Message from the Chair

It has been too long since our last newsletter. With the launching of our refurbished departmental website (http://www.mcgill.ca/psychiatry/), we hope from this point on to deliver news in short installments, and as close as possible to the time that they occur. As a comprehensive review of the transformations and challenges that we have faced as a department in the past year would take too long, I will limit myself to the highlights.

The past year demarcates itself by the impressive number of leadership transitions that took place, with more projected in the coming months. David Eidelman, formerly chair of the Department of Medicine, became the new Vice-Principal (Health Affairs) and Dean of Medicine in January 2012. Lynn McVey, previously Director of Nursing at the JGH, was appointed as Director General of the Douglas Institute and assumed the position in January 2012. Searches are ongoing for several key positions in our network, including the Director of the Douglas Institute Research Centre, the Director of the Montreal Neurological Institute, the CEO of the MUHC, and the Psychiatrists-in-Chief of all but one of our teaching hospitals (try to guess which one before you read on). In the coming year, Warren Steiner, Psychiatrist-in-Chief MUHC; Michael Bond, Psychiatrist-in-Chief JGH, and Susan Lamarre, Psychiatrist-in-Chief SMH, will also be stepping down. In addition, the search is ongoing for a Chair for the Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Psychiatrist-in-Chief at the MCH. We are grateful to Martin Gauthier, who agreed to extend his mandate as acting chief of the MCH and to Lily Hechtman, who replaced Natalie Grizenko as acting chair of the Division since January. We are also fortunate that Alain Gratton graciously accepted to serve as acting director of the Douglas Institute Research Centre following Rémi Quirion’s departure last summer.

On another front, thanks to the contributions of many, we succeeded in maintaining services throughout the MUNACA (McGill University Non-Academic Certified Association) workers strike, which lasted from September to December, 2011. Perhaps the most challenging for our department, was protecting the quality of our teaching environment and maintaining essential services for our students. We are indebted to Marco Leyton, Karl Looper, and Gregg Meterissian for holding the fort and generously giving their time and energy.

In spite of the strike, we also managed to hold a well-attended Department Day on November 11, 2011. Faculty from all sites joined us in a spirited discussion on the Future of Psychiatric Diagnosis.

We were fortunate to draw David J. Kupfer, Chair of the DSM-5 Task Force as our guest speaker. I would like to thank the organizing committee; Dara Charney, Tewfik Said, Joe Rochford, Gustavo Turkei, Gerry Wiviott, Gail Myhr and Karl Looper, and the discussants; Jean Caron, Joel Paris, and Leon Tourian.

The strike also led to the postponement of the Royal College accreditation of our residency program. Accreditation is now scheduled for spring 2013, and preparations are under way. Another significant change pertaining to our education mission was the creation of two new leadership positions in response to the Royal College’s recognition of the sub-specialties of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry and Geriatric Psychiatry. Congratulations to our inaugural Program Directors; Ruth Russell for Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, and Michel Elie for Geriatric Psychiatry. On another note, Marco Leyton has announced that he will be stepping down as Graduate Program Director at the end of May. Marco has held the position for nine years and under his leadership, the program has grown and draws increasing numbers of high-quality students from many disciplines. We are extremely grateful to Marco for his outstanding contributions to the program. Finally, the CaRMS match results are in, and we have once again succeeded in recruiting nine excellent candidates for our residency program. Our thanks to Karl Looper and the selection committee; Carmella Roy, Chandra Magill, Eugenia Zikos, Hannah Schwartz, Katherine Steger, Nancy Low, Sherif Karama, Tewfik Said, Theo Kolivakis, Toby Measham and Warren Steiner, for their time and effort.
Our research mission remains strong, and the past year has been particularly successful with 12 members of the faculty receiving new salary awards (Junior, Senior, National) from FRSQ and CIHR, and over $20M received in grants to fund research ranging from basic neurosciences to social and transcultural psychiatry. Challenges ahead include adapting to proposed changes in the CIHR funding review process, and participating in the faculty of medicine’s exercise to develop a strategic research plan. Dean Eidelman recently announced faculty’s intention to develop a plan that will identify a small number of top priorities (no more than 5) to drive research investment and recruitment at the faculty level over the next five years. The goal is to have a plan in place by December 2012, and to begin implementation by January 2013. Several committees are being set up, and it is expected that research leaders in our department will be invited to participate. The fact that we have recently completed a departmental strategic research plan prepares us to give input based on our department’s already established priorities.

