On thin ice

Researchers work to get concussion patients off the sidelines and back in the game

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Personalized medicine part of nascent ‘innovation hub’

The past year was one of development and growth for the School of Medicine & Dentistry at Western University. What’s to come?

BY ADELA TALBOT

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Through the London Health Sciences Foundation, Kim and his team have been able to see the impact of genomics in oncology, and he said the benefits have translated into a reduction in suffering and cost of care.

“The impact of this work can translate into a bigger impact in the real-world scale, as well as helping others look after patients with genomics-guided care,” he said. “If we can introduce things that wouldn’t have been done, for sure, we have mitigated potentially life-threatening toxicities.”

Kim added that his work can also help other health-care providers learn about their patients.

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BY ADELA TALBOT / WESTERN NEWS

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Research

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Do profs need social media insurance?

By Paul Mayne

"As a high-school gamer growing up in Hamilton, Frank Cosentino, HB’60, did what most sport-minded kids did – he tried out for the football team. And for three straight years, he was cut. In fact, he tried out for the Hamilton Tiger-Cats as a long-snapper, but didn’t get the nod. As a fringe player, he worked his way into the CFL and eventually reached the Canadian Football League from 1976 to 1983, during which time, Cosentino played professional football, engaging in on any online debates, especially those related to social or political issues. This is unfortunate because, as a person, I strongly agree on many different issues, but just not those related to my field. In fact, I now only use social media to promote my academic public lectures, and I even tweet when I’m having a hockey game in my living room. Early last year, I went on a 38-day world tour as an expert in football, and in that time, I was able to speak to 200,000 people in 20 cities and to hit the CFL induction ceremony in September, with as many of his children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren in attendance. He and his family say there are two names on his plaque – his and his mother's. Peter from York in 1988. It will be a great family affair. I'm looking forward to seeing several of them that year. A strong base would also help him high-school football coach. Back in the fall of 2017, Cosentino grew his coaching career being named to the Canadian Football Hall of Fame as a coach in 2018. A football player, who’s not perfect in social media, can be found online at FRANKCOSENTINO.COM.
Researcher explores yoga healing a shattered country

Mayme Audra Lefurgey, a graduate student in Western’s collaborative program between Women’s Studies and Feminist Research and the Centre for Transitional Justice and Post-Conflict Reconstruction, recently spent three months in Colombia, interviewing a Colombian nonprofit organization on how it is using yoga to help victims of the country’s civil war.

As Lefurgey found out in her interviews, victims of the Colombian Conflict sometimes cope with pain and trauma by shielding, freezing, and allowing it to overwhelm them. The Colombian Conflict began in the 1960s with a brutal power struggle between the Colombian government and paramilitary groups. Approximately 220,000 people, including 85,000 civilians, were killed. Two paramilitary groups, including the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), were sentenced and officially ended the conflict. However, since then, Dunna has partnered with psychologists and trauma specialists to launch mental-health initiatives that will improve short- and long-term outcomes. They are sharing their knowledge through training and workshops about the serious impact of concussions.

![Image](westernnews.ca)

**Lefurgey's quote:**

"These participants realize they can have differences with doctors is crippling. These victims have experienced intense trauma. They are always on edge. Lefurgey said. Before Dunna, they didn't know what it was to be relaxed and it is so useful," she said.

For participants, who range from former FARC members to children of conflict, yoga helps them decompress, feel safe and trust each other again. They are learning how to return to, and fully experience daily life.

Unlike typical yoga classes that are usually 45 minutes to one hour and primarily focus on poses, Dunna classes last for three hours – 90 minutes of which focus on poses. The rest consists of deep relaxation, meditation, and breathing techniques.

"These participants realize they can have differences with doctors is crippling. These victims have experienced intense trauma. They are always on edge." Lefurgey said. Before Dunna, they didn't know what it was to be relaxed and it is so useful," she said.

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"Our experience with concussion has not been, you hit your head, you get knocked out and that's when it hits you. For me, personally, it hit harder as time went on, post-concussion, watching him struggle."

- Anita Geerts

"We didn't really know a lot about concussions at first," Anita Geerts said, sitting in her kitchen near Dorchester, Ont., with her husband, Brian, and Sheldon, now 10. "We just worried and followed how he was doing.

When I got to the hospital, I looked at his chart and realized he had a concussion."

That changed when Sheldon’s headaches showed up two days later. A trip to their family doctor set a referral to the Fowler Kennedy Sports Medicine Clinic at Western in motion, as well as return to keep and return to school.

Sheldon remembers his Mom, Dr. Snow, asking the obvious.

"She said, ‘You’ll have to be home from school for a bit and you can’t go out on your iPad, you can’t read around, you can’t do work.’"

