

HEADLINES

July 2021 / VOLUME 16/ ISSUE 4



JOINING OUR RANKS

THE CLASS OF 2026
BEGAN THEIR TRAINING
ON JULY 2



IN THIS ISSUE

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JOINING OUR RANKS Department welcomes new class of residents. *page 4*

FAREWELL TO DR. STOKES Dr. Aidan Stokes retires after more than 50 years. *page 25*

FACULTY REFLECTION Dr. Abraham Rudnick reflects on mental health and population stress in Israel. *page 30*

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This newsletter is published for the Department of Psychiatry at Dalhousie University.

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HEAD LINES

MESSAGE FROM THE INTERIM HEAD

Welcome to summer and the new academic year! As our cover will attest, the highlight this time of year is welcoming our newest residents and students to the department – welcome! You get to know our new residents through this piece and please make a point of welcoming them warmly when you meet them on service.

As one new beginning opens our issue, another closes it. This summer we say goodbye to **Dr. Aidan Stokes** as he begins retirement after 50 years of service to the department. Please read about Dr. Stokes' numerous contributions and how he has influenced current and past leaders. We can look forward to a proper departmental celebration for Dr. Stokes in the fall when gathering rules relax.

Actively supporting faculty wellness is a new initiative within the department arising from our departmental strategic plan and leadership from the medical school. **Dr. Zenovia Ursuliak** describes the work of this committee so far. Her co-lead in this group, Sydney-based faculty member **Dr. Yvonne Libbus**, is featured in Meet our Members section. You can read her journey from family physician to a gratifying psychiatric practice in Cape Breton.

Department members continue to receive awards for their excellent work – we are going to need a bigger trophy case! This month you can read about high-profile awards received by **Dr. Martin Alda** (twice), **Dr. Ben Rusak**, **Dr. Sherry Stewart**, **Dr. Cheryl Murphy**, and graduate student



Dr. Jason Morrison

Sarah Degrace. We also have a piece recapping the award recipients from our year-end postgraduate awards, and you can read about provincial and national recognition for several department members including **Drs. Mutiat Sulyman, Olubenga Williams, Rami Rudnick, Patricia Lingley-Pottie, Patrica Celan, and Ali Manning.**

Rounding out our issue is a report from the Janssen chair, a Med-Ed Minute on teaching, and a reflective piece from Dr. Rudnick written during an emergency visit to Israel amid the recent escalation of violence.

On a personal note, this will be my last issue of *Headlines* as the interim head. Writing an introduction to *Headlines* was my first action in this role back in December 2019. It seems like both yesterday and a million

years ago. We have lived through many things since then. It has been an intense but ultimately gratifying and rewarding experience. I thank our department members, staff and the wider academic community for your support during my time in leadership. I would not have felt as confident making difficult decisions and initiating changes without this important positive feedback.

Renewal will continue to be a theme into the fall as we get rolling with a new academic year in a (hopefully) increasingly post-Covid world under the leadership of Dr. Vincent Agyapong. I look forward to the new ideas he will bring and supporting him as you have supported me. I hope everyone gets a break this summer and returns invigorated for a fresh start in September.

ON THE COVER



On July 2, 2021 the class of 2026 began their postgraduate training in the Department of Psychiatry. Among the eight PGY-1s are three graduates from Dalhousie Medical School, two from the University of Alberta, and one each from the University of Ottawa, the University of British Columbia Northern Medical Program, and McMaster University. This class is the second Competency by Design (CBME) cohort in the department and we know they are in for a busy year! You'll be introduced to each one of them below:

Talia Bond

Where I call home: Shubenacadie, Nova Scotia

Where I attended medical school: Dalhousie University

What excites me most about being a part of Dalhousie Psychiatry: I am so excited to join such a welcoming and supportive group of residents, staff, and faculty! After having such amazing experiences throughout my clerkship and elective rotations at Dalhousie, I am thrilled to be able to complete my residency training here as well.

What I like to do outside of work: In my free time, I enjoy horseback riding and spending time at the barn, yoga, baking, trying to keep my house plants alive, spoiling my pets, and spending time with friends and family.

What I would be doing if I weren't in medicine: Coaching gymnastics! I coached for many years throughout high school and my undergraduate

degree.

An interesting fact about me: I have three pets – in addition to a chiweenie dog and a calico cat, I also have a horse, Gypsee, who I've had since I was 13 years old.

Niamh Campbell

Where I call home: Halifax, Nova Scotia

Where I attended medical school: Dalhousie University

What excites me most about being a part of Dalhousie Psychiatry: Working with my mentors and contributing to my home province's mental health services.

What I like to do outside of work: I enjoy sports (squash in particular), outdoor adventures, and spending time with friends and family.

What I would be doing if I weren't in medicine: Architecture

An interesting fact about me: I spent a summer in Boulder, Colorado and fell in love with the mountains. Summiting my first "14er" (14,000 ft peak) was one of my most memorable experiences.

Julia LeBlanc

Where I call home: Halifax, Nova Scotia

Where I attended medical school: University of Ottawa, Francophone stream

What excites me most about being a part of Dalhousie Psychiatry: I am thrilled to be back in Halifax after five years out-of-province. I have heard wonderful things about Dalhousie's

psychiatry program and am really looking forward to joining this supportive community. I was also drawn to Dal for its strength in child and adolescent psychiatry.

What I like to do outside of work: I am often playing the violin or listening to music. I have continued to play in orchestras throughout medical school and look forward to reconnecting with the music community here in Halifax! I also enjoy cooking—I've recently been exploring Korean cuisine and experimenting with a new ice cream maker.

What I would be doing if I weren't in medicine: I would have followed my undergrad degree in music with a Master's in Music, with the goal of becoming an orchestral violinist and chamber musician!

An interesting fact about me: I have a degree in music therapy from Concordia, and I worked as a music therapy intern in Montreal and Truro the year before starting medical school.

Mitchell Mammel

Where I call home: Chilliwack, British Columbia

Where I attended medical school: University of British Columbia Northern Medical Program

What excites me most about being a part of Dalhousie Psychiatry: Beginning my psychiatric career in the Maritimes.

What I like to do outside of work: Cycle (Mountain and maybe road), Kayak,

and bake.

What I would be doing if I weren't in medicine: Likely something in the mental health field.

An interesting fact about me: The year before medical school I lived in a hut in Northern BC while working as a paramedic and first responder.

Julie Munich

Where I call home: Whitehorse, Yukon

Where I attended medical school: University of Alberta

What excites me most about being a part of Dalhousie Psychiatry: I'm really excited to do rural psychiatry, and I'm super excited about all of the opportunities to do that in the Maritimes! I was blown away by the friendliness of the staff and residents during the tour and I can't wait to get to know everyone better.

What I like to do outside of work: I really treasure my time outside of work. My favourite activity is to rock climb, and I can't wait to explore the HRM climbing gyms! I also love to get outside to climb and I bought the climbing guide the day after I matched so I am feeling the stoke. If I'm not climbing, I love to hike and camp. Especially multi-day backpacking when I get the chance. I highly recommend the Tombstones if you make it to the Yukon!

When I'm not out in nature I tend to be a total sloth and I love reading and playing video games with my dog curled up on the couch with me (and sometimes both cats too, it can get

very crowded). I especially love this when it's raining, there is nothing better than hearing the rain on the roof and feeling cozy with a cup of tea.

What I would be doing if I weren't in medicine: I would be a fiction writer! I actually went to the University of Victoria with the intention of transferring into the creative writing program, but found animal neuroscience just too darn interesting. I love reading fantasy books and my favourite author is Brandon Sanderson. I hope to have more time to read as residency goes on, medical school doesn't always have much free time!

An interesting fact about me: I owned a motorcycle (Ninja 300) years before I owned a car. I still have it and I love going for rides. I'm hard to miss because I dress for the slide and my gear is white and bright red!

Cameron Taylor

Where I call home: Halifax, Nova Scotia

Where I attended medical school: Dalhousie University

What excites me most about being a part of Dalhousie Psychiatry: Apart from not moving provinces during a pandemic (a huge plus), I'm excited to spend the next five years learning and working alongside such a great inter-professional and collaborative mental health team here in the Maritimes.

What I like to do outside of work: I enjoy writing and performing music and going for a long walk or jog with a good podcast.

What I would be doing if I weren't in medicine: During my bachelor degree, part of my education was in religious studies. That whole realm of academic study is still fascinating to me.

An interesting fact about me: I spent some time working at a brewery before medical school.

Alec Watts

Where I call home: Calgary, Alberta

Where I attended medical school: University of Alberta

What excites me most about being a part of Dalhousie Psychiatry: The friendly, supportive and close-knit training culture that exists within the program.

What I like to do outside of work: Socializing with friends/family, watching documentaries, singing to my favourite music in the car or empty stairwells.

What I would be doing if I weren't in medicine: Perhaps become an architect. I have always admired architecture and the way well-designed spaces can change how we relate to the world around us.

An interesting fact about me: For the majority of my life I have been singing in choirs. Singing has provided me the opportunity to travel and experience new cultures. One of the highlights was performing in a 17th century monastery at Montserrat, Spain. The acoustics (and view) were fabulous!

Kara Yeung

Where I call home: Toronto, Ontario

Where I attended medical school:

McMaster University

What excites me most about being a

part of Dalhousie Psychiatry: I'm super excited to get to know everyone in the program and explore the Maritimes!

What I like to do outside of work:

Cycling, running, board games, road trips, campfires, s'mores, and I love a good pun.

