

## AllerGen HQP program highlight of NCE Review

AllerGen will receive ongoing federal funding through the Networks of Centres of Excellence (NCE) program to continue its work in allergic disease research, training and innovation to 2019.

“After a review by the NCE’s international expert panel on September 17, 2015, AllerGen was deemed eligible for continued funding because it met the NCE’s standards for excellence in performance of all five NCE mandate areas – research, networking and partnership, capacity building/training, knowledge and technology exchange and exploitation, and management,” says Dr. Judah Denburg, Scientific Director and CEO of AllerGen.

Dr. Meghan Azad, Assistant Professor, Department of Pediatrics and Child Health, University of Manitoba, represented AllerGen’s Highly Qualified Personnel (HQP) at the NCE expert panel site visit. Dr. Azad is a former member of the AllerGen Students and New Professionals Network (ASNP) Executive Committee and recipient of the inaugural Canadian Respiratory Research Network/AllerGen *Early Research Leadership Initiative Award*. In addition to highlighting her personal experiences as a trainee in the Network, Dr. Azad’s presentation featured videotaped HQP testimonials from the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Trainee Symposium held in Toronto, ON, in April 2015.

“It was a tremendous experience to represent AllerGen trainees and the ASNP during the NCE renewal bid. I enjoyed sharing how AllerGen’s HQP program has positively impacted my career development, and learning more about the breadth of AllerGen’s research investments and other operational aspects of the Network,” says Dr. Azad.

Since 2005, the Canadian government’s award to AllerGen totals \$74.4 million. Continued funding was confirmed as part of a review process that assessed AllerGen’s achievements midway through its second, and final, seven-year term.

“Among its many enduring legacies, AllerGen will ensure that the Canadian Healthy Infant Longitudinal Development (CHILD) Study continues to generate novel research opportunities through national and international collaborations, and facilitate ground-breaking discoveries about the early-life origins of allergies, asthma, and other chronic, non-communicable diseases,” says Dr. Denburg.

The Clinical Investigator Collaborative (CIC) will continue to be a world leader in conducting Phase II clinical trials for new drugs to manage asthma and allergies. The Canadian Food Allergy Strategic Team’s (CanFAST) research will form the foundation of a National Food Allergy Strategy (NFAS) that will disseminate the best evidence on the diagnosis, treatment and management of food allergies and anaphylaxis to patients and policymakers.

AllerGen’s priorities will be to ensure completion of the research projects it has invested in to 2019 and to realize the Network’s national capacity building, commercialization and knowledge mobilization goals.



# AllerGen trainees present research at annual allergy and clinical immunology meeting



**L to R:** Dr. Diana Royce and Dr. Dean Befus with AllerGen poster award winners: Anne-Marie Boucher-Lafleur, Stephanie Legere, Laura Feldman, Mena Soliman, Young Woong Kim, Amrit Singh, Linda Warner, Saiful Huq, Dr. Meghan Azad and Dr. Elinor Simons

## Ten AllerGen HQP recognized for their knowledge translation skills

With the Canada Place pier and the city's panoramic view as the backdrop, the 70<sup>th</sup> Annual Scientific Meeting of the Canadian Society of Allergy and Clinical Immunology (CSACI) took place in Vancouver, BC, October 21-24, 2015. This meeting marked the third consecutive year that AllerGen's Poster Competition was held in conjunction with the CSACI annual meeting. This collaboration offers research trainees a unique opportunity to showcase their research and to receive feedback from Canada's top allergists, clinical immunologists and clinician-scientists.

Twenty-seven abstracts spanning the breadth of AllerGen research ([see the Abstract Booklet](#)) were accepted for presentation, which included posters adjudicated by a panel of AllerGen judges and two-minute oral presentations. Top posters were recognized in five categories: undergraduate, Master's, PhD, research staff, and "open", which included postdocs, fellows-in-training and early career researchers.

