Thoughts from the Chair

It’s hard to believe that yet another academic year has passed. This one, like the last, was filled with unusual challenges. And this one, like all the ones before, ends with a feeling of accomplishment and relief. The end of winter term signals the opportunity to pause before planning for the new academic year. For students, this time will be spent on summer jobs or perhaps attending summer school. Our graduates may be preparing for the next chapter in their life whether that be starting a career or looking for the next academic challenge. For faculty, this time often represents an intense period of research and course preparation for the year ahead. In all instances, the end of winter term through the start of the fall term represents a period of renewal. It’s an opportunity to reflect on the year past, shift focus, and for those of us on campus, enjoy the stunning scenery.

For our department, this past year was hectic but impressively productive. We weathered yet another academic year having to overcome the challenges of the pandemic. We added new faculty members and staff that have served to enrich our department. We graduated an undergraduate cohort as well as many graduate students, despite operating in the most challenging of conditions. Several of our faculty members and graduate students were recognized with prestigious awards and importantly, we were yet again recognized as one of the top programs in the world, ranking 22nd in the QS World University Rankings. Despite its challenges the 2021/2022 academic year was a tremendous success. As always, I’m honoured to lead this department and, with my Kinesiology colleagues, I look forward to tackling the challenges that the next year may hold.

- Dr. Gianni Parise
“What do you see as a highlight of being an Undergraduate Kinesiology student?”

Mac Kin is a program where everyone is always willing to lend you a helping hand and provide you with support, academically or otherwise. It is through these KINnections that you are able to grow as a student and a leader, allowing you to become the best version of yourself through developing your skills while creating life-long friendships and memories.

Samira is a 4th year Kinesiology student representing the Mac Kin department as the 2021-2022 Kinesiology Society President and Valedictorian, a Kinesiology Welcome Week Rep, a member of the Kinesiology Community Outreach Committee, and a Kinesiology upper-year mentor. Her involvement within the department over the past four years has exemplified her commitment, dedication, and passion for bettering the lives of all undergraduate students in Kinesiology.

During her term as KS President, Samira implemented 3 new subcommittees (EDI, Media & Communications, and Grad) and has worked tirelessly to improve relations with the MSU, collaborate with MSU Clubs and faculties, and work alongside external graduate schools to provide students with opportunities to be leaders within the department and foster a sense of community amongst all her peers. She has also been an integral part of several MSU clubs including Smiling Over Sickness, Mac Dance, True Vision Ghana, and the Ismaili Students Association in various fundraising, advocacy, and leadership roles.

External to McMaster, Samira has published 9 books with the Antarctic Institute of Canada and has continued her passion for dance as a professional dancer and instructor. Although Samira will be continuing her graduate studies as a Master’s student at the University of Toronto with the Health Behaviour and Emotion Lab, McMaster and Mac Kin will forever remain an integral part of her.

Recent Achievements

**McMaster University** ranks in the top 25 for QS World University Rankings by Subject 2022: Sports-Related Subjects

**Dr. Jennifer Heisz** – Professor: Funding approval for NSERC Discovery Grant

**Dr. Kirsten Bell** – Professor: Funding approval for NSERC Discovery Grant & Discovery Launch Supplement for Early Career Researchers

**Dr. Stu Phillips** - Professor / Director of PACE: Elected to the ACSM Board of Trustees (Basic and Applied Science Trustee) & Funding approval for NSERC Research Tools and Instruments

[Photo on left: Kinesiology Strategic Retreat]
Ryan Chhiba (he/him) is a first year MSc student studying under the supervision of Dr. Peter Keir. During his undergrad in Kinesiology at the University of Waterloo, he became interested in upper extremity biomechanics. His interest in working with Dr. Keir came after reading about the research conducted by Occupational Biomechanics Lab Alumni Dr. Amanda Farias Zuniga. Ryan’s research involves biomechanical modelling of the hand, using experimental data to improve the computation of internal joint forces to better predict injury.

Currently, Ryan is working with his peers on a study that quantifies hand pressure during common hand-object interactions. Ryan looks forward to becoming more involved in the McMaster Kinesiology community.

“How do you see KIN contributing to your ultimate goal?”

The department is full of amazing characters that inspire me to continue to grow. I have had the opportunity to grow my skillset and my knowledge from those around me, and I hope to continue to learn and help cultivate an environment of growth in others.

Dr. Claire Tuckey – Instructor
Recipient for MSU Excellence in Teaching Award (Department of Kinesiology)

Recent Achievements (Cont.)

