Canadian Association of Gastroenterology Research Committee Report 2011

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A primary goal of the Canadian Association of Gastroenterology (CAG) and its Foundation, the Canadian Digestive Health Foundation (CDHF), in collaboration with the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) and the CAG-CDHF partners, is to promote excellence in research. This research will lead to new discoveries that will translate into improved health for Canadians. Moreover, this partnership will sustain and increase this capacity through high-quality education and research training of talented young scientists and clinicians in gastroenterology. The CAG strategic plan is to sustain its strong support of biomedical research while increasing support for research in CIHR pillars 3 and 4 including outcomes research, quality assurance and knowledge translation. The present report, on behalf of the research committee (Table 1), outlines another very successful year for this partnership program.

Details relating to eligibility and application processes for all of the following awards are available on the CAG website (www.cag-acg.org/research). The review and assessment of every application complies with CIHR standards and guidelines, and any potential conflicts of interest are meticulously identified and avoided.

Operating Grants and New Investigator Salary Award

Three operating grants and one new investigator salary award (Table 2) were awarded this year.

CAG-CIHR-Partnered Postdoctoral Operating Fellowship Program

The fellowship program is the cornerstone of CAG research activities, and its sustained success makes it a model for other societies. A large number of applications were received again this year, and with the support from the CIHR, the Crohn's and Colitis Foundation of Canada and the CAG's industrial partners (see acknowledgements),

seven fellowships were funded (Table 3). Three fellows received CAG/CIHR awards in name only because their applications ranked at a level to be funded entirely by the CIHR.

CDHF-CIHR PhD Studentship Program

Three PhD students were funded under this partnership program (Table 4).

CAG Summer Studentships

It is critical that young investigators be supported at all levels of their training. Thus, in partnership with the CCFC and the CIHR, 19 students received awards (\$3,500 from CAG/CCFC to be matched by the supervisor/institution per award) to work in laboratories of recent or established investigators whose interests cover many facets of gut function in health and disease (Table 5).

CAG-CCFC Partnership

The CCFC continues to be a key partner in the CAG research program, with IBD being a major focus of the research being conducted. The summaries (Tables 2, 3 and 5) show that the CCFC supported three Fellowships, the New Investigator Salary Award and 12 summer studentships.

CAG Resident Research Program

Six awards were made available with the generous partnership of Nycomed Canada, Shire Canada and Warner Chilcott (Table 6).

Congratulations to all the successful awardees. We look forward to your contributions and your continued participation in the CAG research program. Again, many thanks to the CIHR, the CCFC and the CAG industry partners – the 19 summer studentships, six resident research awards, seven fellowships, one salary award and three grants add to a research dollar commitment in 2011 of \$1,220,000.

TABLE 1
Members of the Canadian Association of Gastroenterology Research Committee 2011

Position	Name	Institution	Term
VP Research Affairs	André Buret	University of Calgary (Calgary, Alberta)	2011–2014
Member	Nicola Jones	University of Toronto (Toronto, Ontario)	2009–2012
Member	Wallace MacNaughton	University of Calgary	2009–2012
Member	Nathalie Perreault	University Sherbrooke (Sherbrooke, Quebec)	2011–2014
Member	Aleixo Muise	University of Toronto	2011–2014
Member	Jennifer Jones	University of Saskatchewan (Saskatoon, Saskatchewan)	2011–2014
Member	Maida Sewitch	McGill University (Montreal, Quebec)	2011–2014
Member	Bill Sahl	University of British Columbia (Vancouver, British Columbia)	2011–2014
Member	John Wallace	McMaster University (Hamilton, Ontario)	2011–2014
Member (trainee)	Melanie Gareau	University of Toronto	2008–

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TABLE 2
Canadian Association of Gastroenterology (CAG)-Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) Partner-Funded grants 2011

Candidate	Grant	Years	Institution
Geoffrey Nguyen	CAG/CIHR/CCFC New Investigator Salary Award	5	University of Toronto (Toronto, Ontario)
Geoffrey Nguyen	CAG/CIHR/Abbott Operating Grant	2	University of Toronto
Harminder Singh	CAG/CIHR/Olympus Operating Grant	2	University of Manitoba (Winnipeg, Manitoba)
Elena Verdu	CAG/CIHR/AstraZeneca Operating Grant	2	McMaster University (Hamilton, Ontario)

CCFC Crohn's and Colitis Foundation of Canada

TABLE 3
Canadian Association of Gastroenterology (CAG)-Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) Postdoctoral Fellowships 2011

Candidate	Award	Institution	Duration	Supervisor(s)
Frann Antignano	CAG/CIHR/CCFC Fellowship	University of British Columbia (Vancouver, British Columbia)	2 years	Colby Zaph
Ramzi Fattouh	CAG/CIHR/CCFC Fellowship	The Hospital for Sick Children (Toronto, Ontario)	2 years	Aleixo Muise and John Brumell
Saad Salim	CAG/CIHR/CCFC Fellowship	University of Alberta (Edmonton, Alberta)	2 years	Karen Madsen and Richard Fedorak
Dileep Amma-Radhamony	CAG/CIHR/Ferring Fellowship	Queen's University (Kingston, Ontario)	17 months	Michael Blennerhassett
Johan Van Limbergen	CAG/CIHR Fellowship	The Hospital for Sick Children	1 year	Dana Philpott and Anne Griffiths
Benjamin Willing	CAG/CIHR Fellowship	University of British Columbia	19 months	Brett Finlay
Cherrie Small	CAG/CIHR Fellowship	McMaster University (Hamilton, Ontario)	2 years	Brian Coombes

