



UNIVERSITY of TORONTO

# PLASTIC SURGERY NEWS

*Newsletter of the Division of Plastic Surgery*

ISSUE 1

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VOLUME 2

## OUR GOALS

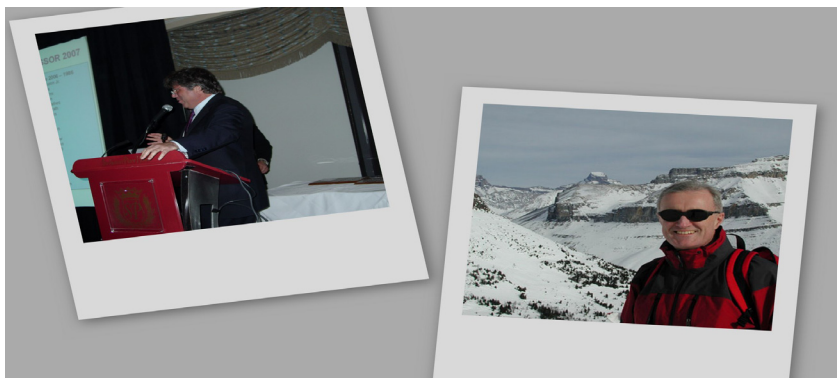
Maintain and develop research, education and clinical excellence

Build through sound financial planning

Enhance stakeholder and public perception and awareness

In this issue:

- [Chair's Column](#)  
A quick update on the shared vision and future goals of our Division (Read more)
- [Who's new. What's new.](#)  
Recruitments. Appointments, excitement!!! (Read more)
- [Our new Program Director says hello](#) (Read more)
- [Greetings from our new Research Director](#) (Read more)
- [Lend us your ears... guess who won this year's 'Art of Listening Award'?](#)  
(Click to find out)
- [Greetings from Anguilla - a friend makes time to say hi](#) (Click here)
- [Alumni - we want to hear from you](#) (Find out how to get in touch with us.)
- [If a picture says a thousand words... \(we've got thousands of 'words' from Banff!!\)](#)



- [Celebrating the accomplishments of Dr. Levine and Dr. Semple on November 29](#) (Read more)

Please feel free to forward this newsletter to those who you think may be interested.  
If you would like to be added to, or removed from this mailing list, please e-mail

[plastics.admin@utoronto.ca](mailto:plastics.admin@utoronto.ca)

### VISION

International leader in plastic surgery research, education and clinical practice

### MISSION

We prepare future plastic surgery leaders, contribute to our communities and improve the health of individuals and populations through the discovery, application and communication of knowledge.

### VALUES

We value:

- Innovation;
- The drive to excel;
- Collaboration;
- Respect for the individuals who are our patients, colleagues, stakeholders; and,
- Honesty, openness, transparency.



This past summer has been busy and I am pleased to share with everyone some of the steps taken as we move forward together with our strategic plan and shared vision for the future of plastic and reconstructive surgery

at the University of Toronto. Our Division identified three priorities for 2007/08-2010/11 including:

- (1) maintain and develop research, education and clinical excellence,
- (2) build through sound financial management and planning and
- (3) enhance stakeholder and public perception and awareness.

These priorities are interdependent and critical to our future success. I'd like to take a moment to summarize some of the steps taken across the Division since our strategic plan was finalized and accepted by Faculty.

## **(1) Build through sound financial management and planning**

### **(a) Finance Committee**

In response to recommendations in our strategic plan, a Finance Committee has been established for the Division. Its members include Dimitri Anastakis (Chair), Kim Moran (CFO, Gallop and Gallop volunteering her time and expertise), Nancy Collett (Advancement Officer, Department of Surgery), Nancy Condo (Business Manager, Department of Surgery) and Kristen Davidge (PGY-2). This committee met in September, agreed on its terms of reference and has made several preliminary financial changes including:

- (i) The committee felt an additional Faculty member was required, and Dr. Howard Clarke has kindly agreed to participate.
- (ii) The Committee will move to adopt a Financial Governance Policy for the Division outlining who can make financial decisions and with what money.
- (iii) The committee has taken steps to streamline divisional funds by closing several funds and accounts. Our Division will only operate using University of Toronto financial services – we will phase out all hospital

and private banking accounts.

(iv) Finally, in accordance with recommendation in our strategic plan - a new fund will be opened to support a Professorship in Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery Education.

