



# The Department of Surgery



## Western Surgery

### Message from the Chair/Chief

As the 2010-11 academic year draws to a close, we can look back proudly at our many accomplishments—while looking forward to the exciting developments of 2011-12. This newsletter highlights our expanding relationship with the West China Hospital; a legacy gift to the Department; and many more highlights of appointments and success in research.

2010-11 has also been a time of change in the leadership at the Medical School and our Hospital partners. I have been pleased to work closely with Dean Strong, Ms. Adamson, and Dr. Kernaghan as we strengthen the relationship between our shared strategic priorities in teaching, research, and education.

Looking forward to 2011-12, there will be growth in the Department on a number of horizons. We will be welcoming new surgeons; continuing to strengthen our medical education initiatives; working closely with our Development colleagues on fundraising priorities; and broadening our research base. Our enterprise is complex and impactful—and we could not make such a difference without every member’s dedicated contributions. For this, I thank you.

All the best for a safe and happy summer.

Sincerely,

John D. Denstedt, MD, FRCSC, FACS  
Richard Ivey Professor & Chair/Chief, Department of Surgery



Dr. John Denstedt  
Richard Ivey Professor and  
Chair/Chief

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Photo: Dr. John Denstedt (front row centre), Mr. John Parker (front row right), Industry Roundtable Participants

## Canadian Surgical Technologies & Advanced Research News

### Roundtable Expands to Partner with China

With a growing number of members in attendance each meeting, the semi-annual Canadian Surgical Technologies & Advanced Research (CSTAR) Industry Roundtable boasted 150 participants. Organizing representatives from 35 companies, the session has recently expanded to include academia and industry professionals from both Canada and China. This collaborative event was held at the convention centre in Cheng Du, garnering national media attention across China.

Addressing items including international property protection, regulation, reimbursement, and cultural considerations, members discussed recent developments and future prospects from a variety of perspectives. CSTAR representatives John Parker, Dr. Tom Forbes, and Dr. Doug Ross were in attendance, as well as Dr. John Denstedt serving as Co-Chair.

### West China Hospital Receives American College of Surgeons Accreditation

In January 2011, the American College of Surgeons officially announced that the West China Hospital was successful in its accreditation bid, making it the first centre in all of Asia to achieve this designation.

The initial process began with the help of CSTAR, when representatives from West China Hospital and

its clinical skills training centre approached CSTAR for assistance. With CSTAR having recently achieved ACS accreditation, their thorough background about the process was an asset in helping the representatives from China with their application.

On a two-day trip to West China Hospital, the application for accreditation was assessed by leading international experts from the American College of Surgeons. "This involved a facilitation of interpretation of accreditation criteria review and editing," says John Parker, Director of CSTAR.

Overcoming challenges including a language barrier and understanding the specific details of the application, CSTAR is proud to welcome West China to this network.

### Dr. John Denstedt Leads Endourology Course at West China Hospital

Dr. John Denstedt led 70 participants in a course in endourology at the West China Hospital March 12-13, 2011. "CSTAR laid the groundwork for this course to happen," Dr. Denstedt said. "It was an outstanding example of collaboration with our Chinese counterparts."

Urologists came from throughout China and included many Department Chairs. Dr. Denstedt added, "The urology and medical school leadership at the West China Hospital were very pleased with the out-



come. It puts UWO and London Health Sciences Centre on the map in China.”

## Two World's Firsts in Cardiac Surgery

On November 3<sup>rd</sup> 2010, LHSC celebrated as the cardiac surgery team led by Drs. Kiaii and Guo preformed the world's first successful aortic valve surgery using the Correx AVB device.



Since the validation and training stages began last summer, CSTAR staff members have been studying the reliability and efficiency of this incredible surgical innovation. The unique device crafted by Correx Inc. of Waltham, MA has been designed to revolutionize AVB surgery by rendering the surgery almost bloodless; eliminating the need to stop the heart and put patients on a heart-lung bypass machine. As a result, this new approach is considered safer for patients and also significantly reduces their recovery time.

Training surgeons from Royal Victoria Hospital in Montreal and Foothills Medical Centre in Alberta, CSTAR has acted as the primary facility for medical professionals to learn and practice this new technique. Most recently, Drs. Kiaii and Guo have welcomed leading European heart surgeons to CSTAR, as these professionals gain an understanding of how to effectively implant the device.