CCFC Crohn's and Colitis Foundation of Canada

TABLE 4
Canadian Digestive Health Foundation-Canadian Institutes of Health Research Studentship Program 2011

Candidate	Institution
Kyra Jones	University of Waterloo (Waterloo, Ontario)
Asanga Samarakoon	University of British Columbia (Vancouver, British Columbia)
Lauren Van Der Kraak	McGill University (Montreal, Quebec)

TABLE 5
Canadian Association of Gastroenterology-Crohn's and Colitis Foundation of Canada Summer Studentships 2011

Candidate	Supervisor	Sponsor	Institution
Kristy Brown	Deanna Gibson	Crohn's and Colitis Foundation of Canada	University of British Columbia (Vancouver, British Columbia)
Shannon Brown	Christopher Waterhouse	Crohn's and Colitis Foundation of Canada	University of Calgary (Calgary, Alberta)
Lee Cheng	Ping-Chang Yang	Crohn's and Colitis Foundation of Canada	McMaster University (Hamilton, Ontario)
David Croitoru	Stephen Girardin	Crohn's and Colitis Foundation of Canada	University of Toronto (Toronto, Ontario)
Shivani Dadwal	Thierry Mallevaey	Crohn's and Colitis Foundation of Canada	University of Toronto
Hashim Kareemi	Gilaad Kaplan	Crohn's and Colitis Foundation of Canada	University of Calgary
Derek Moynes	Alan Lomax	Crohn's and Colitis Foundation of Canada	Queen's University (Kingston, Ontario)
Natalie Ronaghan	Wallace MacNaughton	Crohn's and Colitis Foundation of Canada	University of Calgary
Jan Rudzinski	Julia Liu	Crohn's and Colitis Foundation of Canada	University of Alberta (Edmonton, Alberta)
Tianqing Tina Yang*	Nicola Jones	Crohn's and Colitis Foundation of Canada	The Hospital for Sick Children (Toronto, Ontario)
Michael Yong	Elaine Petrof	Canadian Association of Gastroenterology	Queen's University
Kai Hao Wang	Colby Zaph	Crohn's and Colitis Foundation of Canada	University of British Columbia
Celine Zhou	Shairaz Baksh	Crohn's and Colitis Foundation of Canada	University of Alberta
Channy Chhor	Jörg Hermann Fritz	Canadian Association of Gastroenterology	McGill University (Montreal, Quebec)
Cong Thanh Nguyen	Jennifer Gommerman	Canadian Association of Gastroenterology	University of Toronto
Nischal Ranganath	David Morgan	Canadian Association of Gastroenterology	McMaster University
Daniel Sinclair	Elena Verdu	Canadian Association of Gastroenterology	McMaster University
Emma Torbicki	Nicola Jones	Canadian Association of Gastroenterology	The Hospital for Sick Children
Stuart Wiber	Patricia Brubaker	Canadian Association of Gastroenterology	University of Toronto

*Studentship was closed after one month

CANADIAN DIGESTIVE DISEASES WEEK (CDDW) 2011 AND THE 7TH ANNUAL CANADIAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE STUDY OF THE LIVER (CASL) WINTER MEETING

In addition to reviewing research applications, the other main role of the research committee is to review abstracts submitted to CDDW, which showcases the best of Canadian gastroenterology research. A total of 273 abstracts were accepted to the core CDDW/CASL Winter Meeting scientific program: 44 as CAG or CASL oral presentations, and the remainder in one of two poster sessions.

The following are the 2011 recipients of CAG awards:

- Dr Paul Kubes (University of Calgary, Calgary, Alberta) – Research Excellence Award
- Dr Dana Philpott (University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario) – Young Investigator Award
- Dr Derek McKay (University of Calgary) – Visiting Professor
- Dr Eldon Shaffer (University of Calgary) – Education Excellence Award

TABLE 6
Resident Research Awards 2011

Candidate	Supervisor	Sponsor	Institution
Ronen Behar	Grigorios Leontiadis	Nycomed Canada	McMaster University (Hamilton, Ontario)
Zain Kassam	John Marshall	Nycomed Canada	McMaster University
Feriel Lylia Messekher	Julie Carrier	Nycomed Canada	University of Sherbrooke (Sherbrooke, Quebec)
Humberto Jijon	Subrata Ghosh	Shire Canada	University of Calgary (Calgary, Alberta)
Adam Weizman	Geoffrey Nguyen	Shire Canada	University of Toronto (Toronto, Ontario)
John Chi To Wong	Isabella Tai	Warner Chilcott	University of British Columbia (Vancouver, British Columbia)

- Dr Dana Farina (Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia) – Young Educator Award
- Dr Loren Laine (University of Southern California, USA) – The RD McKenna Memorial Lecturer

The 2011 student research prizes were awarded based on the quality of submitted CDDW abstracts as follows:

CAG sponsored:

MS Bawa, University of Calgary
G Coulombe, University of Sherbrooke, Sherbrooke, Quebec

CCFC sponsored:

V Iablokov, University of Calgary
JM Allaire, University of Sherbrooke

It has once again been an excellent year for Canadian gastroenterology research, and everyone involved deserves congratulations. Should CAG members have questions relating to the work of the research committee, or proposals on how to expand or promote our activities, please contact me directly.

With Thanks,
André Buret PhD,
VP Research Affairs

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