What I would be doing if I weren't in

medicine: I've always loved the ocean, and think it would've been really interesting to go into the marine biology field!

An interesting fact about me: I know

every word to the Shrek soundtrack.

RESEARCH REPORT



Department of Psychiatry Research Day 2021

This year's event is scheduled for Friday, Nov. 12, 2021. The current plan is to hold Research Day at the Atlantica Hotel, but if pandemic-related restrictions are in effect at that time, we will have to revise our plans to create an online Research Day event.

Now in its 31st year, Psychiatry Research Day promotes student involvement in research and showcases the department's diverse expertise to our university and local communities.

We are pleased to announce that this year's keynote speaker will be Dr. Brenda Penninx, a professor of psychiatry epidemiology at

the Department of Psychiatry at Amsterdam UMC, who will be speaking on the topic of the epidemiology of anxiety and depression.

If you are interested in presenting at this year's Psychiatry Research Day, please email hillary.yuill@nshealth.ca for application materials. The deadline to submit an abstract is Sept. 1, 2021.

EDUCATION REPORT



UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION NEWS

Clerk's Choice Award

Each year the Department recognizes a resident for their outstanding teaching efforts; the teaching may be didactic or clinical in nature. The winner is based solely on nominations and feedback given by the clinical clerks throughout the year. We would like to congratulate **Dr. Kate Stymiest** (PGY-3) for being the 2020/21 Clerks' Choice award winner!

Overall, our residents received 69 nominations from the clerks; a testament to how valued the residents are for their dedication to teaching. From the comments provided by the clerks, there are many recurring themes: enthusiastic, approachable, kind, supportive teachers who actively involve clerks and provide constructive feedback to facilitate their learning. Thank you to our residents for providing such a positive experience to our medical students.

Tutor Recruitment

2021/22 tutor recruitment continues. We need to recruit additional tutors in each half of Skilled Clinician this year due to the Med 2 class size increase. These are small group sessions in which tutors use a combination of didactic teaching and patient interviewing. This allows students to acquire initial familiarity with the techniques of psychiatric assessments and learn how to communicate with patients with mental disorders and ask questions about sensitive topics. If this is something you might be interested in participating in, please contact **Kelly Hancock** at kelly.hancock@nshealth.ca.

Summer Internship in Psychiatry

Our new Summer Internship in Psychiatry (SIIP) experience launched this year, running from May 25 – 28 for eight students from the Halifax and Saint John campuses. We would like to thank our resident planning committee for all of their efforts to create a fantastic experience for the students.

POSTGRADUATE EDUCATION NEWS

Graduation COVID-19 and social distancing once again forced the department to get creative in hosting the 2021 graduation exercises. Faculty, staff, and students joined together on June 23, 2021, to celebrate the graduates virtually on Zoom. Congratulations to the Class of 2021: **Drs. Christelle Boudreau, Laura Downing, Melissa Lahti, Greg MacMullin, Christine McClelland, Abraham Nunes, Anthony Pianosi** and **Chelcie Soroka**. Congratulations

also to subspecialty graduates **Drs. Vhari James, Ali Manning** and **Katie Radchuck**, who completed their training in child and adolescent psychiatry.

Awards were presented to:

Teacher of the Year Award: **Dr. Deb Parker**

Above & Beyond Award: **Mathias Gay** (EMHAS)

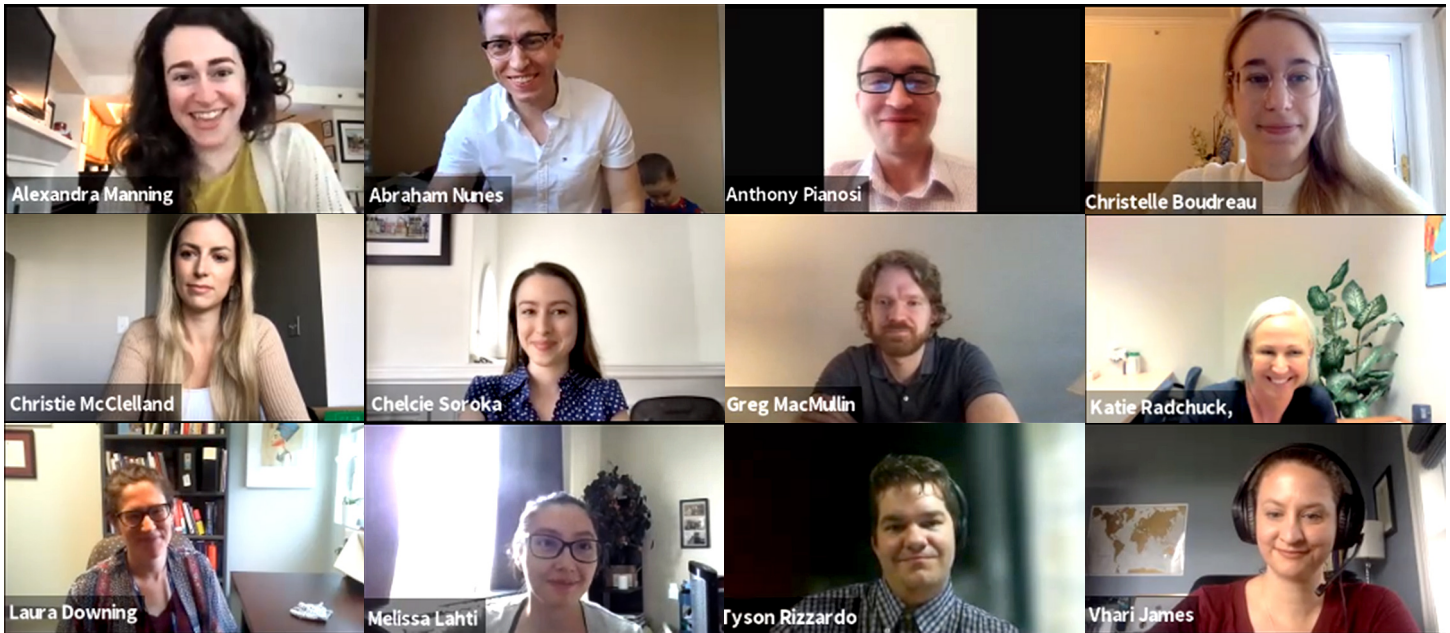
PGY-5 Excellence Award: **Dr. Meagan MacNeil**.

Mentorship Award: **Dr. Keri-Leigh Cassidy**

Clerks' Choice Award: **Dr. Kate Stymiest**

Saint John PGY-1 Resident of the Year Award: **Dr. LeAnne Revell**

Charles J. David Memorial Prize (PGY-2): **Dr. Michelle MacDonald**



The 2021 graduates are celebrated during the virtual graduation ceremony in June. Top row (L-R): Drs. Ali Manning, Abraham Nunes, Anthony Pianosi, Christelle Boudreau; Middle row (L-R): Drs. Christie McClelland, Chelcie Soroka, Greg MacMullin, Katie Radchuck; Bottom row (L-R): Drs. Laura Downing, Melissa Lahti, Tyson Rizzardo, Vhari James.

Herb Orlik Child & Adolescent Psychiatry Award (PGY-3): **Dr. Kate Stymiest**

Geriatric Psychiatry Resident Award (PGY-3): **Dr. Mackenzie Armstrong**

Robert and Stella Weil Fund in Psychiatry Prize: **Dr. Anastasia McCarvill**

W.O. McCormick Award: **Drs. Katie Lines and Jill Cottreau**

Resident Professionalism Awards: **Drs. LeAnne Revell and Tyson Rizzardo**

Alexander H. Leighton Resident of the Year Award: **Dr. Marissa LeBlanc**

FELLOWSHIP AND SUBSPECIALTY TRAINING NEWS

Geriatric Psychiatry Subspecialty Program Competency by Design

The introduction of the Royal College Competency by Design program begins in July. Our thanks go to **Dr. Christelle Boudreau** who has helped the team pilot some of the EPAs (Entrustable Professional Activities) over the last year and who will continue in her final year. **Drs. Mark Bosma** and **Cheryl Murphy** have led faculty workshops to prepare us for the new evaluation techniques. **Dr. Amy Gough**, who joined us July 1, will

be the first official resident to spend two years in the CBD program.

Dr. Terry Chisholm returned from her sabbatical mid-May. She, and the whole team, thank **Dr. Meagan MacNeil** for leading the program during the implementation of Competency by Design. We will look forward to her ongoing input with residency training.

Geriatric Psychiatry Resident Award

We are pleased to announce that **Dr. Mackenzie Armstrong** won the award this year. Mackenzie worked well with

the team, had empathetic interactions with patients and performed excellent assessments. We wish Mackenzie well as he continues on in his residency.

Child and Adolescent psychiatry subspecialty

Congratulations to **Drs. Vhari James, Ali Manning** and **Katie Radchuck** on their graduation from the child and adolescent subspecialty training program.

Welcome to **Dr. Lauren Chan** who will be starting her subspecialty training on July 1 and **Dr. Emily Fraser** who will begin on January 1.

CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT NEWS

Upcoming CPD Workshop

The Involuntary Psychiatric Treatment Act (IPTA): An Overview for Psychiatrists

Friday, Jul 23, 2021, 1 - 4:00 PM,
Halifax

Via Zoom

This workshop will cover the basics of the Involuntary Psychiatric Treatment Act (IPTA) and provide guidance on how to effectively present to review boards. All psychiatrists with a Dalhousie affiliation are welcome.

Check the faculty database or contact **Dr. Lara Hazelton** at Lara.Hazelton@dal.ca for more information.