In addition to the AllerGen Poster Competition, several ASNPN members participated in the CSACI Poster Competition, taking 1<sup>st</sup> place in two categories—Allergic Rhinitis/Asthma and Basic Science/Immunology.

The Network appreciates the dedication and contributions to the success of this year's Poster Competition by the Poster Chairs Drs Anne Ellis and Harissios Vliagoftis, as well as the AllerGen judging panel, which included: Drs Dean Befus, Moshe Ben-Shoshan, Jeremy Hirota, Fiona Brinkman, Richard Hegele, Bruce Mazer, Mohsen Sadatsafavi, Andrew Sandford, Scott Tebbutt and Chris Rider.

## CSACI top posters

Poster Chairs Dr. Harissios Vliagoftis (far L) and Dr. Anne Ellis (far R), with AllerGen ASNPN members: Lisa Steacy (2<sup>nd</sup> L), John Paul Oliveria (3<sup>rd</sup> L), and Dominik Nowak (C).



# Top Posters

## 2015 AllerGen & CSACI Poster Competitions

Vancouver, BC, October 2015



### Top Posters - AllerGen Poster Competition

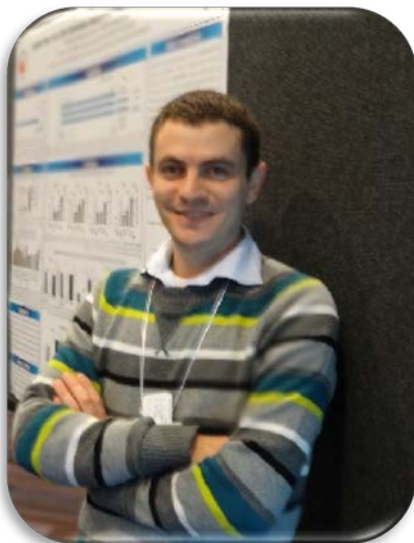
Place	Category	Name	Program	Institution	Supervisor	Abstract Title
1st	Undergrad	Stephanie Legere	BSc	Dalhousie	Jean Marshall	IL-33 induces cytokine and chemokine production in human mast cells
2nd	Undergrad	Anne-Marie Boucher-Lafleur	BSc (c)	L'université du Québec à Chicoutimi	Catherine Laprise	IL33 DNA methylation in bronchial epithelial cells is associated to asthma
1st	Masters	Mena Soliman	MSc	Queen's University	Anne Ellis	Mapping local inflammatory cytokine secretion following a cumulative allergen dose using the Allergic Rhinitis Clinical Investigator Collaborative Nasal Allergen Challenge model
2nd	Masters	Laura Feldman	MPH (c)	The Hospital for Sick Children	Teresa To	Secondhand tobacco smoke exposure in infancy and the development of food hypersensitivity from childhood to adolescence
1st	PhD	Young Woong Kim	PhD (c)	The University of British Columbia	Scott Tebbutt	Systemic immune pathways associated with the mechanisms of Cat-Synthetic Peptide Immuno-Regulatory Epitopes, a novel immunotherapy, in whole blood of cat-allergic people
2nd	PhD	Amrit Singh	PhD (c)	The University of British Columbia	Scott Tebbutt	Multi-omic blood biomarker signatures of the late phase asthmatic response
1st	Open	Elinor Simons	Early Career Investigator	University of Manitoba		Age of peanut introduction and development of reactions and sensitization to peanut
2nd	Open	Meghan Azad	Early Career Investigator	University of Manitoba		Breastfeeding and infant wheeze, atopy and atopic dermatitis: findings from the Canadian Healthy Infant Longitudinal Development Study
1st	Research Staff	Saiful Huq	Data Manager	University of Manitoba	Allan Becker	Comparison of skin-prick test measurements by an automated system against the manual method
2nd	Research Staff	Linda Warner	Research Nurse	The University of British Columbia	Stuart Turvey	The CHILD Study: optimizing subject retention in pediatric longitudinal cohort research