On February 15, 2011, LHSC's cardiac surgery team, led by Dr. Bob Kiaii, successfully performed an emergency surgery to repair a hole in a patient's heart caused by a pacemaker complication using the DaVinci robot. Normally, this type of surgery would have required open chest surgery. With the patient's chest closed, and using the robot on the beating heart, Dr. Kiaii placed a suture around the hole where the pacemaker lead had perforated through the wall of the heart. Next, the cardiology team pulled the pacemaker lead back into place while the surgery team closed the hole. This minimally invasive approach resulted in no bleeding, no complications and left the patient with only three small keyhole incisions. The surgery team was able to anchor the same pacemaker lead to a new position. After a two-day stay at the hospital, the patient went home. She has recuperated and is doing well. (*LHSC Communications*)

## Appointments

### Dr. Fawaz Siddiqi Division of Orthopaedic Surgery

We are pleased to welcome Dr. Fawaz Siddiqi, Division of Neurosurgery, Department of Clinical Neurological Sciences and cross-appointee to the Department of Surgery. Dr. Siddiqi will be working closely with the orthopaedic spine surgeons at Victoria Hospital and is cross-appointed to the Division of Orthopaedic Surgery.



## Awards and Accolades

### Dr. Joseph Chin Appointed to the Order of Ontario

Dr. Joseph Chin received Ontario's highest civilian honor as one of 30 individuals named this year to the Order of Ontario. Dr. Chin was invested in a ceremony on January 27, 2011, by the Honourable David Onley, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, at Queens Park. Dr. Chin was recognized as a medical pioneer and for his outstanding leadership in the prevention and treatment of prostate surgery. Dr. Chin's group was the first in the world to perform 3D, ultrasound guided prostate Surgery. Dr. Chin has also been recognized this year as an Honourary Member of the Chinese Urological Association.



### Dr. George Athwal Awarded the American Shoulder and Elbow Society Traveling Fellowship

We are happy to congratulate Dr. George Athwal who has been awarded the American Shoulder and Elbow Society Traveling Fellowship. This opportunity will allow Dr. Athwal to visit major academic centres in various parts of Europe including the UK, France, Switzerland, Germany, and Italy to name a few.



Dr. Athwal is further commended as being the first Canadian ever to be awarded this honour. We wish the best to Dr. Athwal as he embarks on this exciting learning opportunity this coming fall 2011.

### Dr. George Athwal Wins a Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry Dean's Award of Excellence—Junior Faculty

Dr. George Athwal was awarded a Dean's Award of Excellence—Junior Faculty at a celebration event held on May 12, 2011. Dr. Athwal's impressive CV includes over 65 publications and 14 book chapters.

## Development News

### Dr. J.C. Kennedy Chair in Orthopaedic Surgery Established

Together with his team, Dr. James Roth has raised \$1.5M toward the J.C. Kennedy Chair in Orthopaedic Surgery. This Chair will allow the Division of Orthopaedic Surgery in the Department of Surgery at The University of Western Ontario to recruit and/or retain an individual of high standing in the field of Orthopaedic Surgery.

Dr. Kennedy was the first full Professor and Chair of the Division of Orthopaedic Surgery at Western. Under his leadership, the post-graduate training program in orthopaedics began in 1960 and quickly grew into one of the premiere training programs in Canada.

Dr. Kennedy was recognized for his contributions to research and his commitment to the field of sports medicine by being inducted as the first Canadian President of the American Orthopaedic Society for Sport Medicine in 1979, an honor which was truly unique. He also had been President of the Canadian Orthopaedic Association and was held in high regard amongst his orthopaedic peers in Canada. His expertise in Sports Medicine was recognized by the Federal Government as he participated in the establishment of a template and prototype for medical care with our national and international athletic teams. He served as the Orthopaedic Consultant for the Canadian Olympic Team in Munich in 1972.

We are profoundly grateful to Dr. Roth and all the members of the Division of Orthopaedic Surgery for their leadership, dedication, and generosity in establishing this Chair.



Front row, from left, Graham King, Kevin Gurr, Bob Bourne, Jim Roth, Steve MacDonald and Ken Faber; second row, from left, Deb Bartley, Marie-Eve LeBel, Darren Drosdowech, Rich McCalden, Kevin Willets, Dave Sanders, Ruby Grewal and Stew Bailey; back row, from left, Bob Giffin, Mark MacLeod, Doug Naudie, Tim Carey, Jim McAuley, George Athwal, Jamie Howard, Abdel Lawendy, Chris Bailey, Dave Chess and Bob Litchfield. *(Photo courtesy of UWO Communications)*

## Awards and Accolades (continued from page 3)

He is an active member of the Hand and Upper Limb Centre's Bioengineering Research Laboratory and has taken on a leadership role in orthopaedic surgical education specifically focusing on disorders of the shoulder and elbow. Congratulations to Dr. Athwal on this award recognizing his outstanding performance and achievements as a junior faculty member in the Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry.

