

# Western Urology

2023

## *From the Chair: Dr. Alp Sener*



Dear friends and colleagues,

Wow, what a year this has been!! The achievements and successes of our residents, fellows and faculty highlighted in this newsletter continue to distinguish our Division as a premiere program across all aspects of education, clinical excellence, and academic productivity. I could not be more proud to be part of this group. We are elated to have announced and celebrated two new Chair positions to support our Divisional vision. The first of these is the Keith and Leanne Lavergne Chair in Urology which will not only support the role of the Chair/Chief of the Division but will also create a sustainable research infrastructure for the entire Division which will benefit our faculty, residents and fellows achieve their academic goals. The second is the fully endowed Chin-Hardie Chair in Urologic Oncology, which will be instrumental in the recruitment and ongoing research program of a world class urologic-oncologist. Both of these exceptional initiatives will help lay the foundation for a stellar trajectory of excellence, growth, sustainability and success of our Division for years to come.

Divisional research productivity has been the best it has ever been with our faculty being awarded numerous highly competitive provincial and national grants, high-profile awards. We have published an outstanding 113 peer-reviewed original works and have been awarded a staggering \$7.82 million dollars of new grant funding over the past year...wow!! This performance underscores our strong commitment to academic excellence in education and research that is recognized not only nationally but internationally.

Our residency training program, led by Dr. Wang and Dr. Campbell, has continued to demonstrate excellence under their leadership with many of our residents demonstrating exceptionally high scores on their AUA Inservice examinations. Their vision to create a balanced learning environment has led to significant improvement in resident wellness and have pushed ahead of other programs simulation based surgical training. This has led to us matching our top-ranked applicants whom we are all looking forward to working with over the next five years. Our fellowships spanning SJHC and LHSC continue to be recognized globally for their highest caliber training. I would like to welcome our incoming fellows Dr. Tariq Alotaibi (Saudi Arabia) in endourology, Dr. Pocharapong Jenjitranant (Thailand) in uro-oncology, Dr. Satyanarayana Ravula (India) in pediatric urology, Dr. Catherine McMartin (Canada) in andrology/reconstruction and Dr. Martin Igbokwe (Nigeria) in kidney/pancreas transplantation--it is a pleasure to have you all join our group.

On behalf of the Division, I would like to thank our graduating residents Dr. Noah Stern, Dr. Jeremy Cepek and Dr. Michael Pignanelli for their hard-work and commitment to our patients and to our program. We wish you all a very bright future in your careers and look forward to hearing about your accomplishments in years to come. Thank you as always to Kim Nitz, our Divisional Administrator, who has kept the ship afloat despite the ever-changing rules, schedules, and timelines—as always, you have been integral to our success.

I hope that you all enjoy reading this year's newsletter, and for those alumni who were not able to join us this year for research day, please reach out anytime, I look forward to hearing from you.

## *Keith and Leanne Lavergne and Family Chair in Urology*



On September 20, 2022, we were very excited to announce and to celebrate the Keith and Leanne Lavergne and Family Chair in Urology.

I first met Keith and Leanne when Keith came in to receive a kidney transplant from his cousin David several years ago. After his transplant, Keith became interested in my research and we discussed the importance of fundamental sciences research and its impact on patient care. Keith immediately understood the challenges of obtaining sustainable funding, especially for moonshot projects. This original relationship enabled us to present a vision where their incredibly generous donation could make a monumental and long-lasting impact on urological research, on education and on patient-care. This concept led to the creation of the Keith and Leanne Lavergne and Family Chair in Urology.

Our Division is already exceptionally strong with a deep-rooted history of leadership, innovation and research productivity and have demonstrated ourselves as true pioneers in surgical education and training. Our mission, however, is to become even better through innovation, not only in academics and clinical care but also in wellness and in education.

It is both humbling and an honor to be the first holder of the Lavergne Chair. As the inaugural Lavergne Chair, I will strive to create an environment that allows our faculty, residents, and fellows to successfully achieve their academic career goals. This Chair will enable us to work together to achieve these pursuits. With the help of these funds, our faculty will carry out cutting edge research, including moonshot projects in areas of adult and pediatric urology across the spectrum of oncology, endourology, minimally invasive surgery and robotics, andrology, functional urology and reconstruction, surgical education, and transplantation. These types of moonshot projects, which may not otherwise be feasible, will foster new collaborations both locally and nationally which will then translate to larger national and international grants. In addition, this funding will help create a sustainable research infrastructure that will help grow and strengthen the ongoing research in our Division.

The Chair will allow us to also strengthen the impact that our Division has on the future of urology around the world by funding research endeavors of our fellows and residents who come to us for training from all over Canada and the world. Our residents and fellows who receive these seed grants will be able to go back home and carry the Lavergne name/award with them throughout their careers and be proud of the work that was made possible at Western, by this generous gift. I foresee this Chair facilitating the recruitment of a surgeon scientist or perhaps fundamental scientist to the Division to help push us into areas of research we have not yet explored. I would also like to ensure that we provide avenues to mold the future leaders of our Division with faculty development initiatives and programs that we support with this gift.

