



A LIFE OF SERVICE  
**DR. CHIRAG SHAH**

>> PAGE 6

FALL 2021

# The Blade

The Department of Surgery


CUMMING SCHOOL  
OF MEDICINE



UNIVERSITY OF  
CALGARY



Alberta Health  
Services



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We wish to thank all surgeons, administrators, and team  
members whose efforts made this issue possible.



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# MESSAGE FROM **DR. KEVIN HILDEBRAND,** DEPARTMENT HEAD



I want to begin by acknowledging the traditional territories of the people of Treaty 7 and the home of the Métis Nation of Alberta, Region 3. I am honoured and excited to be the Department Head of Surgery for Alberta Health Services (AHS), Calgary Zone, and the Cumming School of Medicine at the University of Calgary. I am grateful for the work of my predecessors, Dr. Sean Grondin and Dr. Elijah Dixon, who have created infrastructure to support the Department of Surgery's (DoS) academic and clinical missions. I also want to recognize the hard work of previous Department Heads, Dr. John Kortbeek and Dr. Rene Lafreniere, and thank them for their contributions to the department.

COVID-19 has dominated our lives for the last year and a half. We saw a third wave ramp up this spring, and yet again, our ability to deliver services was affected. With the redeployment of personnel and resources, some hospitals had OR closures of up to one-third capacity, while others maintained most OR time. The slowdowns from earlier waves of the pandemic compounded the third wave, and total OR cases were down. We entered the summer feeling optimistic, only to see increasing hospital and ICU admissions by mid-august, and Alberta was squarely in the fourth wave by month's end. We once again face uncertainty with surgery postponements, physician redeployment, and a reintroduction of restrictions. In addition, all scheduled launches of Connect Care have been postponed, and the Alberta Surgical Recovery

(ASR) has been paused. AHS has created surge capacity to manage the increasing ICU admissions, but there is extreme stress on our health care system and health care personnel. We know everyone is tired, but we have to ask you to dig deep yet again. Please reach out to leadership if we can support you in any way through this challenging time.

In March, Alberta Health decided to extend the clinical supplements for certain surgical groups to allow more time to evaluate clinical alternative relationship plan (ARP) proposals. Alberta Health subsequently met with five groups, offered them clinical ARPs, and solicited their feedback. Final decisions are forthcoming. In addition, the DoS is working with the Department of Family Medicine on a Family Practice Acute Care Coverage program. The program will help build capacity due to the fluid situation of coverage provided by residents, extenders, clinical surgical assistants, and fellows. The increasing acuity and volume of patients, decreasing number of residents, and funding challenges for the extender program are causing significant stresses to coverage. Meetings are also taking place to develop consistent overhead rates across AHS facilities for office space, administrative and infrastructure support, and clinic utilization.

The first half of 2021 included recruitment efforts for a geographic full-time (GFT) position in General Surgery Oncology within the Cumming School of Medicine and

AHS. Dr. Adrian Harvey was selected from four applicants. In addition, a deputy department head position leading physician wellness, equity, diversity, and inclusion has been created. Advertisement of the position and interviews will take place later this fall. The stress and disruption we have experienced the last few years, including upcoming changes in care delivery due to the ASI, expansion to CSF and redistribution of cases in hospitals, compensation and overhead plans, Connect Care implementation, and acute care coverage models, do require a wellness lens. The ongoing developments around Indigenous peoples and truth and reconciliation, inequality affecting minority groups, and efforts by the University of Calgary and AHS to respond to these issues call for the department to formally engage in equity, diversity, and inclusion.

We are, yet again, experiencing change and uncertainty. I do not know what the future will hold, but I know we can get through anything if we work together. Please remember to be kind to one another, and please reach out to leadership if we can help in any way.

Sincerely,  
Dr. Kevin Hildebrand, Department Head



# OFFICE OF SURGICAL EDUCATION WITH **DR. STEVEN LOPUSHINSKY**



**T**he Office of Surgical Education (OSE) aims to support educational activities across the Department of Surgery (DoS) from the undergraduate level to lifelong continuing education. The past year has proven to be challenging for all members of the surgical community, and we navigated endless hurdles to provide optimal and timely clinical care during the global pandemic. Academia and education also had to find a place during these troubled times.

