

A background image of purple lavender flowers in bloom, with some in sharp focus and others blurred in the background.

SUMMER 2026 NEWSLETTER

PHYSIOLOGY and PHARMACOLOGY

Message from the Chair

Welcome to Summer and the Start of a New Academic Year

The past year has been a busy and rewarding one for our department. Highlights included the successful IQAP reviews of both our undergraduate and graduate programs, recognition of Physiology and Pharmacology through the Schulich Awards of Excellence, and the celebration of our graduating students at both the undergraduate and graduate convocations.

These accomplishments reflect the dedication, collegiality, and shared commitment that define our department. The strong sense of community and pride within Physiology and Pharmacology continues to drive our success and create an exceptional academic environment. Thank you to our faculty, staff, and students who consistently go above and beyond to make PhysPharm such an outstanding academic home. As we settle into the warmth of summer—and perhaps keep a close eye on the World Cup standings—I encourage everyone to take some time to rest, recharge, and enjoy a well-deserved break. I hope the coming months provide opportunities to unwind, reconnect with family and friends, and return refreshed for the year ahead.

As always, my door is open for any comments, questions, or feedback.

Cheryle

This issue:

Welcome
Congratulations
In Memoriam

Committee Updates:

Undergraduate
Research
Graduate Student
Council
Social

Frank Beier
Scholarship

Upcoming Events:

Special Seminar hosted
by Dr. Grol:
Mon, July 13

Department Meeting
Mon, September 21



WELCOME

BIANCA R. BALTARETU – Post Doctoral Associate with Dr. Andrew Pruszyński

KIM-ANH DANG – Research Technician with Dr. Rommel Tirona

GARIMA GUPTA – Research Technician with Dr. Adrian Owen

CONGRATULATIONS

To graduate students for the completion of their degrees:

ERMINA HADZIC – PhD (Frank Beier/Cheryle Séguin)

CHANGSHENG (Jay) DING – MSc (Qingping Feng)

KATHLEEN GLAVIN – MSc (Richard Kim)

SIDDIQUA SHAHNAZ – MSc (John McGuire)

Congrats to CGRS scholarship winner:

GAVIN ZHANG – MSc (Emily Day)

SCHULICH AWARD PHOTOS



Drs. Anita Woods (Schulich Excellence in Education, Distinguished Leader) and Andrew Pruszyński (Schulich Researcher of the Year) with Dean Yoo. Used with permission.



Dr. Lakshman Gunaratnam has been re-appointed as the Dr. Robert Zong Chair in Translational Transplant Research





A NEW CANADIAN, EH

Baur Negmetzhanov is now officially a Canadian citizen!
Congratulations Baur!



IN MEMORIAM

It is with sadness that we share the news of the passing of Dr. Njanor Narayanan, Professor Emeritus on June 25th. Dr. Narayanan, affectionately known as “NN” by his colleagues, retired in 2014 after 29 years of dedicated service as a researcher, educator, and mentor in the Department.



[LINK](#) TO OBITUARY





CONVOCAATION RECEPTION

On June 9th, the PhysPharm Department hosted a Convocation Reception. It was a lovely event for faculty, staff, students and their families.





Undergraduate Studies Update

We want to congratulate all our graduates who received their degrees on June 9th. It was wonderful to see so many at our department's celebration that morning and to meet family and friends! A special congratulations to our award recipients:

Gold Medal in a Major in Pharmacology: Cassandra Makris

Gold Medal in a Major in Physiology: Andrei Goga

Hugh B. Anderson Award in Physiology: Rayan Farahvash

Gold Medal in an Honours Specialization in Physiology and Pharmacology: Rares Sava