### Top Posters - CSACI Poster Competition (ASNPN members)

1st	Allergic Rhinitis /Asthma	Lisa Steacy	Research Manager	Queen's University	Anne Ellis	Validation of an eSource data collection system in the Environmental Exposure Unit (EEU)
1st	Basic Science/ Immunology	John Paul Oliveria	PhD (c)	McMaster University	Gail Gauvreau	Characterization of IgE-expressing B cells in the airways and peripheral blood of allergic asthmatics
2nd	Case Reports	Dominik Nowak	Medical School	McMaster University	Paul Keith	Sitagliptin associated angioedema not related to concurrent use of ARB or ACE inhibitor

# 2015 CSACI Scientific Meeting

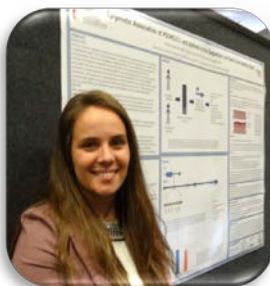
## Snapshots



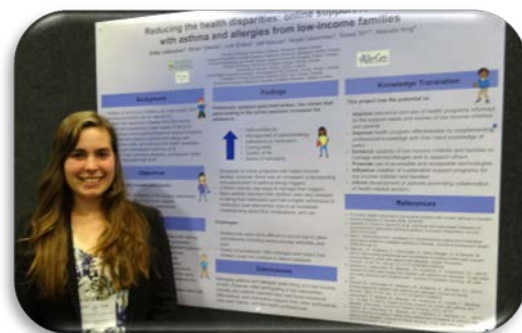
**Bassel Dawod** (Dalhousie)



**Philippe Bégin** (CHU Sainte-Justine)



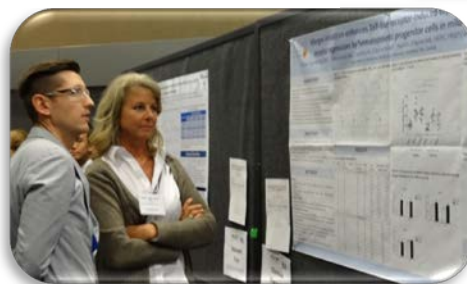
**Miriam Larouche**  
(UQAC)



**Erika Ladouceur**  
(University of Alberta)



**L to R:** Amrit Singh &  
Young Woong Kim (UBC)



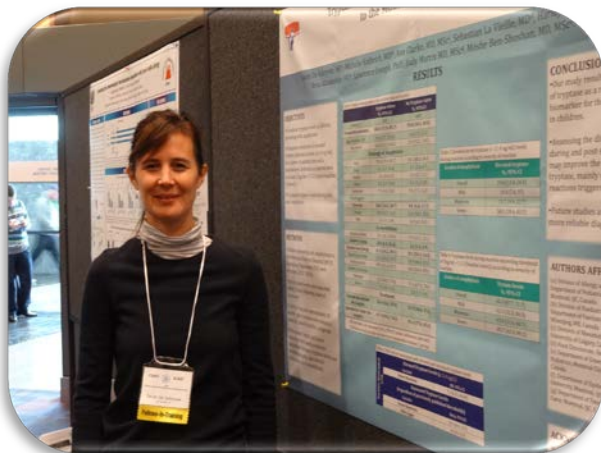
**L to R:** Damian Tworek (McMaster)  
& Linda Warner (UBC)



**L to R:** Amrit Singh, Yolanda Yang, Young Woong Kim, Laura Feldman, Michelle Harkness, Erika Ladouceur, Maxwell Tran, Ali Hosseini, Mena Soliman

