Vaccine showing promise

BY ADELA TALBOT

IT'S A MAJOR milestone in the fight against HIV/AIDS, reached by one of Western's own.

The first and only preventative HIV vaccine developed from a genetically modified killed whole virus by Western virologist Dr. Chil-Yong Kang and his Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry team, has made significant progress, with results from Phase I of human clinical trials showing no adverse effects so far.

“We are so excited about this interim report and are now proceeding with preparations for Phase II,” Kang said, after the public announcement Tuesday.

Patients in Phase I who received the vaccine saw no adverse reactions save the expected minor muscle and joint pain associated with all vaccines at the site of the injection, Kang explained. Their viral load did not increase and there were no reported abnormalities.

What's more, Kang excitedly continued, is the preliminary results are showing promise for the effectiveness of the vaccine with observable growth of HIV-specific antibodies.

"If the vaccine works, you expect to see increased levels of antibodies, and the HIV-specific antibodies showed encouraging results. We were surprised to see (this)," he said, adding the results indicate the vaccine is safe and showing promise of effectiveness.

“We expect to get great news from volunteers in Phase II.”

Phase I of the human clinical trials for the vaccine (SAV001-H) began in March in the United States after receiving approval from the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Testing the safety and tolerability of the vaccine, it was the first human clinical trial to use a killed whole virus.

FDA approval will be needed for Phase II and necessary materials still need to be developed, Kang added. He is confident things will go as planned and doesn’t see any challenges ahead.

"IF WE CAN ERADICATE HIV, OR IF WE CAN PREVENT HIV INFECTION, CERTAINLY THAT WILL BE THE HAPPIEST ACHIEVEMENT I CAN ACCOMPLISH.”

- Dr. Chil-Yong Kang

ILLUSTRATION BY JENNIFER WILSON
Coming Events  
NOV 8 –14

@PresWesternU  
Proud of the Fraunhofer Project Centre for so many reasons, but the greatest among those is #partnership #westernu

twitter.com/MOBomX

West University College - Remembrance Day Ceremony  
10:30 a.m. Friday Mustang Lounge, UCC.

Western Remembrance Day Ceremony  
10:30 a.m. Friday Mustang Lounge, UCC.

Western Remembrance Day Ceremony  
10:30 a.m. Friday Mustang Lounge, UCC.

Central for American Studies and the Canada - U.S. Institute  
Michael Ignatieff, University of Toronto. Us and Them: Opponents and Enemies in Politics  
4:30 p.m. SEB 1059.

Don Wright Faculty of Music  
xTrio: Jana Starling, clarinet; Laurel Swinden, flute; Allison Wiebe, piano.  
The fresh, Ontario-based xTrio explores the extraordinary colour possibilities of the flute, clarinet and piano and promotes the repertoire through unique and balanced programs of contemporary and traditional works.  
8 p.m. von Kuster Hall.

Department of English  
The Knight of the Burning Pestle. Nov. 8-10 and 14-15. Tickets $10 students/ seniors, $15 adults. Available at Western Connections, UCC and at the door.  
8 p.m. Conron Hall, UC.

Thursday  
Department of Visual Arts  
artLAB - Free Association. An exhibition of 13 emerging artists working in a variety of styles and mediums. 12-4 p.m. Monday-Friday, 12-8 p.m. Thursday.

Department of Visual Arts  
artLAB - Dig it. A juried show with a pure focus on the media arts. Runs until Nov. 22.  
12-6 p.m. Monday-Friday, 12-8 p.m. Thursday.

Physics & Astronomy Colloquium  
Ratna Naik, Department of Physics and Astronomy, Wayne State University. Raman Spectroscopy for Biomedical Diagnostics: Cancer detection in pediatric tumors and head and neck squamous cell carcinoma.  
1:30 p.m. P&A, room 100.

Centre for American Studies and the Canada - U.S. Institute  
Michael Ignatieff, University of Toronto. Us and Them: Opponents and Enemies in Politics  
4:30 p.m. SEB 1059.

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8 p.m. Conron Hall, UC.

Friday  
Anatomy and Cell Biology Seminar  
12:30 p.m. MSB 282.

Don Wright Faculty of Music  
Latin American Persuasions. Fiona Wilkinson, flute and friends, with the premiere of London composer Oliver Whitehead’s Excitations.  
12:30 p.m. von Kuster Hall.

Psychology Colloquium Series  
Morgan Berezen, University of Toronto. Perceiving, remembering, and resolving interference: Jointed by a common representational threat?

Saturday  
Earth Sciences Colloquium  
ES4452Z field participants. Geology of the K sqauvial Craton, South Africa. 3:30-4:30 p.m. B&E 0153.  
Women’s Basketball  
Ottawa at Western.  
6 p.m.

Men’s Basketball  
Ottawa at Western.  
8 p.m.

Men’s Hockey  
McGill at Western.  
7 p.m.

Monday  
Canadian Blood Donor Clinic  
10 a.m.-3 p.m.

Learning Skills Presentation  
Preparing for multiple-choice tests. Register at sdc.uwo.ca/learning  
3:30-4:30 p.m. Western Student Services, room 3134.

Tuesday  
Senior Alumni Program  
Vicki Schwenn, dean, Faculty of Education, Western. Children’s Mental Health: How illness affects education.  
9:30 a.m. McKellar Room, UCC.

Class Sold Lecture in Journalism  
Ira Basen, long-time CBC Radio journalist. And Now the News: Re-inventing Journalism in the Digital Age.  
5-6 p.m. University College, room 224. Conron Hall.

Wednesday  
Canadian Space Summit  
Bridging Communities: Unifying the Canadian Space Sector. Visit cs2012.uwo.ca.  

Canadian Blood Donor Clinic  
10 a.m.-3 p.m.

Monday  
Canadian Blood Donor Clinic  
New donors and walk-ins welcome. Visit blood.ca  
10 a.m.-3 p.m. UCC Student Lounge.

The Chinese Program at Huron  
Lunch Hour Conversation. Anyone wishing to speak Chinese is welcome. Email: hku1@huron.uwo.ca  
12:30-1:30 p.m. International Lounge, Huron.

Classes Without Quizzes  
Mandar Jog, scientist, Western and Lawson Health Research Institute, Director National Parkinson Foundation Centre of Excellence. New treatment options in Parkinson disease. From virtual reality to reality. Register at: communications.uwo.ca/CWO/
Western, Fraunhofer celebrate launch of lightweight composites centre

Frank Henning, Fraunhofer deputy institute director, explains some of the sophisticated machinery during a tour at the Fraunhofer Project Centre for Composites Research at Western. At right, Western President Amit Chakma helps Henning show off the Canadian flag that hung inside Henning’s garage in Germany in the years leading up to this partnership.

BY ADELA TALBOT

A FULL HOUSE of local, national and international leaders helped Western and Germany’s Fraunhofer Society launch the Fraunhofer Project Centre (FPC) for Composites Research at Western at the centre’s Advanced Manufacturing Park (AMP) location on Monday. The launch represents an unprecedented partnership, bringing together a Canadian university, a German industry and three levels of Canadian government.

Located in the AMP, just north of Highway 401, the centre will focus on developing lightweight composites at this testing-ground facility through full industrial-scale trials.

Western President Amit Chakma said the university’s partnership with Fraunhofer will benefit industry, the manufacturing sector, the economy, researchers and students alike, as well as align with his global Western vision.

