

News of what's happening around MIMM
June 2020

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRS

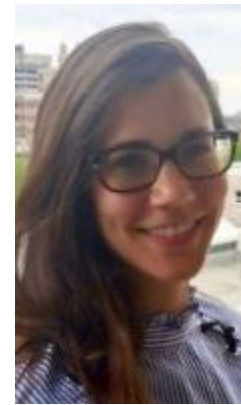
Hi all:

As we sign off for the summer, we have some important changes to announce with respect to our Graduate Student support team: as Dr. Sylvie Fournier steps down from her years of service as Graduate Program Director (GPD), Dr. Ciro Piccirillo will take on the role of GPD for a renewable 2-year term as of June 1st, 2020. Thank you, Dr. Piccirillo, for stepping up to take on this important position in our department.

Just as importantly, please join us in thanking Dr. Fournier for the passion and energy she brought to this role. She has worked tirelessly to ensure the highest standards of education, mentorship, and well-being for our graduate students. Congratulations on a job well done!

In addition, we are delighted to announce that Samantha Packer will be taking on the role of MIMM's Graduate Program Coordinator, also effective June 1st. Sam P. replaces Antonios Daskalakis while he is on a developmental assignment. She will be working closely with both Dr. Piccirillo and Carmen Paez from the student affairs team.

Please welcome Ciro and Sam P. in



*Stefanie Valbon, MSc Student,
Richer lab.*

Immunology blog created by MIMM Student

Stefanie Valbon, MSc student in the Richer lab, has created a blog to share immunology concepts using accessible language. She believes that more than ever, we are being bombarded with information about our body's natural ability to fight infections. However, sometimes the high volume of new information can be very intimidating. She decided to use this platform to share her passion for immunology using accessible language. She will also have monthly interviews with different professors to gather advice for young scientists. The first interview is with Dr. Richer. [Read it here.](#)

Graduate Research Day

GRD took place virtually, on May 29th and had a different format than previous years: MSc and PhD students presented their thesis in 3 minutes.

Congratulations to the award winners:

their new roles and support them in this time of transition.

Kind regards and best wishes for the summer!

Drs. Sam Gruenheid & Don Sheppard



FRQS Chercheur Boursier Jr1 Award

Congratulations to Dr. David Langlais for receiving the [FRQS Chercheur Boursier Jr1 award](#). His research is on the epigenetic regulators of immunity.

Dr. Chen Liang receives funding to study COVID-19 transmissibility

The Acting Director of the McGill AIDS Centre, Dr. Chen Liang, recently received \$480,000 in funding from Health Canada's COVID-19 response grants. Dr. Liang, who also teaches medicine in the Department of Microbiology and Immunology at McGill University, will investigate how SARS-CoV-2 so successfully evades immune responses, allowing it to spread in humans and cause fatal illness. [Click here to read more.](#)

PUBLICATIONS

[Bamford NC, Le Mauff F, Van Loon JC, et al. Structural and biochemical characterization of the](#)

- MSc 1st place: Mina Sadeghi
 - MSc 2nd place (tie): Will Jogia and Nicholas Kieran
 - Ph2 1st place: Trisha Barnard
 - PhD 2nd place: Kayla Paulini
 - Peoples Choice (tie): Trisha Barnard and Stefanie Valbon
-



Results announced for MI4 Seed Fund Grant – Round 2

Congratulations to MIMM members for receiving awards for the second round of McGill Interdisciplinary Initiative of Infection and Immunity MI4 Seed Fund Grants.

The awarded grants are as follows:

Infection-focused:

- CCR5 gene editing with antiviral genes to cure HIV-1 infection: Anne Gagnon and Jean-Pierre Routy
- Integrating polygenic risk scores, machine learning and mouse models to develop predictive tools and therapeutics for severe dengue disease: Jamie Engert and Silvia Vidal

Immunity-focused:

- A stem cell-based microfluidics approach to mine the immunomodulatory activity of the gut epithelial secretome: Irah King and Christopher Moraes
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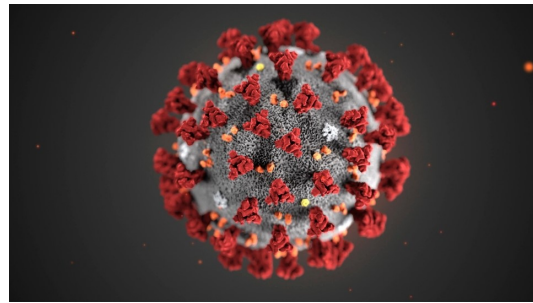
[exopolysaccharide deacetylase Agd3 required for *Aspergillus fumigatus* biofilm formation. *Nat Commun.* 2020;11\(1\):2450. Published 2020 May 15. doi:10.1038/s41467-020-16144-5](#)

[Cordeiro, B., Jeon, P., Boukhaled, G. M., Corrado, M., Lapohos, O., Roy, D. G., Williams, K., Jones, R.G., Gruenheid, S., Sagan, S.M., Krawczyk, C. M. \(2020\). MicroRNA-9 Fine-Tunes Dendritic Cell Function by Suppressing Negative Regulators in a Cell-Type-Specific Manner. *Cell Rep.* 31\(5\), 107585. doi: 10.1016/j.celrep.2020.107585](#)

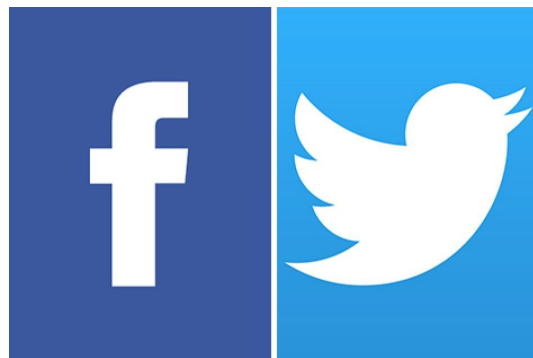
[Fiore, A., Liang, Y., Lin, Y. H., Tung, J., Wang, H., Langlais, D., & Nijnik, A. \(2020\). Deubiquitinase MYSM1 in the Hematopoietic System and beyond: A Current Review. *International journal of molecular sciences*, 21\(8\), 3007. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijms21083007>](#)

[Fisher MC, Gurr SJ, Cuomo CA, et al. Threats Posed by the Fungal Kingdom to Humans, Wildlife, and Agriculture. *mBio.* 2020;11\(3\):e00449-20. Published 2020 May 5. doi:10.1128/mBio.00449-20](#)

[Shaw, T. A., Ablenas, C. J., Desrochers, G. F., Powdrill, M. H., Bilodeau, D. A., Vincent-Rocan, J. F., Niu, M., Monette, A., **Mouland, A. J.**, Beauchemin, A. M., & Pezacki, J. P. A Bifunctional Nucleoside Probe for the Inhibition of the Human Immunodeficiency Virus-Type 1 Reverse Transcriptase. *Bioconjug Chem.* 2020;31\(5\):1537-1544. doi:10.1021/acs.bioconjchem.0c00191](#)



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