Residency and fellowship are typically contained within a defined timeframe during which the trainee is dedicated to a craft, and through a combination of apprenticeship and academic endeavours, they emerge an expert with skills to share with society. Over the past year, training was interrupted by rotation redeployment, cancellation of elective cases, and the change in academic rounds being delivered virtually. The opportunity to explore clinical subspecialties was restricted by a ban on interprovincial electives and the closure of the Canada-US border. Likewise, an entire class of medical students has yet to meet in person one year into joining the medical community. Finishing residents have faced uncertainty in meeting case-volume requirements, cancelled or rescheduled exams, licensing issues, and unknown employment opportunities. It is not surprising that trainee wellness continues to emerge as a burgeoning emergency.

In response, our staff and trainees have stepped up to meet the needs of our community. Despite uncertainty around personal protective equipment and associated COVID protocols, department members continued to provide excellent acute surgical care, volunteered for COVID redeployment, and took the time to work at mass immunization clinics. In addition, they adapted to enhance learning in different ways. For example, meetings and rounds shifted to online formats, research teams worked virtually, and simulation activities were reworked to meet social distancing and other safety

protocols. Members also did their best to maintain connectivity – mentors still mentored, house-staff still bonded late at night staring at the list of emergency room consults, and teachers and students innovated to minimize loss of experience.

We do not know what the next academic year will bring, but the DoS and the OSE welcome all new trainees across the surgical specialties and look to support the 89 residents and 40 extended residents/fellows. Thank you to members who took part in the Annual Surgical Skills Bootcamp that ran the week of July 12, 2021. Again, special recognition to our tireless program directors, particularly those who have completed terms, including Dr. Datta, General Surgery Dr. Chris Hanson, Ophthalmology; and Dr. Jeff Clark, Vascular Surgery.

Our undergraduate trainees are well represented by Dr. Jeremy LaMothe, Clerkship Director. We look forward to seeing these junior learners back in our clinics, wards, and operating rooms with the hope of inspiring the next generation of surgeons.

The Office of Surgical Fellowship (OSF) continues to evolve under the stewardship of Dr. Amin Kherani, OSF Director. An incredibly successful Fellows Research Symposium took place on May 14, 2021, with excellent representation from across the department. A special thank you to the participants, judges, and research supervisors dedicating time to move these projects forward. The OSF has also recently updated its contract and billing processes to improve efficiency and the fellow experience.

Continuing Medical Education, led by Dr. Derrick Randall, Physician Lead, looks to build on city-wide rounds with new and exciting topics and speakers. We have begun preliminary discussions around a surgical education event for primary care physicians, so please stay tuned for your potential involvement.

I anticipate that the OSE will be busy over the next year. We will be preparing for the Royal College external review, scheduled for September 2022, and the ongoing launch of Competency by Design across all surgical programs. We have highlighted the need to improve faculty feedback and evaluation regarding education delivery, including how it is used in periodic reviews, promotion, and recognition. I would also like to see interested surgical educators come together more frequently to promote innovation and research in surgical education.

I want to thank Ms. Elaine Campbell for her administrative contributions to the OSE and wish her well as she steps into her new role as the administrative assistant responsible for surgeon contracts and agreements. I also welcome Ms. Debbie Charlet into the OSE administrative support role and look forward to working with her. I also want to recognize the efforts of Dr. Artan Reso, who was my predecessor in the OSE. Dr. Reso led the OSE for five years, creating a structure for education to thrive in this department. His leadership is reflected in the external review of this office. His positive demeanour and communication skills furthered the OSE efforts across departments in the university.

I look forward to the next academic year and believe we will emerge from the pandemic stronger, with new ideas to drive surgical education forward. I welcome your thoughts and collaboration, so please reach out to me at any time ([steven.lopushinsky@ahs.ca](mailto:steven.lopushinsky@ahs.ca)).



