

# *the* philanthropist

Dalhousie Medical Research Foundation Newsletter Spring & Summer 2010 Issue



Family time. Stephanie, Brian and Gabriel.  
(Photo: Shari Tucker Photography)

## Shared Experience

By Marie Weeren

When Stephanie Parker saw the photo of a happy, healthy Katelyn Robarts in the fall issue of this newsletter she was filled with joy. She called Dalhousie Medical Research Foundation's Director of Development Jyl MacKinnon to thank her for sharing and celebrating Katelyn's story.

Stephanie had a special reason to be moved. Both Katelyn, who has lent her support to the 2009-2010 Molly Appeal for cancer research, and Stephanie's son, Gabriel, were diagnosed with acute myelogenous leukemia (AML).

Gabriel spent just over six months at the IWK Health Centre and is doing well. "Gabriel is an amazing little person," Stephanie says. "When he was born he always seemed to have obstacles to overcome, but he always did. He is well known for always smiling and being happy. He's very vibrant and full of life."

Stephanie and her partner, Brian Haines, live with their son in New Glasgow. Gabriel, who will turn three in October, likes to be on the go, whether it's attending a play group, eating at the local Pizza Delight, or enjoying hockey with his dad.

> continued page 3

*Dalhousie*   
**MEDICAL RESEARCH**  
*Foundation*

Today's Science. Tomorrow's Cures.

The Dalhousie Medical Research Foundation is an independently registered charity established for the purpose of providing financial support for research activities in the Faculty of Medicine at Dalhousie University and its affiliated research institutions.

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## Contents

Shared Experience	1 & 3
Executive Director's Editorial	2
Where Does My Donation Go?	4-5
Allergan Grant	6
Revving Up For Research	6-7
Postcard Project	7
Power of Giving	8
Contributing to the Community	10
Adopt-a-Researcher	12
Picchione Scholar	13
Community of Scholars	14

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## Water and inspiration. What do these two words have in common?

Today, water is certainly a hot topic – the lack of it, the abundance of it, and the overuse of it. Here in Canada, we are extremely lucky as we are in the abundance category and need constant reminding not to take that luxury for granted.

A drop of water has the potential to grow to a pool of water and then to a river and then to an ocean. This is how a lady named Molly unknowingly started an ocean of giving. This month Dalhousie Medical Research Foundation (DMRF) celebrates the 30th anniversary of the Molly Appeal campaign.

It was 30 years ago, in 1980, that housekeeper Molly overheard her employer being asked for a major gift by two Foundation board members. As they were leaving the home, Molly slipped them \$5. She said that she fervently believed in medical research and felt that if every individual gave what they could personally afford, then together we could make a major difference.

The Foundation board members were so touched by Molly's heartfelt statement and gift that they came back and asked her permission to start an annual campaign in her name. She agreed to this proposal but being a humble person did not want her last name used. Molly has since passed away, but a few years before her death she finally gave permission for the world to know her last name - Moore.

From that initial \$5 gift, over \$5 million has been raised from the Molly Appeal campaign – most definitely a drop of water that grew, and continues to grow, into oceans of support.

Research, like water, gathers strength over time, meeting other sources and eventually flooding into lakes and oceans. Small discoveries lead to more important



Alison C. Edwards, Executive Director

revelations, which eventually bring us to new treatment options and better care for patients and their families. Research, like water, is always in motion, seeking out new corners of exploration and innovation.

Now do you see the connection between water and inspiration? Molly Moore is an inspiration to all of us that every single person can contribute to making a true difference in our world. That inspiration has supported many excellent medical researchers in the Maritime provinces.

On April 21, 2010, at the tenth annual Faculty of Medicine Community of Scholars Awards dinner, the Foundation and our friends and supporters celebrate. We honour the inspiration of Molly Moore and the clinical care, education, professionalism and research excellence abundant within the Dalhousie Faculty of Medicine.

All Maritimers should be proud of this research excellence. Every single DMRF donor can take part of the credit for making that happen.

Using Molly Moore as your role model, I challenge each of you to think about what you can do to inspire excellence.

Warm regards,

Executive Director,  
Dalhousie Medical Research Foundation

## Shared Experience



Gabriel Parker-Haines (Photo: Stephanie Parker)

“I love this little fellow with all my heart, and what I have learned from him is that things in the past I thought were important aren’t as important,” Brian says. “Now when 5 o’clock comes at work I don’t stick around as much as I used to. I rush home and I just want to spend every second with him and Steph. With Gabriel I learned to appreciate things a lot more.”