FACULTY DEVELOPMENT

Faculty Development Opportunities

[Dalhousie Continuing Professional Development](#)

Online Learning

Online Courses:

Teaching and Assessing Critical Thinking – Phase One | Sept. 28-Dec. 7, 2021

Teaching and Assessing Critical Thinking – Phase Two | Jan. 25- March 29, 2022

Registration to open soon. For more information please visit <https://medicine.dal.ca/departments/core-units/cpd/faculty-development/programs/TACT.html>.

Save the date

Medical Education Day: Back to the Basics

This year's *Medical Education Day: Back to the Basics* will take place virtually, on Friday, Sept. 17, 2021. Stay tuned for more information.

2018-2020 recorded webinars

Over the past year FacDev hosted a variety of different webinars including six related to teaching during COVID.

Webinar recordings are available upon request by contacting FacDev@dal.ca.

Online Modules

FacDev offers a wide variety of online modules which you are able to access from the comfort of your own home – only internet access is required!

Some of the modules include:

- Reflective Thinking and Its Use in Medicine (accredited)
- Tutor Skill Development – updated with info re teaching online
- Medical Records Keeping (accredited)
- Documenting Your Teaching

For more information, and to access the modules please contact FacDev@dal.ca.

What's new in FacDev?

Anti- Oppression resources have been added to their website, which can be found <https://medicine.dal.ca/departments/core-units/cpd/faculty-development/resources/Anti-RacismResources.html>.

For more information on Faculty Development and their programs, email FacDev@dal.ca.

Note: Many Faculty Development activities are accredited. If you would like to receive a CME listing of your credits for the past year, or other date span, please feel free to contact Deirdre Harvey at 902-494-2234 or deirdre.harvey@dal.ca.

MED-ED MINUTE

The “Med Ed Minute” introduces scholarly snippets to consider in your teaching practice.

This Med Ed Minute highlights the many facets and complexities of the clinician teacher role and the importance they have in educating our learners.

What is teaching?

“Teaching is the process of attending to learners’ needs and experiences and intervening so that learners learn particular things and go beyond what they can achieve alone.”¹

What are the roles of the clinician teacher?

“Teaching is a demanding and complex task.”² To understand these demands and complexities, Harden & Crosby (2000) developed the 12 roles of the teacher framework. The 12 roles are shown in Figure 1. These roles (around the perimeter of the circle) are grouped by six areas of activity (inner circle) that a clinician teacher may engage in.

Roles that require more content expertise are shown on the right of the diagram and those that require more educational expertise are shown on the left. Roles that involve more student contact are shown at the top of the diagram whereas those that involve less direct student contact are shown at the bottom.

Do clinician teachers perform all these roles?

A teacher may participate in one or more of these roles. These roles are often interconnected and may be performed simultaneously. “A good teacher need not be competent in all 12 roles and that it would be unusual to find, and unreasonable to expect, one individual to have all the required competences.”²

In addition to these 12 roles, many teachers also engage in clinical, administrative, and research roles.

Suggestions for future Med Ed Minute topics

If you have suggestions for what you would like to see in a future Med Ed Minute, please send them to **Mandy Eslinger** at mandy.eslinger@nshealth.ca.

References

1. Pylman, S., & Ward, A. (2020). When did “teaching” become a taboo word for clinician educators? *Medical Teacher*, 42(2), 233–234.
2. Harden, R. M., & Crosby, J. (2000). AMEE Guide No 20: The good teacher is more than a lecturer - the twelve roles of the teacher. *Medical Teacher*, 22(4), 334–347.

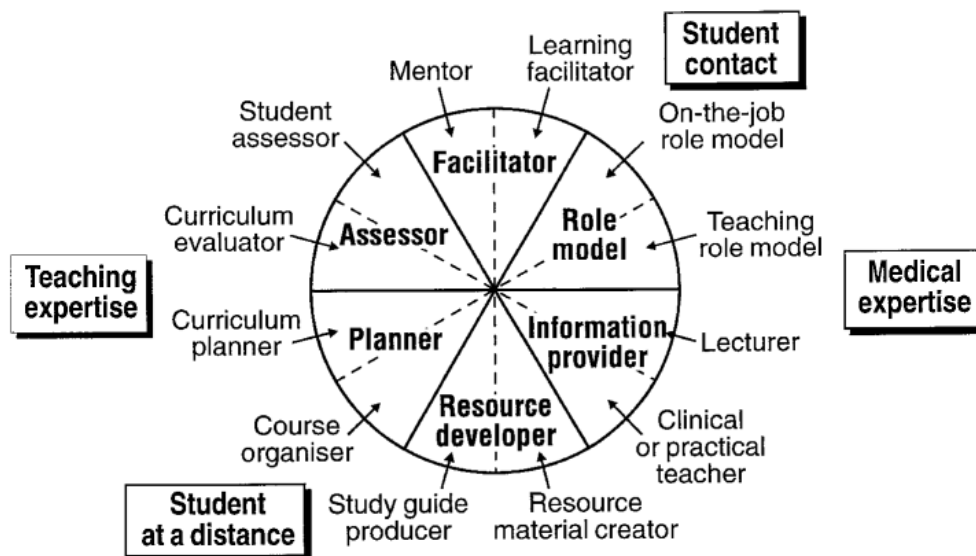


Figure 1. The 12 roles of the teacher.

CHILD & ADOLESCENT PSYCHIATRY REPORT

Faculty Updates

We are very excited to be welcoming two new faculty, **Dr. Ali Manning** (July 1) and **Dr. Katie Radchuck** (August 3). Dr. Manning will be working in community mental health and addictions (Sackville) and the bipolar specific care clinic. Dr. Radchuck will be working in the eating disorders specific care clinic, EMHAS and the family therapy clinic.

We are also pleased to announce that **Dr. Vhari James** has taken a position in the eastern zone and will continue to work with our division, providing locum coverage to the Garron inpatient unit.

Dr. Aidan Stokes retired on July 1 and the division will plan a gathering to celebrate his years with the department sometime in the near future.

Dr. Lourdes Soto-Moreno has moved to Children's Intensive Services (CIS) July 1, 2021, and she will continue at Sackville CMHA two days per week.

Dr. Selene Etches will be moving out of EMHAS and will take over the Consultation Liaison (CL) service for C&A in August 2021. She will continue her work in the concurrent specific care clinic.

Presentation

Senator Stan Kutcher and Office of Member of Parliament Ya'ara Saks, along with special guests **Dr. Alexa Bagnell** and Alisa Simon (Kids Help Phone), hosted a Facebook-based series for Mental Health Week in

May. The series, *Mental Health Week: Moving Beyond Awareness Toward Action* can be viewed by visiting: https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?v=2972636766392824&ref=watch_permalink.

2021 Dr. Herb Orlik Award in Child & Adolescent Psychiatry

The division would like to extend sincere congratulations to **Dr. Kate Stymiest**, this year's recipient of the Dr. Herb Orlik Award in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry. Dr. Stymiest was commended on her motivation, professionalism and interpersonal skills. Her drive to learn is infectious, and she is always willing to go above and beyond. Congratulations on this well-deserved award.

Publication

The original research FORBOW study of spectrum of neurodevelopmental disorders in offspring of parents with major mood disorders found higher rates of ADHD in offspring, in particular in children of parents with bipolar disorder. Higher rates of neurodevelopmental disorders were associated with chronic course of mood disorders in parents.

The findings may remind clinicians regarding the importance of screening for ADHD and other neurodevelopmental disorders in offspring of parents with major mood disorders. Early diagnosis may allow for targeted treatment, and early interventions may in turn reduce risk of more severe mental illness later in

the clinical course.

Reference to the full article:

Propper L, Sandstrom A, Rempel S, Howes Vallis E, Abidi S, Bagnell A, Lovas D, Alda M, Pavlova B, Uher R. Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder and other neurodevelopmental disorders in offspring of parents with depression and bipolar disorder. *Psychol Med.* 2021 Jun 18:1-8. doi: 10.1017/S0033291721001951. Epub ahead of print. PMID: 34140050.

DR. PAUL JANSSEN CHAIR IN PSYCHOTIC DISORDERS REPORT

There continues to be a return to active research as the pandemic and subsequent restrictions begin to ease. The ability to recruit research subjects (both clinical and community control subjects) had been hampered over the last number of months. That said, the Janssen Chair's research group have a number of projects ongoing, and others starting.

The Janssen Chair is the PI on a grant from the Canadian Center on Substance Use and Addiction (CCSA) that has recently started, allowing a collaboration between psychiatry, psychology and the emergency department (ED), investigating cannabis-related presentations to the ED. The first part of this investigation has a number of objectives, including determining the frequency of physical and mental health-related adverse events related to cannabis use in both child, adolescent and adult EDs since cannabis legalization in Canada. Additionally, it will examine if there is any association between variables such as gender, sex, age, ethnicity or socioeconomic status and risk of experiencing an adverse event with cannabis use that requires an ED visit. Monitoring emergency department outcomes has been previously identified as an important metric for measuring the impact of cannabis legalization on the healthcare system in Canada and our deeper dive will not only provide the data to examine this metric, but also to examine



New research assistant Cora-Lynn Monroe.



New research assistant Brad Gillis.

care pathways arising from the ED. The amount of data to review has precipitated the need to hire two new research assistants, as on the adult ED side alone there are over 130,000 ED encounters to review.

Another interesting collaboration to highlight is a Nova Scotia Health Research Foundation grant-funded study led by psychiatry resident **Dr. Shiloh Ricciotti**. This study will investigate, utilizing database and retrospective cohort chart review methodology, the outcomes after curative-intent surgery for lung and esophageal cancer in severe and persistent mentally ill (SPMI) patients as compared to a matched cohort. This will be a collaboration between psychiatry, surgery and anaesthesia.