“I speak often of the importance of internationalization and taking Western to the world and bringing the world to Western. This is an incredible accomplishment (for that), starting here, to build both the Advanced Manufacturing Park and the Fraunhofer Project Centre at Western,” he said.

“This (centre) will support the competitiveness and increase the productivity of Canada to respond to the lightweight challenges facing North America’s automotive transportation industries, as well as the development of innovative products for the renewable energy and construction material industries,” said Frank Henning, Fraunhofer deputy institute director. “It creates a unique platform for the training of the next generation of engineers.”

Fraunhofer, Europe’s largest research and development organization, has been credited with the invention and patent of the MP3, among many other discoveries. This joint venture is the first comprehensive initiative between a Canadian university and an institute of Fraunhofer.

London Mayor Joe Fontana said the partnership will translate into job creation for the region, a strengthened economy and much-needed advancements in the future of manufacturing.

“Western is providing the backbone of technology, creativity and innovation. With the vision and leadership from Western and (city) council, we were able to leverage the incredible investments announced,” he said.

“EXPECT TECHNOLOGICAL BREAKTHROUGHS. TOGETHER WE WILL MAKE AND CREATE AN IMPACT AROUND THE WORLD IN THE AREA OF COMPOSITE TECHNOLOGIES. THAT TRANSFORMATION STARTS TODAY.”

- Andy Hrymak, Western Engineering dean

Germany, and particularly Fraunhofer, has become a world leader in lightweight construction. Fibre composites are finding increasing application, particularly in the automotive sector. Some of the applications include automotive underbody shields, parts of the body structures of a car, closures such as tailgates and doors and seat structures. There are also applications for the solar and wind turbine industries.

The centre will provide platform technology for real-time, industrial trial part development using – as well as developing – composite materials and manufacturing processes. The focus of the centre is advanced manufacturing, which means highly precise in-line quality controlled manufacturing of high-performance composites in a suitable scale.

What’s more, Western’s own research and development will be strengthened because of this new partnership.

“The (centre) will allow us to grow our established strengths in the area of lightweight materials research. Our researchers will advance their knowledge to advance composites innovations, providing solutions for transportation, construction and renewable industries,” said Andy Hrymak, Western Engineering dean.

He added students and researchers will benefit from working with Fraunhofer experts in a state-of-the-art facility.

“Expect technological breakthroughs,” he said. “Together we will make and create an impact around the world in the area of composite technologies. That transformation starts today.”

Funding for the centre brought together three levels of government.

More than a year ago, the City of London was the first supporter of this initiative. Without the city’s support of land, space and $10 million in funding, the project would not have gotten off the ground, Hrymak said.

The province contributed more than $2 million through the Ontario Research Fund. Those funds get leveraged for additional contributions from industry, bringing the total value to more than $7 million for specific lightweight composites research projects at the FPC.

And, announced at the event Monday, the federal government contributed $13.7 million in Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario (FedDev Ontario) funding. With a five-year mandate, FedDev Ontario was launched in August 2009 to help respond to Ontario’s economic challenges.

Diane Finley, Canada’s Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, called the FPC a wave of the future.

“In our economy today, this is great news. The (project centre) will help accelerate research and development and let manufacturers get their ideas to market faster,” she said. She noted the development of lightweight composite materials stores great potential for sustainability in many industries, the automotive sector being a prime example.

Finley also praised Western, calling its partnership with Fraunhofer a perfect fit and one that will generate opportunities to develop a struggling economy and help overcome challenges facing Canadians today.

“Western has established itself as a leader in applied research. The school is an academic leader, without question, but it has also entered into very meaningful partnerships to apply its expertise to the real world. It’s because of partnerships that Western has built that we are here today,” she said.

Chakma echoed the sentiments. “FedDev Ontario’s investment supports our efforts to create jobs and stimulate regional economic growth, while advancing scientific knowledge and innovation,” he said.
Editor’s Letter

Hanging out the welcome sign for the world’s best minds

JASON WINDERS
Western News Editor

Allow me a moment to address my fellow Americans.

Greetings from Canada. Congratulations on electing your next president. I know from my last few presidential elections, before happily moving North of the Border, the task of electing a leader has become increasingly challenging in the United States. (Yes, I’m looking at you, Florida.)

This was a long slog to Election Day given presidential campaigning now overlaps presidential governing by 24 months. You faced a difficult decision between a challenger who didn’t know who he was vs. an incumbent who wasn’t who you thought he was. That’s a heck of a choice.

But you made it. And I am sure everything is going to work out just fine.

OK, maybe not. I didn’t want to make you feel bad this soon after the election. But as it turns out, there was a reason why you were treated to a high-on-rhetoric, low-on-specs campaign. You see, no matter who got in, the next four years aren’t going to be pretty.

Seriously, have you looked at pictures of that vibrant lad who won in 2008? So, who is this guy? Set aside the fact ‘hope’ and ‘change’ turned into drone attacks and Wall Street sympathizing, what’s with the grey hair and sagging face in just four years? Did Obama’s dad win Tuesday?

And that’s just what the last four years did to him. After the next four, he’ll look like the underside of Clint Eastwood’s.inside.

Literally days after this election, the U.S. government needs to make some huge decisions. Not its strong suit, by the way.

Without action, nearly every tax cut since 2001 will expire in December. USA Today reported the result would raise the average American household’s tax burden by $3,500. On top of that, the first $1.1 trillion of a planned $2.2 trillion in spending cuts over 10 years to reduce the deficit also would begin just days into January.

The U.S. Congress put the latter piece in place to force them into action. But Congress no longer does ‘action,’ even when it sets reminders for itself. It’s sort of like hitting the snooze button on your alarm – for a few decades of extra sleep.

No, the United States is facing not only a tough four years, but perhaps a generation of cuts. (Enjoy Generation X, you’re working until you’re 110.) So I am here to say to you today, “Come on up.” OK, maybe not everyone. Keep the Honey Boo Boos among you. But Canada has work to do, and needs talented people to do it. The country doesn’t suffer from a lack of smarts, simply a lack of capacity.

Pardon the presumption of this guest in a great land, but allow me to invite a few more folks in.

The country needs to recruit – both students and researchers – outside the borders to sustain global leadership in the area of higher education.

Western knows this, and has been aimed in that direction for some time. Western is investing, and trying new things. The welcome sign is out for the world’s best minds.

For the last year-plus, there is a growing fear in The States working in areas that depend on stable, long-term government support – higher education among them – that top talent will be wooed elsewhere in the years to come. We watched it play out in the U.K. over the last few years. Now, it has arrived stateside.

If a country shows a bit of political sanity, a dash of long-term commitment and stability – or ‘acts Canadian’ – they could nab some of the best minds in The States.

And it’s already happening.

The Way We Were: 1959

Contributed by Alan Noon (anoon@uwo.ca)
Sustainability

Gallery becomes national leader in sustainable renovation

BY JASON WINDERS

IT’S A UNIQUE-TO-CANADA status worthy of “the most beautiful building on campus.”

As of last month, Western’s McIntosh Gallery is the nation’s first building to be certified under the new, more stringent green building guidelines, LEED NC-2009. The building was certified officially on Oct. 19.