### Canadian R&D Centre for Probiotics, Lawson Health Research Institute Wins a Dean's Award of Excellence—Team

The Canadian Research and Development Centre for Probiotics, led by Dr. Gregor Reid, Professor in the Departments of Microbiology & Immunology and Surgery, was awarded a Dean's Award of Excellence—

Team. Also on the team from the Department of Surgery is Dr. Peter Cadieux, Assistant Professor in the Division of Urology. The goal of the Centre is to strengthen the foundation of probiotic research and development in Canada and become recognized as a leader in the field.

### Dr. Jamie Howard Awarded the British Hip Society Travelling Fellowship

Dr. Jamie Howard has been awarded the British Hip Society Travelling Fellowship in recognition of his dedication and passion for orthopaedic surgery. This opportunity has allowed Dr. Howard to visit a



number of joint replacement centres in Great Britain this past fall. Working alongside some of the most talented orthopaedic surgeons in adult hip reconstruction, he was able to experience informal and formal interactions with hosts in a number of clinical settings.

### **Biniam Kidane wins Maclean-Mueller Prize**

We would like to extend our congratulations to Biniam Kidane, a general surgery resident who has won the Maclean-Mueller Prize for resident research from the Canadian Journal of Surgery. Initially presented in September at the Canadian Society for Vascular Surgery Meeting in Vancouver, Kidane submitted his paper entitled “Natural history of minimal aortic injury” for this award. In recognition of his achievement, Kidane’s paper will be published in the journal at a later date. “Thanks to the Division of Vascular Surgery, the Department of Surgery for supporting the research and Dr. Forbes for all his work and guidance,” says Kidane.

### **Accomplished Alumni Ken Foster: A Surgical Inspiration**

Since his residency at the Schulich School came to a close nearly two decades ago, HULC graduate Ken Foster, MD, FRCSC has been selflessly dedicating his surgical talents overseas in an effort to help underprivileged civilians in parts of Africa and the Middle East.

As a result of his benevolent practices, we are proud to announce that Dr. Foster is this year’s recipient of the Teasdale-Corti Humanitarian Award of 2011. This prestigious award recognizes the work of Canadian physicians who go above and beyond the expectations of routine practice to deliver health care and emergency medical services worldwide. As a gifted surgeon devoted to working towards the benefit of a greater good, Dr. Foster has been viewed by many as an inspiring member of the medical community and was an ideal candidate to receive this high honour.

Dr. Foster works in Afghanistan as both as a consultant surgeon in Kabul at the Wazir Akbar Khan Hospital (WAKH) as well as at the Afshar Hospital where he helps rural doctors to develop basic surgical skills through the Hope Family Medicine Training Program.



Dr. Ken Foster, FRCSC (left), demonstrates knot-tying to one of his star pupils in a basic surgical skills workshop.

## **Research News**

### **Dr. Hao Wang Receives CIHR Award**

Dr. Hao Wang has recently been awarded the CIHR operating grant for the amount of \$316,529 over four years. The research project entitled “Mechanisms of Soluble CD83 in Prevention of Antibody Mediated Rejection” has allowed Dr. Wang and his team to focus on graft rejection in kidney transplan-



tation. Dr. Wang’s diligent work in this area aims to determine the mechanisms of a novel immunoregulatory protein in the prevention of Antibody Mediated Rejection (AMR) and induction of kidney graft tolerance in pre-sensitized recipients.

Holding a position as an Associate Professor in the Department of Surgery as well as a cross appointment in the Department of Pathology, Dr. Wang’s research achievements have contributed to the advancements in various surgical areas. Also filling the role as Director of the Experimental Microsurgery Program of the Multi-Organ Transplant Program, Dr. Wang has demonstrated exceptional leadership in pursuing this unique research approach.

In receiving this grant, Dr. Wang has been recognized as developing a project that will work towards prevent AMR including direct clinical applications. We congratulate Dr. Wang on this achievement and wish him luck with his future progress.