Other research studies continue,

including: longitudinal neuroimaging of brain white matter and cannabis exposure in early phase psychosis and controls; graduate student research including prevalence and type of adversity in early phase psychosis with comorbid substance use; and electrocortical markers of auditory change detection mechanisms in high risk psychosis populations, as well as on clinical investigations of use of LAIs (long-acting injectable antipsychotics) over time and in the context of the pandemic.

OPERATIONALIZING OUR STRATEGIC PLAN



RE-ENVISIONING AND RECREATING WHO WE ARE FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF WELLNESS

By: Dr. Zenovia Ursuliak, chair of the faculty wellness committee

In March 2021 **Dr. Jason Morrison**, interim department head, appointed me the interim lead of the budding Department of Psychiatry (DoP) faculty wellness committee and a representative to the newly forming Faculty of Medicine (FoM) Wellness Implementation Group (WIG). **Dr. Yvonne Libbus**, a dedicated psychiatrist who works in Cape Breton, also became a DoP representative to the FoM WIG.

The committee's first task was to operationalize four strategic plan items that the DoP Executive Committee deemed relevant to wellness. Dr. Morrison supported the committee by offering the talent of **Kate Rogers**, communications coordinator, and **Stephanie Heath**, a facilitator/planner from Research Power Incorporated, who had already been working with the DoP in strategic planning. An invitation went out to the DoP membership to join the committee. The following people took up the call and have been dedicating themselves to this work over the past three months:

Drs. Keri-Leigh Cassidy, Pippa Moss, Kulli Poder, Kathleen Howell, Beverley Cassidy, Yvonne Libbus, Pam Arenella, Alexandra Manning, Greg MacMullin, Joe Sadek, Ezio Dini, Courtney Handford, Jennifer Cumming, Anastasia McCarvill

and myself, **Zenovia Ursuliak**. The members of this team have keen intellects, compassionate hearts and creative spirits. Three of us practice in rural Nova Scotia, and four are residents.

The four strategic plan items we were tasked to work on are:

Strengthen faculty engagement within the department

Continue to promote, recognize and value faculty contributions to the academic mission of the department

Provide opportunities to build relationships and promote collegiality among faculty and staff

Encourage activities that promote physician health and well-being

We created four task teams, one for each strategic plan item, to work with **Stephanie Heath** on action planning. Members were encouraged to join the task team for the strategic plan item that most resonated with them. Strangely, no one chose item 3c.

I signed up for the unpopular 3c) and invited other courageous souls to join me in deconstructing this item so that it held more meaning from a wellness perspective. Residents were also asked to distribute themselves evenly across the teams to ensure the resident perspective was at each Zoom "table". The team was adept at graciously redistributing themselves.

We have done a significant amount of work in two months and the first fruits of our labour were presented to the executive committee on June 24. Some of initial themes that have arisen from our work include supporting career paths, resident wellness, developing current and new DoP leaders to be champions of wellness, and enriching educational and social opportunities to mobilize the human potential of our diverse membership. We plan to have a half day retreat in the fall to put the finishing touches on these plans.

Thank you to every wellness committee member, as well as **Kate Rogers** and **Stephanie Heath**. People have shared their unique perspectives and created a supportive and inspiring environment. Our committee is large and diverse, and would benefit from even more diversity, so if you want to join us, please contact **Kate Rogers** at kate.rogers@nshealth.ca or myself, at Zenovia.ursuliak@nshealth.ca

MEET OUR MEMBERS



The Department of Psychiatry is home to over 200 faculty. We have expert teachers, researchers and clinicians among them. In hopes of familiarizing you with our members, in each issue of *Headlines* you will be introduced, or re-introduced, to a new face. In this issue, get to know **Dr. Yvonne Libbus**, psychiatrist and assistant professor in the Department of Psychiatry in Cape Breton.

DR. YVONNE LIBBUS

My career at Dalhousie: I came to Dalhousie University for medical school and I am proud to be in the med school class of '93. I completed my family medicine residency at Dalhousie and worked as a family doctor in Halifax before joining the Nova Scotia Hospital team to care for the medical needs of inpatients. I maintained a connection with Dalhousie as a clinical instructor within the Department of Family Medicine. After a few years I went back to Dalhousie to complete my psychiatry residency and after graduation in 2006 began to work as a psychiatrist in Cape Breton.

How my career at Dalhousie/NSH changed over the years: I have worked as a general adult psychiatrist in the Sydney Mental Health Clinic, a role that continues to this day. I have had the privilege of working within the Department of Psychiatry in what was the Cape Breton District Health Authority or CBDHA. CBDHA was a fantastic place for me to begin my career as a psychiatrist. We had up to 15 psychiatrists back then and I had the good fortune to work with the best group of colleagues that one could hope for. Dr. Brian Foley was the chief of psychiatry and clinical director and he continues to be a mentor to this day. In fact, there are



Dr. Yvonne Libbus (photo submitted)

seven psychiatrists that made up the core group and two of them have been coming back to work with us in their retirement years. This amazing Cape Breton psychiatry group consists of myself, **Drs. Javed Ali, Scott Milligan, Brian Foley, Adewale Raji, John Rogers**, and Brian Roxburgh. Cape Bretoners are known for getting through tough times with unmatched resiliency and a sense of humor to boot. That this group has been sticking around through thick and thin makes me that much prouder as a Cape Bretoner. The commitment to the patient population we serve and to the colleagues is what holds us together.

I was surprised to have found myself in leadership positions within a few years of being in Sydney. I had the good fortune to follow in the leadership footsteps of Dr. Foley, becoming the chief of psychiatry in 2008 to 2015 and the role of clinical director was added in 2011 to 2015. What a wonderful opportunity to see the importance of collaboration within the health care sector as we navigated the various challenges and opportunities of the time.

My current position with Dalhousie:

As an assistant professor with the Department of Psychiatry I am involved with teaching medical students and family medicine residents along with my CB psychiatry colleagues. This is an excellent place to do a rural psychiatry selective or elective and encourage residents to consider us. I sit on the Psychiatry Recruitment Action Group with **Dr. Andrew Harris** and Sam Hodder as co-chairs and would like to invite learners to visit or join us for locum opportunities.



Back row (L-R): Drs Javed Ali, Brian Foley, Adewale Raji, Brian Roxburgh, and John Rogers. Front row (L-R): Drs. Scott Milligan and Yvonne Libbus.

I have been asked by **Dr. Jason Morrison** to join **Dr. Zenovia Ursuliak** and represent the Department of Psychiatry in the Faculty of Medicine Wellness Implementation Group headed by **Dr. Angela Cooper** and Roberta Preston. Work has already begun with colleagues across the province to talk about wellness; it has been engaging and I am hopeful that we can create something that helps to set future directions for health care providers where we take care of our patients but also ourselves a bit better and lessen chances of burnout.

My early career aspirations: As I said earlier, I started off as a family doctor, but ended up discovering that I wanted to study psychiatry after working at the Nova Scotia Hospital. I had people like Dr. Bill McCormick encouraging me and **Dr Michael**

Teehan allowing me to trial the job as a GP in psychiatry before I took the plunge to go back to school and enter the residency program. My three daughters were 3, 5 and 7-years-old when I started the residency program in July 2002, so I needed to know that this was something I really wanted to do as this decision affected our entire family.

A typical day in my life: In Cape Breton we have three inpatient units with 46 beds. There are three psychiatrists (Drs. Ali, Milligan and Roxburgh) that are dedicated to manage these beds with an average of 16 patients per psychiatrist. With Dr. Roxburgh's retirement in December 2019 and challenges with recruiting to our area, the Cape Breton psychiatry group came together to propose a solution to cover the units until

replacements could be found. We are still using this model of two week coverage alternating with Dr. Roxburgh's coming out of retirement half time and Drs. Foley, Rogers, Raji and myself rotating through, while still managing the outpatient clinic work, as well as managing the clozapine and depot clinics. We also liaise with programs such as the community supports treatment team to help address the needs of those with severe and persistent mental illness.

The workload certainly is heavy, but it is shared amongst the team of colleagues and allied health professions. The use of virtual care has also helped our clinicians have access to psychiatry consultations. We are looking forward to **Dr. Vhari James** joining us this summer.

The most satisfying thing about my current role: In just a few words it is about providing care to the patients and the opportunity to work with an excellent group of colleagues. For me, having an opportunity to come home and work in an area that you were born and raised in, and to be able to give back to the people that helped you get to where you are is very special; in some small way I feel like I am giving back to the people who gave to me.

What I wish I could change about it: I would have more psychiatry residents come to Cape Breton. I also would create a locum pool that would provide much needed relief, but also allow early career psychiatrists and those who want to work with us a chance to be reasonably compensated. We have unique needs and will need unique solutions to manage our human

resource challenges. I really do think we have a work environment that is large enough to see a wide range of psychiatric diagnosis and a diverse community with varying social and economic challenges that one would never have to be worried of not seeing enough. In fact, I feel my psychiatry residency prepared me to do the work here, but the patients that I have had the privilege to care for have been my best teachers. I continue to learn to this day.

The piece of advice I would offer to someone starting their career in mental health: Be a good listener and cultivate an attitude of compassion in your work daily. It is a true privilege to be in this helping position and try not to let the stressors of the system around you affect your ability to do the best you can for that person and/or the family in front of you.