Our Division is already a powerhouse in research, surgical education and patient care, but I believe that the Lavergne Chair will strengthen that position and take us from excellent to exceptional! I am very excited about the opportunities this gift will create within our Division as well as that of the monumental downstream impact of this gift on the urologic care of patients in our region as we build upon our strengths and establish a stronger path forward.

On behalf of the entire Division of Urology, I would like to express our deepest gratitude to the entire Lavergne Family. We take this with an extreme sense of excitement, as well as a sense of duty and trust to ensure that we are exceptional stewards of this gift. I feel a massive sense of hope of what incredible things will be achieved not only by the current faculty, residents, and fellows, but also by the future urologists of our Division.

*Alp Sener*

## *Chin-Hardie Chair in Urologic Oncology*

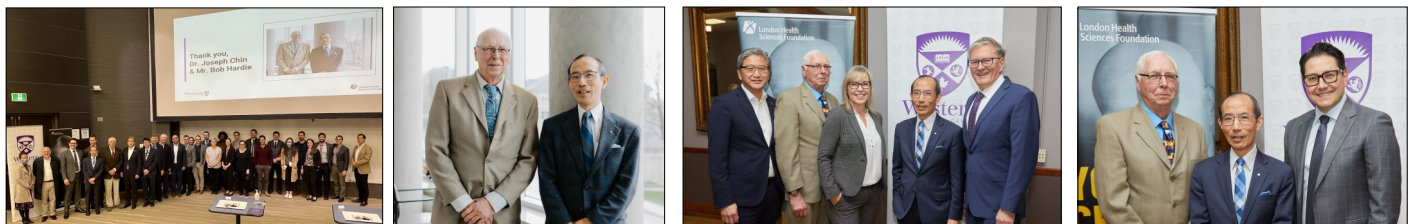
We recently celebrated the creation of the Chin-Hardie Chair in Urologic Oncology facilitated by two leaders who have truly left their mark on patient care and on clinical research in the field of urologic oncology. Through their generosity, Dr. Joseph Chin and Mr. Bob Hardie have enabled us to create the Chin-Hardie Chair in Urologic Oncology. This Chair will allow us to recruit exceptional individuals to provide state of the art cancer care for patients in our region and to carry out cutting edge translational oncological research.

Dr. Chin has devoted 43 years to his profession and is one of the most highly regarded urologic oncologists in the world. Over his career at Western, his research has brought in more than \$22 million dollars of funding to our institution. During his tenure, he has published over 400 peer reviewed papers and he has led the field of prostate cancer treatment in minimally invasive robotic surgery and in focal therapies. He has trained countless residents and fellows, who have gone on to become leaders in Urology across Canada and the world. He has been Program Director and Chair of our Division, President of the CUA and NE AUA. These prestigious roles not only highlight his innate value to the national and international Urology community but also of his willingness to serve his colleagues and profession.

Mr. Hardie's name is well recognized throughout LHSC – both as a clinical researcher and long-time donor. During his career at LHSC he worked initially with the orthopedics team and then joined Dr. Chin and his research team in 1996 as a research assistant and later as a donor. After a long career in prostate cancer research within the Division of Urology, he then retired from Western to pursue philanthropic interests with his Foundation. As a clinical researcher, Mr. Hardie saw first-hand the toll cancer takes on the patient and their family. Knowing he could make a difference, not just in the lab, but through his own charitable giving, he founded the Hardie Family Foundation. Mr. Hardie, and his Foundation have left a long-lasting mark in our community on cancer research, treatment, and care – for patients as well as for their families. In fact, Mr. Hardie has helped countless individuals diagnosed with cancer to access life-changing resources. His passion and altruism are truly inspiring!

The Chin-Hardie Chair will undoubtedly further strengthen Western Urology's stronghold in maintaining its ranking as a premiere oncology program both nationally and internationally. On behalf of the entire Division of Urology, I would like to thank Dr. Chin and Mr. Hardie for their generous flagship donations and would like to acknowledge all the many other local donors whose collective contributions have facilitated the creation of the Chin-Hardie Chair in Urologic Oncology. The future of urological oncology at Western will continue to shine bright!

*Alp Sener*







AUA Program Kuwait



National Meeting Argentina



AUA Program—Spain

## My Experience as American Urological Association Secretary

As I watched some of the coverage of the visit of US President Joe Biden to the Canadian Parliament in Ottawa recently, it reminded me of the close relationship and bond between Canada and the United States. As a resident trainee in Urology at Western University in the late 1980's one of my main mentors, Dr. Jack Sales, advised me to “stick with the Americans”. Over the decades following, I took him up on this advice and participated as much as possible in activities of the Northeastern Section of the AUA and in the national association. I attended my first AUA meeting in 1987 and have been to every annual meeting since. Like anyone from outside the USA, I was immediately impressed with the scope of the meeting and experiences I was able to be a part of at the AUA meeting.

