

# MONTHLY UPDATE

## DEPARTMENT OF BIOCHEMISTRY

June 2016

It's hard to believe the year is half over, semester 1 is done, and exams are upon us. A big thank you to Nurit and her team of new staff for delivering the teaching laboratories and to the teaching fellows and academic staff that have delivered lectures and laboratories and are about to spend a significant amount of time marking.

In addition to exposing our regular crop of students to the wonders of biochemistry, you may have noticed groups of high school students wandering the halls. Thanks to Kaye and her helpers who have hosted a number of local high schools in the Department recently enabling them to gain some hands on experience and hear about some of our research. Hopefully we will see some of them in our classrooms next year.

From the research front the Department has had a very successful strike rate with Marsdens this year getting 7 research proposals through the first round. This makes for a very busy grant-writing period for 7 of our staff. Do not distract them from this very important task!

A reminder that the Queenstown Research Week is in our midst (28th August to 3rd September) not in Queenstown but in sunny Nelson for a change. The week features 66 invited international speakers, including a Nobel prize winner and many New Zealand speakers plus lots of opportunities for students and post docs to present their work. Check out the website <http://www.queenstownresearchweek.org> to see what's on offer. A notoriously fun meeting for students and a good excuse for a long roady!

And from the social frontline, Biochemistry donated the most cans to the "Cans per Capita" competition held to support the Presbyterian Support Services Food Bank. We brought in a whopping 207 cans, well ahead of Anatomy with 176. Just a reminder that we are a competitive and compassionate Department!



Sally

## Awards

There seems to be no end to the stream of awards accruing to department members these days. We started with Warren getting an HRC award for "outstanding contributions to health research excellence, leadership, and impact" on the 8th June, later that day we heard that Sally's PhD student Monika Sharma won not one but two "Best Young Investigator Presentation" awards at conferences in Austria then to top it all off, Peter Mace was awarded an Early Career Award for Distinction in Research by the University on the 10th June.

Well done everyone!



Warren with the other winners of HRC awards. Emma Wyeth (left) is also one of our graduates.

## MOU with Otakou



Donna Matahaere-Atariki, the chairperson of Te Rūnanga o Ōtākou, addresses department members prior to signing the relationship agreement on the 2nd June. Tony Merriman's gout research will be the founding project in this relationship, which we hope will bring considerable benefit to both parties.

## Conferences

### Recent attendance

Parry Guilford "Targeting Cancer Vulnerabilities" USA, 16-19 May

Sally McCormick "84th Congress of the European Atherosclerosis Society's Congress and associated Lp(a) Satellite Meeting" Austria 27 May - 1 June

### Upcoming

**Tony Merriman** "European League Against Rheumatology (EULAR)" London 8-11 June

**Wayne Patrick** "EMBO Conference on the Biochemistry and Chemistry of Biocatalysis: From Understanding to Design" Finland and "20th Swedish Conference on Protein Structure and Function" Sweden 12-15 and 17-20 June

**Iain Lamont** "BioMetals 2016, 10th BioMetals International Symposium" Germany 10-15 July

## Upcoming IPLs

Peter Dearden, 6 December 5.30 pm, Archway 1 Lecture Theatre

Tony Merriman - postponed to 2017

## PhD/MSc completions:

Congratulations to Lily Ong (Ledgerwood Lab) who recently completed her PhD.

## Purchasing

InVitro has specials on Tocris products - buy 1 get 2nd 50% off.

BOC have 10% off MVE liquid nitrogen dewars.

Interlab has specials on filter tips & PCR plates.

## New arrivals



Julie Farquhar (temporary - office)



Mike McArthur (Prep Room)



Sophie Chevalier, Visiting Student in the Hughes Lab. Sophie comes to us from the National Institute of Applied Sciences of Toulouse, but here she is pointing to her actual home - the tropical paradise of Réunion!

## Health & Safety

There is an IBSC meeting on 28th June, items for the meeting are due by 21st June.

UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO  
ipl  
Integral Professional Lectures

New connections  
between old lipids

Professor Sally McCormick  
Department of Biochemistry  
Otago School of Medical Sciences

5.30pm Tuesday, 28 June 2016  
Archway 1 Lecture Theatre, Union Street East  
All welcome

otago.ac.nz/osms/biochemistry