“It isn’t quite an achievement that one of our most historic buildings on campus can attain a LEED Silver certification on its renovations,” said Isabella Kulczycki, vice-president (resources management, sustainability and energy engineering). “It’s all about setting a higher status worthy of ‘the most beautiful building on campus.’

Leading up to its renovation, the gallery had its issues – temperature and humidity controls, important to the display of art, were temperamental at best; a long-standing problem of many buildings, manufacturing plants and other types of residential buildings, public assembly buildings, manufacturing plants and other types of buildings.

The renovation efforts also inspired McIntosh director Andy Van Straaten, facilities management, sustainability and energy engineering, to mark our commitment to sustainability.

The McIntosh Gallery was “typical for campus,” said Randy Van Straaten, facilities manager. “The campus boasts many ‘beautiful buildings,’ each with their own challenges. For instance, the gallery’s tight spaces for mechanical systems are fairly common across campus.

For the McIntosh renovation, energy efficiency was key. The building’s windows were replaced with high-performance double- and triple-glazed windows. Sensors were installed to control lights and ventilation. And it’s now only the second gallery in the country with LED lighting.

“With regular light bulbs, they change colours over time. So you would be showing under several different colours – including brown,” Patten said, noting the aesthetic benefits that came with the environmental “Now they are consistently white, a beautiful white. “I tell all my colleagues you have to switch.”

The renovation efforts also inspired McIntosh staff to develop some of their own green initiatives – like targeting paper use to using only locally sourced walnut frames for art.

Developed by the U.S. Green Building Council in 1988, Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) is a rating system for the design, construction and operation of green buildings.

In 2003, the Canada Green Building Council created LEED Canada NC 1.0, which was based upon LEED NC 2.0 in the United States. Canada updated its standards on June 21, 2010 to LEED Canada NC-2009.

Until now, no building in Canada had achieved LEED Canada NC-2009. The LEED Canada NC rating system applies to new construction and major renovations of commercial and institutional buildings. It also applies to retail, mid- and high-rise multi-unit residential buildings, public assembly buildings, manufacturing plants and other types of buildings.

The latest version ups the requirements in many areas. For instance, the new system re-weights credits so the number of points that may be earned for each credit has been re-evaluated using a more scientific approach, resulting in greater emphasis on preventing climate change. It’s all about setting a higher bar for development, Van Straaten said.

Now, the McIntosh renovation has paved the way for others across campus.

“Getting ahead of the system and being the first one to get this certification, lets us do a good job planning for future projects,” Van Straaten said. “There is always uncertainty operating under new certifications. This project allowed us to ease some of that uncertainty.

“We really wanted to get an in-depth understanding of how it (the new requirements) works – the costs, how different practices lined up with what LEED was expecting. It’s difficult to capture the complexities of these buildings without really going through them.

“Now we have and have a better understanding.”

The McIntosh Gallery will not be the last on campus to shoot for LEED NC-2009. Western’s new residence, as well as the Family Medicine building, will target the new standards as well.
Western Research is pleased to announce the following competition:

International Research Award – 2013

Funded by the Office of the Vice-President (Research), this program is offered to support the cost of international research projects of modest scope, whether as seed money for one-time requests or for projects of short duration. Proposals must have a significant international component which enhances knowledge generation or information exchange between Canadian and international academics. Please note that an “international component” refers primarily to the subject of the research and not simply to the means by which it is carried out. Applicants are encouraged to outline plans for any scholarly interactions with researchers while abroad.

Grant Amount: Up to $7,000
Deadlines:
Dean’s Deadline January 15
RD&G Deadline January 31

For more “Funding News”, please visit: http://www.uwo.ca/research/

Contact:
Florence Lourdes
Internal Grants Coordinator
Research Development & Services
Room 5150, Support Services Building
internalgrants@uwo.ca
519.661.2111 x84500

Campus Digest

Western slips from Maclean’s Top 10

An odd rankings season closed out with some bad news for Western, as the university fell out of the Top 10, landing at No. 11 in the 22nd annual Maclean’s University Rankings issue, released Nov. 1. Since 1994, Western has never been out of the Top 10.

For the eighth year in a row, the self-professed “holy book for anyone planning their education in Canada” ranked McGill first in the Medical Doctoral category, which boasts 15 schools. The University of British Columbia was up one spot this year to second; the University of Toronto was down one spot to third. Otherwise, the Top 10 held serve with the exception of Western.

At No. 11, Western is ahead of only Montreal, Laval, Sherbrooke and Manitoba.

Nobody passed Western, per se. Two ties in last year’s Top 10 – McMaster and Dalhousie at No. 6, Saskatchewan and Ottawa at No. 10 – gave the list 11 universities in the Top 10. Both were resolved this year and as all four remained in a Top 10 list with only 10 schools, one had to go. That one was Western.

“If there’s one trend in the rankings, it’s the rise of the west,” Maclean’s wrote. “Every university from Saskatchewan to the Pacific Ocean maintains or improves its standing. All four of British Columbia’s ranked universities placed in the top two in their categories.”

The magazine continued, “That said, Ontario, Quebec and Atlantic Canadians still have some of the mightiest institutions.”

These marks come as part of a mixed bag of results for Western this rankings season.

So far, the institution had slipped in Times Higher Education magazine’s World University Rankings, released in October, and in the QS World University Rankings of the Top 200 global universities, released in September.

However, for the 11th straight year, Western was tops in Canada when it comes to the most satisfied students, according to the The Globe and Mail’s 2013 Canadian University report. Overall, in the survey of more than 31,000 undergraduate students across the country, Western topped 11 of 19 categories – six led outright and five tied.

NEWS AND NOTES

On Friday, Nov. 2, nearly 200 students from 10 schools in the London area gathered at Western for the French for the Future-London Local Forum. Held annually, the forum offers students a day of activities that highlights the benefits of bilingualism through the acquisition of French. It also gives students enrolled in French immersion, core French and French first language programs the rare opportunity to meet up outside of school for a day entirely in French. Under the theme Pratiquement bilingue/Practically Bilingual, students took part in interactive workshops and presentations, which were designed to inspire, guide and help them share their passion for the language in their own communities.

The Schulich Interfaculty Program in Public Health is hosting a Master of Public Health (MPH) Open House 1-4 p.m. Monday, Nov. 12 in the Dr. David S. Chu Inter-faculty Student Centre, Western Student Services Building 2130. The MPH is a new professional course-based masters program currently accepting applications for fall 2013. Learn about the different opportunities for faculty involvement in the next stage of program development. Faculty members interested in attending can RSVP to Diana Lee at Diana.lee@schulich.uwo.ca or ext. 82797. Visit schulich.uwo.ca/publichealth for more information.

London photographer MJ Idereda has brought a new show straight out of the past and the future by showcasing new photographs from old cameras as well as old photographs from new cameras.

The exhibit, Recent Images from the Trailing Edge, showed a collection of old film cameras displayed beside the new photographs made with them. What makes this unique is that this exhibit is countered by a second exhibit entitled Circa ...?, a collection of one-liner film prints photographed recently using digital capture, and printed on old or low-quality ‘found’ paper.

The show is on through December in the John A. Schweitzer Gallery in Western Libraries’ Archives and Research Collections Centre in the D. B. Weldon Library.