The American Urological Association is one of the world's longest established urology associations, having been founded in 1902. Although Canadians are full active members of the AUA, no Canadian had been Secretary of the organization previous to me assuming the role. As with most organized medical groups, the Secretary position is the pivotal role and, in the case of the AUA, includes prime responsibility for organizing the annual meeting, leading the international initiatives, participating in all aspects of governance and as the editor of AUA News. Throughout my career, I have frankly not had my eye set on particular roles or responsibilities but rather have just taken life as it comes my way and I must say it has brought me many interesting opportunities and positions in medical leadership. I was never thinking about being the Secretary of the world's largest urology organization but after a term on the Board of the AUA, several of the US physicians including past AUA Presidents and Board members encouraged me to apply -- so I did. And in October 2017, I began an 18 month term as Secretary Elect followed by 4 years in the role of AUA Secretary.

I can easily summarize by saying this has been a great thing to do. It was a chance to make a difference and contribute to the American Urological Association and, in fact, urology globally. It is a very big job but interesting and a challenge in so many ways. Of course there were some unanticipated challenges. The Covid pandemic, for example, required cancelling and converting to virtual within a few weeks, two of the AUA annual meetings I was responsible for. I will always be able to say that I was the only AUA Secretary {let's hope the only} to put together six annual meetings in four years. Certainly one of the best aspects of the role has been working with the great and dedicated AUA staff including the CEO, Mike Sheppard, and many others. I have learned a lot and have always admired the American ability to get things done, start and end meetings on time, make decisions and act on those decisions with determination. A most rewarding component of the role was leading the international efforts of the organization. One of the features of the AUA that attracted me to apply for the job was that it is a group with a global focus and aspirations. Over a third of the twenty five thousand members are from outside the US in over 100 countries. The AUA conducts an educational program somewhere in the world almost every other week throughout the year. I represented the AUA at national meetings throughout the world on at least 35 occasions during my tenure and visited 22 countries — some of these several times. Some representative photos are enclosed. I experienced many different cultures, met wonderful people who will now be lifelong friends and I think was able to contribute positively to the organizational goals worldwide. Back home I interacted and worked closely with many great

people on the AUA Board, committees and with the Assistant Secretaries during my term {Sam Chang, Angie Smith, Aseem Shukla and Jorge Gutierrez}. There were also hidden gems in the role which I had not anticipated such as transforming AUA News from a quiet publication into a dynamic interesting venue translated into multiple languages. Once again this could only have been done with the assistance and guidance of the great staff at AUA Publications. Of everything though, perhaps the best was the influential role this position holds for promoting others and getting people involved. Promoting young and diverse individuals to get engaged in the many activities AUA has to offer was a wonderful opportunity.

Finally, I would like to thank the residents, fellows and those colleagues in London who backed me up at home. As a busy surgeon who still sees patients and operates regularly—I could not have done this task without your support. And a special thanks to my wife Carolyn and daughters Emily and Ellen who throughout my career have supported me unquestionably as I spent many evenings and weekends at the computer or overseas at meetings. As I transition the AUA Secretary role to Dr. David Penson I now look forward to whatever life next brings my way.

*John Denstedt*



AUA Program—Kuwait



Operating in India



Karnak Luxor Egypt


  
[DASH4DAD.CA](https://www.dash4dad.ca)

  
**Father's Day, June 18, 2023 | Springbank Gardens**



Dash 4 Dad is BACK for it's 25th Anniversary!

DID YOU KNOW THAT 1 IN 9 CANADIAN MEN ARE DIAGNOSED WITH PROSTATE CANCER? These are dads, husbands, sons, brothers or uncles who receive this frightening diagnosis on a daily basis in Canada.

Take part in this fun and inspiring event in person or virtually on Sunday, June 18, 2023 and help raise much-needed funds for prostate cancer research at London Health Sciences Centre.

**Date:** In person or virtually on Sunday, June 18, 2023 **Location:** Springbank Gardens or your neighborhood!

**For more information and to register as an individual or a team, visit [lhf.ca/dash4dad](https://lhf.ca/dash4dad)**  
 Register by April 30th to take advantage of the discounted early-bird pricing



## *From the Program Directors*



Dear friends,

As I write this, nearing the end of my first year as Program Director, I am almost relieved at how normal it felt. I think first and foremost, I wanted to thank Dr. Jeffrey Campbell and Kimberly Nitz for sharing this journey with me, the faculty (both within London and in the community) for their support and the residents for their tolerance and understanding.

This year, with the help of faculty and residents, our program has transitioned to a night-float on-call system. An approach that we adapted during the pandemic, which helped protect our resident's health and, more importantly, their wellness. This initiative has been very well received, and has been an important selling point for potential candidates to our program.