J.A.F Stevenson Medal in Honours Specialization in Physiology: Sandra Xu

Governor General's Silver Medal: Sandra Xu

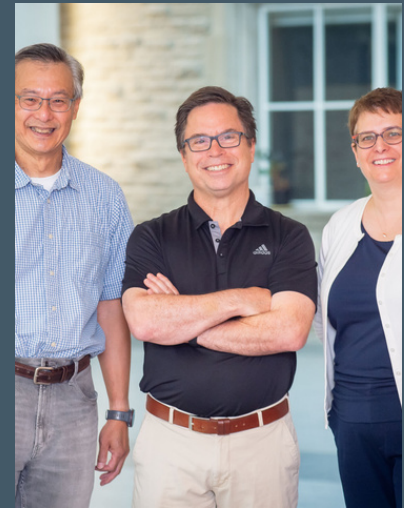


Dr. Beye and Rayan Farahvash



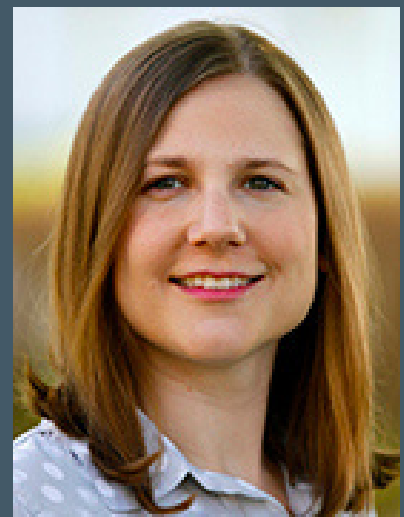
Dr. Beye and Andrei Goga

IN THE NEWS



Dr. Chris Pin was in Western News regarding a collaboration that studies the effects of radiation on astronauts during space missions

[LINK TO ARTICLE](#)



Dr. Nicole Campbell was featured in Inside Western discussing how to build confidence in students

[LINK TO ARTICLE](#)



Dr. Beye and Rares Sava



Dr. Urquhart and Sandra Xu

Research Committee Update

Please save the date for our Research Day on November 2nd, 2026. Dr. Lotte Bjerre Knudsen will deliver the 2026 Stevenson lecture. Dr. Knudsen was the lead on development of several transformative GLP-1 drugs like Liraglutide and Semaglutide (Ozempic). She has received various prominent awards including the 2024 Lasker-DeBakey Clinical Medicine Research Award and the 2025 Breakthrough Prize in life sciences. You can read more about Dr. Knudsen's contributions here: [LINK](#)

Graduate Student Council Update

Thank you to everyone who attended our Industry Q&A and Paint event! We look forward to hosting more events later in the summer!

During our June meeting, we held our elections for our executive positions. Listed below is the new PPGSC executive committee for 2026-2028:

Chair – Nouran Al-Banaa
 Vice-Chair – Loredana Cirillo
 Secretary – Jonathan Nguyen
 Congratulations to you all!

Elections will be held in September for remaining PPGSC positions, we encourage you all to join!



Dr. Nica Borrådile was featured on CTV London, sharing details about London Health Research Day [LINK TO ARTICLE](#)