Appreciation is a recurring theme in conversations with Stephanie and Brian. There’s gratitude for the support of family, friends, community and even strangers, which kept the couple going on those days when Stephanie says “it was so hard and scary and overwhelming.” There’s admiration and thanks for the expertise

and dedication of the IWK team. There’s Brian’s respect for Stephanie’s strength during their long journey. And then there’s their gratefulness for Willow Langlais.

The daughter of Sara and Ricky of Royalton, New Brunswick, Willow also had AML. She passed away just before her seventh birthday. “The time

we spent at the hospital, after a little while there, she was greeting everyone and trying to get to know them, to find out what was wrong and trying to help out,” Ricky says.

“She was always my little girl to go to and ask a lot of questions...” Stephanie says. “Every single night Gabriel looks up and says ‘Night, Willow.’ I couldn’t imagine my life without feeling Willow around us.”

After what Stephanie and her family have experienced, she is determined to give back. “I see supporting medical research in a whole different light now, because I’ve experienced it through my child.” She says it’s a matter of fact that the involvement of people in fundraising enables doctors “to study more, research more, to make a better protocol or just make it a little easier for the kids to go through it.” ☐



**Molly's Runners  
run again!!**

For the second year in a row, Dalhousie Medical Research Foundation will be entering a team in the Group Charity Challenge of the Scotiabank BlueNose Marathon event taking place on Sunday, May 23rd, 2010.

**All are welcome to join the Molly's Runners Team.  
You can walk or run any of the day's events :  
5K or 10K or half marathon or full marathon.**

**Molly's  
runners**

Contact Alison Edwards at  
alison.edwards@dal.ca or 902-494-3502



Dr. Gail Eskes (Photo supplied by Gail Eskes)



Dr. Susan Bryson (Photo: Danny Abriel, Dalhousie)

## Where does my donation go?

Every year Dalhousie Medical Research Foundation holds an annual capital equipment grant competition to support laboratory equipment for medical researchers at Dalhousie University. Funds to support these equipment grants come from a variety of generous donor sources, including 'In Memoriam gifts', one-time designated gifts and on-going endowments. For 2009/10, the foundation was able to support the purchase of seven pieces of laboratory equipment totaling over \$125,000. Background on the amazing research work of two of these recipient researchers follows below.

## Addressing cognitive problems

The development of treatments for cognitive problems after brain damage is the goal of a multidisciplinary project led by Dalhousie neuropsychologist Dr. Gail Eskes. The initiative has been awarded \$1.8 million from the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency Atlantic Innovation Fund.

“It’s often a silent problem because you can’t actually see cognitive problems,” says Dr. Eskes, explaining that cognition includes domains such as attention, memory, language, problem solving and reasoning. “They’re often

under-recognized and at this point there aren’t very many resources for dealing with them. The types of things that you need to do are very time-intensive, resource-demanding, and we just don’t have the health services set up for that in the province.”

One way that the project will help address this problem is by developing a “cognitive repair kit.” The kit will feature game-like technology that can be set up on a person’s home computer. A therapist will determine what kinds of training the individual

needs and then assess the results.

Enabling individuals to engage in skills training at home means they have the opportunity to practice – a lot.

“We know that intensity is very important for making improvements in cognitive skills. The injured brain is actually much more resilient than we ever imagined, but it requires a lot of input and training for it to show plasticity and to be able to improve skills like attention and memory,” Dr. Eskes says.

> continued on page 5

While the focus will be individuals who have had a stroke or have Parkinson's Disease, Dr. Eskes says the hope is to move into other areas including traumatic brain injury. The project's team is composed of Dalhousie's Dr. Eskes and other members of the Brain Repair Centre, including its Chairman Dr. Ivar Mendez; Dr. Ray Klein, Psychology; and Dr. David Westwood, Health and Human Performance.

Dr. Eskes is a Dalhousie Associate Professor of Psychiatry, Psychology and Medicine (Neurology), an affiliated scientist (Neuropsychology) with Capital Health and a member of the Brain Repair Centre.


She earned her PhD from the University of California, Berkeley, and first came to Dalhousie in 1981 for a postdoctoral fellowship in the Departments of Physiology and Biophysics, and Psychology. In 2002 she received a Clinical Research Scholar Award from the Faculty of Medicine.