# 2015 CSACI Scientific Meeting

## Snapshots



**Sarah De Schryver** (McGill)



**Saiful Huq** (University of Manitoba)



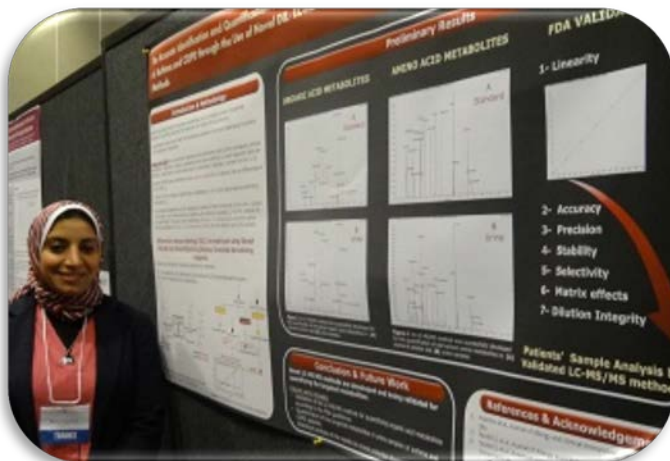
**L to R: Meghan Azad & Elinor Simons**  
(University of Manitoba)



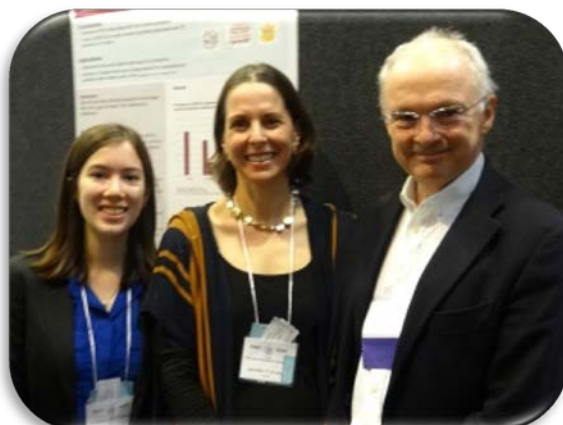
**Leah Stiemsma** (UBC)



**L to R: Stephanie Legere** (Dalhousie) and **Anne-Marie Boucher-Lafleur** (UQAC)



**Mona Hamada** (University of Saskatchewan)



**L to R: Laura Feldman** (UofT), **Jennifer Protudjer** & **Magnus Wickman** (Karolinska Institute)

# Opening doors to careers in research



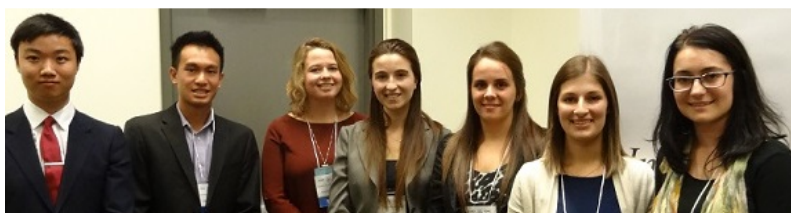
2015 AllerGen Summer Studentship recipient, Michael Chen (centre front), with Dr. James Martin (2<sup>nd</sup> row, 3<sup>rd</sup> from left) and his research staff at McGill University

AllerGen's investment in the next generation of allergic disease researchers and clinician-scientists begins at the undergraduate level. The training and mentorship provided to undergraduates by AllerGen research teams is intended to foster an enduring interest in allergic and related immune disease research.

Annually, AllerGen awards 10 summer studentships to undergraduate students, and provides additional support through AllerGen's *Travel Awards* for them to present their research at national and international conferences, such as the CSACI Annual Scientific Meeting and the American Thoracic Society International Meeting.

The 2015 AllerGen Poster Competition included seven undergraduates, the largest representation of undergraduates in an AllerGen-sponsored event to date.

## AllerGen undergraduates participating in the 2015 AllerGen Poster Competition



**L to R:** Michael Chen, Maxwell Tran, Stephanie Legere, Laura Walsh, Miriam Larouche, Anne-Marie Boucher-Lafleur and Nela Cosic

**Michael Chen**, a 3rd year Physiology student at McGill University and recipient of a 2015 AllerGen Summer Studentship attended CSACI, his first scientific meeting.