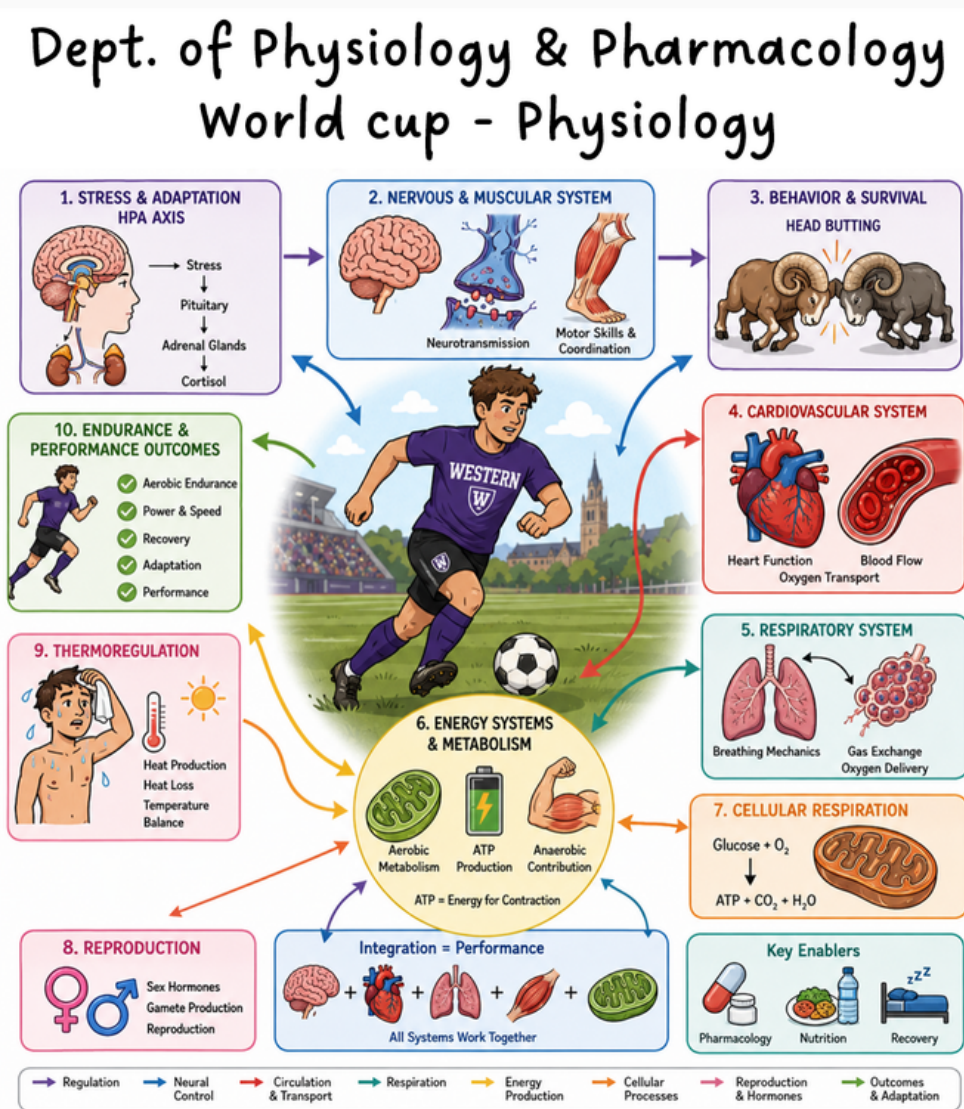




Social Committee Update

The social committee is open for suggestions for summer activities. We are also hoping to recruit a few new members for the upcoming year. In the meantime, many members of the department have joined the world cup soccer pool and provided their opinion on which physiological process is important in world cup soccer. The image below represents a ChatGPT representation of those processes.

THE DOG DAYS OF SUMMER





FRANK BEIER GRADUATE OPPORTUNITY SCHOLARSHIP

The Department of Physiology and Pharmacology is dedicated to increasing representation of racialized and marginalized groups in the broad fields of Physiology and Pharmacology through equitable and inclusive practices. We aim to recruit and retain a diverse representation of outstanding students who will contribute toward research excellence in Physiology and Pharmacology. The goal of the Frank Beier Graduate Opportunity Scholarship is to attract Canada's most promising graduate students. Preference will be given to students who are Black, Indigenous (First Nations, Inuit, and Métis), 2SLGBTQIA+ and persons living with a disability.

Number of awards: 1 award per year

Value of award: \$10,000

Duration: 1 year

Start date: typically, at the start of the student's first academic term

For more information, please click this [LINK](#).

Upcoming Seminars

The Department of Physiology and Pharmacology



Special Seminar hosted by Dr. Matt Grol in MSB 282

Date: Monday, July 13

Time: 11:00 am - 12:00 pm

Speaker: Kelsey H. Collins

University of California, San Francisco

"The role of fat in osteoarthritis"

We love celebrating our accomplishments, in and out of the lab.
Please share your stories, pictures and newsworthy items for
upcoming editions! Send emails to jjacob62@uwo.ca.