Dr. Martin Gibala – Professor: Funding approval for Faculty of Science Research Infrastructure Fund
Dr. Aimee Nelson – Professor: Funding approval for Faculty of Science Research Infrastructure Fund
Jennifer Williams – Graduate Student: Received 2022-23 Ontario Women’s Health Scholars Award
Angelica McQuarrie – PACE Program Manager: Nominee for 2021 Individual President’s Award
Jeremy Walsh – ORF-RI award of $100,000, which matches your successful CFI JELF, Integrative psychophysiology research lab.
Faculty Highlight
Stu Phillips

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Stuart Phillips is a Tier 1 Canada Research Chair in Skeletal Muscle Health. He is also the Director of the McMaster University Physical Activity Centre of Excellence. Dr. Phillips has authored more than 350 research papers. In 2018-21 he was named to Clarivate’s Highly Cited Researchers list as being in the top 1% of all cited researchers in nutrition and physiology research. Dr. Phillips is a fellow of the American College of Sports Medicine and the Canadian Academy of Health Sciences.

His research is focused on the impact of nutrition and exercise on human skeletal muscle protein turnover. His work, and enthusiasm for science, are supported by an outstanding group of talented and industrious undergraduate and graduate students and postdoctoral fellows.

“What does it mean to you to be a faculty member in the department of Kinesiology?”

Being a faculty member in Kin can be summed up in three words: collegiality, fun, exciting. I don’t have a comparison, but I’ve been in Kin now for 24 years, and while jobs have their ups and downs, I love my work. It’s just a great environment, from the grad students, the postdocs, the staff, and my colleagues. I’m proud to be a Mac Kin Prof and even prouder of our work, Kin Rocks!

Recent Papers (trainees underlined)


Recent Achievements (Cont.)

Dr. Maureen MacDonald – Dean of Science Project Grant, Canadian Institutes of Health Research. T Hawke, M. MacDonald, B. al-Khazraj, C. Perry, Z. Punthakee. Targeting vascular and Skeletal Muscle health to improve the quality of life in males and females with Type 1 Diabetes. Awarded $875,925. 2022-2027.

Dr. Krista Howarth – Professor: 2022 President’s Award for Outstanding Contributions to Teaching and Learning

Mai Wageh – Graduate Student: Received 2022 Howard G. "Skip" Knuttgen Scholar Award
Alumni Highlight

Jordan Clarke

“...My time in Mac Kin taught me to have high standards of really understanding the subject matter, not just memorizing content for a test. Being able to understand the mechanisms by which something works or being able to critically evaluate the evidence presented, were some of the keys take-home points that I carried forward.”

– J. Clarke’ 09

Jordan Clarke (Hon Kinesiology ’09) started his undergrad degree at McMaster in science and then switched to Chemistry in his second year. However, early on he realized that he didn’t share the same passion for chemistry as his peers, TAs, and professors. In his spare time, Clarke was coaching in Canoe-Kayak and started to invest more time in weight training. It was by pursuing these extra-circular activities and following his passion for sports, that he realized Kinesiology might be the right fit for him.

After graduation and pursuing a Masters degree in Kinesiology, Clarke received a job offer at Pacific Sports in Prince George, BC and was able to apply everything he had learned at Mac. Eventually Clarke became the head of the department and enjoyed working with young athletes to help them achieve their fitness training goals.

Now, Clarke is the Lead in Physiology and Sport Science at Rowing Canada and works with the country’s Olympic team.

“The opportunity to apply what I have learned, to test ideas, and go beyond theoretical knowledge was invaluable. In 2015 there was an opportunity to go back to Ontario and work with Rowing Canada in London (where I grew up). The chance to go home and work in High-Performance sports was exciting and I was fortunate enough to get the job. Six years and two Olympics later I am back on the other side of Canada and in a Leadership role with Rowing Canada.”
Jake Pickersgill – Graduate Student


Jennifer Williams – Graduate Student

Publication from the Vascular Dynamics Lab recently published in March as a collaboration between McMaster University and Queen’s University, including one of our fourth-year thesis Jenna Stone.

22nd Annual Bertha Rosenstadt National Undergraduate Research Conference

Maria Salman won the best presentation award. Investigating modulations in afferent inhibition following training on a novel sensorimotor finger maze task.

Co-Author(s): Jacob Pickersgill; Faculty Advisor: Dr. Aimee Nelson; McMaster University students Jenna Stone.

At the 22nd annual Bertha Rosenstadt UG Research Conference at U of T. Mac Kin had its usual massive cadre of students – 19 (5 virtual, 14 in-person). We were the biggest University contingent outside of U of T.

[Photos from top to bottom: Ker-Yung Hong, Kiera Matook, Matt Fong, Jenna Stone, and Vagif Zenyali at the 22nd Annual Bertha Rosenstadt National Undergraduate Research Conference.]
In the Lab
Photos from the Kinesiology Community

EMRG Orientation Day
Dr. Jeremy Walsh, Dr. Trevor King, Dr. Kirsten Bell, Dr. Baraa Al-Khazraji

Kyle Lau presenting at the 22nd Annual Bertha Rosenstadt UG Research Conference at U of T

Kinesiology Strategic Retreat
Dam Nguyen, Dr. Dylan Kobsar, Greg Noseworthy, Adrienne Tearle

Samira Sunderji accepting the Mary E. Keyes Citizenship Award at Grad Formal from Dr. Steven Bray

EMRG Orientation Day
Graduate and Undergraduate students

Then and Now