London will play host to the CIS Cross Country Running National Championships noon Saturday at the Thames Valley Golf Club. The event is among the largest Canadian championships in any sport featuring the best collegiate runners in the nation from 26 universities – a number of whom have already represented Canada internationally and no doubt some who will one day compete as Olympic track distance runners.

Cross country is the most successful sport of all Western, with 11 titles – seven for women, four for men.

Several members of the Western community will be honoured as part of the 11th annual Spirit of Sport and London Sports Hall of Fame inductions.

Don Getty, HBA’55, and Larry Haylor, former Western coach and parent, and Western’s Canadian champion 1990-91 basketball team are among the 10 (nine...
On Nov. 25, the Canadian Football League celebrates a century of football, with the awarding of the Grey Cup, the longest all-Canadian annual professional sporting championship in existence. To celebrate, the Grey Cup is in the midst of visiting 100 communities across Canada, which included a stop in London and Western, this past week. Graduate student A. J. Steven, a die-hard Montreal Alouettes fan, took a moment before class to get a closer look at the iconic trophy at the Western Student Recreation Centre.

Western Biology professor Brent Sinclair has been awarded the 2012 Entomological Society of Canada’s C. Gordon Hewitt Award for outstanding achievement in Canadian entomology by a researcher under 40.

Western Worlds is getting to be a crowded place. And Western’s Centre for Planetary Science & Exploration (CPSX) couldn’t be prouder. Since Feb. 27, CPSX has been broadcasting its news and views to more than 20,000 listeners in 85 countries with its weekly Internet radio show, Western Worlds. Last week, the show reached an aggregated audience of one million listeners.

The show includes the work of a dozen volunteers. Airing at 10 p.m. EST Mondays on astronomy.fm, each show is 30 minutes, and includes a 20-minute interview followed by a 10-minute round-table discussion of that interview.

All of the shows are available for download on the Western Worlds webpage. Follow it at the CPSX website, Facebook and Twitter.

Students from Western’s Richard Ivey School of Business made their international marks in recent competitions. A team comprised of HBA2 students Jeremy Chad, Ethan Feldman, Adam Edgerley and Russell Citron took third place in the Citi International Case Competition in Hong Kong. The competition is the first international business case competition held in Hong Kong and the 10th year the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology has hosted the event. A team comprised of HBA2 students Connor Lyons, Samara Hadler, Samantha Hamilton and Norman Gao took first place at the CUBE-Northeastern University International Business Case Competition in Boston. And finally, HBA2 student Kevin Zhou has made it to the finals rounds of the 2012 Financial Modeling World Championship. He travels to the finals on Dec. 2 in New York.
2012 Canadian Space Summit

Western plays host to the 2012 Canadian Space Summit, Bridging Communities: Unifying the Canadian Space Sector, Nov. 14-16. This summit will address relevant issues in Canada’s current and future space program and the major roles that could be played by various participants and advocates, private sector companies, provincial and federal government organizations and academia.

Among the highlights, Apollo 17 astronaut Harrison ‘Jack’ Schmitt will present the 9th annual Planetary Science Distinguished Public Lecture. Schmitt and crewmate Eugene Cernan were the last astronauts to set foot on the Moon.

In advance of the event, Western News reporter Adela Talbot spoke with Western professors Gordon Osinski, Peter Brown and Phil Stooke about Canada’s – and the world’s – next steps into the final frontier.

Where does the Canadian space program stand today?

Osinski: The budget cuts in government have definitely affected the Canadian Space Agency, but we do have people working on the Mars Science Laboratory Mission and OSIRIS-Rex has a Canadian contribution that will fly later on this decade. But definitely beyond that, things are up in the air.

Brown: But Canadian space industry, companies like MDA (MacDonald Dettwiler Space and Advanced Robotics Ltd) and Comb Dev, are still doing well, but commercially. There’s a lot of space activity for satellite communications, remote sensing, lots of that. But with pure exploration, there’s some ambiguity right now and that’s reflected from what’s happening south of the border. There’s still ambiguity there and it translates up here.

What expertise remains that’s purely Canadian? What does the world turn to Canada for?

Osinski: Robotics is still definitely a Canadian signature. Last week, they unveiled what they call ‘the next generation Canadarm’ and this was out of the stimulus package money. And it was MDA, again, but the system is for on-orbit servicing and MDA space missions – or the U.S. equivalent. There’s a new contract with the U.S. defense to do that type of thing – robotics capturing spacecraft in orbit. So at least commercially, they’re still coming to Canada for robotics.

Brown: RADARSAT – it’s a synthetic aperture radar commercial remote sensing. We’re pretty much unique in the world for that. That’s a big Canadian heavyweight.

In terms of space science – impact cratering and impact geology are something where Canada has been, and still is, pretty well placed. It’s not to say were the only place that does it, but there’s a lot of that and it’s a biggie.

Osinski: It’s not really a big contribution, but scientists from all over the world still come to Canada for the geography and geology – these analog sites. I’m working on a proposal now with a group from NASA who wants to come up to the Arctic to work on a new impact crater.

What do we need to accomplish in the next generation to continue being considered relevant?

Osinski: There needs to be a long-term space plan, which hasn’t existed for a number of years now, close to a decade. So there’s been a lot of stalemate and quagmire on the government level. There (have been) various acting presidents of the space agency, very different industry ministers and it’s resulted in the Canadian Space Agency not having a current ratified long-term space plan. Without that, it’s hard to predict the future and the space agency needs to get through these budget cuts, hopefully emerge stronger, and have more of a budget in the future.

Brown: I think, overall, Canada needs to decide, as a country, where our strengths lie and not try and compete across the board, but to say ‘Here’s a few things’ – robotics comes to mind – and press that advantage, and try to take that to an international scale. We need more of that and less spreading ourselves over everything we want to accomplish.

Can humans still be considered explorers even though we’ve turned the journeys over to machines?

Osinski: We’re going to have a panel discussion on that Friday the 16th.

Brown: There is definitely an area where robotic exploration makes sense, but there is definitely a niche for human exploration. I don’t think it’s an either/or; I think it’s both, albeit one’s more expensive than the other. There’s no doubt about that. But there are certain things humans can do that robotics can’t.

Why are we, as humans, not just Canadians, not further along in space than we currently are?

Stooke: I think money has to be considered a major factor in that. It’s no surprise the whole world is going through a difficult time at the moment and we have to hope that we will get through that and there will be more money. Then there are the other factors that drive space exploration – the desire for knowledge, spurring new technologies and so on, demonstrating our technological prowess to the world – all those kinds of things will take effect again when there’s more money. We have to go through a lean time right now and we have to get past that.
2012 Canadian Space Summit

CSA: Canada finds its space in space

BY JEFF RENAUD

THE FUTURE’S SO bright, you gotta wear shades. Better yet, make it solar viewing glasses. As Western prepares to welcome delegates from academia, industry and government next week for the 2012 Canadian Space Summit, a Canadian Space Agency (CSA) official says thanks to scientists and researchers, like those affiliated with the Centre for Planetary Science and Exploration (CPSE), Canada is well positioned to remain a major player on the global stage.

“We (Canada) are moving forward to sustain some key areas of expertise in space exploration and Earth observation,” said Manon Larocque, CSA government liaison director. “We’ve done the groundwork and are ready to contribute to future international space missions.”

Larocque cited Canadarm as arguably the country’s most significant aeronautic advancement, even though it was launched 31 years ago this month. She said robotics remain one of Canada’s strength areas and thereby, continue to receive financial support from the government.