On the clinical side, our RUIS programs (http://www.mcgill.ca/psychiatry/ruis/ruis-programs) continue to develop. This year our focus has been to launch a Telehealth program that will facilitate our capacity to fulfill our RUIS mandate. All teaching hospitals have been equipped with the necessary equipment, and Charles Edouard Carrier has been named as coordinator of Telepsychiatry activities for our RUIS. After several months of hard work, the project was launched in the fall, and two programs (Eating Disorders and Psychogeriatrics) have been selected to pilot the project. In addition, with the help of Michele Larose from the MCH, a new virtual outpatient clinic will provide child psychiatry follow-up to children in Ungava Bay. Impressive! We are now poised to improve access to specialized evaluations, consultations, training and knowledge transfer for our partners.

Our mandate to provide specialized services to Nunavik and Cree are a constant challenge. Last June, Notre Dame Hospital decided that they would no longer offer inpatient services to Nunavik. The Douglas expressed an interest in taking on this responsibility, but only if associated with the addition of two positions that would allow recruitment of new psychiatrists. While we sort this out, the Douglas, MUHC, JGH and SMH have agreed to a monthly rotation for admissions from Nunavik. Our thanks to all the clinicians who have taken on the additional tasks of offering consultations and inpatient care to this very challenging population. In the meantime, we are close to signing an agreement with Nunavik and hope to recruit a psychiatrist by the summer.

Our wish to develop culturally-sensitive strategies to improve delivery and quality of mental health services to our first nation partners have inspired us to organize a one-day retreat on Friday, April 13, 2012. The goal is to inspire a meaningful discussion on how the mental health needs of the Inuit can be effectively addressed by bringing together key players from Nunavik, from the ministry, and from our institutions. We encourage all members of our department to attend. Special thanks to Tewfik Said and the organizing committee for their dedication, tireless efforts, and impressive frustration tolerance in organizing this unique event. Notable mentions to our fellow McGillians include: Simon Amar, Francois Bourque, Eduardo Chachamovich, Virginia Fauras, James Gates, Janique Harvey, Laurence Kirmayer, Marc Laporta, and Lucie Nadeau.

My last word will be about PREMs (the evil word that symbolizes our struggles to maintain a reasonable level of psychiatric academic recruitment at McGill). Since 2004, academic psychiatric institutions have had their recruitments limited by a closed envelope. For McGill this meant that 2 to 3 graduating residents could be recruited every year to cover the needs of 5 teaching hospitals regardless of attrition or changing needs. In October 2011, the health minister announced that there would be no closed envelope for 2012, and hence no new recruitments. They did allow for the possibility of asking for derogation for exceptional cases. At McGill, we have so far asked for five derogations: 2 were accepted, 1 is being processed and 2 were put on hold because they are for graduating residents who would only start in 2013 (overall good news). In the meantime, the ministry has struck a work group composed of the four Quebec university chiefs, and representatives for the AMPQ and FMSQ. Several meetings are scheduled between now and June. I will be representing us and can assure you that we have done a careful analysis of the manpower needs of our entire RUIS, taking into account academic and community needs for the regions we serve.

I will sign off by expressing my gratitude to our faculty. As Chair, I am privileged to work for a group of talented, caring and supportive people. I would also like to extend a very special thanks to my creative, inspiring, and energetic administrative support team, Aleks, Anouk, and Wenwen.