## DR. CHIRAG SHAH A LIFE OF SERVICE

In 2004, Dr. Chirag Shah was in Canada for the first time. With a train ticket and a twenty dollar bill in his pocket, he was ready to travel from Toronto to Montreal to interview for a highly coveted ophthalmology fellowship. Twenty dollars would cover food for the day and bus fare to the train station. He stepped on the bus and was stunned when the driver told him he would not make change. Shah had a choice. He could put the \$20 bill in the farebox and not eat all day or get off the bus and miss the interview. His choice was obvious, but the kindness of a stranger changed the course of his day. A nearby woman overheard the conversation and quickly pulled a bus ticket from her purse. Shah was an immigrant and a student with little money.





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FOR OTHERS.”**

He was overwhelmed and embarrassed by the woman's kindness. It is a memory that he has never forgotten.

Born in Gujarat, India, Shah, 44, grew up in a middle-class neighbourhood next to the slums. Witnessing the day-to-day struggles of friends and neighbours, he learned the value of giving back from an early age. “My parents and three sisters had a huge impact on me. Their kind hearts and willingness to help others provided an example for me to follow,” says Shah. “I was also born in the same state as Gandhi, so his values are a part of my culture. We learned them in school, and they are a part of who I am.” Though he experienced struggles during his early years in Canada, the experiences and generosity of others served to inspire him. Shah has dedicated his life to helping underserved populations and new immigrants.

In 2003, after completing medical school and an ophthalmology residency in India, Shah spent two years working and volunteering in eye camps throughout his home

state. An eye camp is a mobile medical centre that brings free eye care to rural towns and villages. During this time, Shah performed hundreds of life-changing surgeries. Cataracts are a leading cause of blindness in India, yet cataract removal is a simple surgery that can reverse blindness almost instantly, allowing the person to earn a living and lead a normal life. But the surgeries are not without risks. “We operated in temporary surgical suites, which can be a challenging environment,” says Shah. “Eye surgeries are more complicated than general surgery. If a patient gets an infection, they will go permanently blind.” Donations covered the cost of equipment and supplies, and the surgeons and staff volunteered their time.

Dr. Shah moved to Canada in 2005 to complete the first of two ophthalmology fellowships, but after quitting his job in India, the fellowship in Montreal fell through. Then, his partner received a contract extension and stayed in India. Shah accepted a different fellowship and moved



**“I WANT THEM TO KNOW THAT I WAS NOT RICH. I HAD BILLS, AND I STRUGGLED. I TELL THEM THAT IT IS A CIRCLE OF GIVING. SOMEONE HELPED ME, AND I HOPE THEY WILL HELP SOMEONE ELSE ONE DAY.”**

to Calgary. “It was a challenging and difficult time,” says Shah. “It was tough financially, emotionally, and socially. It was tough in every possible way.” After completing a fellowship in Calgary, he completed a second in Toronto in the emerging field of medical retina. An anonymous donor sponsored the final fellowship. “I have tried multiple times to find out who sponsored my fellowship. I want to say thank you to the person,” says Shah. “It made such a difference for me, so I was inspired to help other students.”

The first scholarship Shah created was for international medical students. He now has six scholarships established for students furthering their education in medicine, nursing, and pharmacy. Scholarships are established at the University of Calgary, Southern Alberta Institute of Technology, and Bow Valley College. Each year, Shah meets the recipients to share his story and hear their stories. “I want them to know that I was not rich. I had bills, and I struggled,” says

Shah. “I tell them that it is a circle of giving. Someone helped me, and I hope they will help someone else one day.”

As a retinal specialist, Shah continues his work for underserved populations. His current focus is helping premature babies with Retinopathy of Prematurity, ROP, an underserved area of care in the Southern Alberta region. ROP is a treatable eye disorder, but if it is not identified or treatment is delayed, it can cause blindness. With no signs and symptoms at birth, early screening and detection are critical. Dr. Shah and his team travel with their equipment to the neonatal intensive care units (NICUs) in Calgary when premature babies are born. “Our instruments are sterile, and the NICUs are sterile environments,” says Shah, “but there’s always an increased risk of contamination and infection when you bring something new into the environment.” He and his team applied for and received \$35,000 in grant funding to purchase headsets and lenses for the five NICUs across the city.