Dr. Eskes has twice received capital equipment grants from Dalhousie Medical Research Foundation. The first was for software (and the hardware to run the program) that helps in the analysis of brain activity.

The most recent grant of \$10,000, given in the fall of 2009, is towards the purchase of an EyeLink eye tracker. "Eye movements are a window into cognition in terms of being able to tell where people are looking and what

they're paying attention to," Dr. Eskes says.

The eye tracker will be a part of the Atlantic Innovation Fund research, which is a matching fund project that has received support from the Nova Scotia Health Research Foundation, Dalhousie University, Capital Health and Dalhousie Medical Research Foundation.

"We can't do it without partners," says Dr. Eskes. "DMRF has always been a valuable partner in my research." 

## Advancing autism research

Dr. Susan Bryson, an international expert in autism and holder of Dalhousie's Joan and Jack Craig Chair in Autism Research, stresses the importance of early detection and treatment for children with autism.

Dr. Bryson and her colleague Dr. Isabel Smith, Associate Professor and a Faculty of Medicine Clinical Research Scholar, are proceeding in two research directions to advance this goal.

The first is a basic line of research designed to identify early behavioural and physiological markers of autism. The second is more applied research that evaluates the effectiveness of early intervention initiatives.

Their basic research includes involvement in the first and largest

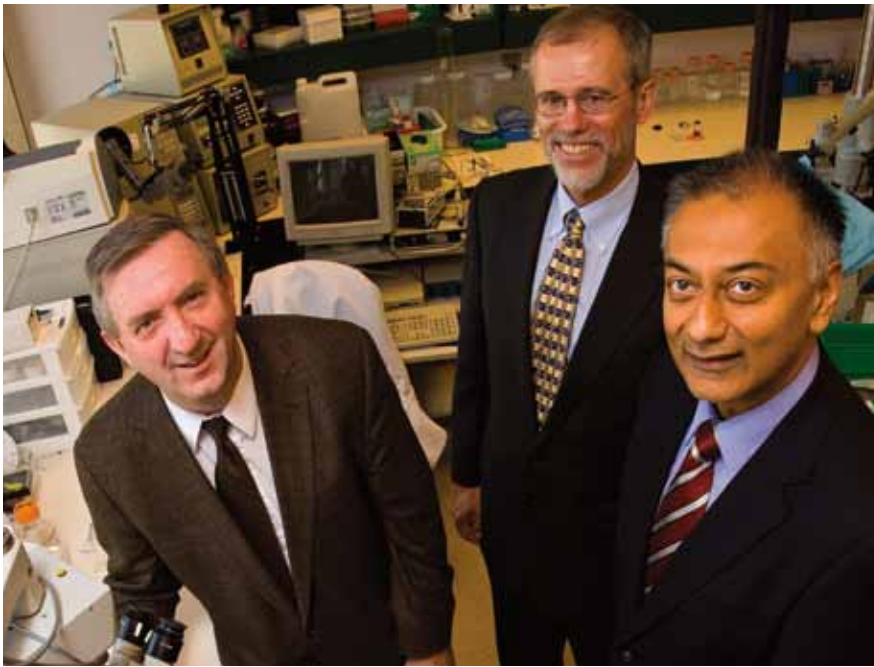
study of high-risk infants (all with an older sibling with autism), drawn from all three Maritime provinces. Their applied research is examining the effectiveness of the innovative Nova Scotia Early Intervention Program for preschoolers with autism and their newly developed parent-mediated intervention for 12 - 24-month olds with suspected autism – programs that have attracted wide interest throughout Canada and beyond.

In the fall of 2009, their Dalhousie Medical Research Foundation capital equipment grant application was successful. Dr. Bryson was the principal applicant and received \$25,000 in DMRF funding, which will be used for two purposes.

The first is directed to the purchase of a system from Noldus which combines digital video cameras and computer systems to permit data collection – in this case video and audio recordings of the behaviour of children with autism. The system allows the investigator to carry out detailed analyses of behaviour time-locked to other events (for example, the presentation of a specific visual or auditory stimulus, or the behaviour of another person).

The capability for on-line coding of digitized video information made possible through the new system replaces the current necessity of scoring events by watching video, often frame-by-frame, and recording events on paper.