Enjoy the spring!
New Hires in Department

**Assistant Professor**
- Carl Ernst, PhD  
  *Douglas Mental Health University Institute*
- Dr. Katherine Steger, MD, PhD  
  *Douglas Mental Health University Institute*
- Dr. Julie Desmarais, MD  
  *McGill University Health Centre*
- Dr. Monique Desjardins, MD  
  *McGill University Health Centre*

**Associate Professor**
- Dr. Frank Elgar, PhD  
  *Douglas Mental Health University Institute*

Departmental Promotions

**To Associate Professor**
- Dr. Johanne Renaud, MD  
  *Douglas Mental Health University Institute*

**To Full Professor**
- Dr. Marco Leyton, PhD  
  *McGill University Health Centre*
- Dr. Giamal N. Lukses, PhD  
  *Douglas Mental Health University Institute*

New Heads & Directors

**Douglas Mental Health University Institute**
- Head of Clinical Research Division: Dr. Pierre Etienne
- Director of Schizophrenia Axis: Dr. Bruno Giros
- Director of Brain Imaging Centre: Dr. Natasha Rajah
- Director of Animal Facility & Chair of User Committee: Dr. Florian Storch

**McGill University Health Centre**
- Co-Leader of the Mental Illness and Addictions Axis: Dr. Gabriella Gobbi
- Director of Postgraduate Training for Senior Residents at the MUHC: Dr. Eugenia Zikos

**McGill University**
- Geriatric Psychiatry Program Director: Dr. Michel Elie
- Undergraduate Psychiatry Clerkship Chair: Dr. Trent Semeniuk
- Acting Chair of Division of Child Psychiatry: Dr. Lily Hechtman
- Child & Adolescent Psychiatry Program Director: Dr. Ruth Russell

New Residents-July 2013

*A warm welcome to the new residents starting in July 2013*

- Michelle Cicalo  
  *University of Ottawa*
- Laura Freedman  
  *McGill University*
- Anthony Gifuni  
  *Université de Montreal*
- Kenneth Huang  
  *McGill University*
- Vincent Laliberté  
  *University of Laval*
- Sofie Mauger  
  *University of Ottawa*
- Marie-Christine Noel  
  *University of Sherbrooke*
- Zoe Thomas  
  *McGill University*
- Ching Yu  
  *USMG-Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine-USA*
Student Research Day

9 June 2011

This year’s Student Research Day was a great success. In front of a large and inquisitive audience, 23 excellent talks were given, and six prizes were awarded.

Douglas Mental Health University Institute Prizes

- **FRSQ Prize for best talk given by a graduate student:**
  Rosalind Sham (MSc-2) “A spatial memory intervention program increases hippocampal fMRI activity and grey matter, and improves memory in healthy elderly and in patients with Mild Cognitive Impairment.” (Supervisor: Dr. Veronique Bohbot)

- **Douglas Foundation Prize for the 2nd best talk given by a graduate student:**
  Susan Westfall (MSc-2) “The influence of fever and inflammation on peripheral clock gene expression.” (Supervisor: Dr. Nicolas Cermakian)

- **Douglas Research Centre Prize for the 3rd best talk given by a graduate student:**
  Melissa Burt (PhD-6) “Prenatal infection, a risk factor for schizophrenia, produces spatial processing deficits and N-methyl-D-aspartate receptor (NMDAR) hypofunction in hippocampus of adolescent male rat offspring.” (Supervisors: Dr. Patricia Boksa & Dr. Tak-Pan Wong)

Department of Psychiatry Prizes

- **Birmingham-Dennis Prize for best talk given by a graduate student registered in the Department of Psychiatry program:**
  Michelle Roseman (MSc-2) “Reporting of conflicts of interest in meta-analyses of trials of pharmacological treatments.” (Supervisor: Brett Thombs)

- **Child & Youth Psychiatry Prize for best talk on research on problems of young people by a graduate student registered in the Department of Psychiatry:**
  Paul Gomes (MSc-2) “The treatment of childhood attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder with medication: an analysis of the impact of information interventions on parents’ knowledge and attitudes and their impact on adherence to medication.” (Supervisor: Lily Hechtman)

- **Leyton Addiction Research Prize for the best addictions related paper published each year by a trainee in the Psychiatry Department:**
  Elaine Setiawan (PhD-6) “The effect of naltrexone on alcohol's stimulant properties and self-administration behavior in social drinkers: influence of gender and genotype.” (Supervisor: Marco Leyton)