## DEPARTMENT OF SURGERY

Dr. Vivian Hill, a colleague, says, "Dr. Shah was instrumental in acquiring funding for dedicated onsite instrumentation in the NICUs. He actively brought the team together, even opening his home, to discuss the challenges of delivering care while dealing with financial restraints. He has helped every screener do their job more efficiently. It's been a privilege to have Dr. Shah as a colleague but perhaps even more so to call him a friend."

Shah's plan is ambitious, but he wants to help raise an additional \$1.2 million. Raising additional funds will purchase a specialized laser and angiogram, improving the quality of care for premature babies. In addition, the purchase of specialized cameras will allow for remote screening in other Southern Alberta towns and cities. A nurse or technician can be trained to perform the ROP exam, and the images sent to Calgary for review. Premature babies in rural areas would no longer need to travel to Calgary. "Right now, people are mindful of money because of COVID and the economy," says Shah, "so it's going to be tough." He hopes raising awareness of ROP will help.

With the arrival of COVID, Shah expanded his work with immigrants and underserved populations. He has volunteered and provided short-term support to the Calgary Drop-In Centre, the Homeless Foundation, The Mustard Seed, and The Alex. Shah has also helped the Alberta International Medical Graduate Program create one-time COVID bursaries for seven first-year residents. The residents were left without income when their Calgary program was delayed due to the pandemic. "With COVID, we all witnessed the world change," Shah says, "and with the added stress of no income, the bursaries were important for the seven applicants." In addition, Shah joined friends to raise money and send oxygen concentrators to India to help with the country's shortage of medical oxygen.

Next, Shah plans to work with the University of Calgary's Office of Professionalism, Equity and Diversity. "I am openly gay, and I am proud to be gay, but there have been times, personally and professionally,

when I have felt uncomfortable," Shah says. "A lot has changed in the world around race, gender, and sexuality. There's more awareness. The university is doing a lot, and I want to get involved." The Dr. Chirag Shah Medical Student Bursary is a new annual award offered to an undergraduate student who identifies as LGBTQIA2S+. Shah has also become involved with the Pathways to Medicine Scholarship Program, helping to support future medical students from diverse, underrepresented groups in Alberta.

In addition to his work with underserved populations, Shah is known for his keen fashion sense. Bow ties are a wardrobe staple, and his patients look forward to their appointments to see what he is wearing. "I dress up for myself and my patients," Shah says. "It's something I enjoy, and it seems to bring joy to my patients as well." In 2017, Avenue Magazine included him on the list of best-dressed Calgarians.

It's been 17 years since Shah came to Canada for the fellowship interview, and he still tells the story of the woman with the bus ticket. It reminds him of a time in his life when he needed help and how a small gesture had a significant impact. It is the same reminder Shah gets when he travels to India each year. He still knows everyone in the neighbourhood, and he stands outside his parents' home, visiting with friends as they return from work. "Visiting India reminds me that I have changed and that my life has changed. I have so much," says Shah. "When I go home, I remember who I was and who I should be. It gives me a perspective on life. Life is good, but not for everyone. It inspires me to keep doing more for others."

By Tammie Roy



# 2021 SURGEONS' DAY

**T**he 38th Annual Surgeon's Day Research Symposium was held virtually on June 4, 2021. The event was a great success, with close to 200 attendees and over 20 presenters.

This year's symposium had presentations given within three pillars, including Clinical Research, Health Systems, and Education, as well as a Resident Research Showcase. In addition, the highly successful Sharpest Knife Live Grant Competition was held for the third time.

Thank you to our special guests, Dr. Jonathan White from the University of Alberta, McPhredran Lecturer, and Dr. Mary Brindle from the University of Calgary, McMurtry Lecturer. A thank you also goes out to the presenters, moderators, and event organizers who helped ensure a successful and enjoyable event. Please join us in congratulating the Surgeons' Day winners!