> continued on page 14



(Photo: David Grandy)

## Allergan provides grant to DMRF for Vision research

By Alison C. Edwards

Allergan Inc., with headquarters in Irvine, California, is a global specialty pharmaceutical company that develops and commercializes innovative products in areas such as neurology, obesity intervention, urology and ophthalmology. Allergan has been a longtime supporter of vision research at Dalhousie University.

Allergan Inc. contacted Dr. Bal Chauhan, Dalhousie Chair in Vision Research and Professor in the Dalhousie Department of Ophthalmology and Vision Sciences, with news of a research grant to support postdoctoral fellows and graduate students in the Retina and Optic Nerve Research Laboratory located in the Sir Charles Tupper Medical Building.

On December 7, 2009, Dr. Larry Wheeler, Senior Vice President, Biological Sciences, Allergan Inc. visited Dalhousie Medical School in person to present a \$100,000 cheque to Alison Edwards, Executive Director of Dalhousie Medical Research Foundation, and Dr. Bal Chauhan. Allergan Inc. made a further contribution of \$38,000 in March 2010. All of these funds will be used to support graduate trainees doing research work in Dr. Chauhan's lab in the area of open-angle glaucoma – the most prevalent optic neuropathy and a major cause of blindness and visual disability.

*Dr. Bal Chauhan, Chair in Vision Research (right) shows Dean of Medicine, Dr. Tom Marrie (left) and Dr. Larry Wheeler, Senior Vice President, Allergan Inc. (middle) one of the microscopes in the Retina and Optic Nerve Research Laboratory in the Tupper Medical Building.*

With initial funding assistance from a variety of sources, including Dalhousie Medical Research Foundation and Allergan Inc., the Retina and Optic Nerve Research Laboratory at Dalhousie University opened in 1998. It now houses six faculty researchers and their medical trainees and technicians on the top floor of the Sir Charles Tupper Medical Building.

Understanding retinal function is fundamental to determining how the visual system performs in healthy and diseased states. Allergan Inc.'s recent funding contribution in this area is most appreciated by Dr. Chauhan and his team. Dalhousie Medical Research Foundation was very pleased to assist in the facilitation of this important support. ☒

## Revving up for research

By Marie Weeren

Halifax Motorcycle Ride for Dad is getting ready to roll on May 29. Riders and supporters will once again join forces to raise funds for research and for increasing awareness of prostate cancer.

> continued on page 7

## Revving up... continued

Part of the national Motorcycle Ride for Dad program, the Halifax chapter is led by the Municipal Association of Police Personnel with representatives from Metro Transit and the Fire Department.

The Halifax chapter has donated a total of \$37,000 to Dalhousie Medical Research Foundation over the past three years. Its contribution from last year's ride has made possible a studentship for an undergraduate student engaged in prostate cancer research this summer.

The studentship will be administered by the Beatrice Hunter Cancer Research Institute (BHCRI). The



(Photo: John Sherlock)

Institute bears the name of a longtime Molly Appeal supporter who bequeathed \$12.5 million to Dalhousie Medical Research Foundation for cancer research. The Foundation is one of BHCRI's founding members.

"Dalhousie Medical Research Foundation is so pleased to be Halifax Ride for Dad's charity of choice,"

says Director of Development Jyl MacKinnon. "The ride is a great example of what can happen when people come together to work towards a common cause, in this case, fighting prostate cancer."

To become involved in the 2010 Halifax Ride for Dad, visit <http://motorcycleridefordad.org>



Alyson Murray (Photo: Supplied by Alyson Murray)

## Postcard Project

By Marie Weeren

Alyson Murray will have a wonderful adventure this spring and summer as a crew member for two legs of the Clipper 09-10 Round the World Yacht Race. She will be sailing on Cape Breton Island – Nova Scotia's Masterpiece. The yacht is sponsored by Sydney Ports Corporation through the support of Enterprise Cape Breton Corporation.

Murray is looking forward to sharing her experience with others through a fundraising project involving postcards. For \$10, supporters can purchase a postcard on which Murray will write an update and then mail from one of her ports of call. Murray's stopovers include Jamaica, New York, Cape Breton, Ireland and England.

"As a child I collected postcards from all over and really loved it," she says. "I think everyone loves getting good old-fashioned mail, especially something that's positive and fun."

Twenty per cent of the funds Murray raises for her trip will go to Dalhousie Medical Research Foundation and The Philip Green Memorial Trust.

Murray says, "Being able to participate in the race is such an amazing opportunity for me, but I would feel incredibly selfish to be taking this opportunity and this privilege and not using it to benefit others at the same time."