Psychiatry Department Day

11 November 2011

DSM-5: Different Perspectives on the Future of Psychiatric Diagnosis

**Special Guest Speaker, Dr. David Kupfer**
Chair of the DSM-5 Task Force

**On the Road to DSM-5**

**Research Perspective, Dr. Jean Caron**
Prevalence of Mental Disorders: How Will DSM-5 Affect Epidemiological Research?

**Clinical Perspective, Dr. Joel Paris**
Personality Disorders in DSM-5: Will a Radical Revision Have Clinical Utility?

**Residents’ Perspective, Dr. Leon Tourian**
Somatic Symptom Disorders: Does DSM-5 Unite Mind and Body?

Residents Award Night Results

16 November 2011

The Resident Awards Night took place at the Faculty Club on November 16th. Thank you to MPRA and the department for making this a special evening where we were able to honor Faculty and Resident achievements.

Congratulations to the 2011 award recipients:

**Faculty Awards**

- Best Teacher Award: Dr. Tewfik Said
- Best Supervisor Award: Dr. Don Groenewege
- Best Training Director Award: Dr. Joanne Joly

**Resident Awards for the Best Scholarly Paper**

- Geriatric Psychiatry Prize: Dr. Soham Rej
- Gabrielle Weiss Prize for Child Psychiatry: Dr. Venkat Bhat
- Innovative Publication Prize: Dr. Simon Ducharme
- Saul Wilner Prize: Dr. Arash Nakhost
- Serge Bikadoroff Prize: Dr. Leon Tourian
- Chairman’s Prize: Dr. Vi Nguyen

**Resident Awards for Clinical and Educational Excellence**

- Dennis Engels Award for Excellence in Psychotherapy: Dr. Paulina Bjasarowicz
- Most Promising Teacher: Dr. Ammar Albanna
- Most Promising Clinician: Dr. Leon Tourian
Awards and Prizes

- PRIITE Fellowship (http://www.acpsych.org/resident-fellowships) from the American College of Psychiatry (one of the two residents in North America chosen for this fellowship): Dr. Venkat Bhat
- Canadian academy of Geriatric Psychiatry Lifetime achievement: Dr. Vasavan Nair
- Outstanding contributions to Geriatric Psychiatry: Dr. Martin G. Cole
- Coordinators of postgraduate education in psychiatry award: Dr. Tuong-Vi Nguyen
- 2010 winner of the MHS/Keith Conners Award for Scholarly Contribution: Dr. Natalie Grizenko & Co-Authors in article Is the Inattentive Subtype of ADHD Different from the Combined/Hyperactive Subtype (JAD, 2010, 13, 649-657)
- Canadian Geriatric Association Lifetime Achievement Award for Contribution in the field of Geriatric Psychiatry: Dr. Vasavan Nair
- CAGP Resident Award for 2011: Soham Rej
- 2011 Annual Psychiatry Research Awards for research on problems that affect young people:
  - Early Career Psychiatrist: Dr. Nancy Low
  - Psychiatry Resident: Dr. Venkat Bhat
  - Graduate Student: Dr. Samantha Wells
- Canadian Psychiatric Association Awards:
  - 2011 RO Jones award for best paper: Dr. Ashok Malla & Dr. Tuong-Vi Nguyen
  - 2011 President Elect: Dr. Suzanne Renaud
  - Named Fellow of the CPA in October 2011: Dr. Mimi Israel & Dr. Joel Paris
- Named Lifetime Fellow of the American Psychiatric Association in May 2011: Dr. Michael Bond
- Canadian Psychological Association 2012 Award for Distinguished Contributions to Public or Community Service: Dr. Reut Gruber
- Appointed as Member of the Order of Canada: Dr. Michael Meaney
- Laureate of the 2011 Award for an "Outstanding achievement in the field of Mental Health Care" offered by the Swiss Foundation for World Health, in collaboration with WHO: Dr. Claudina Cayetano, Director of the Mental Health Pro- gram in the Ministry of Health of Belize, and a graduate from our Psychiatry Residency Program (awarded October 2011 in Geneva.)
- American Foundation for Suicide Prevention 2012 Research Award: Dr. Gustavo Turecki
- Canadian Research Chairs
  - Dr. John Breitner, Douglas Mental Health University Institute
  - Dr. Antoine Adamantidis, Douglas Mental Health University Institute
- APA Lilly Psychiatric Research Award for fellowship: Dr. Simon Ducharme
- Human Frontier Science Program Award: Dr. Antoine Adamantidis
- Renewed Appointment as a James McGill Professor: Dr. Chawki Benkelfat