As a testimony to the efforts of staff and the resilience of our PGY5s, Noah, Michael and Jeremy have all successfully passed their Royal College Exams; our first CBME (competency-based medical education) cohort. I think it will be an understatement to say that we, as a program, are proud of them. This group were our frontline at the start of this pandemic, and I will always be thankful for their sense of duty, conscientiousness and, maybe cliché, but bravery in front of so much uncertainty. We wish them well in their fellowships: Noah will be doing a reconstruction fellowship in Toronto, Jeremy a community urology fellowship in Mississauga and Michael an andrology fellowship in Florida.

This year also marked a fruitful collaboration with the Department of Anatomy. Again, I would like to thank the faculty and residents for their understanding and tolerance with this. This collaboration has allowed us to fully integrate anatomy labs into our current curriculum, giving our residents the chance to safely learn 'surgical' anatomy, practice their skills, reinforce their knowledge of urological procedures, construct their intraoperative decision-making skills and, for our seniors, a chance to hone their teaching and supervisory skills.

Each year that passes, we see a whole new generation of learners who have grown up more and more with the concept of active learning. The days of sitting in lectures, listening to the speaker and making notes, may not 'jive' as well with these young, talented learners who have placed their trust in our program to make them competent, compassionate and thoughtful physicians for our society. And again, many thanks for the understanding to the faculty and the residents for bearing with us as we trial different approaches to improve our academic half day seminars with the hope to transition these to an active learning experience.

Lastly, our program would like to welcome the new additions to our residency program: Mehran, whom some of us knew as a medical student, Aurinjoy, who will join us from NOSM and McKinley, who will join us from Saskatchewan. We are all very happy to have them, teach them and continue the tradition at Western of graduating superb Urologists.

Thanks for your continued support, we are looking forward to another great year.

*Peter Wang and Jeffrey Campbell*

## 2023-2024 Urology Resident Roles

Chief Residents: B.Liu, L.Stringer  
Resident Wellness Representative: E.Afenu  
CBME Resident Lead: H.Rotz

RTC Representative: L.Stringer  
CaRMS Representatives: M.Playfair  
Bootcamp Representatives: C.MacLeod, B.Li

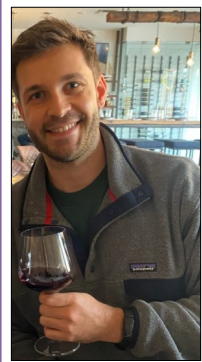






## Goodbye and Best Wishes!

As I approach the end of my time at Western Urology, I am overwhelmed with appreciation for the opportunities and experiences afforded to me over the last five years. I am grateful to have worked alongside such a talented, resilient, and supportive group of residents, staff, and surgeons, and I will treasure the memories we have shared. The knowledge and skills I have gained during my time here will undoubtedly serve me well as I embark on the next chapter of my career. I would also like to acknowledge the exceptional mentorship I have received throughout my training. From my early years as a medical student into residency, I was fortunate enough to be nurtured by exceptional surgeons who provided me with the guidance and support I needed to become a competent and confident clinician myself. To all those who have helped me along the way, I am forever grateful for your time, patience, and unwavering dedication to helping me reach my full potential. I hope to stay in touch with all of you, and I wish you all the best. Finally, I would like to express my appreciation to my wife, who has been my constant source of support throughout my residency. Her encouragement, understanding, and patience have been instrumental and I could not have achieved any of this without her love and support. I am truly grateful for her unwavering dedication to our family, and I look forward to continuing to navigate life's adventures with her by my side. Thank you all for everything. *Noah Stern*



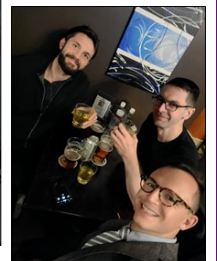
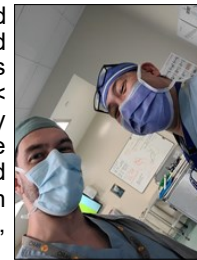
To the Western Urology Community, It is with mixed emotions that I bid farewell to this residency program. It was not always smooth, but "should be okay" prevailed.

To all the Western Urology consultants, I am deeply grateful for your unwavering dedication and patience throughout my training. Your mentorship and wisdom will be frequently called upon for the rest of my career and I look forward to being colleagues for life. To Dr. John Denstedt and Dr. Nick Power, thank you for being straight up amazing people when I needed to chat about work, career and life ideas. A special thank you to Dr. Gerald Brock and Dr. Jeff Campbell for inspiring me to take a career in Men's Health and Andrology. Dr. Campbell, I will be speaking to you frequently about "Doozies" (aka Florida mans) next year during my fellowship. To our residency program director, Dr. Peter Wang (as well as the previously outstanding Dr. Alp Sener and my good buddy Dr. Sumit Dave) the most sincere thank you for all you do/did to make my training and our program successful. To all the community urologists eager to have me on as a visiting learner: thank you for sharing some pearls and practical advice from a non-academic point of view. Another thanks to Dr. Paul Martin, Dr. Tom Deklaj and Dr. Raj Goel who all got me my initial exposure to urology early in medical school. I hope we can stay close! To all our wonderful secretaries, medical assistants, nurses and support staff who do not ever get the credit they are much deserving of: thank you we cannot do this as residents without you. To Kimberly Nitz, thank you for the past ~8 years (going back to medical school!) of your support, listening, and help keeping me organized and on track. To the fellows, thank you for sharing your expertise and having frequent laughs between OR cases. I am grateful for your advice and the friendships we have forged. I'm also glad several of the current fellows were able to attend our weekly "Thursday Tea" sessions and journal clubs! Finally, I want to thank my family, friends, all of the Sr./Jr. residents, and my co-residents for being the greatest group of people I could ask to lean on. To Jeremy Cepek and Noah Stern, you two were always solid when times were toughest, from family illness to pandemic isolation. Whatever practice lands you, I am insanely jealous as they are getting two of the most absolute hardworking, reliable beauties to add to their team. Love you guys and I will miss my brothers beyond words.