“When you look at large space robotics, clearly Canada has an advantage,” Larocque said. “The government continues to provide funding for the industry working in space robotics as they develop the next generation of rovers that could be positioned, eventually, to participate in international expeditions.”

Closer to home, Earth specifically, Larocque said the government is also committed to further developing the RADARSAT Constellation mission. RADARSAT is a sophisticated Earth observation satellite developed by Canada to monitor environmental changes and the planet’s natural resources.

“The next generation of RADARSAT is being developed for Earth observation missions that are crucial to Canada’s security and sovereignty,” Larocque said.

The three satellite configuration of RSM, expected to launch in 2016 and 2017, will provide complete coverage of Canada’s land and oceans offering Canadian and other international users maritime surveillance (ice, wind, oil pollution and ship traffic), disaster management monitoring (mitigation, warning, response and recovery), and ecosystem observation (forestry, agriculture, wetlands and coastal change).

Larocque, who also highlighted the importance of Canada’s ongoing participation in the International Space Station program, said conferences like the 2012 Canadian Space Summit give government an opportunity to meet university-based researchers and hear first-hand what discoveries are being made at the academic level and, also, where scientists feel Canada could be better resourced.

“Space is a very small community. And there are really not that many players,” Larocque explained. “Likewise, there are not that many opportunities to advocate for space, exchange ideas and discuss the future of space, which is all very important.”

Larocque will be joined on campus next week by her colleagues Michel Doyon, CSA flight operation manager, and Vqar Abbasi, CSA simulation engineer. Experts on space debris, Doyon and Abbasi will present CSA & Space Debris: Towards a Common Approach for Canada 11:30 a.m. Wednesday.

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CM, MD, FRCP, FACP
"Can we Achieve Clinically-Relevant Glycaemic Control in People with Type 2 Diabetes with Currently Available Therapies?"

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"Can we Achieve Clinically-Relevant Glycaemic Control of Diabetes"
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POSTGRADUATE CERTIFICATE EVENT MANAGEMENT
Shuttleworth Auditorium, 591 Wellington Road London, ON
Date: Wednesday, November 14, 2012.
Time: 11:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Time: 11:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Staff Profile
Visiting Catherine Morrisey’s emotional bend in the river

BY LESLIE KOSTAL

“Hundreds of persons began to assemble on the banks of the river.
... What with the gay afternoon costume of the ladies, the flags, the boats’ crews, the sparkling river, the green banks and the bustle of animation which pervaded the assemblage, the scene was one of considerable interest.”

This tiny slice from an 1860’s London Free Press article, transcribed by the late Greg Cumoe, illustrates an occasion organized by the Tecumseh Boat Club – an event on a portion of the Thames River where trees and banks remain constant. The historical nature and beauty of this spot stirs emotions within Catherine Morrisey, Resource Support Services manager with Western Libraries.

In fact, it’s now the artist’s piece of river.

Morrisey enjoys capturing visually inspiring landscapes allowing her objects drama. Trees reveal the effects of years of intertemperate weather.

“It’s a balance between the original impulse and where the design and structure start to go. If I get too involved in the designing end of things, it loses its truth,” she said.

Exhibiting almost every year at The Art Exchange, her October showcase was entitled This Bend in the River. To assist in acquiring such inspiration, Morrisey paddles her kayak upriver from Labatt Breweries toward Wellington: Weighing only 22 pounds, it’s a convenient mode of transportation. "Honestly," she said, “I’ve had purses that weigh that much.”

In 2004, she purchased an old auto-body shop close to the river. With a front and back door allowing the west breeze to blow right through, it serves as an appropriate studio for her oils and turps.

“I paint really with a lot of turpentine,” Morrisey admits happily, reliving a conversation. You don’t know where it’s going to go.”

Often her works flow off the top of the canvas. Someone suggested painting from the top down. “I was horrified,” she said. “I paint a tree the way it grows.”

Her work has movement. She attributes her big canvass preference to dance classes in public school. “It’s about the swing of your arm and the movement of your body.”

Her teachers – one from Java who had an oriental influence, the other, she says, was “a beatnik” teaching modern dance – provided an extraordinary educational experience.

Some of her pieces have a silk- or satin-like quality. Branches bend and turn. You can feel the wind through the willows and fancy, perhaps, slipping into the soft waters holding reflections of trees on the bank.

Her favourite colours are browns, ochres and siennas. “What really sings with that is a pure, or an orange red, a cool tiny bit of yellow.”

“When I was 3 years old, I remember being handed a paintbrush,” she said. Her mother, sister, grandmother and great-grandfather were all artists. Enrolled in the first graduating class of fine arts at York, she was also mentored by prominent Canadian painters at a small art school in Toronto.

Morrisey says understanding how a piece reveals itself is truly getting to the heart of painting. For example, looking closely at a large piece (see her work in the Mezzanine, Weldon), a portion of the image may seem blurred or disconnected. But stepping back and drinking in the entire picture allows your mind to connect the dots. It amazingly comes into focus.

“When I paint, I have to paint with my body up close,” Morrisey explained. “I’m not actually painting what I think I want to see. I’m making marks using my whole body. Then I put the painting up and I go back as far as I can go.”

Morrisey has an easel back in the garden and prefers painting outside. She can step back 30 or 40 feet, or sit in her rocking chair and look at what’s happening.

“I can see what it needs,” she said.

Morrisey enjoys packing a little plastic bag of water colours and paintbrushes, getting in the kayak and going out on the river. You tie up to a tree branch so as not to drift off and then just dip over the side for a little glass of water.

“In an afternoon you can do several little water colours and then paddle home to have tea,” she said smiling.

Morrisey’s pieces may be rented at Museum London and viewed at The Art Exchange.

Leslie Kostal, web administrative assistant, Department of Economics, writes periodic pieces profiling Western staff members. If you, or someone you know, has an interesting story to tell, please e-mail her at Leslie.Kostal@uwo.ca.
Universities move to fill void for ‘digital natives’

BY KATRINA CLARKE

WHEN 10 PER CENT of students in a 600-person class plagiarized on a term paper, Political Science professor Peter Ferguson was perplexed. Ferguson began to do some investigating. He looked into whether students received instruction in how to properly conduct research, such as finding, using and citing sources. His discovery was that most of them didn’t.

He observed students lacked integral research skills to access the mountain of digital information to do scholarly research.

“People assume students know how to find information on the Internet faster and better than we do,” Ferguson said. “But students are skilled at finding music to download or television shows to download — that doesn’t mean that they know how to find research material for classes.”

Ferguson then enlisted the help of Western librarian Bruce Fyfe to help teach his class these crucial academic research skills.

University-age students today are sometimes referred to as ‘digital natives’ – a group of people who have grown up with the Internet. But many young people are unsure of how to use computers and the Internet beyond social media or web-browsing purposes. Librarians are now helping students fill this digital void.

The use of the term digital native can be controversial, said Western Sociology professor Anabel Quan-Haase, jointly appointed to the Faculty of Information and Media Studies as well as Social Sciences.

“Certainly digital natives are more aware of more technologies — how in depth they know each of these technologies is another question,” she said.

Quan-Haase said even if these digital natives are familiar with technology, they may not know how to use it effectively.