To place a postcard order please email: [chartmycourse@gmail.com](mailto:chartmycourse@gmail.com)



Katelyn Robarts, Molly Ambassador 2009-2010 (Photo: Johanna Matthews)

## The power of giving

By Marie Weeren

When asked why she has given so much of herself in support of the 2009-2010 Molly Appeal for cancer research, Katelyn Robarts replies:

“I feel like I don’t want anyone to have to go through what my family and I went through. I think it’s important that we raise money and find a better way to treat children and adults with cancer.”

Katelyn, who was diagnosed with acute myelogenous leukemia in 2008, is now doing well. During the Molly Appeal campaign she was interviewed by the media and made several presentations, including one to her school about the Appeal and her experience with cancer.

Jyl MacKinnon, Director of Development for Dalhousie Medical Research Foundation, thanks Katelyn for sharing her story and her positive energy. “She’s been a true ambassador and such an inspiration for people. She’s done an amazing job.” MacKinnon also appreciates the supportive team which is Katelyn’s family – parents Mary and Scott (who was a co-presenter with Katelyn at one event) and brother Gareth.

The Molly Appeal is, at heart, a team effort. “In the spirit of Molly Moore, our donors from across the Maritimes continue to support medical research,” MacKinnon says. “Thanks to their combined efforts we will be able to purchase the first RNA-interference library in the region.”

Postdoctoral fellow Dr. Maya Shmulevitz is one of the many researchers who will benefit from the RNAi library. She says, “It will take us a long way in our understanding of which changes in the cell contribute to cancer.” [🔗](#)



MaryLee McMillan (John’s Mom), Cheri Lumsden (John’s sister), Colin Williston, Jeff MacDonald, Katelyn Robarts, and Tanna McMillan (John’s wife)

## Reaching out to help others

The 2009-2010 Molly Appeal for cancer research has successfully concluded with a gift of \$20,000 from the John T. McMillan Jr. Memorial Foundation of Saint John, New Brunswick.

Family and friends established the foundation in honour of John, a community-minded person who was always willing to lend a hand. He passed away at 34 from acute myelogenous leukemia (AML).

> continued page 9

## Reaching out... continued

“John was adamant about beating leukemia,” says board member Colin Williston, a friend of John’s from Dalhousie student days. “When he didn’t, we all recognized that had he beaten the disease he would have been there to help those that might have needed the help. So, although he’s not here, we’re carrying on with what we think he would have done.”

The McMillan Foundation has a three-pronged approach: elevating education, families helping families, and cornering the cure. The first component involves providing scholarships at Simonds High School, which John attended. The second sees, primarily, that individuals and families dealing with a blood-related cancer receive financial help.


“Our foundation helps families with various needs, ranging from assistance with transportation costs to equipment purchases, allowing families to concentrate on recovery. However, the bigger picture is that if enough people and enough organizations support research, then there won’t be that need in the end. It’s tackling the source of the problem instead of the symptoms,” says Williston as he explains the third component, cornering the cure.

The McMillan Foundation’s involvement with the Molly Appeal was prompted by a newspaper article about Katelyn Robarts from Rothesay, New Brunswick, who was the face of the Molly Appeal campaign for cancer research. (The McMillan Foundation had earlier provided support to the

Robarts through families helping families.)

The generosity of the McMillan Foundation and other Molly Appeal donors will make possible the purchase of an RNA-interference library. Dr. Maya Shmulevitz, a postdoctoral fellow working in Dr. Patrick Lee’s lab at Dalhousie Medical

School, says the research facility will foster new collaborations in Atlantic Canada and open up new areas for medical research.

“There are a lot of questions we’ve wanted to ask for a long time that we just simply couldn’t. It’s exciting to think that with the RNAi library, we will soon be able to.” 



Left to Right: Dr. Patrick Lee and Cheryl Dean (Photo: John Sherlock)


## Teamwork!

By Marie Weeren

Dr. Patrick Lee’s research lab has won the first annual team challenge at Dalhousie Medical School to raise the most funds – nearly \$5,400 – for the Molly Appeal. They sold tickets and hosted an evening event featuring a live auction at the Bitter End Martini Bar & Restaurant in Halifax.

In recognition of their achievement in support of the Molly Appeal for cancer research they will receive a Bronze Daisy award and a pizza party from Dalhousie Medical Research Foundation. The greatest reward, however, comes from knowing the contribution they’ve made.