**Dr. Mary Brindle**

*Guest Judge and  
McMurtry Lecture*



**Dr. Jonathan White**

*Guest Judge and  
McPhredran Lecture*

## RESIDENT RESEARCH SHOWCASE FIRST PLACE



**Dr. Alysha Kheen,  
General Surgery**

*Determining research priorities for young women with breast cancer: A priority setting partnership.*

## RESIDENT RESEARCH SHOWCASE SECOND PLACE



**Dr. Michael Mak,  
Ophthalmology**

*An affordable, open-sourced, 3D printed Frenzel goggle for the neuro-ophthalmology clinic.*

## SHARPEST KNIFE LIVE GRANT COMPETITION



**Dr. Laurie Hiemstra and  
Team (Dr. Marcia Clark  
and Dr. Kevin Hildebrand),  
Orthopaedic Surgery**

*Gender equity and inclusion for Canadian orthopaedics.*

## PETER CRUSE AWARD



**Dr. Derek Waldner,  
Ophthalmology**

*Segmental gonioscopy-assisted transluminal trabeculectomy (GATT): Comparison of superior vs. inferior hemisphere outcomes.*



# SURGICAL FELLOWS AND EXTENDED RESIDENTS RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM

**T**his year's symposium took place virtually on May 14, 2021. The keynote speaker was Dr. Wai-Ching Lam, a Clinical Professor and Albert Bing-Ching Young Professor from the Department of Ophthalmology, University of Hong Kong. The event was well attended and included 31 presenters and 9 adjudicators. Please join us in congratulating this year's award recipients!

## FIRST PLACE RESEARCH AWARDS

### ROOM 1

Dr. Henry Yao, Reconstructive  
and Functional Urology Fellow

### ROOM 2

Dr. Osama Elsewaisy, Orthopaedic  
Joint Reconstruction Fellow

### ROOM 3

Dr. Lanny Li, Colorectal Surgery Extended Resident

## SECOND PLACE RESEARCH AWARDS

### ROOM 1

Dr. Annie Boisvert, Vascular and Endovascular Fellow

### ROOM 2

Dr. Joep Kitzen, Orthopaedic Surgery Trauma Fellow

### ROOM 3

Dr. Caitlin Cahill, Colorectal Surgery Extended Resident



**“AS PHYSICIANS,  
WE HAVE A  
VOICE THAT  
PEOPLE WILL  
LISTEN TO. IT IS  
UP TO EACH OF  
US TO DECIDE  
HOW WE USE  
THAT VOICE.”**

## **DR. TITO DAODU** SOCIAL JUSTICE IN HEALTH CARE

**M**otivated by a strong sense of social justice, Dr. Tito Daodu believes everyone should have equal access to health care.

Born in Nigeria, Daodu immigrated to Canada as a child, growing up in a rough Winnipeg neighbourhood. Though money and security were in short supply, supportive family and good mentors at the local after-school program were not. “Coming from a background with a lot of barriers, I recognize that I was lucky. I had good mentors and was often in the right place at the right time. Other students were just as bright and motivated, but they did not get the same opportunities,” says Daodu. “For me, justice means removing the barriers that prevent people from being their best.”



## **“FOR ME, JUSTICE MEANS REMOVING THE BARRIERS THAT PREVENT PEOPLE FROM BEING THEIR BEST.”**

At age 34, Daodu is a pediatric surgeon in her first year of practice. While completing her medical degree at the University of Manitoba, she launched a homework club for children in her old neighbourhood. She also travelled with NGOs to Tanzania and Nigeria, teaching high school students about gender equality and reproductive health. Her experiences shaped and gave her an appreciation for health equity challenges on a local and global level. “Systemic racism and health inequities exist across our systems,” says Daodu. “These things have always been with us, but we have not allowed ourselves to see the problem. But, the needle is moving. The reluctance to have these difficult conversations is shifting.”

In early 2021, Daodu began working with the University of Calgary’s Undergraduate Medical Education (UME) and Postgraduate Medical Education (PGME) offices to develop anti-racism and anti-oppression curriculum. “Improving our health systems start with the way we teach and train physicians,” says Daodu. “Medical school teaches and misrepresents certain things that foster implicit biases, which then follow us into our clinics and operating rooms.” Daodu is working with the PGME to develop modules and workshops that teach the fundamentals of equity, diversity, and inclusion. Her work with the UME is focused on redeveloping their curriculum set to launch in the next two-to-three years. Daodu believes this work will address gaps in the healthcare system and help dismantle biased thinking in the medical community.