“We can use many tools — Twitter, Facebook, Google — but we don’t really know exactly what information we’re getting and what we may not be getting,” she said.

At Western, students have access to a wide range of subject-specific scholarly databases and millions of articles. For example, a Psychology student researching brain injuries in the PubMed database has thousands of articles available. Navigating these resources can be challenging.

Libraries are looking to teach students how to optimize research and many now offer workshops on how to make sense of the information they find, Quan-Haase said.

Trefor Armstrong, a first-year Engineering student at Guelph, said he was introduced to the services offered at his school library during a Fresh Week orientation session.

Armstrong said his orientation group was introduced to basic library services — like signing out a library book — but struggled to grasp the technology.

“We were like, this is going to be quick and easy,” he said. But when his orientation group didn’t have the collective ability to sign out a book as part of a scavenger hunt, they required the help of a librarian.

Armstrong still sees many students looking confused at the university’s book checkout kiosks, but he has taken the initiative to learn more about the library’s services, talking to librarians about digital services they offer. As a result, Armstrong is now much more comfortable in the library environment.

Jenna Schiralli, 21, is a fourth-year student at Western, who has moved on from library basics such as signing out books, but she still goes to librarians for help with her digital research.

“I would have no idea what to do otherwise,” she said.

Schiralli said she is very knowledgeable about social media, but it’s difficult for her to use digital resources for academic purposes. She said librarians at Western have taught her how to search efficiently within academic databases, using simple tricks such as adding brackets and asterisks to narrow down her searches.

Jennifer Robinson, communications and outreach librarian for Western Libraries, said the university launched a new online chat service called ‘Ask a Librarian’ in September to help students like Schiralli. Here, students can go online and ask questions to a university librarian such as, “How do I find online scholarly articles?”

In the first week of offering the chat service, Robinson said the system received 50 questions. This is “pretty good” considering the beginning of school is generally a slow time for libraries, she said.

Robinson said it’s important to recognize not all students are tech-savvy and for libraries to have support services for students.

“Some students are embarrassed to ask for help,” she said. “They think they’re supposed to be technologically efficient.”

Kendra Yama, 21, a fourth-year political studies student at Queen’s University, writes two to three research papers per semester. However, she said her frustration with technology sometimes discourages her from doing more in-depth work.

“When I’m doing research for papers, I feel as though there’s a lot of information available, but I don’t necessarily have the skills to access it,” she said.

Yama said she is reluctant to go to librarians with questions because she thinks their problems would seem too trivial. However, she said she might be inclined to use a service like ‘Ask a Librarian,’ where she would conveniently be able to ask questions of a librarian online.

Marnie Harrington, FIMS librarian, has helped many students like Yama.

“Students will come to school they’ll have their laptop and e-reader,” she said. “But they don’t know how to use these tools in an academic setting.”

Harrington said one way Western is helping students is through liaison librarians. These librarians spend time in research-intensive classes introducing students to the library resources available to them.

Back in Ferguson’s American government and politics class, he and librarian Fyfe began to dedicate the first 15 minutes of class to teaching students effective research skills.

Students were taught about plagiarism and how to avoid it, and how to properly access reference material by governments, interest groups and think tanks on databases like ProQuest.

“These are rich fields to plough but they were mostly being ignored because people don’t know about them,” Ferguson said.

At the end of the semester, Ferguson conducted a class survey. The research sessions had paid off — 85 per cent of students reported they were now more confident in their ability to conduct research.

“When you teach students things that they don’t know, they not only absorb that information but they feel better about what they’re doing,” he said.
Phase II will test for immune responses in healthy individuals and will take about a year. Phase III will test the efficacy of the vaccine and is expected to take at least three years. A marketable vaccine could be a possibility within five years, Kang said.

"If we can eradicate HIV, or if we can prevent HIV infection, certainly that will be the happiest achievement I can accomplish."

The development of the vaccine was supported by Sumagen Canada. It is the only HIV vaccine currently under development in Canada, and one of only a few in the world.

Dr. Dong Joon Kim, a Sumagen Co. Ltd. spokesperson, echoed Kang's excitement, calling the immune reaction observed in Phase I "amazing."

"We found the virus 30 years ago, in 1983. During the 30 years, human-kind and pharmaceutical companies have tried to develop a preventative HIV vaccine, but up until now, no one has," he said. "Among those (vaccines) developing now, we can expect ours to prevent HIV/AIDS. We expect our killed whole virus vaccine will do that. We need it to be safe and it should succeed in producing immune response from human body.

"Today's (announcement) is what we expected; it's good news."

Sumagen has, so far, invested roughly $60 million toward the vaccine. Kim expects another $30-40 million will be needed for Phase II and an additional $100 million for Phase III.

HIV/AIDS has killed more than 28 million people worldwide, and more than 34 million people currently live with the virus infection. Over the past three decades, there have been numerous trials through pharmaceutical companies and academic institutions around the world to develop vaccines, but one has yet to be commercialized.

Kang's vaccine is unique in that it uses a killed whole HIV-1 virus. It is similar to killed whole virus vaccines for polio, influenza, rabies and hepatitis A. The HIV-1 is genetically engineered so it is safe and can be produced in large quantities.

Paul Mayne // Western News

Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry professor Chil-Yong Kang is swarmed by media following the announcement of the current progress made following the Phase I Clinical Trials of a preventative HIV vaccine.

Dean, Richard Ivey School of Business

Western University’s Richard Ivey School of Business (Ivey) is seeking a new Dean. Since its founding over 90 years ago, Ivey has consistently ranked among the world’s leading business schools. Located in London, Ontario, Canada, Ivey also has campuses in Toronto and Hong Kong, and academic partnerships with top institutions in China and India. Ivey has earned an international reputation for its teaching and research excellence, including its renowned case-method of learning; for the outstanding caliber of its students, faculty and professional staff; and for the commitment of its global network of 22,000 highly successful alumni. In 2013, the School will open the second phase of a $110-million gold LEED-certified facility on the beautiful Western University campus.

Our search for a new Dean comes at a propitious time. During the past decade, Ivey’s reputation has been strengthened through the introduction of its Cross-Enterprise Leadership strategy, which saw the School re-engineer its flagship MBA program; double the size and enhance the quality of its undergraduate program (HBA); introduce several new centres of excellence for teaching and research in areas of strength, including leadership, sustainability, emerging markets, entrepreneurship and health innovation; refine its executive education offering and corporate connectivity; and launch a $200-million Campaign for Leadership, which is poised to conclude successfully in 2013.

The new Dean will build on this success and continue to drive Ivey’s mission of creating business leaders who think globally, act strategically, and contribute meaningfully to the societies in which they live and work. The ideal candidate will have a track record of working strategically and collegially in advancing the mission of a major institution. S/he must be a person with superb leadership skills, inspired vision, unassailable character, and a passionate commitment to business education, research, and public service. This is an outstanding opportunity to lead a world-class business school at a leading research-intensive Canadian university, at a time when global forces are demanding innovative approaches to business education.

Western is committed to Employment Equity, welcomes diversity in the workplace, and encourages applications from all qualified individuals including women, members of visible minorities, aboriginal persons, and persons with disabilities. In accordance with Canadian immigration requirements, all qualified candidates are encouraged to apply; however, Canadians and Permanent Residents will be given priority.