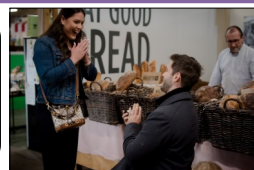
As I prepare to move on to the next chapter of my life, I look forward to staying connected. If you're reading this and find yourself around Tampa Bay in the next year or so, give me a shout! Call for the next, *Michael Pignanelli*

It has been a great pleasure and an honor to learn from such a talented, professional, and wonderful group over the last several years. The memories and lessons will last a lifetime, and I will dearly miss the many brilliant and friendly characters I have spent thousands of hours with. I will contend that this is the best group of residents this program has ever seen ( $p < 0.001$ ), and leaving London will feel like leaving behind my family. There are far too many people to thank; all of the consultants have left a unique lasting impression in my future approach to Urology and life in general, and I consider myself extremely lucky to have learned so much from Dr. Chin and Dr. Brock near the end of their careers. Finally, I cannot thank Kim Nitz enough for her tireless work in keeping this program coherent and running smoothly, something I'm sure feels like herding cats when dealing with all these wacky residents.

I will miss you all! *Jeremy Cepek*



## What's New with the Residents?



Congratulations to Mike Pignanelli and his fiancée Elizabeth Rooney!!

Mike popped the question on March 25, 2023, and she said "yes"!





### *Aurinjoy Gupta*

Hometown: Thunder Bay, ON  
 Undergrad: Medical Sciences minoring in Computer Science at Dalhousie University  
 MD: NOSM U.



I am thrilled to be joining the Urology team at Western! It is an honour to be joining a program with so many excellent residents and staff, and I look forward to the next five years. Outside of medicine, I enjoy playing violin and piano, rock climbing, and spending time with family and friends.

### *Mehran Nejad Mansouri*

Hometown: Tehran, Iran  
 Undergrad: York University  
 MD: Western University



I am thrilled to continue my journey at Western Urology, and I look forward to working with and learning from the phenomenal team of residents, fellows, and staff. Outside of medicine, I am an avid FIFA and spike ball player.

## Getting to know the PGY1s:

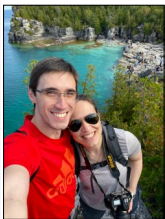
### *McKinley Smith*

Hometown: Pike Lake, Saskatchewan  
 Undergrad: University of Saskatchewan  
 MD: University of Saskatchewan



It is an honour to be joining the Western Urology team. I am thrilled to be working with and learning from this esteemed and welcoming group. The mix of incredible people, technology, and rewarding patient outcomes makes me delighted to be a part of this field. In my free time, you will likely find me at the gym, playing disc golf, or rock climbing. I am excited to get to know the London community better and hear Dr. Wang's famous OR playlist.

## Follow the Fellows



I can remember clearly the first day I walked into St. Joseph's Hospital for my 6-month Endourology fellowship. Four years and two fellowships later I cannot say how much I have learned during this journey, not only about Urology but also about teamwork, collaboration and friendship. It was a pleasure working with all the consultants, residents and hospital staff. I could not thank Dr. Welk and Dr. Campbell enough for taking me as a fellow this year and for all of their encouragement and teaching. It is inspiring to see how much you are passionate about your practice. I will be in the London area for the next few years and I hope to see you all outside of the hospital.

### *Fernanda Gabrigna Berto*

I had the amazing opportunity to learn at this highly academic place. My mentors were not only superb in surgical techniques but very humane in their approach. I will miss the Western family now that I'm moving on the next chapter of my life. *Victor Sandoval*



It feels like yesterday when I arrived to London for the EndoUrology fellowship. Time has gone so fast and I could not be more thankful for all the amazing teachings, experiences and knowledge I gained from everybody throughout this past 2 years. I'll be forever grateful with Dr. Denstedt, Dr. Razvi, Dr. Pautler and Dr. Bjazevic for the opportunity to become part of the fellowship and to be under their tutelage. Thanks to their guidance, I have learned the necessary tools, skills and gained enough confidence to become the endourologist I'm today. The professional and life mentorship was exceptional, it's been an incredible journey. It was a pleasure working with the residents and rest of the staff, I hope I was helpful. My wife and I enjoyed our time in London and had the opportunity to gain forever friends and special anecdotes. London will always have a special place in our lives. Our next chapter is moving to Veracruz, Mexico; where we will settle down and I will start my urology practice. Words cannot express the impact this program had on me but I can say: "Muchas gracias, los extrañaré". *Eduardo Gonzalez Cuenca*