In an ideal world, the next five years will look like: I would like to have the option to take a few days off and not feel like things will fall apart. I want to have the option to connect more with the patients and people in our community to tell us how we can try and get services better. I would rather have direction for service improvement come from those most directly affected and feed this information to the provincial leads. To have people listen when we say what is needed and adapt the system to what is needed at the time so that we provide the best care to those we serve.

NEWS FROM THE DEPARTMENT

Drs. Mutiat Sulyman and Olubenga Williams and team featured in MHCC report

Drs. Mutiat Sulyman and **Olubenga Williams** and the Adult Neurodevelopmental Stabilization Unit are featured amongst the *Champions and Changemakers: Real-World Examples of Approaches that Address Mental Illness- and Substance Use-Related Structural Stigma in Canada's Health-Care System*, as well as in the *Structural Stigma - Personal Experience Stories*, two reports were recently released by the Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC).

The Champions and Changemakers report features case studies demonstrating innovative models of

care, quality improvement initiatives, interventions, programs, policies, or practices related to reducing structural stigma — specifically, those that showed promise or effectiveness by improving access and the quality of health care and/or outcomes for people with lived and living experience of mental health problems or illnesses and/or substance use. The Adult Neurodevelopmental Stabilization Unit was one of 62 submissions, and one of six who were chosen to be featured. The report describes the key features that make each program an important approach for tackling structural stigma. You can access the full report by visiting: <https://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/sites/default/files/2021-05/Champions>

[and Changemakers Real World Approaches to Structural Stigma eng.pdf](https://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/sites/default/files/2021-06/structural_stigma_personal_experience_stories_narratives_eng.pdf)

In the Structural Stigma report the MHCC interviewed Rachel Boehm, the director of the Mental Health and Addictions Program in the NSH Central Zone, on methods to address and dismantle structural stigma. Ms. Boehm provided information about the Adult Neurodevelopmental Stabilization Unit and the work they have done to combat structural stigma. You can access the report by visiting: https://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/sites/default/files/2021-06/structural_stigma_personal_experience_stories_narratives_eng.pdf.

Dr. Abraham (Rami) Rudnick named chair of Doctors Nova Scotia committee

Dr. Abraham (Rami) Rudnick has been named the chair of the Policy and Health Issues Committee (PHIC) of Doctors Nova Scotia (DNS). The PHIC, which has approximately a dozen physician members from various specialties across Nova Scotia, engages in policy discussion and makes recommendations to the Board of Directors of DNS; it addresses matters such as professional activities in special circumstances like pandemics as well as many other

issues. Dr. Rudnick will chair the PHIC for three years, during which time he will establish meeting agendas, lead the meetings, provide reports of the committee work to the Board of Directors of DNS, and communicate relevant information to the media. He has been a volunteer member of this committee since 2019. As the exiting chair's term ends this year, Dr. Rudnick was approached to apply for the position, which he did, and was elected by acclaim in May 2021. His time as the chair will allow him the opportunity to collaboratively inform and influence sound health care policy in Nova Scotia.



Dr. Abraham Rudnick

Drs. Patricia Lingley-Pottie and Patrick J. McGrath involved in book launch with Dr. David Goldbloom

On May 3, **Drs. Patricia Lingley-Pottie** and **Patrick J. McGrath** joined eminent Canadian psychiatrist, Dr. David Goldbloom, for a Q&A period prior to the virtual launch of his book *We Can Do Better: Urgent Innovations to Improve Mental Health Access and Care*. The book describes the barriers to care and other faults in mental health care systems, highlighting several key Canadian innovations designed to improve access to mental health services. Examples include: Self-referrals for faster access to care; apps and e-tools for treatment,

rehabilitation, and self-monitoring between appointments; remote coaching for effectively treating common childhood problems; integrated youth services to improve early intervention; personalized care to ensure treatments don't fail patients; and rapid-access housing for the homeless and mentally ill so they can begin a journey of care. The book describes how the Strongest Families Institute (SFI), developed by Drs. Pottie and McGrath, was designed as a 'distance system of care' to remove barriers through innovation, best science and highly trained para-professional telephone support coaches. On pages 24 through 39, they examined the strength of SFI's

evidence-based technology and its scalable service delivery model, speaking specifically to the success of the coach role in encouraging open and honest family dialogue and how the skills learned are customized to the specific needs of the child/parent adult and/or family. SFI staff work at times convenient to the client/family so help is provided when and where they need it.

The virtual event attracted more than 300 guests from across Canada and the U.S. To learn more about Dr. Goldbloom's book please visit: <https://www.simonandschuster.ca/books/We-Can-Do-Better/David-Goldbloom/9781501184864>.

Dr. Patricia Celan part of virtual choir event

In honour of National Physicians Day, the Canadian Physicians Virtual Choir released their latest musical project on May 1. The Vancouver-based choir is comprised of over 200 physicians from across Canada, including one of our own psychiatry residents, **Dr. Patricia Celan**. Guest musicians for the latest performance included celebrity singers such as Josh Ramsay from Marianas Trench, Broadway singer Romano DiNillo, and Josh Ward from Hey Rosetta! Each performance from the choir is aimed at promoting donations for a particular charity. The May 1 video, "Who Do You Love," was in support of the Lewy Body Dementia Association and Alzheimer Society of Canada. Watch it here: youtu.be/TbuBhghRNWE



Resident Dr. Patricia Celan participates with the Canadian Physicians Virtual Choir.

Dr. Ali Manning part of new initiative creating online community for physicians

When **Dr. Ali Manning** read about *Resilience Rx by The Rounds* she knew it was something she wanted to be part of. This online forum provides a safe space where physicians can connect with their peers for support, relieve and personal growth without the fear of judgement. It provides the highest quality content for physicians while breaking down specialty silos and geographic barriers. Inspired by the unwavering dedication of physicians during the COVID-19 pandemic and grounded in the belief that healthier physicians equal healthier patients, Tim Rice, CEO of *The Rounds*, a Halifax based online collaboration network for physicians, wanted to do something to demonstrate their gratitude towards physicians, both as a company and as members of the community at large. In the fall of 2020, with the shift of healthcare to primarily virtual and *The Rounds* being an already established, gated and secure online collaboration network for Canadian physicians, *The Rounds* found themselves positioned to do something to give back to doctors. It was evident how the pandemic was exacerbating the burden on physician mental health and well-being. They sought out partners who shared their view on the importance of contributing to the practice of taking care of the caregivers and that healthier physicians equal healthier patients, and in conversation with strategic corporate sponsors the genesis of *Resilience Rx by The Rounds* was born.

Dr. Manning was excited about the possibilities that *Resilience RX*



Dr. Ali Manning (right) is interviewed virtually by Dr. Vivien Brown.

offered to physicians as a space to share information and support one another from the moment she learned about it. “Their mission to raise awareness on the importance of physician health is one I share” she says. “In discussing with the *Resilience Rx by The Rounds* team, it became evident that this was not only about decreasing stigma around physician health and well-being but also about supporting physicians to thrive in the work that they do.” Dr. Manning’s own belief is that we need to start with the assumption that physicians are resilient and shift the conversation away from building individual resilience towards building systems that do not demand one to constantly draw on that resilience. She believes we need to re-conceptualize burnout not so much as a failure of the individual, but rather as a problem in the context within which their practice is situated. In doing so, we can begin to start examining and reforming the cultural and systemic factors that drive burnout.

Dr. Manning was invited to participate in the media launch of *Resilience Rx*

by *The Rounds*, which included an interview with Global News, to share her experience as a resident and to discuss her work with Balint Groups. “It was a great opportunity to hear from two other physicians about how they think about physician wellness and why this is something they continue to talk about,” she says. She has since been working with *Resilience Rx by The Rounds* in planning to offer Balint Groups in the *Resilience Rx* community.

To view Dr. Manning’s interview with Global, please visit <https://globalnews.ca/video/rd/02a0a37e-1ac0b-11eb-bd85-0242ac110004/?jwsourc=cl>. Dr. Manning was also interviewed by Dr. Vivien Brown on *The Rounds* platform and that interview can be found by visiting: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dMOET3XSzZM>.

To learn more about *Resilience Rx by The Rounds* please visit <https://www.newswire.ca/news-releases/the-rounds-launches-resiliencex-highlighting-the-need-for-physician-mental-health-and-wellness-support-810520964.html>.

STAFF & FACULTY CHANGES

Arrivals

Dr. Sonia Detillieux joined the department as assistant professor effective May 10, 2021. Dr. Detillieux is working at the NSOSI Clinic in Dartmouth. She can be reached at sonia.detillieux@nshealth.ca or 902-460-6225.

Dr. Laura Downing joined the department as assistant professor effective May 17, 2021. Dr. Downing is working at the Dartmouth Community Mental Health and Addictions Clinic and Connections Dartmouth. She can be reached at lauram.downing@nshealth.ca or 902-466-1830.

Dr. Melissa Lahti joined the department as assistant professor effective May 25, 2021. Dr. Lahti is working at the NSOSI Clinic in Dartmouth and in acute care on 6 Lane. She can be reached at melissa.lahti@nshealth.ca or 902-460-6225.

Dr. Gregory MacMullin joined the department as assistant professor effective July 1, 2021. Dr. MacMullin is working at Connections Halifax and West Hants Community Mental Health. He can be reached at gregory.macmullin@nshealth.ca or 902-473-7114.

Dr. Ali Manning joined the department as assistant professor effective July 1, 2021. Dr. Manning is working at the IWK Bedford/Sackville Outpatient Clinic. She can be reached at alexandra.manning@iwk.nshealth.ca or 902-864-8868.