*"The AllerGen Summer Studentship fueled my interest in pursuing a career as a clinician-scientist, and gave me the chance to participate in and learn more about translational science research. The CSACI meeting provided me with the opportunity to interact with clinician-scientists and meet other like-minded individuals."*

Michael Chen

## 2016 AllerGen Undergraduate Summer Studentships

**Application Deadline:**  
Friday, February 12, 2016

Ten studentships valued at \$3,500 each and matched 1:1 with non-AllerGen funding for a total value of \$7,000/ studentship.

For more information, [CLICK HERE](#).

# International Trainee Research Visit Program

2016 application deadlines: January 15, April 15, September 16

Through a competitive process, AllerGen's **International Trainee Research Visit Program** funds graduate students and postdoctoral fellows to work outside Canada with international investigators and their research teams for six weeks to six months. Research visits must advance the objectives and intended outcomes of an AllerGen research project.

The next application deadline is January 15, 2016. Interested trainees are required to provide a letter of intent to AllerGen's HQP and Events Coordinator, Michelle Harkness, as the first step in the application process.

For more information [CLICK HERE](#).

## AllerGen funds research visit with Dr. Andrea Baccarelli at Harvard

"Because of the support provided by AllerGen, I was able to enhance my research training with specialized skills in mitochondriomics. Dr. Baccarelli is one of only a handful of pioneers working on mitochondrial epigenetics. The experience I gained at Harvard helped me to secure my current position as a post-doctoral fellow at the University of Toronto."

**Michelle North**, PhD, University of Toronto



## AllerGen launches 2016 HQP Video Competition

Bring your research to life! Create a short, original knowledge translation video that will increase awareness and understanding of allergic disease research among a non-scientific audience.

Submission guidelines [CLICK HERE](#).

A playlist of videos entered in the 2015 Competition can be viewed on [AllerGen's YouTube channel](#).

SUBMISSION  
DEADLINE  
June 30, 2016

WIN  
\$1000

## Winning video draws attention to specialized skills

Following the success of David Ngan's whiteboard video in the 2015 AllerGen Video Competition, the Centre for Heart Lung Innovation at St. Paul's Hospital in Vancouver, BC, recruited David to teach a series of video-editing workshops. David's video has also been featured on St. Paul's video display screen.



# 2016 Allergen Research Conference

## Call for poster abstracts

The next Trainee Poster Competition will take place during the 2016 Allergen Research Conference to be held in Vancouver, BC, from May 29 to June 1, 2016, at the Fairmont Waterfront Hotel.

The Poster Competition is open to Allergen-funded trainees and members of the Allergen Students and New Professionals Network (ASNP) interested in presenting allergic disease research findings.

Abstracts that present results with potential for clinical application, or for knowledge mobilization aimed at patient education, policy innovation and/or technology or market development, are strongly encouraged.

This competition will include a new Knowledge Translation (KT) category for posters that present research findings in a manner that is understandable and captivating to a non-scientific audience using information visualizations such as infographics.



**Abstract submission deadline – Friday, March 4, 2016**

**For more information [CLICK HERE.](#)**

## Tim Caulfield to speak to HQP at conference

### The role of “pseudoscience” in popular culture

Professor Tim Caulfield, an Allergen investigator and author of *Is Gwyneth Paltrow Wrong About Everything? When Celebrity Culture and Science Clash*, will be the featured speaker at the Allergen Research Conference HQP Dinner on Monday, May 30, 2016. Professor Caulfield will debunk celebrity health trends and explore the relationship between celebrity culture and our health choices.