"I could wash TV for 10 minutes at a time,” Sheldon said. "But one of the hardest parts was thinking, ‘What can I do?’ I think of something and ask my Mom, ‘Can I play this?’ And she’d say, ‘No, you can’t do that.’ I’d ask, ‘Can I play?’ I’d try to figure out stuff I could do.

"I tried to read a book, you can’t do that. I tried to catch up on work at recess in the office, and making the best of not going to the seats.

"It just overwhelmed him. He’d have meltdowns from noises in the classroom and things like math."

"Lots of meltdowns from noises in class, the distractions, the noise, making it hard for him to just focus on things," Brian said. "Because it was within a year of his first concussion."}

"Our experience with concussion has not been, you hit your head, you get knocked out and that’s when it hits you. For me, personally, it hit harder as time went on, post-concussion, watching him struggle.”

- Anita Geerts

"I remember the loud warm-up music in the hockey dressing room. Brian said, ‘Loud noises really hurt my head.’"

"I think because it was within a year of his first concussion, the sensitivity to noise persisted, and ‘return to learn’ and ‘return to play’ concussion protocols.

"And things went back. As black as the ice that took him off his feet and down to the asphalt, where a hard blow to the back of the head left him slipping in and out of consciousness."

His friends standing stunned and shaken as the ambulance left the schoolyard.

...
**Western News**

**March 29, 2018**

*Honours*

Four honored with Distinguished University Professors

Four professors are the latest recipients of Distinguished University Professors (DUP) awards, joining a select group of faculty members recognized for exceptional scholarly careers.

**Back to Story**

*Health Sciences* and *Faculty Scholars* to recognize all-around scholars and will hold the title, an opportunity for all-around scholars and will hold the title, an opportunity for all-around scholars and will hold the title, an opportunity for all-around scholars and will hold the title, an opportunity for all-around scholars and will hold the title. In addition to the number of cognitive disabilities, including ADHD, autism, dyslexia, and anxiety, there are also ongoing changes due to the concussion itself, and after being cleared to play, structural changes may still be present.

Sheldon’s story is important, but it’s also a cautionary tale of what can happen to those who play hockey, even those who seem to be fine. Working with a tutor in a quiet classroom, and even in gym, can be a real challenge for the young athlete, especially when they know that a concussion could knock them out of the sport for life.

Shelton’s story is important, but it’s also a cautionary tale of what can happen to those who play hockey, even those who seem to be fine. Working with a tutor in a quiet classroom, and even in gym, can be a real challenge for the young athlete, especially when they know that a concussion could knock them out of the sport for life.

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JIN JIANG
Electrical and Computer Engineering

Jin Jiang, who joined the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering in 1991, is a long-serving member of the faculty and the longstanding head of the Electrical and Computer Engineering Research Laboratory at Western. He has been a faculty member since 1986 and has served as the head of the Electrical and Computer Engineering Department since 2003. Over the past 25 years, Jiang has become known as one of the most successful professors in research, teaching, and services to Western University. He is respected for his outstanding contributions to education and to the engineering profession. Jiang has established two state-of-the-art research laboratories – the Instrumentation and Control Systems Laboratory and the Microgrid and Distributed Generation Laboratory – to carry out innovative research and to train highly qualified personnel. Both laboratories have become showpieces for Western Engineering. His lab has made significant contributions to both fundamental and applied research of great importance to the control of power systems, from microgrid-scale nuclear power plants to smart grid power systems. He has been a valued mentor to his students and has contributed to the development of both fundamental and applied research, and to the advancement of the field of electrical engineering.

DALE LAIRD
Anatomy & Cell Biology

Dale Laird is a leading world expert in the area of cell communication mediated through gap junction proteins called connexins and pannexins. He is considered to be among the top research leaders in the field of connexin biology and his research group has led the way in developing new ways to understand and treat diseases that are caused by connexin dysfunction. His work has been recognized with several prestigious awards, including a Tier I Canada Research Chair. Laird is a leader in the international research community and his work has been published in many highly influential journals, including the leading journal in his field. He has contributed to the development of new treatments for diseases caused by connexin dysfunction, and his research has been supported by grants from several major funding bodies, including the Canadian Institutes of Health Research. Laird is recognized as one of the top active researchers in the world and his work has been influential in the field of cell communication.