Dr. Abraham Nunes joined the department as assistant professor effective, July 1, 2021. Dr. Nunes is working in the Mood Disorders Clinic and in research. He can be reached at nunes@dal.ca or 902-473-2585.

Departures

Dr. Aidan Stokes has retired from the department, effective July 1, 2021. We thank Dr. Stokes for his unwavering dedication to the Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and the wider department, over the last 50 years.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dalhousie Psychotherapy Journal Club Launched

In the depths of winter (and COVID-19), the Saint John Department of Psychiatry felt a need to meet to share practical knowledge and skills as a community of psychotherapists. At about the same time across the Bay of Fundy,

Dr. Lara Hazelton, director of CPD, contemplated a similar initiative -- and a collaborative online Psychotherapy Journal Club was born.

In the past three months, between 20-30 interdisciplinary mental health clinicians in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia have met online to discuss classic psychotherapy articles from Bruce Wampold (Common Factors Theory), Carl Rogers (Client Centered Psychology) and Martin Seligman (Positive Psychology).

Sessions take place the first Thursday of the month from 12 - 1 pm via Zoom. An asynchronous discussion option using Google docs is also available for

those who cannot attend in person.

We look forward to welcoming facilitators and other discussion contributors when we re-start after the summer break. The next Psychotherapy Journal Club will be Thursday September 2 at 12:00pm on Zoom. If you wish to be put on the invitation list or have any questions or comments, please contact **Dr. Joseph Aicher** at joseph.aicher@dal.ca or Dr. Lara Hazelton at Lara.Hazelton@dal.ca.

AWARDS & HONOURS

Dr. Martin Alda receives inaugural Dr. Aidan Stokes Mentorship Award

Dr. Martin Alda is the recipient of the first ever Dr. Aidan Stokes Mentorship Award. Named in honour of **Dr. Aidan Stokes** who has dedicated his career to fostering a culture of strong leadership and mentorship within the Department of Psychiatry, this annual award recognizes and honours a faculty member who has demonstrated exceptional mentorship and leadership in their work with the department. Over the course of close to half a century of service to the department, Dr. Stokes served as acting head and deputy head for over two decades. He served nationally in the Canadian Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry as a board member and past president. Nominated by **Dr. Abraham Nunes**, Dr. Martin Alda was recognized for his integrity and professionalism, and his accessibility at even the most difficult of times. Dr. Nunes described him as ‘one of the single most

Master’s student Sarah DeGrace recipient of research award

First year Master’s in Psychiatry Research student **Sarah DeGrace** has received a 2021 Faculty of Medicine Best Presentation of Research Award for her platform presentation at the Graduate Student Research Day event held virtually on June 1, 2021. The event brought together 58 students from across the Faculty



Dr. Alda accepts his award virtually during the May department meeting.

important factors in my development as a productive scientist,’ indicating he owes his academic career to his guidance. He continued by saying “I do not exaggerate when I say that Martin Alda has been one of the most important contributors to my life, and this will remain a point of

personal gratitude and pride for me henceforth.”

Dr. Alda was recognized virtually during the May 18 biannual meeting. Congratulations Dr. Alda.

of Medicine, Health and Dentistry who presented in nine different sessions. Sarah, who is supervised by **Dr. Sherry Stewart**, presented her abstract titled *Sex differences in maladaptive emotional and behavioral responses to COVID-19: What is the role of personality?* in a session with four other students presenting in the same session. She was declared the winner by the judges. Sarah’s MSc thesis research concerns how gender

differences in personality may help explain gender differences in COVID-19-related distress and adherence to public health pandemic containment measures. Her prize, which includes a certificate and monetary gift, was awarded virtually in June. Congratulations Sarah!

Dr. Cheryl Murphy receives Excellence in Education Award

Dr. Cheryl Murphy is the recipient of the 2021 Dalhousie Faculty of Medicine Award for Excellence in Education. This award was established by the Faculty of Medicine to acknowledge excellence in education among faculty members and to encourage their continued efforts in education. Dr. Murphy is the undergraduate program director in our department and a dedicated teacher for medical students, residents and subspecialty trainees. She tutors in the psychiatry Clinical Skills unit and delivers several clerkship seminars. She has worked collaboratively to revitalize faculty development within our department, offering sessions on virtual supervision, MCQ development and feedback, and is also regularly invited by DMNB to deliver faculty development. She has provided excellent leadership to our program, evidenced by student feedback and very successful recruitment of Dalhousie students to our residency program. She has also transformed the clerkship curriculum with case-

based seminars and well received e-learning modules, in response to student feedback. She has contributed to a culture shift within our department, with a progressive increase in interest in medical education particularly within our resident body.

Dr. Murphy strives to develop her skills as an educator. Despite being one of the first faculty members in our department to complete a Master of Education degree in 2007, she subsequently enrolled in the Master of Medical Education at the University of Dundee. Having completed the required coursework, she is currently completing her thesis, a qualitative case study that examines the complex factors influencing participation in faculty development. Additionally, she regularly attends conferences with an educational focus, and she has completed several of the online courses offered through the Faculty of Medicine including TACT 1 and 2 and ELAM.

Beyond our department, Dr. Murphy also contributes to education locally



Dr. Cheryl Murphy

and nationally. She demonstrates a passion for and commitment to medical education that is inspiring. She has made significant and sustained contributions across the educational spectrum, within our department, and beyond. She was presented with her award virtually during the June Faculty of Medicine faculty meeting. Congratulations Dr. Murphy.

Dr. Ben Rusak honoured with career achievement award

Dr. Ben Rusak has been awarded the 2021 Career Achievement Award from the Canadian Society (CSC) for Chronobiology. The Canadian Society for Chronobiology is Canada's first and only association of researchers working on biological rhythms. The selection committee has recognized Dr. Rusak's career-long research and service contributions to the field of chronobiology, as well as his extensive

successful training of the next generations of researchers.

Dr. Rusak's award was announced during the 2021 CSC meeting held virtually on June 14-15.



Dr. Ben Rusak

Dr. Sherry Stewart awarded prestigious mentorship award from CAGS

In June it was announced that **Dr. Sherry Stewart** is the winner of the 2020 Award for Outstanding Graduate Mentorship from the Canadian Association for Graduate Studies (CAGS). The award was established in 2018 to recognize graduate faculty members with a record of excellent mentorship of graduate students under their supervision. As described by the CAGS, 'outstanding mentors inspire their graduate students to be creative in their thinking, to push their research in new directions, and to make a positive impact on the future. They are essential to graduate student success – in the classroom, the laboratory, and beyond.'

Dr. Stewart is the graduate studies coordinator in the Department of Psychiatry, in addition to being the Canada Research Chair in Addiction and Mental Health. She is also a full

professor in our department, and in the Department of Psychology and Neuroscience. She is extensively involved with graduate supervision at the university, supervising 18 doctoral students and one master's student to the completion of their degrees, and has also supervised 13 postdoctoral fellowships. Dr. Stewart has been an integral part in the development of both our MSc and PhD programs in psychiatry research. She has published hundreds of articles, including 152 co-authored with her graduate students and postdoctoral trainees as first authors. She is a highly sought after supervisor whose personal generosity and authenticity as a mentor have allowed for the success of her mentees.

To learn more about Dr. Stewart's recognition visit: <https://cags.ca/prizes/cags-announces-winner-of-2020-award-for-outstanding-graduate-mentorship/>



Dr. Sherry Stewart

Dr. Martin Alda recipient of DMRF Max Forman Senior Research Prize

Dr. Martin Alda is the recipient of the 2021 Dalhousie Medical Research Foundation Max Forman Senior Research Prize. The Max Forman Senior Research Prize is the Foundation's most prestigious award, presented to a member of the Faculty of Medicine whose research achievements have enriched the academic environment and advanced scientific understanding.

It was originally established by Ms. Sophie Forman in memory of her late husband, Max Forman, who was a respected businessman and philanthropist.

Dr. Alda receives this award for his outstanding work as a clinician-scientist and his contributions to our understanding of, and treatment for, severe and debilitating forms of mental illness. His career has been marked by major contributions to pharmacological and pharmacogenetic treatment

approaches to bipolar disorder based on both clinical research and basic research related to underlying mechanisms. He has an international reputation as a research leader and clinical innovator whose work will have a lasting impact on the lives of large numbers of patients and their communities.

Dr. Alda received his award virtually during the June Faculty of Medicine faculty meeting. Congratulations Dr. Alda.

THE HEAVY HELPERS: COMMUNITY GROUPS MAKING A DIFFERENCE



LAING HOUSE

Who they are.

Established in 2001, Laing House is a non-profit dedicated to empowering young people living with mental illness by providing well-rounded support in wellness plans, leading to better outcomes. Initiated and fully funded for the first two years by Keith and Rosemary Hamilton, Laing House offers non-clinical, people-centred mental health support for youth aged 16-29 in locations in Halifax and Yarmouth.

How they help.

Laing House has a variety of programs that fall under four portfolios: Healthy Living, Community Navigation, Employment and Education and Peer Mentorship—one of the most important services for youth living with mental illness. Each of their programs includes both staff and peer support, as well as opportunities for member-to-member socialization in healthy and positive environments.

Want to make a difference?

Laing House offers various ways to give. You can get involved in the following ways:

- Talk about mental illness, continue the dialogue!
- Make a donation
- Make an in-kind donation
- Fundraise for Laing House
- Make a planned gift

Laing House is currently looking for volunteers to join their board. If you are interested please contact Dr. Jason Morrison at Jason.Morrison@nshealth.ca for more information.