The Search Committee will begin reviewing expressions of interest in late November 2012, with the new Dean to take office in the summer of 2013. Inquiries or applications should be directed, in confidence, to Colleen Keenan or Gerri Woodford at iveydean@odgersberndtson.ca.
Research

Surgical first offers hope for liver research

BY PAUL MAYNE

Dr. Roberto Hernandez-Alejandro didn’t expect a conversation over a couple beers at a Miami hotel bar eight months ago to lead to a surgical first in North America.

Presenting his own research at the Americas Hepato-Pancreato-Biliary Association annual meeting, the Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry professor quickly became enthralled with a presentation from a group of German liver surgeons.

They spoke of a two-stage hepatectomy (liver resection), discovered by chance, that saw 70 to 80 per cent re-growth of liver tissue in patients who underwent the procedure.

“Ts was something interesting,” Hernandez-Alejandro said. “The surgeons in Switzerland and Argentina, also performing the ALPPS procedure, to get more long-term information and validate results and compare them to the previous surgical method.

Thus far, they have a total of 35 ALPPS procedures, which they are comparing to 46 prior surgical approaches. He also plans animal studies to learn more about how the liver regenerates so quickly.

“While it’s very aggressive for the patient, you’re not letting the tumour progress, we’re learning more,” Hernandez-Alejandro added. “And at six months with the registry, which is new, we’re finding results have been better than the standard procedure.”

Hernandez-Alejandro now finds himself in high demand to share his results across the country. Returning from Hamilton this past week, he will soon be heading out to Edmonton, Calgary, Ottawa, Montreal, Kingston, Windsor and Owen Sound, to name just a few, to share his expertise.

A two-stage liver resection, a North American first, performed earlier this year by Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry professor Dr. Roberto Hernandez-Alejandro, may revolutionize how surgeons attack liver cancer.

The surgical first is that both stages of the hepatectomy, or removal of the liver, were completed in just one week to ensure cancer did not spread to other parts of the liver.

In the past, such a procedure would have taken three to four months from start to finish, not including recovery time. Now, patients can be out of hospital within a month.

When he initially spoke to the first patient, Hernandez-Alejandro was asked what experience he had with this type of surgery. He pulled out the paper written by the German doctors. He said he could make a copy for the patient.

“He told me ‘I’m not going to understand any of it, but I trust you doc,’” Hernandez-Alejandro said.

Hernandez-Alejandro performed another surgery on the patient, approximately two and a half hours, to remove the right side of the liver and, therefore, all cancer from the liver.

“In this new surgery we split the liver, giving nothing to the right side from the portal vein. You’re giving all the flow from the portal vein to the left side, while the right side gets artery only to keep the patient alive for one week. Then, bang, you go in and remove the right side.”

Since that first surgery in April, Hernandez-Alejandro has completed four additional surgeries.

“I have done a lot of liver resections, but normally, we cut out parts of the liver which have tumours, but this one is a challenge because you have to cut it open like a book, and it has to be clean,” he said. “It’s a more challenging and technically demanding operation.”

Along with the excitement, Hernandez-Alejandro realizes this sort of procedure will not be for everyone dealing with liver cancer, since it is very aggressive for a patient to go through two major abdominal surgeries in such a short period of time.

He has also teamed up with surgeons in Switzerland and Argentina, also performing the ALPPS procedure, to get more long-term information and validate results and compare them to the previous surgical method.

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November 13, 12:30-1:30
November 14, 5:00-6:00
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// CAREERS

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FULL-TIME ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

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Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry and the Faculty of Science
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Richard Ivey School of Business
Tenured and Untenured Positions in Finance seeks candidates for multiple tenure and/or untenured positions in the area of Finance to begin in July 2013. Qualified applicants for visiting and limited term appointments will also be considered. Application submission deadline is Nov. 26.

// ACADEMIC

PHD LECTURES

Emanuele Leonardi, Theory and Criticism, Biopolitics of Climate Change: Carbon Commodities, Environmental Profanations, and the Lost Innocence of Use-Value, Nov. 12, N/A

// STUDENT BULLETIN

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UNDERGRADUATE COURSE REGISTRATION DATES

Nov. 30: Last day to drop a full course and full-year half course (on campus day and evening and Distance Studies) without academic penalty.
Program teams with First Nations community to address diabetes ‘epidemic’

BY PAUL MAYNE

“It’s an epidemic.” There’s really no other way Stewart Harris can describe the overwhelming prevalence of diabetes among Canada’s First Nation’s communities.

“I’ve spent the better part of two decades working with First Nation’s communities to gain a better understanding of how big this epidemic is, why it is happening, why is it particularly affecting them, and is there anything we can do about it,” said the Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry professor. “And the epidemic is continuing to grow.”

Diabetes occurs in First Nation’s communities almost five times that of the general population. Diagnoses occur, on average, 15 years earlier than the general population, with upwards of 25 to 40 per cent of First Nation adults diagnosed. More First Nation women than men have diabetes, opposite the general population.

Change, Harris said, is needed now.

“It’s clear their metabolism, and hence their genetic makeup, predisposes them to diabetes,” said Harris, the Canadian Diabetes Association Chair in Diabetes Management.

“We get diseases on the basis of two things, our genes and our environment, or a combination of both, and 40 years ago, there was no diabetes in their communities, so in the course or one to two generations this epidemic has emerged.”

And nowhere is this more prevalent than during the reproductive years of First Nation’s women. When weight is gained during pregnancy, Harris said, this, along with an increase in hormones, puts women at greater risk for diabetes. In fact, almost three times higher than the general population.

To address this issue, Harris’ latest research project, Healthy Moms, Healthy Babies, is a community

lifestyle program which aims to increase awareness and improve care of First Nation’s women gestational diabetes.

Along with fellow Western researchers Irene Hramiak, Michelle Mottola and Selma Liu, the project is comprised of a healthy lifestyle component focusing on exercise during pregnancy with the use of cutting-edge technology – continuous glucose monitors – which can record blood sugar levels every two minutes, along with traditional finger-prick testing.

“One thing we are doing is creating community-based lifestyle exercise programs. Community people have been hired and trained to introduce walking programs and educating them about healthy food choices, what they can do to manage their diabetes and, therefore, protect their babies,” Harris said. “Pregnancies with diabetes lead to worse outcomes at delivery for mother and baby, and puts the baby at future risk for diabetes.

“If we can intervene and have good diabetes control, you can mitigate those bad outcomes.”

Harris added three First Nation’s communities have signed up as part of his project including Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte, Six Nations of the Grand River and Walpole Island First Nation. He is hoping for 60 female volunteers, with the program running for 12 months and being led with an on-reserve community healthcare professional.

Harris quickly brushes off the idea this is a small project.

“This is definitely an education component that needs to be involved with this, but at the same time, if you don’t have access to facilities, programs or awareness, it makes it even harder,” Harris said.

“We want to help these women become aware and enable them to undertake better lifestyles.”

While there is a major care gap and the epidemic continues to grow, Harris said it’s not all doom and gloom. Federal and provincial governments are stepping up with funding and Western continues to be a leading centre for diabetes research.

“If this epidemic didn’t exist 40 years ago, why can’t we go back?” Harris asked.

Research

By Paul Mayne

It’s an epidemic.” There’s really no other way Stewart Harris can describe the overwhelming prevalence of diabetes among Canada’s First Nation’s communities.