### **Spring 2011 Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry Faculty Support for Research in Education (FSRE) competition**

Congratulations to two Department of Surgery members awarded grants in the Schulich Faculty Support for Research in Education spring 2011 competition:

**Dr. Sayra Cristancho**—Computer-based vs. Expert-based Assessment for Complex Laparoscopic Surgical Tasks

**Dr. Michael Ott**—Meta-Cognition in the Operating Room”

### **Department of Surgery Internal Research Grant Awards Announced**

Dr. Graham King, Chair of the Department of Surgery Research Committee, is pleased to announce the results of the spring 2011 Internal Research Grant Competition:

**Dr. Alp Sener**—The Protective Role of Supplemental Hydrogen Sulphide in a Novel Donation after Cardiac Death Model of Renal Transplantation



**Dr. Abdel Lawendy**—Pharmacological Treatment of Limb Compartment Syndrome With a Novel CO-releasing Molecule (CORM-3), Using a Rodent Model

**Dr. Arjang Yazdani**—The Development of a Model to Measure Load Transmission in the Craniofacial Skeleton.

“The Research Committee was very pleased with number and quality of applications,” noted Dr. King. “I would like to thank the committee members for their significant efforts in reviewing the applications and providing constructive feedback to the applicants.”

### **Dr. Sayra Cristancho Awarded JP Bickell Foundation Grant**

Along with co-applicants Drs. Bob Kiaii, Adam Dubrowski, Fuad Moussa, and Bill Kapralos, Dr. Sayra Cristancho was recently awarded a grant from the JP Bickell Foundation for her project entitled, “Usability Testing of Virtual and Physical Simulation Resources for Training Off-Pump Coronary Artery Bypass Surgery.” This project aims to study surgical performance, specifically in relation to the mechanisms that surgeons utilize to create or adapt their surgical strategies to challenging situations.



Off Pump Coronary Artery Bypass (OPCAB) surgery is a strategy for revascularizing diseased coronary arteries without cardiopulmonary bypass. Despite the benefits of OPCAB, and more specifically its non-reliance on the cardiopulmonary pump, evidence has shown that it is not commonly performed in Canada.

### **Dr. Marie-Eve LeBel Successful in ADF Grant Competition**

Congratulations to Dr. Marie-Eve LeBel who was recently awarded a UWO Academic Development Fund grant for her project, “Initial Evaluation of a Physical Knee Simulator for Skills Development and Assessment in Arthroscopic Knee Surgery” in the New Research & Scholarly Initiative—Small Grants Program. The overall objective of this proposal is to develop a system for the training and assessment of the skills required for basic arthroscopic knee surgery. Her project involves two stages: improvement of a knee-shaped simulator for basic arthroscopic surgical training that has been developed by our person-



nel; and development of experiments with residents and surgeons in order to assess the effectiveness of the system.

Dr. LeBel was also recently awarded a grant from the Fowler-Kennedy Sport Medicine Clinic for her project, “Determination of Standardized Tasks for Simulator-Based Skills Development and Assessment in Arthroscopic Knee Surgery.”

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## **Education Update**

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### **Schulich Students Finish First**

The 2010 graduating class from the Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry achieved the highest ranking of all medical schools in the Medical Council of Canada Qualifying Examination. The results were for first-time takers who graduated in the same year the exam was taken (Spring 2010). Schulich was recognized as having the highest overall score in the country while ranking highest in several individual sections of the exam. Congratulations to our graduates; as well as to our faculty and staff who have contributed to this tremendous achievement.

### **Serving the Royal College**

The Department of Surgery would like to acknowledge our members who are currently serving in important roles for the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada:

**Dr. Timothy Carey**, Chair, Orthopaedic Surgery Subspecialty Committee

**Dr. Joseph Chin**, Chair, Urology Subspecialty Committee

**Dr. Ward Davies**, Deputy Chair, Examination Board, General Surgery

**Dr. Thomas Forbes**, Vice-Chair, Vascular Surgery Subspecialty Committee

**Dr. Richard Novick**, Chair, Examination Board, Cardiac Surgery

**Dr. Doug Ross**, Chair, Examination Board, Plastic Surgery; and Member, Evaluation Committee

### **Dr. Brian Taylor Appointed A.D. McLachlin Professor**

We are pleased to announce that Dr. Brian Taylor has been appointed as the A.D. McLachlin Professor in the Department of Surgery. A well-respected, longstanding, and valued role model and contributor to surgical education, Dr. Taylor has been recognized with ten awards for teaching at the Division, Department, and University level.



The A.D. McLachlin Professorship was established in 1991 with the generous contributions made by former trainees and colleagues of Dr. Angus McLachlin. This role was created to foster surgical education at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels and to contribute to continuing professional development in the surgical community of southwestern Ontario.