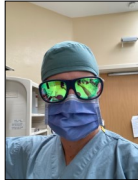


I hope everyone at Western urology is well. I am doing great, thanks to my training in London. Nuseyba, my wife, and I have been blessed lately with our son Chaker! (in English his name means grateful) He is 6 months old now. He and his mom are doing great. Hopefully I will be able to meet Western Urology members next year or at another occasion. Best regards to all my bosses in London. I bring their instructions and teachings to each case I do. My patients and I owe them a great debt of gratitude.

### *Khalil Hetou (graduate update)*

## Updates from Alumni

Hello from Sarnia! Not much to report. Kids (11 & 8) are growing fast and I'm taking them on many adventures. I'm looking forward to having more residents come hang out with us in Sarnia. Best wishes to all. *Paul Martin*



Hello Everybody!

Hope you are all doing well. I have really missed my time in London. Over the past year, I have been completing a clinical fellowship at the Credit Valley Hospital (Mississauga) with a focus on robotic and advanced laparoscopic surgery. During this time, I have learned a lot about community practice and have had the opportunity to work closely with great mentors (including Western Alumnus Dr. Tom Short). On November 25, 2022, our lives changed forever as Cheryl and I welcomed Ethan and Melanie Chan into the world. There have been many sleepless nights but everyone is happy and healthy. Chloe loves being a big sister and has been growing and thriving as well. In July, Samir Sami and I will be starting our careers at Lakeridge Health in Oshawa. Under the guidance of fellow Western alumnus Dr. Tom Morton, we will be heading the urology robotics program. We are very excited for the opportunity to work together on delivering robotic surgery to the Durham region. Thanks to everyone for their continued support. Wishing you all the best and hope to cross paths soon! *Ernest Chan*

I was an endourology fellow with Dr. Denstedt in 1995-1996. I have gone on to have a career here in Toronto at the Michael Garron Hospital since that time. We have established our own clinical endo fellowship program here through UofT which includes both stone surgery and robotic surgery. We are currently in the process of graduating our 21st fellow. They have all gone on to have flourishing careers across the country. I am also the Chief of Surgery currently and an Associate Professor at the University of Toronto and have an academic interest in global health capacity building. We have primarily focused on the country of Malawi where we have tried to build capacity in urology. We have done this in collaboration with the College of Surgeons of Eastern Central and Southern Africa (COSECSA) and a fund that I started at UofT. There were no urologists in the country in 2016. There are currently two in the country and we have a pathway with our current training commitments to get to 9 by the end of 2027. I just got back from Malawi at the end of March. *Rajiv Singal*



Dr. Patrick Luke has added yet another new car to his collection!



## Division Productivity 2022 (Jan. - Dec.)

### Honors and Awards

#### Dr. Jennifer Bjazevic:

- Dean's Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program (DUROP) Award, Liu D, **Burton J, Bjazevic J**. Propensity of the gut microbiome to produce toxins and its role in kidney stone formation
- First Prize Essay Contest – Basic Science Category, Endourological Society (B. Wallace, supervised fellow)
- Dr. John Robinson Graduate Scholarship (G. Stuienberg, supervised doctoral student)
- Nominated for AUA Golden cystoscope award

#### Dr. Jeffrey Campbell:

- Best Basic Science Abstract 22nd Annual Fall Scientific Meeting of SMSNA: Intracavernous Injection of Botulinum Toxin may Improve Erectile Function in a Bilateral Cavernous Nerve Injury Animal Model. **Campbell J**, Feng K, DeYoung L, Brock G J Sex Med 2022
- Best Basic Science Abstract Issm/Smsna 2022: Exploring the Effects of Actinidin as a Novel Collagenase on Human Peyronie's Disease Cells. Feng K, Kiattiburut W, Hickling D, **Burton J, Campbell J**

- ISSM/SMSNA 2022, MAP Foundation Sexual Health Tip-ping point Honorable Mention
- **Campbell J, Pignanelli M**, Deroches D, Macdonald J (all from Western University, received an Honorable Mention for the presentation: "Implementing a Virtual Mindfulness-based Group Therapy to Improve Male Sexual Dysfunction"

#### Dr. Joseph Chin:

- Division of Urology Residents' Teaching Award, Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry
- Awarded the Schulich Dean's Award of Excellence - Lifetime Achievement! This award is given to individuals who have excelled in multiple areas throughout their career, and have a record of distinguished service to Schulich Medicine & Dentistry