To be more socially accountable in her medical practice, Daodu is looking at how she engages with patients, particularly those with language barriers. “I remind myself that a gap in a patient’s ability to speak my language does not equal a gap in their ability to understand.” With a busy practice, it

could be easy to rush these more challenging consultations. Instead, Daodu books patients identified as having a language barrier at the end of the day when she knows she will not feel rushed. “There is no right or wrong way of doing this,” says Daodu, “but having awareness is the first step to making it easier and more equitable for our patients.”

Since moving to Calgary, Daodu has become an ambassador for the United Way, helping raise funds and awareness around diversity and inclusion. “Calgary is the city where I am going to live and work, so I want to know what the most vulnerable in the city are experiencing,” says Daodu. Working with the United Way is helping her better understand community needs and advocate for patient populations that have historically been disadvantaged.

Over the last decade, Daodu’s professional and volunteer work has garnered significant recognition. She was recently selected as one of Avenue Magazine’s Top 40 under 40 and chosen as a national finalist for the Prime Minister’s Volunteer Award. When not working or volunteering, Daodu is completing her Master of Public Health from the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health.

Dr. Daodu would like to see more physicians use their voice and position to advance social justice in healthcare. “We can be vocal on a local, regional, and national scale about the injustices we see,” says Daodu. “As physicians, we have a voice that people will listen to. It is up to each of us to decide how we use that voice.”

By Tammie Roy

# WELCOME TO **NEW FACULTY**



## **Dr. Johnny Chau**

Clinical Lecturer,  
General Surgery

Dr. Johnny Chau was born and raised in Calgary, Alberta. He completed medical school and a general surgery residency in Edmonton before pursuing a colorectal surgery fellowship in Montreal. He returned to Calgary as a locum and joined the Section of General Surgery at the South Health Campus in December 2020.



## **Dr. Helen Chung**

Clinical Lecturer,  
Ophthalmology

Dr. Helen Chung was born and raised in Edmonton, Alberta. She completed medical school with special training in research at the University of Alberta and finished her ophthalmology residency training at the University of Calgary. Dr. Chung practices comprehensive ophthalmology at Gimbel Eye Centre, Serac Eye and Skin Care Centre, and the Rockyview General Hospital Eye Clinic. In addition, she recently accepted the position of Residency Program Director for the University of Calgary's Ophthalmology Program. Dr. Chung is excited to work towards enhancing the training experience.





### **Dr. Justin Lui**

Clinical Lecturer,  
Otolaryngology

Dr. Justin Lui was born and raised in Edmonton, Alberta. He pursued medical school and otolaryngology-head and neck surgery (OHNS) training at the University of Calgary. This was followed by a two-year fellowship in otology/neurotology at the Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre in Toronto. There, he focussed on surgeries of the skull base in addition to cochlear implant surgery. His research interests focus on augmented/virtual reality simulation and its role in surgical training and preoperative planning. Currently, Dr. Lui serves as the Simulation Director for the OHNS Residency Program.



### **Dr. Maleka Ramji**

Clinical Lecturer,  
Plastic Surgery

Dr. Maleka Ramji is a plastic surgeon based at the Peter Lougheed Centre. She completed medical school at the University of Alberta and residency training at McMaster University. She returned to Alberta in 2018 to complete a hand, wrist and peripheral nerve fellowship through the University of Calgary. Dr. Ramji has a busy breast reconstruction, transgender medicine, and body contouring practice. Her research interests are in ultrasound imaging. She is also the co-creator of the Canadian Point of Care Ultrasound Society's certification course, Hand and Wrist for the Hand Surgeon.



### **Dr. Caitlin Yeo**

Clinical Lecturer,  
General Surgery

Dr. Caitlin Yeo is a general surgeon at the Foothills Medical Centre. She is fellowship-trained in both endocrine surgery and surgical oncology. Dr. Yeo completed medical school and a general surgery residency at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario, before joining the University of Calgary for her fellowship. She is currently completing a Master's in Medical Education through the University of Dundee in the UK. Her research interests span the domains of endocrine surgery, surgical oncology, and surgical education.