“It’s a great Foundation and our lab and department have been awarded Molly Appeal funds for equipment to conduct cancer research,” says research associate and lab manager Cheryl Dean, a key organizer of the team’s efforts. “We just wanted to give back and raise money for the Molly Appeal to help support cancer research here at Dalhousie.”

A very honourable mention goes to the Cupcakes for Cancer Research team spearheaded by Dr. Jonathan Blay’s laboratory. The team raised over \$3,000 through the sale of deluxe homemade baked goods. 



Left to Right: Evelyn Cole, Mary Boutin (Photo: John Sherlock)

## Contributing to the community

By Marie Weeren

A vital tool for immunity research, the Multiplex Analyzer, was recently purchased thanks to the generous support of Molly Appeal donors.

One of these donors was the Royal Canadian Legion Centennial Branch 160, which made a \$3,000 gift through its Poppy Trust Fund to top off the fundraising efforts for the 2008-2009 Molly Appeal.

“It’s awe-inspiring to have such a wonderful group of individuals, who have already given so much of their time and dedication to our country and our community, continue to give

back and support medical research that will help so many others,” says Dalhousie Medical Research Foundation Executive Director Alison Edwards. “They make me proud to be Canadian and motivate me to want to give back more as well.”

Centennial Branch 160, which is located in Westphal, Dartmouth, has almost 700 members. President Evelyn Cole was instrumental in guiding the donation process after learning from branch member Dorothy (Dot) Kern about Dalhousie Medical Research Foundation’s efforts to purchase the Multiplex Analyzer.

Cole, who is a long-serving member of the Centennial Branch poppy committee, explained the equipment will be of value to the community at large – veterans, seniors and the general public. “It benefits everybody in the long run.”

Edwards was presented with the donation at one of the branch’s monthly general meetings. She spoke to the gathering about the Multiplex Analyzer, its importance and the Foundation’s gratitude for the branch’s contribution. “I think it made the people who were there feel that they were a part of it,” Cole says. ☐

Today's science.  
Tomorrow's cures.



The Molly Appeal began thirty years ago with a simple gesture – a \$5.00 donation from a lady named Molly Moore. She believed that if every person made even a small annual gift, it would make a big difference. *She was right.*



Thanks to Molly's inspiration and your kindness, we look to a future filled with hope.

Contact us today to help create change through medical research.

**DALHOUSIE MEDICAL RESEARCH FOUNDATION**

5850 College Street, 1-A1 Sir Charles Tupper Medical Building,  
Halifax, Nova Scotia B3H 4H7

902.494.3502 Toll-free 1.888.866.6559 [www.mollyappeal.ca](http://www.mollyappeal.ca)

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I prefer my donation to remain anonymous. I do not wish to have my name appear in the DMRF annual report or have my gift publicly acknowledged in any donor recognition program.

Registered Charity BN# 11922 9318 RR0001



# Adopt-a-Researcher




Ms. Jyl MacKinnon, Director of Development

I am very excited to write to you about our newest program – “Adopt-a-Researcher.” The team here at Dalhousie Medical Research Foundation has been working with Pattie LaCroix, President of Catapult Media, to develop this pilot project.

This exciting initiative is an invitation to become directly engaged in supporting research at Dalhousie University’s Faculty of Medicine through ‘adopting’ a medical researcher, their lab and their team of researchers.

This may be of interest to individuals, corporations or community groups who wish to support a specific area of research. You can select your preferred area of medical research and we will match you with a researcher/lab in need of assistance. Sample areas include: Alzheimer’s, Parkinson’s, Cancer, Stroke, Diabetes, Epilepsy, Heart disease, to name but a few.

And there are a variety of ways you can contribute: a one-time donation, monthly donations, a pledge over a specific number of years. The program is customized for you to meet your goals for charitable giving and the funding priorities of the research labs. We are offering an opportunity for you to get to know the world-class researchers in our community, to learn firsthand about their research initiatives and over time to build a supportive relationship that celebrates their ground-breaking discoveries and your generous support.

For more information please give me a call at: (902) 494-2356 or by e-mail: [jyl.mackinnon@dal.ca](mailto:jyl.mackinnon@dal.ca). 

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Your gifts make it possible for researchers at Dalhousie Medical School to continue a long tradition of research excellence...research that impacts your life, the lives of your family and those in your community.

