Congratulations...

GRADUATE STUDENT DEFENSES

Denny Chin, PhD
*The Role of Coagulase-Negative Staphylococcal Secreted Products on Staphylococcus aureus and Staphylococcus lugdunensis Infections*
Supervisor: Dr. David Heinrichs

Jacklyn Hurst, PhD
*Investigation of Streptococcus pyogenes hyaluronic acid capsule and M protein during acute nasopharyngeal and skin infections, as vaccine candidates, and possible drivers of heart dysfunction*
Supervisor: Dr. John McCormick

GRADUATE STUDENT CANDIDACY EXAMS

Lei Qi
Supervisor: Dr. Eric Arts

Gerrit Stuivenberg
Supervisor: Drs. Jeremy Burton and Gregor Reid

Lane Buchanan
Supervisor: Dr. Jessica Prodger

Shabitha Arumugurajah
Supervisor: Dr. Lakshman Gunaratnam

Andris Evans
Supervisor: Dr. Joe Mymryk

Mo’ayyad Nassar
Supervisor: Drs. Jeremy Burton and Donna Goldhawk

1-YEAR MSC STUDENT GRADUATES

Clara Sun (Dr. Dekaban)
Minhyuk Mun (Dr. Heit)
Aleena Ghafoor (Dr. Arts)

4TH YEAR HONOURS THESIS STUDENTS

**Barr Lab:** Nicole Jasmine Friesen, Jacqueline Lebiadowski-Parish

**Burton Lab:** Paul Akouris

**Burton and Barra Labs:** Andrew Keith Bowman

**Creuzenet Lab:** Jeena Khan, Brian Yang

**Dekaban Lab:** Zi Xuan Chen, Kaitlin Lees

**DeKoter Lab:** Heidi Rysan, Joshua SW Yi

**Dikeakos Lab:** Carolyn Rose Prins, Dana Caroline Spencer

**Fruci Lab:** Faye Mao

**Gunaratnam Lab:** Najat Said El-Farra

**Haeryfar Lab:** Zi Xin Gao, Imran Amaan Rhemtulla, Nicole Ilayda Wang

**Heinrichs Lab:** Colette Benko, Michelle Kan-Hodgson, Ainslie Claire Shouldice, Catherine Chen Sun

**Heit Lab:** Catherine Yeeun Jung

**Kerfoot Lab:** Kevin Kaichao Zhang

**Kim Lab:** Georgia Roy, Justin Wen Jie Zhou

**McCormick Lab:** Lara Fouad Bawadi, Carla Sorana Maduta, Bonnie Yiu

**McGavin Lab:** Alexandria Bartlett, Romanch Shah

**Mymryk Lab:** Luke DiMambro

**Prodger Lab:** Victor Hoe-Kin Lam, Jeff Lin, Reeya Parmar

**Ronald Lab:** Victor Velehorschi

**Sener Lab:** Lucas Nelson Penney

**Troyer Lab:** Samuel Kamal, Pierce Bryan Roger Nelson

**Zheng Lab:** Serina Chahal
WELCOME NEW GRADUATE STUDENTS!

**Winter of 2022**
Inbar Habaz (Dr. Haeryfar)
Akanksha Thukral (Dr. McGavin)

**Summer of 2022**
Polycronis Akouris (Dr. Burton)
Omar Almomani (Dr. Prodger)
Andrew Bowman (Dr. Burton/Dr. Barra)
Serina Chahal (Dr. Zheng)
Jason Chen (Dr. Dekaban)
Nicole Friesen (Dr. Barr)
Avery Gaudreau (Dr. Heinrichs)
Carla Maduta (Dr. McCormick)
Heidi Rysan (Dr. DeKoter)
Victor Velehorschi (Dr. Haeryfar/Dr. Ronald)
Brian Yang (Dr. Creuzenet)
Kevin Zhang (Dr. Kerfoot)

MNI Social Committee Events

Intramural Ultimate Frisbee
Wednesday nights 6:30-8:30pm

MNI Social Committee Contact Information:
Please feel free to contact Mack with questions or suggestions for social events!
The other graduate student representatives can be found on the departmental website.
Mack (mdodge@uwo.ca)

Mark your calendars!

The Infection and Immunity Research Forum (IIRF) is coming this Fall on November 4th 2022! IIRF will be featuring Dr. Dawn Bowdish as the keynote speaker

Keep an eye out for emails, twitter or Instagram updates on registration and abstract submission (Twitter, Instagram)

If you are interested in being part of the IIRF committee, please contact iirf@schulich.uwo.ca

**Upcoming Meetings!**

 CSV  
June 5–7  
Edmonton, Alberta

 CSI  
June 17–20  
Halifax, Nova Scotia (or virtual)

 CSM  
June 26–29  
Guelph, Ontario

 ASV  
July 15–20  
Madison, Wisconsin

The deadline for the **Dean’s Research Scholarship** is June 24th, 2022. Remember to seek references early! This competition is restricted to students co-supervised by a clinician and a basic scientist (view link):
In Memory of Dr. R.G.E. Murray

Dr. Murray joined the University of Western Ontario in 1945 and was head of the department from 1949 to 1974. He was chairman of the Founding Committee and the Founding President for the Canadian Society of Microbiologists, the founding editor of the Canadian Journal of Microbiology, and was president of the American Society for Microbiology. In 1999, the department initiated the annual R.G.E. Murray Lectureship and named the departmental seminar series as the R.G.E. Murray Seminar Series. Microbiology and Immunology scholarships and seminar awards were established in his name. Dr. Murray continues to be an inspiration to students and faculty members. He will be missed. His memoriam and details for his celebration of life can be found [here](#).