To learn more about Laing House and how you can contribute to their excellent programs please visit <https://www.lainghouse.org/>.

FEATURE



DR. AIDAN STOKES RETIRES FROM THE DEPARTMENT AFTER MORE THAN 50 YEARS

It was 1969 when **Dr. Aidan Stokes** travelled across the Atlantic from Dublin, Ireland to join the Department of Psychiatry as a senior resident. The following year he completed his fellowship, and in 1972 he accepted his first faculty appointment as a lecturer. Dr. Stokes has held many positions since then, not the least of which is acting department head and president of the Canadian Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry. On July 1, more than 50 years since the day he walked through the door, he retired from the department, an immeasurable loss to faculty, staff and patients alike. It is doubtful we will be able to replace his quiet leadership and deadpan, dry sense of humour. He will be missed by so many who have had the pleasure of working with him.

Dr. Stokes has been a trusted leader, mentor, and valued clinician. He has been relied on by his colleagues for his experience, wisdom and integrity. The Department of Psychiatry was very fortunate that he turned down an appointment in Dublin after his psychiatry training, in search of the broader experience that psychiatry in North America promised. With several non-academic positions on offer, Dr. Stokes revelled in the opportunity to come to a university setting and to be being eligible to sit Canadian Royal College exams. Having heard of Dalhousie from colleagues, he wrote to then head, Dr. R.O. Jones to express his interest. After an interview in



Dr. Aidan Stokes

Dublin with Dr. Patrick Flynn (known fondly as ‘Paddy Flynn’ to Dr. Stokes), he was accepted into the program.

Dr. Stokes admits that psychiatry was not always his passion. “I was bound for general practice,” he recalls. “I had postgraduate training in obstetrics, pediatrics, infectious diseases and public health, however, my limited exposure as locum tenens showed me that I knew very little about psychological medicine, which was very poorly taught in my medical school.” After a 6-month experience in a family psychiatry unit where his interest and enthusiasm in psychiatry was stirred, he became drawn into the specialty.

Dr. Stokes’ more than 50 years in

the department have seen some extensive changes. When he arrived in 1969, Halifax had six acute care hospitals, including the Nova Scotia Hospital in Dartmouth and two psychiatry rehabilitation facilities. The core department had six full-time psychiatrists with a similar number of part-time psychiatrists who mainly worked in private practice. Care was hospital-based and fragmented between the general hospital and provincial systems. Research was limited within the department with the main academic emphasis being placed on excellence in clinical care. “Contrast that with the broad range of the department’s activities today and clearly the differences are enormous,” says Dr. Stokes. “I would

remark that the changes which have come over time have not come in orderly progression, but rather have evolved from the efforts spear-headed by successive department heads to overcome many obstacles along the way." He mentions the most striking advances in clinical practice include the treatment of serious and persistent psychiatric illness, the inclusion of services for addictions, and more focused rehabilitation.

On the academic side, Dr. Stokes has seen the department through many changes, with the most noteworthy being the development of research as an essential part of the department's mandate. "While the initial momentum came from Dean Ruedy and Stan Kutcher," he says, "the research mandate has been sustained by the unparalleled efforts of Dr. Ben Rusak as director of research."

It is difficult to encapsulate Dr. Stokes' accomplishments and career highlights, but he notes above all the close-knit and supportive group he has worked with, starting from the day he joined Dr. Doris Hirsch at the Atlantic Child Guidance Centre and the IWK. "It is matter of pride that those supportive relationships have endured through the years and remain an integral characteristic of the Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry," says Dr. Stokes. "From Doris to Herb Orlik and now to Alexa Bagnell. The pursuit of excellence in care, teaching, advocacy, and research perseveres. There may be larger Divisions of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry elsewhere in Canada but there are none better."

He would be remiss if he did not include his involvement in the Canadian Academy of Child and

Adolescent Psychiatry (CACAP) as a highlight. He was part of the development of the specialty in Canada from the inception of the Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and served as president of CACAP for several years.

Though Dr. Stokes reflects fondly on his working relationships and administrative accomplishments, above all he is a compassionate clinician and his patients will always remain the priority. Locally he assisted in unifying child and adolescent psychiatric services to better serve children and families. "Looking back," he says "what one most remembers is the experience of working with patients and families. It has been an honour to do so."

In true Dr. Stokes style he admits he hopes is greatest accomplishment is still in the future.

It will be a time of transition for the Department of Psychiatry, as Dr. Stokes will leave a void that, as mentioned, is not easily filled. Many lives have been impacted by his kind wisdom and humour. We will miss his quiet presence and leadership, and though he recognizes he has had the pleasure of working with wonderful clinicians and administrative staff, it is the patients he will miss most. "I think I will miss my identity as a physician," he says. "Seeing patients and families, being part of a community that cares."

Dr. Stokes will no longer face busy days of clinical and administrative work, but admits he wants to remain busy. When it becomes reasonable he hopes to travel to visit with family, do some volunteering, and last, but certainly not least, lower his golf

handicap....

Our deepest gratitude goes to Dr. Aidan Stokes for his dedication to the Department of Psychiatry over the last 50 years. The department will certainly not be the same without him.

~~Dr. Stokes has had an incredible~~ impact on the department and its members. A few of his colleagues reflect on their time working with him below.

Dr. Alexa Bagnell, head and chief, IWK Department of Psychiatry

What it has been like working with

Dr. Stokes over the years: I feel like Aidan would have something witty and clever to say about what it has been like to work with him, or better yet, what it has been like for him to work with me. I will just say with all sincerity that it has been an honour to work with Aidan over the years. He has supported our department and division with such wisdom, fairness and vision, and mentored so many of us. In truth, there may be some dependence on him that has developed, I truly can't imagine not having him to reach out to for advice or banter with. To Aidan: Don't change your cell phone number when you retire please.

How he has most impacted my

career: Aidan is best described as a 'slow burn' mentor. It took me a long time to realize and appreciate his influence and subtle coaching in my career. I remember early on in leadership thinking, "why doesn't Aidan say much or tell me what to do, isn't it clear I am out of my depth?" However, he was teaching me, if I watched him, if I listened. I have now seen him mentor so many of

our faculty and guide them through opportunities and challenges.

His mentorship has significantly impacted my career, but it has been in subtle ways. Aidan did not announce, "I am going to mentor you." Not his style. However, he has been supporting me and my career and my leadership since the day I stepped into the IWK in 2003, all bright eyed and bushy tailed with really no idea what I was doing. He encouraged me to get involved with our national organization, CACAP, and all of the sudden I was nominated on the board. He supported me from behind the scenes in growing my clinical work and research, giving space for me to do this in areas he had already established expertise.

His moral compass to do right in our field regionally and nationally is so strong, and this pride in our work and responsibility for others is contagious. As we all know, he is hard to argue with, but he is a lot of fun to tease and gives it back as well. Bringing fun, humour and humanity into our faculty is something he encouraged and has been so helpful for our faculty cohesion and support of each other. I figure if I can be one tenth as selfless as Aidan in my leadership and contributions then I am doing okay, but as Aidan would comment: "you can always do better." He has taught me to never lose sight of why we are doing all this in the first place, for our patients now and in the future.

His greatest asset: I know this is not a plural, and Aidan would say you are only being asked for one asset or there would be an 's' at the end. However, I am going to go against 'the' grammarian as I don't think he is



Dr. Stokes is celebrated by a virtual retirement at the IWK.

going to edit this, right?

Aidan's two greatest asset(s) are his depth of caring for others and of course his subtle and 'sometimes' witty sense of humour.

What I will miss most about having him in the department: What? Aidan is retiring? I am in denial still. I don't honestly know what I will miss most. I will miss him immensely, as will our entire faculty, I really can't even imagine it yet. So far I haven't been able to really talk about it without tearing up. For certain our minutes are going to be atrocious from here on out. I don't know who we are going to blame for cheating in our faculty games in the future. Seriously, we will miss you Aidan, so very much, and we are so grateful for your service, leadership and mentorship in the department and the IWK over the past five decades.

Dr. Herb Orlik, child & adolescent

psychiatrist, Department of Psychiatry

What it has been like working with Dr. Stokes over the years:

He has been the best colleague ever. He made me feel welcome in the department and in the hospital, has always been available for a discussion, and has been a fantastic role model in his dedication to the department and to the hospital and in his unflappability and perseverance. He has been a mentor, teacher and so highly respected by so many professionals, kids and parents that he has so strongly contributed to the great reputation that our IWK psychiatry group continues to have.

How he has most impacted your

career: He played a significant role in my recruitment, as did his wife. He included me and my wife, supporting a young, come-from-away psychiatrist through the adjustment to the local culture – mind you, some of it then

was what affectionately was called the “Irish Mafia” in the department.

His greatest asset: His insight, foresight, perspective, his ability to give sage advice without imposing anything on you.

What I will miss most about having him in the department:

His steadfastness, his ability to leave you guessing whether he is serious or pulling your leg, his dry sense of humour, his counsel, his parsimony with regard to finances in the department contrasted by his generosity to give his time, his willingness to step in, help out, support, share his resources, the sound of him playing floor hockey in the clinic’s hallway or conference room – actually I haven’t heard this for a few years. Perhaps he had to finally admit that some of his patients were better at it than he.

Lukas Propper, child & adolescent psychiatrist, director of child & adolescent psychiatry education, Department of Psychiatry

What it has been like working with Dr. Stokes over the years: Dr. Stokes is simply a wonderful person to work with. He has been an exceptional role model to child and adolescent psychiatrists across the country, and his strong work ethic and drive for patients’ care have inspired our faculty, learners, and other health care professionals.