“I’ve spent the better part of two decades working with First Nation’s communities to gain a better understanding of how big this epidemic is, why it is happening, why is it particularly affecting them, and is there anything we can do about it,” said the Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry professor. “And the epidemic is continuing to grow.”

Diabetes occurs in First Nation’s communities almost five times that of the general population. Diagnoses occur, on average, 15 years earlier than the general population, with upwards of 25 to 40 per cent of First Nation adults diagnosed. More First Nation women than men have diabetes, opposite the general population.

Change, Harris said, is needed now.

“It’s clear their metabolism, and hence their genetic makeup, predisposes them to diabetes,” said Harris, the Canadian Diabetes Association Chair in Diabetes Management.

“We get diseases on the basis of two things, our genes and our environment, or a combination of both, and 40 years ago, there was no diabetes in their communities, so in the course or one to two generations this epidemic has emerged.”

And nowhere is this more prevalent than during the reproductive years of First Nation’s women. When weight is gained during pregnancy, Harris said, this, along with an increase in hormones, puts women at greater risk for diabetes. In fact, almost three times higher than the general population.

To address this issue, Harris’ latest research project, Healthy Moms, Healthy Babies, is a community lifestyle program which aims to increase awareness and improve care of First Nation’s women gestational diabetes.

Along with fellow Western researchers Irene Hramiak, Michelle Mottola and Selma Liu, the project is comprised of a healthy lifestyle component focusing on exercise during pregnancy with the use of cutting-edge technology – continuous glucose monitors – which can record blood sugar levels every two minutes, along with traditional finger-prick testing.

“One thing we are doing is creating community-based lifestyle exercise programs. Community people have been hired and trained to introduce walking programs and educating them about healthy food choices, what they can do to manage their diabetes and, therefore, protect their babies,” Harris said. “Pregnancies with diabetes lead to worse outcomes at delivery for mother and baby, and puts the baby at future risk for diabetes.

“If we can intervene and have good diabetes control, you can mitigate those bad outcomes.”

Harris added three First Nation’s communities have signed up as part of his project including Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte, Six Nations of the Grand River and Walpole Island First Nation. He is hoping for 60 female volunteers, with the program running for 12 months and being led with an on-reserve community healthcare professional.

Harris quickly brushes off the idea this is a small project.

“This is definitely an education component that needs to be involved with this, but at the same time, if you don’t have access to facilities, programs or awareness, it makes it even harder,” Harris said.

“We want to help these women become aware and enable them to undertake better lifestyles.”

While there is a major care gap and the epidemic continues to grow, Harris said it’s not all doom and gloom. Federal and provincial governments are stepping up with funding and Western continues to be a leading centre for diabetes research.

“If this epidemic didn’t exist 40 years ago, why can’t we go back?” Harris asked.

Tracking the epidemic

Compared to women in the general population, on-reserve First Nations women in Ontario had:

• Higher prevalence of diabetes in pregnancy;
• Less preconception/antenatal care;
• Less postpartum care;
• Higher mean birth weight and rate of macrosomia;
• Higher rates of pre-term delivery, jaundice, neonatal hypoglycemia, shoulder dystocia;
• Less primary care after birth.

Visit the National Diabetes Management Strategy at ndms.ca.

Clissold Lecture in Journalism

And Now the News: Re-inventing Journalism in the Digital Age

Tuesday, November 13 5:00 – 6:00 pm
University College Room 224 (Conron Hall)
Admission FREE, Everyone Welcome
Reception to Follow

Ira Basen is a long-time CBC Radio journalist. He has produced several award-winning documentary series, including Spin Cycles and News 2.0: the Future of News in the Age of Social Media. He has created programs such as The Inside Track and This Morning and taught at Ryerson, McMaster and the University of Toronto. He is currently the CanWest Global Fellow in Media at Western.

The Clissold Lectures commemorate the life and work of Edward Clissold (1833 - 1915), one of London’s most important early editors and journalists. Clissold retired in 1910 as editor of the London (Ontario) Advertiser after 33 years on its staff. The lectures are made possible by a bequest from Edward Clissold’s grandson, Robert E. Blount.

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Community

Western encourages all to take The Pledge

BY JASON WINDERS

WESTERN IS ASKING members of the university community to join friends and colleagues across London on Monday, Nov. 12 in taking The Pledge to End Bullying, a Thames Valley District School Board-led initiative.

“I applaud the school board’s leadership in promoting a healthy, safe and respectful community where bullies are simply no longer tolerated,” said Amit Chakma, Western president. “Staying silent and looking the other way when inappropriate behaviour happens is unacceptable, and I encourage all members of our campus to think about the difference they can make at home, at work and in the classroom by committing to The Pledge to End Bullying.”

As part of Western’s commitment to supporting a healthy, safe and respectful working and learning environment, Chakma encouraged Western students, staff, faculty and alumni to go online on Monday, Nov. 12 to thepledgetoendbullying.ca, click on London and then take The Pledge.

Ontario’s Ministry of Education defines bullying as repeated, persistent and aggressive behaviour directed at an individual or individuals, intended to cause (or should be known to cause) fear and distress and/or harm to another person’s body, feelings, self-esteem or reputation. Bullying occurs in a context where there is a real or perceived power imbalance and can be physical, verbal, social or electronic (cyberbullying).

“Bullying robs people of their enjoyment in life and impacts their productivity enormously; it undermines their self-confidence,” said Gitta Kulczycki, Western’s vice-president (resources and operations). “This is true whether the people being bullied are students or adults pursuing their way in the working world.

“No one has the right to impair the dignity and self-worth of another human being.”

Kulczycki has seen the impact of bullying – both in the workplace and as a mom. “I have seen first-hand the impact it has had,” she said. “I have no tolerance for it. Period.”

In June 2010, Bill Tucker, Thames Valley District School Board director of education, launched the Director’s Community Task Force on Anti-Bullying to gather ideas to combat bullying behavior in the community. Fifteen agencies throughout Thames Valley spent a year sharing and learning from each other. Released in June 2011, the task force’s Report to the Community highlighted how each organization will address the issue of bullying in the future.

Out of that initiative came The Pledge, a community-wide initiative that seeks to raise the public consciousness about bullying—in schools, at work and at home. Last year, more than 74,000 people took The Pledge.

“I believe that every individual has the right to live, work and participate in an inclusive community,” said Leslie Gloor Duncan, PMA president and Student Success Centre team coordinator for transition, leadership and enrichment programs. “Individuals must be able to live authentic lives without fear of harassment or bullying. The Pledge is an important tool to help raise awareness and allow our community to engage in important conversations.”

Adam Fearall agreed. “Bullying is a concern for all demographics and too many people are scarred by its impacts,” said the University Students’ Council president. “Perpetrators and victims must believe that there is a support network of people available that can help to break the cycle of bullying. We all have a responsibility to ensure that bullying does not impact our schools, workplaces and relationships.

“Signing the pledge allows all of us at Western to unite behind a shared vision for acceptance and inclusivity.”

The Pledge reads: “I believe that everybody has the right to live in a community where they feel safe, included, valued and accepted regardless of differences.

I pledge to be respectful of others and stand up against bullying whenever and wherever I see it.”

FOR MORE INFORMATION
Visit the program’s website, thepledgetoendbullying.ca, to take the pledge or find out more details on the program’s reach in the community.

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