MICROIMM NEWS

**Congratulations...**

Congratulations to faculty members from our department who have been recognized for their excellence and achievements.

**Dr. Jimmy Dikeakos**  
2022 Faculty Scholar

**Dr. Lakshman Gunaratnam**  
2022 Dean’s Award of Excellence

**Dr. Aleks Leligdowicz**  
2022 Wolfe-Western Fellowship At-Large

**Dr. Gregor Reid**  
Dr. Rogers Prize in Excellence for Complementary and Alternative Medicine.

**Welcome to the Department**

A warm welcome to two new members of our department. **Dr. Veronica Guariglia**, who has just completed a PDF with Dr. Heinrichs, joins us as an Assistant Professor and our newest Educator. Dr. Guariglia’s research interests focus on understanding how microbial pathogens interact with their environment. **Dr. Jennifer Guthrie** has also joined our department as an Assistant Professor. Dr. Guthrie’s research combines genomics, computational biology and microbiology with the goal of developing and applying bioinformatics and epidemiological methods to interpret complex pathogen data.

**In The News**

**Dr. Jennifer Guthrie**  
Featured in Discover Magazine detailing a study she led investigating SARS-CoV-2 in white-tailed deer in Ontario [view link](#)

**Dr. Mansour Haeryfar**  
Featured in a BBC Future article where he discusses immune amnesia [view link](#)

**Dr. Art Poon**  
Featured in a National Post article discussing what we know about sub-lineages of the Delta variant [view link](#)
Alumni News

Matthew Miller (PhD 2011, Mymryk Lab) an Associate Professor at McMaster University, was awarded a 2022 Alumni of Distinction Award from the Schulich School of Medicine and Dentistry

Ryan Chanyi (PhD 2014, Koval Lab) was awarded a Science New Zealand award for 2021

Faizah Alotaibi (PhD 2020, Koropatnick Lab) is now an Assistant Professor at the King Said bin Abdulaziz University for Health Sciences

Jessica Sheldon (PhD 2015, Heinrichs Lab) is now an Assistant Professor at the University of Saskatchewan for Biochemistry, Microbiology & Immunology

DEPARTMENTAL FUNDING

Student Awards
Stephen D. Poland Award
  Brendan Daisley (Reid)
John A. Thomas Award
  Denny Chin (Heinrichs)
RGE Murray Graduate Seminar Awards
  Denny Chin (Heinrichs, PhD)
  Alex Lac (Heit, MSc)

Grant Competition Success

Dr. Jessica Prodger (PI)
Neovaginal health for transfeminine people: the microbiome, inflammation, and post-vaginoplasty outcomes
(CIHR, $873 815, 5-year)

Dr. Jeremy Burton (PI)
Critical cross feeding mechanisms of microbial communities in the gut: menaquinone production and bacterial bioenergetics
(NSERC, $149,705, 5-year)

Dr. Martin McGavin (PI)
Role and regulation of resistance-nodulation-division family efflux pumps in physiology and resistance mechanisms of Staphylococcus aureus
(NSERC, $170,000, 5-year)

Dr. Bryan Heit (PI)
Cages, corrals and vesicular trafficking shape the diffusional environment of the plasma membrane
(NSERC, $200,000, 5-year)

Dr. David Heinrichs (PI)
Interactions between coagulase -negative staphylococci and the host
(NSERC, $240,000, 5-year)

Dr. Rodney DeKoter (PI)
Biological role of the lineage-determining transcription factor Spi-C in B cells
(NSERC, $240,000, 5-year)

Dr. Lakshman Gunaratnam (PI)
KIM-1-mediated Suppression of Renal Cell Carcinoma
(Kidney Foundation, $100,000, 2-year)

Dr. John McCormick (PI)
Multimodal Microplate Reader for Research in Microbiology and Immunology
(NSERC RTI, $149,160, 1-year)

Dr. John Ronald (PI)
Immun-oncology
(Western Research IDI, $100,000, 2-year)


DEPARTMENT PUBLICATIONS 2


DEPARTMENT PUBLICATIONS 3


We need your help!
The Microbiology & Immunology Newsletter is a community initiative brought on by the students in the MNI Department. We need community support to be maintained – please email mniuwonewsletter@gmail.com with any updates that you would like to have featured in the next newsletter. The MNI UWO newsletter will be published every semester. A call will be sent out to students and faculty a couple weeks before the newsletter is published as a reminder.