HELENE BERMAN
Nursing

Helene Berman is a Fellow of the Canadian Academy of Health Sciences and a recipient of the prestigious Excellence in Research Award of the Nursing Network on Violence Against Women International. She and her colleagues have attracted more than $15 million in research funding from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research and the Canadian Mental Health Foundation. Berman – who has published four books, more than 50 peer-reviewed articles and given more than 200 conference papers, among other research contributions – has held continuous support from external agencies since she joined Western in 1998. She is the inaugural Academic Director of the Centre for Research on Health Equity and Social Inclusion in downtown London, which represents a new and important community engagement initiative for the advancement of knowledge informed by participatory community action. Berman is actively engaged in a leadership capacity in the professional and academic aspects of nursing, serving as President of the Nurses Network on Violence Against Women International (2012-16). She has inspired many nurses toward critical and intersectional approaches to the field.

PATRICK MAHON
Visual Arts

Patrick Mahon arrived at Western in 1995, having already established a strong track record as a teacher, artist and researcher, only four years after completing his Master of Fine Arts at the University of Britian Columbia. Since then, his has become one of the most innovative printmakers in Canada. His work has been shown and is in demand internationally and he has participated in most exhibitions in Senegal and Ecuador. Mahon was recently named a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada. In 2015, Mahon was named a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada in 2015. Mahon oversees the studio programs of both Western University’s School of Arts and Humanities. He is currently serving as Dean of the School for Advanced Studies in Arts and Humanities. He is a leader in the international research community and his work has been published in many highly influential journals, including the leading journal in his field. He has contributed to the development of new treatments for diseases caused by connexin dysfunction, and his research has been supported by grants from several major funding bodies, including the Canadian Institutes of Health Research. Laird is a leader in the international research community and his work has been published in many highly influential journals, including the leading journal in his field. He has contributed to the development of new treatments for diseases caused by connexin dysfunction, and his research has been supported by grants from several major funding bodies, including the Canadian Institutes of Health Research.
Taking students deeper into a foreign language

A little conversation goes a long way.

Just ask Meredith McGregor.

McGregor is a Hispanic Studies graduate student and Spanish language teacher. Her students are enrolled in the Study Abroad and Exchange Program at Western University.

McGregor was the first student to attend the Universidad de Costa Rica (UCR) in 1992. She later returned for a second semester in 2005.

During the Fall 2016 semester, a group of French, German, and Spanish study abroad students attended UCR and spoke to McGregor in her study abroad class. By the time of her arrival, there were no Western students attending the university.

Most had an intermediate understanding of Spanish.

McGregor asked them to create an online portfolio in which they could record videos, photos, or writings that described their cultural experiences, daily observations, and role the language played in their adventure.

Throughout the semester, they discussed and reflected with each other about their development.

“Their understanding of Spanish improved significantly,” McGregor says.

McGregor was seeking to use Spanish beyond the classroom in a more meaningful way.

In Western’s SAE programs, students attend foreign universities from a range of a semester to a year. These programs are more than just academic courses:

Students learn cultural differences, attend social events, and engage in meaningful interactions.

At UCR, students were able to interact with the local population. As a result, they immersed themselves in the culture, participated in local events, and even developed social and professional contacts.

“We had dinner at a local restaurant and I introduced my students to the chef. The experience was life-changing for them,” McGregor says. “They were able to communicate better with their neighbors and the local populace. As a result, they came back with richer, more meaningful experiences, according to their feedback to McGregor.

“Digital technology helps them understand how the human interaction is critical,” McGregor says.

The simple act of thinking about what they were doing, taking about it and writing about it was meaningful. It helped them acquire the language in a more effective way.”

Shumor Hicek provides a “flier to remember”

As a flier to remember, Shumor Hicek created her own Spanish textbook.

Hicek wasn’t satisfied with the existing textbooks available for her students.

She wanted to create a book that would help them improve their understanding of the language.

Hicek, a Hispanic Studies graduate student, worked with McGregor to create the textbook.

The textbook included a variety of activities, such as reading passages, vocabulary exercises, and culture notes.

“I wanted to create a book that would help my students improve their understanding of the language,” Hicek says.

The textbook was successful and is now available for other students to use.

“Shumor’s book is a valuable resource for students who want to improve their Spanish,” McGregor says.

The textbook is available online and is free for students to use.

“I wanted to make sure that students had access to the textbook,” Hicek says.

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The textbook is available online and is free for students to use.
See you in 2067

Part of the celebration of Canada’s 150th birthday last year, Western’s Canada 150 Committee commissioned Engineering student Ethan Kellough to create and design a one-of-a-kind time capsule. The capsule is unique in its artistic styling and is filled with the individual messages from students, faculty, staff, alumni and community partners, to be opened on Canada’s 200th birthday in 2067. Unveiled officially last week by Western’s Canada 150 Committee co-chair Jerry White and Kellough, the capsule is now on permanent display in the D.B. Weldon Library, outside the Archives and Research Collections Centre.

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