 2010.

## Keep us up to date

Do you have news you would like to share in the Alumni Notes section? Please e-mail us at [network@mcmaster.ca](mailto:network@mcmaster.ca) to keep us up to date on your accomplishments.



# MD alumna honours parents by establishing award

**As a McMaster** medical student, **Francesca Ting Yan Cheung (MD '06)** benefited from the generosity of others when she received bursaries through the Michael G. DeGroot School of Medicine.

Now the young alumna is planning to give back and, in the process, honour her parents who helped her get to where she is today.

"Part of it is I wanted to give to McMaster because it's such a great school," said the 29-year-old family physician who has a special interest in dermatology. "Now that I am able to do that, I want to use the scholarship to honour my parents. They supported me through my medical studies."

This spring, Cheung made a generous gift of \$25,000 to establish The Patrick Shing Lung Cheung and Ivy Heong Ngan Chan Award. The annual bursary, upon appropriate approvals, will be given to students in the Michael G. DeGroot School of Medicine with an interest in family medicine who are in good academic standing and demonstrate financial need.

As part of the gift, Francesca Cheung requested that preference be given to students who are newcomers to Canada.

"It takes a lot of energy and enthusiasm to start in a new country," said Cheung, who immigrated to Canada



■ Francesca Ting Yan Cheung (centre) with her father, Patrick Shing Lung Cheung (left), and mother, Ivy Heong Ngan Chan (right).

from Hong Kong as a teenager. She said her parents, a certified engineering technologist and a homemaker, came to this country looking for a better life and new opportunities.

"I hope my scholarship can help out many, many students," said the physician who lives and works in Markham. "Being a recent graduate, you benefit a lot from the education you receive at university, but you also learn how to view yourself as a person."

Established as an endowed gift, the Patrick Shing Lung Cheung and Ivy Heong Ngan Chan Award will establish

an endowed fund of \$25,000 which will provide an annual student bursary valued at \$1,000. The donation will be matched dollar-for-dollar by the Ontario Trust for Student Support, raising the endowment to \$50,000 and doubling the impact of the donation to two annual awards of \$1,000.

"I'm fortunate to be in a great profession," said Cheung. "If I can give back early, why not?"

*For more information on setting up student awards, please contact Josie Bufalino-Jasek at [jasekj@mcmaster.ca](mailto:jasekj@mcmaster.ca) or 905-525-9140, ext. 21874.*

**Albert Agro (PhD '95)** has been appointed chief medical officer of Cynapsus Therapeutics. He also continues to serve as president and CEO of HNZ Strategic Holdings, Inc., a consulting firm which provides clinical development services and counselling to pharmaceutical and biotech companies. After completing his PhD in medical sciences at McMaster, Agro joined the faculty as a part-time assistant professor in the Department of Pathology and Molecular Medicine.

**John Cairney**, an associate professor in the Department of Family Medicine and the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioural Neurosciences, has co-written a new book, *Mental Disorders in Canada*,

with David L. Streiner of the University of Toronto. The book explores the history of psychiatric epidemiology and is the first dedicated to the study of mental disorders at a population level in Canada. Cairney completed his post-doctoral training in psychiatric epidemiology at McMaster in 2002.

**Myles Druckman (MD '89)** and **Paula Rochon (BA '80, MD '83)** were inducted into the McMaster Alumni Gallery in June 2010. Druckman, a leading pandemic expert and thought leader in international corporate health, is vice-president, medical services, for International SOS. He directs the medical consulting and corporate medical staffing services in

the Americas. Rochon is vice-president of research at Women's College Hospital in Toronto. She is also a professor of medicine and health policy, management and evaluation at the University of Toronto.

**Michael McGillion (BScN '96)** has received the 2010 McMaster Arch Award for young alumni. The award recognizes McMaster's most recent graduates for their unique and interesting contributions to society, their local community and to McMaster University. McGillion is an assistant professor of nursing at the University of Toronto. His program of research focuses on improving the quality of life of people with debilitating cardiac pain caused by refractory angina.

# Alumni can keep in touch

**Josie Bufalino-Jasek** has joined the Faculty of Health Sciences' Advancement Office and will be managing the alumni relations program. She will be the link to help grads stay connected to McMaster University.

"I have already met with many alumni, and I'm learning the lore of our excellent health sciences programs," she said. "I look forward to hearing from alumni as I put together a new alumni relations program. I want to bring alumni closer to both their fellow alumni and the university."

Her professional background includes more than 20 years of experience in alumni relations. Most recently she was a member of McMaster University's advancement team

which successfully completed the Campaign for McMaster University this past summer.

Josie will be seeking the input of graduates as she puts together an active alumni relations program that will bring graduates together with the university and alumni, and give meaningful opportunities to invest in the future of McMaster.



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Faculty of Health Sciences  
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ext. 21874

## Class Reunions

### School of Rehabilitation Science

Classes of 1991, 1996, 2001, 2006 and 2010

Date: Saturday, June 4, 2011

Location: McMaster University

Register: [www.mcmaster.ca/ua/alumni/programs\\_events\\_registration.html](http://www.mcmaster.ca/ua/alumni/programs_events_registration.html)

### Nursing Class of '86 – 25th Reunion

Date: May 14-15, 2011

Location: Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont.

Reunion Committee: *Cindy MacDonald*

### Nursing Class of '91 – 20th Reunion

Date: Saturday, September 17, 2011

Location: McMaster University

Reunion Committee: *Manuela Lopes and Lesley Jeffries*

### MD Class of '76 – 35th Reunion

Date: Saturday, October 1, 2011

Location: McMaster University

Reunion Committee: *Robert Bruce*

### MD Class of '81 – 30th Reunion

Date: Saturday, October 1, 2011

Location: McMaster University

Reunion Committee: *Betsy Bishop and Sandy Buchman*

### MD Class of '86 – 25th Reunion

Date: Saturday, October 22, 2011

Location: McMaster University

Reunion Committee: *Sheelagh Pyper-Kalman, Richard Packer and Martha Davidson*

### MD Class of '91 – 20th Reunion

Date: Saturday, October 1, 2011

Location: McMaster University

Reunion Committee: *Karen Finlay*

### MD Class of '96 – 15th Reunion

Date: Saturday, October 1, 2011

Location: McMaster University

Reunion Committee: *Tim Hillson*

### MD Class of '01 – 10th Reunion

Date: Saturday, October 1, 2011

Location: McMaster University

Reunion Committee: TBD

## Stay connected

To change your address or update your email address, contact the Alumni Office at [alumni@mcmaster.ca](mailto:alumni@mcmaster.ca)

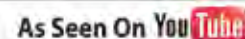
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Network is published by the  
Faculty of Health Sciences  
McMaster University

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requested.

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HSC 2E46-50

Hamilton, Ontario CA L8S 4K1  
PUBLICATION MAIL AGREEMENT  
NO. 40063416

Registration No. R119035988  
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