# MEET MICHELLE JEONG, DEPARTMENT OF SURGERY MANAGER

**M**ichelle Jeong, Manager for the Department of Surgery, has worked in healthcare for 15 years and is an avid volunteer. She has dedicated her life to helping others.

Jeong moved to Canada as a child, growing up in Calgary with four older brothers. From a young age, she recognized the disparity between herself and some of her classmates. "I was lucky that I had everything I needed growing up," says Jeong. "But, I noticed that some children were not so lucky." A breakfast program in elementary school opened her eyes when she realized that some kids in her class came to school hungry. This memory stayed with her. She wanted to make a difference, so she was inspired to begin volunteering from an early age. "I knew that I wanted to dedicate my life to helping people," says Jeong. "Volunteering and working in healthcare help me fulfill this."

As a teenager, Jeong volunteered with various organizations, including senior care homes and the Boys and Girls Club of Calgary. After university, she joined the board of Opportunity Works, a not-for-profit organization focused on helping low-income individuals with mental health challenges. Jeong worked directly with clients, helping them develop business plans to turn their skills and abilities into business opportunities. "Our clients had amazing talents," says Jeong. "They just needed help channelling them to create meaningful, sustainable employment." Jeong grew up in a family of entrepreneurs, so working with businesses and developing strategies came naturally. During this time, she also helped the organization secure government funding to hire an employee to further their work. "It was inspiring to hear the stories of our clients," says Jeong. "They had such resilience and perseverance through their mental illness. It was quite amazing."



**DID YOU KNOW?**  
*Jeong has meditated  
every day for the  
last ten years.*

*Jeong is a trained  
chef, having attended  
Le Cordon Bleu, a  
cooking school in  
Paris, France.*



In 2015, Jeong joined the Diaryo Alberta Society as the Special Projects Director and began spearheading various community projects focused on diversity and inclusion. "I want to cause small ripples of change," says Jeong. "They may be small, but when they meet other small ripples, I hope they become big enough to change our community." Jeong has twice secured a Multiculturalism, Indigenous, and Inclusion Grant from the Province of Alberta for the organization. The grant supports initiatives and projects that build intercultural awareness and understanding. With the most recent grant funding, Jeong worked with the Alberta Civil Liberties Research Centre to develop diversity and inclusion training for community leaders across Alberta. Participants took what they learned from the workshops to begin diversity and inclusion conversations with their community members.

Throughout her 15 years in healthcare, Jeong has worked on the frontlines as a nurse and in a variety of leadership positions, such as the Outpatient Operations Manager for Tom Baker Cancer Centre. Her varied work experience and background in business strategy and operations made the manager's role with the Department of Surgery a perfect fit. "This is one of my favourite jobs," says Jeong. "It plays into my skill set and still allows me to impact patient care." When not working or volunteering, Jeong is busy raising her five-year-old daughter, staying active at the gym, and working on her Doctorate in Business Administration.

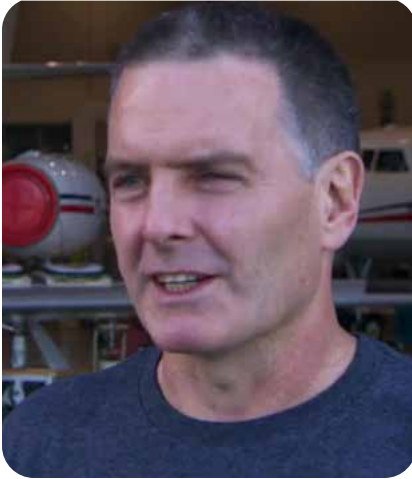
"At the end of the day, I hope that I have lived a well-examined life," says Jeong. "Life passes by so quickly. I want to know that I have tried my best to help others."