#### Dr. Sumit Dave:

- Mid-Career Award for 2022 in Pediatric Urology, Asian and Indian Society of Pediatric Urology



**Dr. John Denstedt:**

- Honorary Member, Korean Urological Association, Korea, Republic Of
- Honorary Member, Japanese Urological Association, Japan
- Honorary Member, European Association of Urology
- Honorary Member, the Sociedade Brasileira de Urologia
- Honorary Member, the Moroccan Urological Association
- Current President Elect of the Endourological Society and will be President starting at the meeting in Jerusalem at the end of October 2023 - first Canadian to hold this position since the ES was founded over 40 years ago

**Dr. Melissa Huynh:**

- Surgery Clerkship Teaching Award

**Dr. Hassan Razvi:**

- World Congress of Endourology and Uro-Technology, First Prize, Basic Science Essay Contest, (Brendan Wallace, supervised Fellow)
- Best Fellow Presentation, Division of Urology Research Day, (Fernanda Gabrigna Berto, supervised Fellow), Western University

**Dr. Peter Wang:**

- Academic Merit Award Recipient – Teacher / Educator, For outstanding academic achievement. Department of Surgery, Schulich Medicine & Dentistry, Western University
- Winner, Surgical Education Node Dragon's Den Pitch competition for research grant: "Augmented Reality on Surgical Operative Autonomy and Assessment"

**Dr. Blayne Welk:**

- Academic Merit Award Recipient – Researcher / Scientist, For outstanding academic achievement. Department of Surgery, Schulich Medicine & Dentistry, Western University
- Best in Category Prize - Geriatrics / Gerontology at ICS 2022, for "The impact of prevalent overactive bladder anticholinergic use on cognitive change in adults with normal cognition, mild cognitive impairment, or dementia". International Continence Society
- BJU International America's Prize 2022, Best paper from the America's published in BJU International from July 1 2020-June 30 2021 (for Increased risk of dementia among patients with overactive bladder treated with an anticholinergic medication compared to a beta-3 agonist: a population-based cohort study). BJU International

## Grants

**Academic Medical Organization of Southwestern Ontario (AMOSO):**

- *Using DNA Methylation Profiling to Differentiate Good from Poor Prognosis Muscle-Invasive Bladder Cancer Patients.* PI: **J.Izawa**, \$36,000
- *Supporting Physicians: A Multi-Systems Investigation to Understand Burnout, Resilience, Moral Injury, and Institutional Trust.* PI: Richardson JD, Co-Investigator: **N.Power**, **A.Sener** \$299,545

**Canadian Foundation for Innovation, John R. Evans Leaders Fund:**

- *Leveraging the genital microbiome to improve health and prevent HIV,* PI: **J.Prodger**, \$234,359

**Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR):**

- *Integrated precision medicine technology and approach for optimal drug therapy for Canadians.* PI: R Kim, Co-Investigator: **E.Winguist**, \$1,995,001
- *Prostate-targeted PET/TRUS dual-modality imaging system for diagnosis and image-guided biopsy.* PI: A.Reznik, Co-Investigator: **S.Pautler**, \$738,226
- *Neovaginal health for transfeminine people: the microbiome, inflammation, and post-vaginoplasty outcomes,* PI: **J.Prodger**, \$873,815
- *Drug repositioning in a simulated ischemia-reperfusion injury model for the preservation of donor kidneys at room temperature.* PI: **R.Bhattacharjee**, Co-investigator (s): **P.Luke** \$344,250

- *The effect of sodium thiosulfate-supplemented organ preservation in porcine and human donation-after-cardiac-death renal transplantation.* PI: **A.Sener**, Co-investigator(s): GJ Dugbartey, L Gunaratnam, **P. Luke**, BL Urquhard \$795,600

**Canadian Urological Association: Early Investigator Scholarship Fund:**

- *Exploring the role of intravesical hydrogen sulfide synthesis inhibitors in a murine model of urothelial carcinoma of the bladder.* PI: **M.Huynh**. \$50,000

**Genome BC Pilot Innovation Fund:**

- *Breaking the blood group barrier for kidney transplantations.* Co-PI: P.Rahfield, **A.Sener**, \$246,500

**Lavergne Catalyst Grant – Division of Urology:**

- *Using a 3D human tissue model to explore actinidin as a novel treatment option for Peyronie's disease,* PI: **J.Campbell**, Co-Investigator: **J.Burton** \$25,000
- *Evaluating a novel augmented reality platform for open surgery assessment: A pilot study,* PI: **P.Wang**, \$25,000

**Lavergne Resident & Fellow Research Grant**

- *Do alpha-blockers cause cognitive decline in people with normal or abnormal cognition?.* PI: **F.Berto**, Co-PI: **B.Welk**, \$5,000
- *Preoperative hypogonadism screening and testosterone replacement in End Stage Renal Dysfunction (ESRD) patients prior to kidney transplant.* PI: **M.Pignanelli**, Co-Investigators: **P.Luke**, **Y.Guo** \$5,000
- *Evaluating the Prognostic Variables for Overall Survival in Patients with Metastatic Renal Cell Carcinoma,* PI: **B.Li**