Professor Caulfield is a Canada Research Chair in Health Law and Policy, and a Professor in the Faculty of Law and the School of Public Health at the University of Alberta. He is a Fellow of the Trudeau Foundation and the Principal Investigator for a number of large interdisciplinary projects that explore the ethical, legal and health policy issues associated with a range of topics, including stem cell research, genetics, patient safety, the prevention of chronic disease, obesity policy, the commercialization of research, complementary and alternative medicine, and access to health care.

Professor Caulfield writes frequently for the popular press on a range of health and science policy issues and is a regular guest commentator on CBC/Radio-Canada. He was named one of *Alberta's 50 Most Influential People by Alberta Venture magazine* in 2014.

**Register for the 2016  
Research  
Conference [HERE.](#)**

**If you have questions related to the Call for Abstracts or participation in the 2016 Allergen Research Conference, please contact Michelle Harkness at [michelleharkness@allergen-nce.ca](mailto:michelleharkness@allergen-nce.ca).**

# AllerGen-Stanford collaboration advances food allergy research

In June 2014, AllerGen and Stanford University launched a new collaboration that allows a young Canadian scientist (MD or PhD) with an interest in developing new and safe therapies for food allergies to pursue academic research training with Dr. Kari Nadeau at the Sean N. Parker Center for Allergy & Asthma Research at Stanford University.

The *Stanford/AllerGen Research Fellowship Award* provides a salary/stipend of up to \$50,000 for one year of study. The award is aligned with AllerGen's strategic goal to contribute to an understanding of the origins, causes, prevalence and treatment of food allergy and to inform the development of improved clinical management strategies and public health measures.

Dr. Nadeau is one of North America's foremost experts in adult and pediatric allergy. She has pioneered research that de-sensitizes the immune system by gradually exposing patients to incremental doses of a food allergen over time—a treatment called oral immunotherapy. The Sean N. Parker Center for Allergy & Asthma Research is an interdisciplinary research centre named after technology billionaire and principal donor Sean Parker.

For more information  
[CLICK HERE.](#)

"This collaboration is a perfect example of two organizations coming together to help mentor future scientists and physicians in the fields of allergy and immunology. We are very excited about our work with AllerGen now and in the future."

**Dr. Kari Nadeau**



## CRRN to host 2nd Annual Training Workshop

The Canadian Respiratory Research Network (CRRN) will host its 2nd Annual [CRRN/RENASCENT Training Workshop](#) on April 13 and 14, 2016, in Halifax, NS, prior to the 2016 [Canadian Respiratory Conference](#) (CRC). AllerGen *Travel Awards* are available to ASNPN members interested in attending these events.

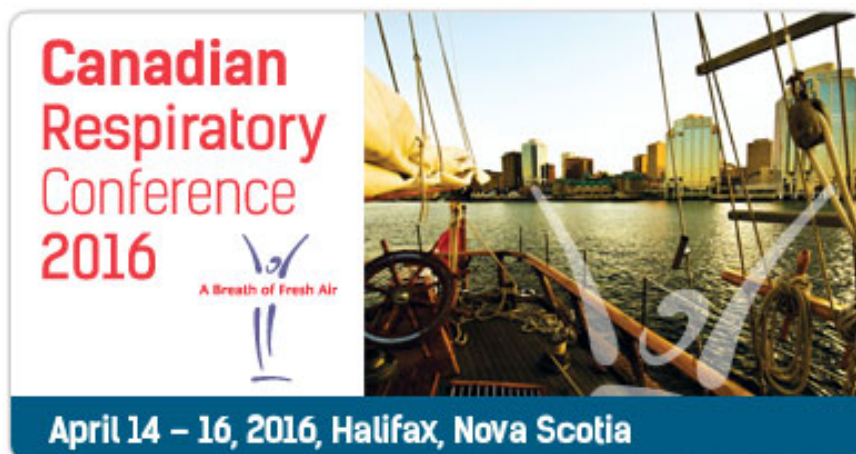
### CRRN Training Workshop

April 13, 2016 - 6:00 pm-9:00 pm

April 14, 2016 - 8:00 am-4:30 pm

Marriott Harbourfront, Halifax, NS

To register for the  
CRRN Training Workshop  
[CLICK HERE.](#)