How he has most impacted my career: Dr. Stokes is a very considerate and thoughtful colleague, and both professionally and personally, I have thrived from his experience and wisdom throughout my career. In particular, his well-rounded guidance

has shaped my academic leadership skills and professional development.

His greatest asset: Dr. Stokes has many great qualities I very much admire. But if I had to choose, his wisdom and institutional memory have been the most important and irreplaceable assets.

What I will miss most about having him in the department: I will greatly miss everything I have mentioned about Dr. Stokes in my previous answers. And I would also miss his wonderful sense of humor (and his competitiveness and a strong need to win games at our holiday season parties at any cost).

Dr. Michael Teehan, former department head, Department of Psychiatry

What it was like working with Dr. Stokes of the years: Aidan was a preceptor in my first rotation at the IWK in 1984. It was both frightening and exhilarating and up to then, the best educational experience of my training. Aidan has a prodigious capacity for hard work, and those he worked with and trained were expected to try and keep up. He also has an encyclopedic knowledge of psychiatry (and everything else in the world). He would evince pained disappointment with us as we fell short in this regard. It took me a couple of months to realize that he is among the wittiest people I’ve ever met. I learned to listen acutely to the sotto voce comments, gems of sarcasm, hilarious insight and mimicry. In short, working with Aidan was unique.

How he impacted my career:

Well.....he more or less hired me for Dalhousie. We met by appointment at a Royal College of Psychiatry meeting in London following my application to Dal. After a pleasant chat and pint of beer, he reported back that I was ok, but not likely to stay in Halifax long! He has many fine qualities but is lacking in prophetic gifts.

Alistair Munro, Bill McCormick, Paddy Flynn, Doris Hirsch were all hugely influential in my career. But Aidan was my guiding light and constant confidant throughout. Still is.

His greatest asset: His dedication to children and families that he has served with his heart and soul. Anyone who has worked with Aidan cannot but be awed by the skill and devotion he brings to his work. He excels academically, and administratively. He patiently steered the department through the worst crisis in its history during his tenure as interim Head. But it is in work with patients and families that I see genius. He works quietly, patiently, generously and persistently in the service of some of the most need people in our society.

After Aidan they broke the mould.

HUMANITIES CORNER

Student Writing Competition

The 2021 Dalhousie Student Writing Competition closed on May 1, 2021 and we are thrilled to announce this year's first place awardees! Jordana Leilah was the winner in the Medical Student category for *On Applying to Psychiatry Residency as a Psychiatry Patient*. In the Postgraduate Trainee category, Dr. Howie Wu wrote the winning entry, entitled *The Bridge*. Thank you to all of the students, trainees, and faculty who participated this year. Watch for an excerpt from the winning entries in the next issue of *Headlines*.

Book Club

Thank you to everyone who participated in the inaugural year of the Department of Psychiatry Book Club, addressing memoirs and similar non-fiction personal narratives. We

discussed Jann Arden's *Feeding My Mother* at our last meeting on June 15, and it turned out to be an interesting reflection on dementia, family, loss, complicated emotions, and how to best support our patients. We look forward to a new theme for the 2021-22 book club, starting this fall — stay tuned! Please reach out to alison.toron@nshealth.ca with book suggestions or other ideas.

Summer Reading List

Brought to you by the Psychiatry Department Book Club

Here's a not-so-comprehensive list of great summer reads, from a few of our residents and staff.

1. *Unnatural Causes* by Dr. Richard Shepherd: "A book I could not put down. It drew me in with a great

personal story. A light read but a moving one."

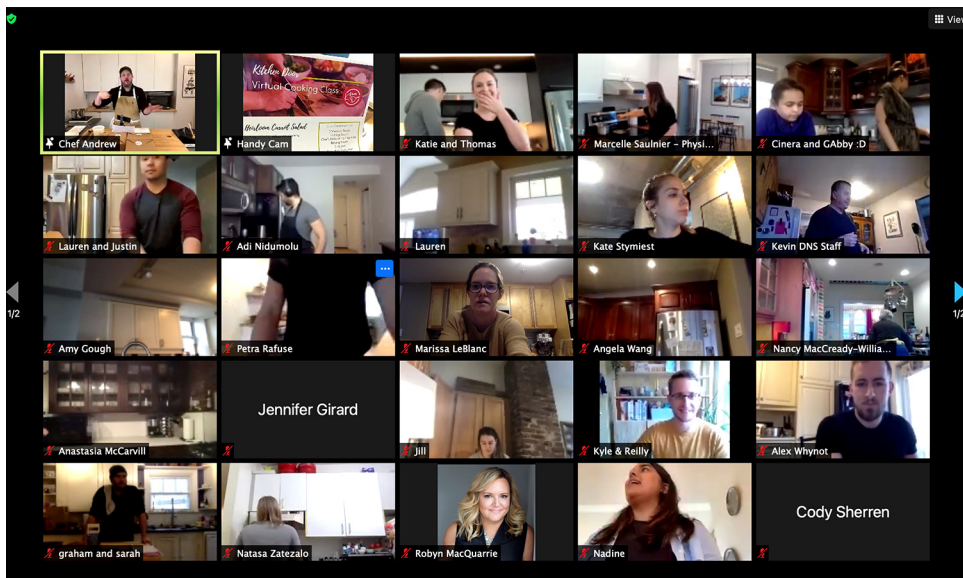
2. *Grit* by Angela Duckworth: "A well-researched book that is easy to read and has lots of practical information for everyone."

3. *The Cloister Walk* by Kathleen Norris: "Thought-provoking and a good anchor in troubled times."

4. *Dreams from My Father: A Story of Race and Inheritance* by Barack Obama: "An inspiring and thoughtful autobiography."

RESIDENT'S CORNER

On April 16 residents joined together virtually for a Doctor's Nova Scotia (DNS) sponsored dinner. Organized by **Drs. Katie Lines** and **Marissa LeBlanc**, 25 residents participated in the virtual cooking class with Chef Andrew from Kitchen Door Catering. At the end of the session they feasted on homemade gnocchi, heirloom roasted carrot salad and apple crumble.



FACULTY REFLECTION



REFLECTION ON MENTAL HEALTH AND POPULATION STRESS IN ISRAEL

By Dr. Abraham Rudnick

It's May 15, 2021 and I am writing this report from Israel where I am still self-quarantined. This is where my family of origin lives and where I am visiting due to my family's current health crisis. In April 2021 my elderly father became very sick and was hospitalized. My elderly immune-compromised mother stayed home (my parents live together independently), but soon after my arrival she was hospitalized too. My two siblings have been helping my parents as much as they can, but I knew I had to attend to my parents as soon as possible. So I scrambled in the Nova Scotia lockdown to test for COVID-19 (with a negative result), and urgently flew to Israel with a history of one COVID-19 vaccine injection from March 2021 (my second COVID-19 vaccine injection is scheduled for July 2021); most Israelis are already twice vaccinated for COVID-19. Soon after I landed in Israel the May 2021 Jerusalem uprising, Gaza missile launches and riots in Israeli cities started. I would like to briefly share here my non-political observations, experiences, and reflections in relation to this complex (warfare and family) situation, especially its mental health aspects, in order to express, inform and hopefully also inspire others.

I was born, raised, studied and worked for approximately half of my adult life in Israel, and since my immigration to Canada I have visited Israel

frequently. Yet in spite of my intimate familiarity with Israel, it seems to have changed so much lately that I feel like a foreigner here. Everything in Israel seems more tense now, for example, in television news interviews and discussions, taking turns for a dialogue is often interrupted with shouts and sometimes offensive language by many interviewees and even some interviewers; this seems especially prominent with the new uprising and riots. In spite of jokes abounding here, such as that people now miss the Israeli pandemic wave from last year, the stress of the Israeli population is palpable here. And I can imagine how severely stressed the Gazan population is. Israeli media do not broadcast much of, if any of the happenings in Gaza, because of the Israeli Defense Forces' retaliation. In the midst of this, I am still self-quarantined, as my second COVID-19 test in Israel to shorten my quarantine by a few days has been delayed due to the warfare. As a result I can't go to my building's safe common area during missile attacks and I can only help my parents and siblings remotely in relation to miscommunication and other challenges in hospital (such as no consideration for hospitalizing my mother in the same building as my father, although there are suitable units for her there; as a result, my parents can't meet each other and my siblings are commuting back and forth across a huge academic health centre). Personal, family and population mental health can

be considerably impaired in these circumstances. Sense of control, which is so important for well-being, is easily disrupted in such dire straits. For adaptive coping to address such stress, I continue to try to (and advocate for): hope for the best, plan for the worst, and try to enjoy (at least some of) the rest, including precious moments with family and appreciation of silver linings such as reconnecting with old friends. I expect that by the time you read this report, I will be back in Canada and, in spite of continuing concern about my family, friends and others in that area of the world, as well as the COVID-19 pandemic, enjoying the relative calm of Canada in general and of Nova Scotia in particular.

PHOTO FEATURE



Emerging (Photo by Dr. Sherry James).

HEADLINES SUBMISSIONS

Headlines aims to provide a forum for the exchange of information, ideas, and items of general interest to the faculty, fellows, students and staff of the Department of Psychiatry. Your contribution(s) are needed and greatly appreciated.

The next issue of **Headlines** will be distributed on Sept. 1, 2021, with the deadline for submissions to be Aug. 13 2021.

Please send all submissions to Kate Rogers: Kate.Rogers@nshealth.ca