There are many ways to arrange your gift to meet your needs and those of your family, while supporting local, innovative medical research. To obtain more information or confidential assistance please don’t hesitate to contact Jyl MacKinnon at [jyl.mackinnon@dal.ca](mailto:jyl.mackinnon@dal.ca) or by calling 1-888-866-6559.

Please send me: \_\_\_\_\_

- |                                                                                                                 |                                                                                              |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> information about the “Adopt-a-Researcher” program                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> gifts of stocks and bonds                                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> a booklet on writing my Will or information about supporting medical research through: | <input type="checkbox"/> gift annuities (for those age 70 and over)                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> bequests                                                                               | <input type="checkbox"/> I have remembered Dalhousie Medical Research Foundation in my Will! |



Dr. Jana Sawynok, Professor and Head, Department of Pharmacology, Dalhousie University and Dr. Jason McDougall, Picchione Visiting Scholar 2009/10

## Picchione Visiting Scholar Program

By Alison C. Edwards


The purpose of the Picchione Visiting Scholar Program is to bring to Dalhousie Medical School internationally respected scholars recognized for having made significant contributions to the advancement of their respective fields of endeavour in medical research.

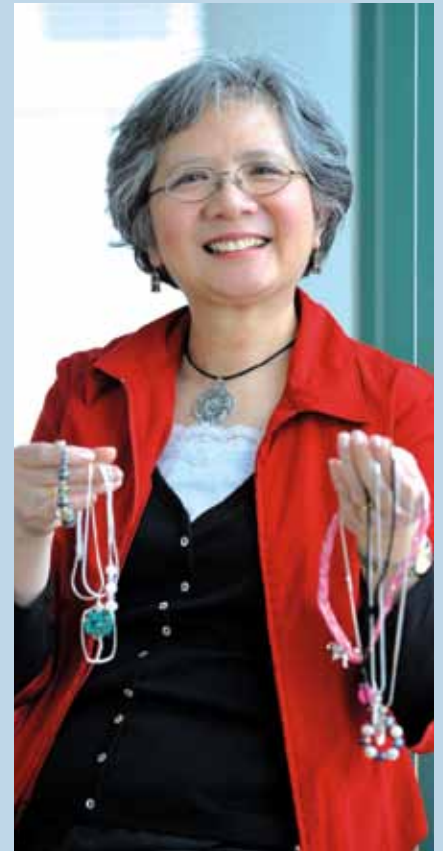
Such visits provide an opportunity for exchange of ideas and promotion of ongoing collaboration in medical research.

The 2009/10 Picchione Visiting Scholar was Dr. Jason McDougall, Associate Professor, Department of Physiology and Biophysics, from the Faculty of Medicine at University of Calgary. With the support of DMRF's Picchione program, Dr. McDougall was able to visit Dalhousie as part of his recent sabbatical leave.

Dr. McDougall's main research interest is in the treatment of joint inflammation and arthritis pain. During his visit last fall, he teamed up with members of the Dalhousie Department of Pharmacology, including the department's head Dr. Jana Sawynok, to examine the delivery of novel pharmacological agents to arthritic joints. This was done with the development of a novel osteoarthritis pain model and the pharmacological assessment of various antidepressants and anticonvulsants in an osteoarthritis nerve. In addition, Dr. McDougall presented a research seminar and assisted in graduate student project guidance.

Dr. McDougall returned to Calgary last November. However, his visit to Dalhousie has stimulated new ideas and the beginning of long-term collaborations. As our Dr. Sawynok states:

"This has been a fabulous 'joint' undertaking!!" 



Pearl Blay (Photo: John Sherlock)

## A su-pearl-ative collection

Halifax artisan Pearl Blay (a.k.a. the Beading Gem) has launched a beautiful jewelry line with a distinct purpose. Net proceeds from LIFE COLLECTION sales support research at Beatrice Hunter Cancer Research Institute.

Blay has lost family members to cancer. "I think that's key to a lot of artisans like myself who have decided to raise money for research – we ourselves have seen what the disease has done."

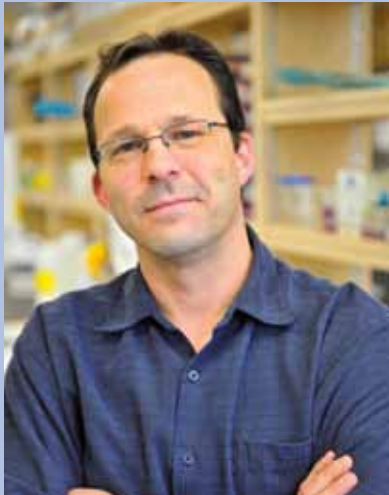
She shares her creativity through jewelry-making workshops and a blog. "A lot of people are quite bemused that someone named Pearl is actually making jewelry. You could say I was born to do it."