Allergy, Genes and Environment Network  
Le réseau des allergies, des gènes et de l'environnement

**Application  
Deadline  
April 1, 2016**

## **\$250,000 Fellowship Award**

### ***Emerging Clinician-Scientist Research Fellowship***

AllerGen NCE Inc. is a member of Canada's Networks of Centres of Excellence (NCE) program with a mandate to support research, networking, commercialization, knowledge mobilization and capacity building activities that contribute to reducing the morbidity, mortality and socio-economic impact of allergic and related immune diseases.

The AllerGen *Emerging Clinician-Scientist Research Fellowship* enables Canadian clinicians to pursue allergy, asthma and/or anaphylaxis-related academic research training following Clinical Immunology and Allergy sub-specialty training. Applications are judged on the quality of the research or training opportunity and the potential for a combined career as a clinician and researcher. Eligible academic foci include basic and/or clinical research related to allergy, asthma and/or anaphylaxis.

#### **Award Value**

**A \$100,000 stipend plus a \$25,000 research allowance will be awarded in each of the two years of this fellowship.**

For more information contact  
Michelle Harkness, HQP Coordinator  
[michelleharkness@allergen-nce.ca](mailto:michelleharkness@allergen-nce.ca).

#### **Eligibility**

Applicants must be Canadian citizens or permanent residents who are enrolled in or have completed Clinical Immunology and Allergy sub-specialty training.

Individuals who pursue PhD studies following completion of Clinical Immunology and Allergy sub-specialty training are also eligible to apply.

Applications will be accepted two years prior to and two years after completion of sub-specialty training or PhD studies.

Awardees must hold the fellowship at a Canadian university or research institute.

**[allergen-nce.ca](http://allergen-nce.ca)**

Issued October 2015



Students and New Professionals Network  
Réseau des étudiants et des jeunes professionnels



# MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



Former AllerGen trainees (L to R) Drs **Meghan Azad** and **Elinor Simons**, University of Manitoba, and Dr. **Jeremy Hirota**, The University of British Columbia, were recently approved as Network investigators by AllerGen's Board of Directors.



**Matt Gold**, pictured here with AllerGen Scientific Director **Dr. Judah Denburg**, is completing a Postdoctoral fellowship with Dr. Pamela Ohashi, a Senior Scientist at the Princess Margaret Cancer Centre and the Ontario Cancer Institute. Matt completed his PhD training with Dr. Kelly McNagny at The University of British Columbia.



**Laura Feldman**, UofT, recently published an article in *Perspectives in Public Health*. The paper, "[Estimating Toronto's health services use for the 2015 Pan American and Parapan American Games](#)," was based on research conducted as part of a 2013 AllerGen Summer Studentship.



Congratulations to **John Paul Oliveria**, McMaster University, on receiving the Eva Eugenia Lillian Cope Research Scholarship for 2015-2016 issued by McMaster University, Faculty of Health Sciences, Centre for Gene Therapeutics, Division of Respiratory Diseases and Allergy.

Congratulations to **Emmanuel Osei** (R)

on receiving the NC3R's best oral presentation award at the 9<sup>th</sup> Young Investigators Meeting (YIM) in Smooth Muscle in Airways and Vascular Disease in London, UK. Emmanuel is a PhD student in Dr. Tillie Hackett's lab at The University of British Columbia.



# AllerGen welcomes new ASNPN members

Trainees and new professionals working on AllerGen-funded research automatically become ASNPN members. Students and new professionals not directly involved in AllerGen research, but training or working in the field of allergy, asthma and/or anaphylaxis, may apply for membership.