### **New Second Year Clinical Methods Curriculum a Success**

We would like to extend our thanks to everyone who participated in modified curriculum for the second year surgery clinical methods. This year the curriculum consisted of three one-week sessions. The first two sessions were structured learning: the first week was held in the Don Rix Clinical Skills centre with standardized patients; and the second week in CSTAR with seminar teaching, tours of the clinical facilities and OR, and sessions on gowning and gloving. The third week was based on the previous format of real patient interviewing. All students had same exposure to teaching in weeks one and two, however the patient experience in week three was variable.

Dr. Taylor, Associate Director of Surgical Education—UGE notes, “Initial feedback of this curriculum was very positive. Instructors found it a very stimulating experience— particularly in the Rix Centre. There is a definite need for more instructors next year.” Your dedication and support is appreciated as we continue to work towards improving our program and providing medical students with the best exposure to surgery possible.

## **Remembering**

### **Dr. Murray Girotti**

Since the recent passing of a dear friend and colleague, the memory of Dr. Murray Girotti lives on as we honour his work as a dedicated and compassionate surgeon.

Dr. Girotti was first welcomed to the London community many years ago, after graduating from Queen’s University in 1989. Taking his place as Chief of Surgery at Victoria Hospital and as a professor at the University of Western Ontario, Dr. Girotti taught and inspired many students through not only his outstanding medical expertise, but also by demonstrating a sincere passion for the health and well being of surgical patients.

“Dr. Girotti was a fantastic teacher. Dr. Girotti’s insightful comments, entertaining anecdotes and un-



wavering reassurance welcomed us into the profession of medicine and provided much needed support during a time of anxiety and uncertainty for many newly matriculated medical students,” said Jeff Landreville, one of Dr. Girotti’s former students.

Serving the London Health Sciences Centre for over 20 years, Dr. Girotti filled various roles including Senior Medical Advisor, Vice President of Medical Affairs, and Medical Director for the Trauma Centre Network. A pioneer of laparoscopic surgery, Dr. Girotti was a devoted trauma surgeon who dedicated his knowledge of medical practice, talented teaching methods, and goodwill gestures above and beyond the call of average surgical duties.

As students, colleagues, patients, friends, and family of Dr. Girotti, we remember his work, his passion, his kindness, and the imprint he has left on our hearts.

~Contributed by Dr. Ward Davies

### **Dr. John Coles**

As a brilliant surgeon, loving husband and father, and dedicated member of the LHSC, we remember Dr. Coles since his recent passing this past December.

With a keen passion for medicine throughout his career, Dr. Coles developed many of his surgical talents as technology evolved over the years. Making significant advances in thoracic, vascular, and cardiac surgery at UWO, Dr. Coles was an ambitious surgeon to say the least. In the early days of complex coronary bypasses, Dr. Coles was one of the first-generation cardiac surgeons, developing his methods without the aid of clinical trials, training courses, textbooks, or even regular access to the lab. Eager to learn new procedures and pass his knowledge on to his team and students, Dr. Coles exercised incredible technical skill, stamina, and personality to persist, constantly returning to the OR to modify and perfect his efforts.

In his later years, Dr. Coles became known for his intellect and devilishly charming personality. With a fondness for fast cars and medicine, he devoted countless hours to the LHSC furthering his practice techniques and building relationships with fellow staff members.

Even after retiring, Dr. Coles established and worked at walk-in clinics in London, his love for medicine continually pursued. We will forever miss our friend and colleague Dr. Coles, who gave so much with his time at the LHSC.

~Contributed by Dr. Martin Goldbach



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## STAR NEWS

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The UWO Standard CV can now be limited by date range. Please go to the reports page and select dates, where required.

The Department of Surgery is pleased to announce our new STAR Superuser is Melissa Serrano. Please contact her at [Melissa.Serrano@sjhc.london.on.ca](mailto:Melissa.Serrano@sjhc.london.on.ca) or ext. 34776. Please note that Melissa's hours are 8:30—4:00 Tuesdays and Wednesdays; and 8:30-3:00 on Thursday.

**Project Website:** <http://www.star.schulich.uwo.ca/>

**Login to Acuity:** <https://uwo.activityreporter.ca/>

"When did you last update your STAR Records?"

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The Department of Surgery

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All members of the Department are invited to submit story ideas, articles, photos, or comments for the spring issue. Please send them to: **[Dinah.Frank@lhsc.on.ca](mailto:Dinah.Frank@lhsc.on.ca)**, or call ext. 32361

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