View the collection:

<http://www.etsy.com/shop/beadinggem> 

# 2010 Community of Scholars Award Winners

By Melanie Jollymore



**Award of Excellence in Basic Science Research**  
**Dr. Christopher Sinal**  
Associate Professor,  
Department of Pharmacology

**Dr. Christopher Sinal sheds light on chronic diseases**

Talented young scientist Dr. Chris Sinal runs a wide-ranging research program that has already shed light on our understanding of lipid metabolism, fat-cell formation and hardening of the arteries. He recently discovered an endocrine factor called chemerin, which has captured worldwide interest because it could lead to new treatments for obesity, type 2 diabetes and even osteoporosis.



**Award of Excellence in Clinical Research**  
**Dr. Ryan D'Arcy**  
Associate Professor, Department of Radiology

**Dr. Ryan D'Arcy, a visionary research leader**

Dr. Ryan D'Arcy has transformed Halifax into a leading centre for brain imaging research. As group leader of the National Research Council's Institute for Biodiagnostics (Atlantic), he has raised more than \$38 million, developed three state-of-the-art imaging facilities, and built a team of more than 50 people. He is known around the world for his work in functional imaging in coma and white-matter disease, pre-brain-surgery simulation, cognitive processing, and many other areas of neuroscience.



**Max Forman Senior Research Prize**  
**Dr. Susan Howlett**  
Professor, Departments of Pharmacology and Geriatric Medicine

**Dr. Susan Howlett, a cardiac research pioneer**

Dr. Susan Howlett's studies of the impact of age and gender on heart-cell function have opened new frontiers in the field of heart research. She has discovered why the ability of each heart cell to contract—and therefore pump blood—declines with age, pointing the way to potential new drugs to protect heart-cell function in aging people. At the same time, Dr. Howlett has found that female hearts do not age the same as male hearts, and that male and female hearts may respond differently to certain cardiac medications. Her findings could revolutionize how men and women are treated for heart disease in the future.


## Autism research continued from page 5...

The second direction for the funding is an upgrade of psychophysiology equipment that will provide the researchers, their students and the wider university community with facilities that are optimal for testing

young children, infants and special populations with autism or related developmental disorders. The new video observation and audio equipment will support efficient and high-standard research.

Dr. Bryson received her PhD in Clinical Psychology from McGill University. She was founding director of the Autism Research Unit at the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto,

and in 2002, became the founding director of the Autism Research Centre at the IWK Health Centre.

In addition to the 2009 equipment grant, Dalhousie Medical Research Foundation has supported the endowed Craig Chair in Autism Research at Dalhousie's Faculty of Medicine, and provided earlier equipment funding to Dr. Bryson. 

# Your memorial gift to medical research is a step toward future cures.

*M*EDICAL  
RESEARCH  
*touches us all*

Molly Appeal memorial packages are available in funeral homes across the Maritimes or by calling us at 1-888-866-6559.

The package includes a sympathy card that you may give directly to the next of kin, or, if you prefer, the Foundation will notify the family designate on your behalf. The card acknowledges your donation in memory of their loved one, but does not include the amount of the gift.

In Memoriam donations to the Molly Appeal support the purchase of much-needed research equipment, right here in the Maritimes. Thank you for making the Molly Appeal your charity of choice.

Memorial donations may also be made online by visiting: [www.mollyappeal.ca](http://www.mollyappeal.ca).

the Molly  
Appeal for  MEDICAL  
RESEARCH

**Doctor  
Gilbert  
Holland  
died in  
2003.**



**Today, he'll search for a cure for Glaucoma.**

Dr. Holland dedicated his life to treating people with eye diseases. He knew how dangerous diseases such as glaucoma could be. So he keenly followed advances in treatments made possible by medical research. That's why he included a generous gift to DMRF in his Will supporting research excellence.

Thanks to Dr. Holland our researchers are making great strides in the discovery of treatments and cures for eye diseases. Include a bequest to Dalhousie Medical Research Foundation in your Will. Contact us today to find out how!

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