March 2011
McGill Psychiatry did exceptionally well this competition and managed to obtain 10 new grants totaling to over $8M (twice higher than the national average).
Congratulations to:
- Dr. Antoine Adamantidis
- Dr. Pat Boksa
- Dr. Tom Brown
- Dr. Jean Caron
- Dr. Cecilia Flores
- Dr. Alain Gratton
- Dr. Krista Hyde
- Dr. Suzanne King
- Dr. Pedro Rosa-Neto
- Dr. Dominique Walker
- Dr. Ashley Wazana

September 2011
- Dr. Chawki Benkelfat
- Dr. Nicolas Cermakian
- Dr. Anne Crocker
- Dr. Kathryn Gill
- Dr. Fabrice Jollant
- Dr. Marco Leyton
- Dr. Judes Poirier
- Dr. Gustavo Turecki
- Dr. Sylvain Williams
$2.9 million grant obtained for mental health promotion in Aboriginal youth
A group of researchers, including Drs. Kirmayer and Zelkowitz from our Department, are receiving more than $2.9M (Phase I and Phase II) to adapt and expand on a family-centered prevention program that is directly related to suicide prevention and will be supplemented with components addressing mental health literacy. The focus of the program will be on culturally-specific approaches to strengthening family relations in First Nations communities.

Bell Canada donates $2 million to upgrade and expand Douglas Institute Brain Bank
Thanks to an unprecedented $2 million gift from Bell Canada, the Douglas Institute will be able to improve facilities and expand recruitment and research activities for its brain bank. Part of the Bell Let’s Talk mental health initiative, this financial support represents one of the largest donations ever made in Quebec to a university-affiliated mental health institute. The only brain bank of its kind in Canada and one of a select few worldwide, the facility will be called the Douglas-Bell Canada Brain Bank.

Dancing with the Docs
The MUHC Fundraising event “Dancing with the Docs” took place on February 4, 2012 at Metropolis. 10 dancing doctors representing different sites and missions of the MUHC competed in front of a panel of celebrity judges. Representing the Department of Psychiatry was our very own Dr. Dara Charney who did a fabulous job! The event raised $203,000 for the MUHC’s The Best Care for Life Campaign.

Other News...

Department of Psychiatry launched its new WEBSITE!
The Department of Psychiatry launched its new website on February 16, 2012! You may view it at: http://www.mcgill.ca/psychiatry/. We hope you enjoy the new site and we welcome any and all feedback. Please send an email to communications.psychiatry@mcgill.ca for feedback or modification requests.
Irving Ludmer Research & Training
1033 Pine Avenue West
Montreal, Quebec, H3A 1A1

As of March 2012, there will be a
temporary relocation of Psychiatry
Administration due to construction:

Hugessen House
3666 McTavish Street
Montreal, Quebec, H3A 1Y2

514-398-7293
admincoord.psychiatry@mcgill.ca

McGill University
Department of Psychiatry

Departmental Academic Fund

We wish to thank all those who have generously contributed to our fund since its inception. Please help us continue in this direction. Your contributions will be used to invest in promoting academic excellence within our department and to support student, resident and junior faculty initiatives. If you would like to make a gift online today, please visit www.alumni.mcgill.ca/online-giving. You may leave the “Gift Code” blank. When you get to the “Gift Details” tab, simply type “Department of Psychiatry” in the box.

*If you wish to contribute a news item for the Departmental Website please send an email to communications.psychiatry@mcgill.ca.*