#### London Regional Cancer Program Fall 2022 Catalyst Grant:

- *Exploring the role of Akkermansia muciniphila in combating the metabolic effects of androgen deprivation therapy in men with metastatic prostate cancer.* PI: **M.Huynh**, \$22,500

#### Megan J. Davey Opportunity Fund

- *Cellular and molecular basis of inflammation in donor kidneys in transplantation.* PI: **R.Bhattacharjee** \$4,800

#### National Institutes of Health (NIH):

- *TransBiota: Genital microbiome, inflammation and HIV risk in trans men and women.* PIs: **J.Prodger**, J.Ravel, \$352,005

#### Ontario Neurotrauma Foundation (ONF):

- *The ability of a structured urologic surveillance program to minimize complications after spinal cord injury (1 year extension).* PI: **B.Welk**, \$23,400

#### Prostate Cancer Catalyst Grant:

- *Exploring the role of Akkermansia muciniphila in combating the metabolic effects of androgen deprivation therapy in men with metastatic prostate cancer,* PI: **M.Huynh**

#### Southwestern Ontario Academic Cancer Trials Network (SOACTN)/London Regional Cancer Program:

- 3CTN NCC PI: **E.Winguist**, \$1,644,500

#### Surgery, Department of, Internal Research Fund:

- *The safety of overactive bladder medication exposure during pregnancy and delivery.* PI: **B.Welk**, \$10,000
- *The effect of pharmacological inhibition of endogenous hydrogen sulfide production on the progression of high-grade bladder cancer,* PI: **A.Sener**, \$10,000
- *Assessing equity of healthcare access for pediatric surgical procedures: Does socioeconomic marginalization affect timely surgical care in Ontario (2002-2017)?* PI: **S.Dave**, \$10,000
- *Foreskin microbiome implications in pediatric pathologic and non-pathologic male circumcisions.* PI: **S.Dave**, Co-Investigator: **D.Matti**, \$5,000

#### Western University Bridge Fund:

- *Weight-Loss for kidney Transplant (WILL TRANSPLANT-1).* Co-PIs: C.Clemens, **A.Sener**, \$25,000

## Publications

Abou Taka M, Dugbartey GJ, **Sener A**. The Optimization of Renal Graft Preservation Temperature to Mitigate Cold Ischemia-Reperfusion Injury in Kidney Transplantation. *Int J Mol Sci*, 2022 Dec 29; 24 (1), DOI: 10.3390/ijms24010567

Ai Li E, Farrokhi K, Zhang MY, Offerni J, **Luke PP**, **Sener A**. Heparin Thromboprophylaxis in Simultaneous Pancreas-Kidney Transplantation: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis of Observational Studies. *Transpl Int*, 2023 Jan; 36: 10442, DOI: 10.3389/ti.2023.10442

Akouris PP, Chmiel JA, Stuijvenberg GA, Kiattiburut W, **Bjazevic J**, **Razvi H**, et al. Osteopontin phosphopeptide mitigates calcium oxalate stone formation in a Drosophila melanogaster model. *Urolithiasis*, 2022 Dec 22; 51 (1): 19, DOI: 10.1007/s00240-022-01395-2

Alfano R, **Bauman GS**, Gomez JA, Gaed M, Moussa M, **Chin J**, Pautler S, Ward AD. Prostate cancer classification using radiomics and machine learning on mp-MRI validated using co-registered histology (2022) *European Journal of Radiology*, 156, art. no. 110494

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Allagany F, Dekalo S, **Welk B**. Endoscopic management of intraurethral mesh extrusion with the holmium:YAG laser is an acceptable treatment option in selected patients. *Neurourology Urology*, 2022 Aug; 41 (6): 1511-1516, DOI: 10.1002/nau.24999

Barootes HC, Huynh AC, Maracle M, Isti AC, **Wang P**, Kirpalani A. "Reduced to My Race Once Again": Perceptions about Underrepresented Minority Medical School Applicants in Canada and the United States. *Teach Learn Med*. Online ahead of print. 2022 Nov 9: 1-12, DOI: 10.1080/10401334.2022.2141247

**Bhattacharjee RN**, Jackson A, Ruthirakanthan A, Juriasingani S, Levine MA, Jiang L, Patel R, Richard-Mohamed M, Forrest S, Ravichandran S, **Sener A**, **Luke PP**. The Impact of Nutritional Supplementation on Donor Kidneys During Oxygenated Ex Vivo Subnormothermic Preservation. *Transplant Direct*, 2022 Oct; 8 (10): e1382, DOI: 10.1097/TXD.0000000000001382

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Buchanan L, Shao Z, Jiang YC, Lai A, **Prodger JL**. Book Chapter: Quantitative Imaging of Mucosal Tissues. *Methods in Molecular Biology: Fluorescence Microscopy* (Editor: Heit B), Springer Nature. 2022 2440:143-164

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