By Tammie Roy

**"I WANT TO  
CAUSE SMALL  
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CHANGE. THEY  
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# RESEARCH CORNER



## Dr. Andrew Kirkpatrick

### COVID-19 Research Grant

Congratulations to Dr. Andrew Kirkpatrick, who received a \$10,000 COVID-19 research grant from the Office of Surgical Research. The TeleMentored Ultrasound Supported Medical Interventions (TMUSMI) Research Group is investigating the real-world practicality of a diagnostic and informatic paradigm directly derived from Space Medicine. The grant will help support their project “The Feasibility, Accuracy, and Utility of Tele-Mentored Self-Administered Lung Ultrasound Examination in COVID-19 Infected Patients,” where they hope to demonstrate that healthy self-isolating patients at risk for COVID pneumonia can be remotely guided to self-exam themselves with lung ultrasound.

This work will improve individual patient care while protecting the healthcare system against COVID and other potential diseases requiring population health measures. In addition, the work may further accelerate the acceptance of drone-delivered healthcare.



## Dr. Michael Monument

### CIHR Funding & Early Career Momentum Award

Congratulations to Dr. Michael Monument, whose lab was ranked 1/44 in a very competitive cancer biology and therapeutics panel. As a result, the lab has been awarded \$1 million by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR). In addition, Dr. Monument was awarded the Early Career Momentum Award in Cancer. This \$25,000 award is given to new investigators in the field of cancer research with highly ranked applications in the Project Scheme competition that fall with the Institute of Cancer Research (ICR) mandate.

Dr. Monument's research focuses on utilizing immune-competent mouse models of sarcoma developed by his lab to better understand sarcoma immunology and to test new immunotherapies. The research funded by the CIHR grant will support experiments examining how pre-operative immunotherapies and radiation can lessen post-operative tumour relapses across multiple sarcoma subtypes. It will also support technology development exploring immune-targeted gene therapies for sarcoma.



## Dr. Derrick Randall

### COVID-19 Research Grant

Congratulations to Dr. Derrick Randall, who received a \$10,000 COVID-19 research grant from the Office of Surgical Research. Dr. Randall developed a research protocol in collaboration with his infectious diseases colleague, Dr. Ranjani Somayaji, to evaluate the prevalence of occult COVID-19 infections among otolaryngology patients undergoing surgery. Many otolaryngology complaints overlap COVID-19 symptoms and may obscure the risk of exposure to health care workers by nature of the surgical procedures disrupting mucosal surfaces. An additional aspect of this project seeks to determine the psychosocial impacts of healthcare workers exposed to routine otolaryngology patient encounters and their perceptions of risk and risk mitigation strategies.



## CONGRATULATIONS TO MEMBERS IN NEW POSITIONS

**Please join us in welcoming  
these members to their new  
positions in the department:**

**Dr. Kate Elzinga,**  
Interim Physician Lead, Quality Assurance and  
Improvement, *effective August 1, 2021*

**Dr. Paul Cantle,**  
Interim Section Chief Vascular Surgery,  
*effective July 14, 2021*

**Dr. May Lynn Quan,**  
Medical Director Calgary Breast Health Program - renewal,  
*effective July 1, 2021*

**Dr. Kevin Hildebrand,**  
Department Head, Department of Surgery,  
*effective March 1, 2021*

**Dr. Paul McBeth,**  
Site Lead, General Surgery, SHC,  
*effective February 1, 2021*

**Dr. Steven Lopushinsky,**  
Director, Office of Surgical Education,  
*effective February 1, 2021*

**Dr. Colin Schieman,**  
CLEAR Score Coordinator - renewal,  
*effective February 1, 2021*

**Dr. Estifanos Debru,**  
Physician Lead Bariatric Surgery Program - renewal,  
*effective January 1, 2021*

## THANK YOU TO RETIRED MEMBERS

We would like to recognize and thank our retired members for their dedication and years of hard work. We thank you for your academic and clinical contributions to the department and wish you a happy and fulfilling retirement.

**Dr. Robert Bray,** Orthopaedic Surgery

## 2021/2022 DATES TO REMEMBER

### Grand Rounds

November 5, 2021  
December 3, 2021  
February 4, 2022  
March 4, 2022  
April 1, 2022  
June 3, 2022

### Surgical Foundations Teacher Training Retreat

February 2022  
dates to be confirmed

### Department Leadership Retreat

February 25, 2022

*\*Events will take place  
virtually or in-person,  
depending on current  
government regulations.*







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