

# DMAA Annual President's Report – June 2021

Highlights from 2020/2021 at the DMAA

## Events

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic the Dal Med Gala was cancelled in both 2020 and 2021, with Dal Med Gala 154 now firmly scheduled for April 2, 2022. The DMAA Awards ceremony was held virtually in November 2020 celebrating the well-deserved winners of the four alumni and two resident awards and included videos and brief speeches from each of the award winners. The event was well attended with many alumni connecting virtually for this inaugural virtual event. Plans are to continue this format for November 2021 with interest for a hybrid type event when gatherings are once again permitted.

## Board Activities

The DMAA board of directors was comprised of 13 members in 2020-2021. It was the first year of Dr. Kathy O'Brien's term as DMAA president. The executive included Dr. Peggy Leighton (past president), Dr. Cynthia Forbes (vice president) and Dr. George Ferrier (treasurer). The board was well supported this year with Mona Dunn, communications lead and Barrett Hooper, Faculty Engagement Lead, working on many projects including the production of a digital version of VoxMeDAL, gathering information with an alumni survey, exploring wellness initiatives with Dr. Angela Cooper and Roberta Preston, and supporting our graduating medical students with a 2021 Class gift. Virtual class gatherings were encouraged during the pandemic as many class reunions were cancelled.

## Office Activities

Allison Bain left the DMAA in August 2020 to pursue additional education.

Barrett Hooper joined the DMAA in September 2020 as Faculty Engagement Lead, along with Mona Dunn, Administrative and Communications Assistant. In addition to activities noted above, Barrett is working with Dr. Angela Cooper on a program for faculty members that do not have a physician of their own and has been recruiting alumni for the PLANS (Promoting Leadership in Health for African Nova Scotians) program in which panels and Webinars are planned for students. Barrett has also been working with alumni on a soft mentorship programs- connecting Alumni with Students.

Cathrine Yuill stepped in as the new Executive Director Advancement for the Faculty of Medicine. Cathrine will have leadership responsibility for Alumni Relations as well as Faculty-based Advancement Marketing and Communications functions.

Over the past year, the DMAA assisted with online class reunions, including the recent and very well-attended Class of 1981 virtual reunion. The DMAA published two digital issues of VoxMeDAL with a very



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high open rate. Another edition had been prepared for spring 2021, but due to COVID-19, photography for the issue could not take place and so the issue has been delayed to June 2021.

## Moving Forward

Planning for 2021/2022 has been a significant challenge due to the uncertainty caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The DalMed153 Gala has been rescheduled for April 2, 2022 and the DMAA and Faculty of Medicine are working with Parkhill Events to host an in-person event at the Cunard Centre. A virtual celebration is being planned for the 2021 Fall DMAA Alumni and Resident Awards to celebrate the winners of the Alumni awards and two Resident Leadership awards. Barrett is working on many student support initiatives, the alumni survey, VoxMeDAL, supporting the board of directors and communicating with alumni through phone and email.

## Acknowledgements

On behalf of the DMAA Board, I would like to acknowledge and thank several people who have made a significant contribution to the DMAA. **George Ferrier** served as treasurer for 4 years and we remain in strong financial shape in large part due his leadership.

**Lori Connors and Gillian Bethune** served on the board as members at large and as members of the Nomination Committee.

We thank Drs. Ferrier, Connors and Bethune for their valuable contributions.

**Brett Ells**, DMSS President, graduating class of 2023, was our student representative on the DMAA Board. We thank him for his valued input and wish him well in his medical career and look forward to him joining the Dalhousie Medical Alumni community.

Lastly, I would like to thank **Barrett Hooper**, Faculty Engagement Lead for his tireless work supporting the DMAA over the past year on many DMAA and student support initiatives. His enthusiasm and energy have enabled the DMAA to support our medical students and alumni in innovative ways during the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy O'Brien

DMAA President