27 new ASNPN members joined the AllerGen network since June 2015:

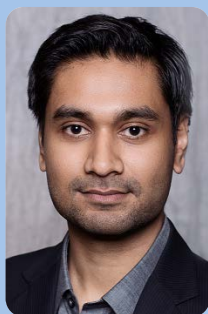


Name	Supervisor	Category	Institution
Chris Olesovsky	Gail Gauvreau	Undergrad	McMaster University
Ahmed Darwish	Paul Keith	Postdoc	McMaster University
Mariam Hanna	Susan Wasserman	Fellow-in-Training	McMaster University
Melinda Roberts	Helen Neighbour	Research Assistant	McMaster University
Abbey Schlatman	Gail Gauvreau	Research Technician	McMaster University
Fadwa Majeed	Helen Neighbour	Research Assistant	McMaster University
Nadia Daniel	Anne Ellis	Research Assistant	Queen's University
Jaclyn Parks	Tim Takaro	Undergrad	Simon Fraser University
Namit Sharma	Catherine Jane McGlade	Postdoc	The Hospital for Sick Children
Liane Kang	Anita Kozyrskyj	MSc	University of Alberta
Mahmoud Mostafa	Robert Newton	PhD	University of Calgary
Evelyn Gunawan	Chris Carlsten	Undergrad	University of British Columbia
Emily Fogarty	Lisa Reynolds	MSc	University of British Columbia
Danay Maestre-Battle	Chris Carlsten	MSc	University of British Columbia
Basia Rogula	Denise Daley	MSc	University of British Columbia
Aida Eslami	Denise Daley	PhD	University of British Columbia
Sarah Koch	Chris Carlsten	PhD	University of British Columbia
Emmanuel Osei	Tillie Hackett	PhD	University of British Columbia
Nina Viskum Hogaard	Chris Carlsten	PhD	University of British Columbia
Leila Mostaco-Guidolin	Tillie Hackett	Postdoc	University of British Columbia
Lisa Reynolds	Brett Finlay	Postdoc	University of British Columbia
Olga Pena	Chris Carlsten	Research Technician	University of British Columbia
Agnes Yuen	Chris Carlsten	Research Technician	University of British Columbia
Lorena Vehling	Meghan Azad	MSc	University of Manitoba
Sara Gordon	John Gordon	MSc	University of Saskatchewan
Christopher Rudulier	John Gordon	Postdoc	University of Saskatchewan
Hannah Lank	n/a	Undergrad	University of Toronto

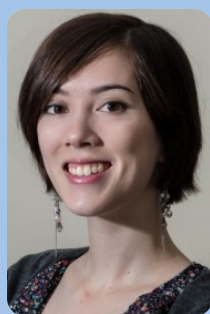
Join Us!



# 2015-2016 ASNPN Executive Committee



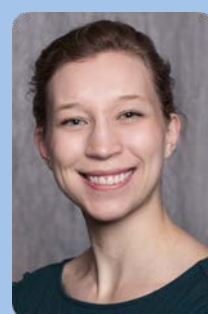
**PRESIDENT**  
**AMRIT SINGH**  
The University of  
British Columbia



**VICE-PRESIDENT**  
**LAURA FELDMAN**  
University of Toronto



**COMMUNICATIONS  
DIRECTOR**  
**MENA SOLIMAN**  
Queen's University



**EVENTS DIRECTOR**  
**LEAH GRAYSTONE**  
University of Waterloo



**PACIFIC DIRECTOR**  
**JASEMINE YANG**  
The University of  
British Columbia



**CENTRAL DIRECTOR**  
**VIVEK GANDHI**  
University of Alberta



**ONTARIO DIRECTOR**  
**ELIZABETH SIMMS**  
McMaster University



**QUEBEC/ATLANTIC  
DIRECTOR**  
**CYNTHIA  
KANAGARATHAM**  
McGill University



**MEMBER-AT-LARGE**  
**ERIKA LADOUCEUR**  
University of Alberta



**MEMBER-AT-LARGE**  
**KYLA JAMIESON**  
University of Calgary