### **(b) Commercialize other knowledge and educational tools**

During the summer I met with Dr. Sarita Verma, Vice-Dean of Postgraduate Medical Education, and Mohamad Alameddine, Director of International Development and Partnerships, to discuss several issues related to plastic surgery education including growth of our training program and revenue generating opportunities. Fortunate for our Division, Dr. Verma and the PGME office have identified revenue generation as a long-term goal. Several opportunities for revenue generation will soon exist include (1) increasing the number of VISA trainees; (2) developing the capacity to contract educational consultants to other universities as they develop new training programs and (3) developing a "Summer Institute" - a proposed 6 week intense clinical fellowship in a specific clinical area. Revenue generated from these intense fellowships would be shared between PGME and the host Division. Clearly, opportunities exist for our Division to partner with PGME in the future.

### **(c) Develop a corporate philanthropy strategy**

Corporate philanthropy was identified as a priority for our Division. As we develop a corporate philanthropy strategy, we will ensure that all future partnerships are mutually beneficial and based on shared values. In the past, we have seen significant contributions from the corporate sector to our Golf Tournament as the main venue for corporate giving. As we move forward, other opportunities to support the Division will be identified and matched with the interests and values of our various corporate partners.

### **Breast Cancer Reconstruction Fellowships**

On behalf of Dr. Joan Lipa, Dr. John Semple and Dr. Mitch Brown I am happy to announce that Allergan has made a generous commitment of \$150,000 over the next two years to support two Breast Cancer Reconstruction Fellowships at the University of Toronto as well as other educational and research initiatives related to breast reconstruction. I am grateful to Mr. Malcolm Eade (Director, Allergan Medical) and his entire team for their commitment to our Division and to breast cancer reconstruction.

For information regarding Allergan's surgeon educational support visit [www.allerganacademy.ca](http://www.allerganacademy.ca) and for patient education visit [www.breastimplantstoday.ca](http://www.breastimplantstoday.ca).

#### **(d) Build revenue from Alumni**

Developing an alumni giving plan was identified as a strategic priority by Faculty. In preparation for future alumni fundraising, Sandy Davies (Alumni Coordinator) has been working hard on updating contact information for what is now a database of over 300 alumni including residents, clinical and research fellows, and retired faculty. Identifying the fundraising priorities to be supported through individual giving will be the Division's next step as we prepare for a major fundraising initiative. More to come in the near future.

#### **(2) Maintain and develop research, education and clinical excellence**

(a) Recruit and retain dedicated researchers, further develop divisional collaboration and depth of Divisional infrastructure to promote creativity and innovation, and facilitate grants, publications and invited lectures.

Recruitment and retention is a priority for the Division. As you know, we have managed to bring stability to the significant staffing challenges at Sunnybrook over the past 12 months. With new leadership and confirmed financial resource for additional plastic surgeons, Sunnybrook is well on its way to recovery and a bright future. At TGH, faculty departures created staffing and service delivery challenge for the remaining Dr. Joan Lipa. With the support of both Bryce Taylor (UHN Surgeon-in-Chief) and Jay Wunder (MSH Surgeon-in-Chief) and a variety of short-term strategies, we have been able to keep things a float at TGH until new staff surgeons are recruited.

Over the past year, I have come to appreciate the challenges and complexity associated with recruiting surgeons to our Department. As many of you now know, recruitment to any position in the Department of Surgery must be done by committee and in accordance with well defined guidelines. These guidelines have been developed and approved by the Department. The Chief of the Division that is recruiting leads the selection committee and decides on the selection committee members (up to 14 members). The reason for this change relates to ensuring that the best candidates are selected and that all the necessary resources are made available up front, in-

cluding financial support, laboratory space and equipment, and hospital and University commitments.

#### **Recruitment to the Division of Plastic Surgery**

Over the last year, the Division of Plastic Surgery has recruited two new faculty members, Dr. Stefan Hofer (UHN) and Dr. Shar Shahroki (RTBC).

#### **Dr. Stefan Hofer, Chief of Plastic Surgery UHN**

Dr. Stefan Hofer has been recruited from Erasmus University Medical Center, Rotterdam, Netherlands to the position of Chief of Plastic Surgery at UHN starting on October 1, 2008. Dr. Hofer will also be the second holder of the Wharton Chair in Head and Neck Reconstruction. He is appointed as an Associate Professor and Surgeon-Investigator and is the Division's first international candidate to be recruited in over a decade. On behalf of the Division of Plastic Surgery, we welcome Stefan, his wife Jenny and their two children Lisa and Daniel to Toronto and to our Division.

(For more about Dr. Hofer, [click here.](#))



#### **Dr. Shar Sharhoki, Burn Surgeon, RTBC**

The Ross Tilley Burn Centre also has a new staff member and addition to the Division of Plastic Surgery. Drs. Joel Fish and Robert Cartotto in collaboration with the Surgeon-in-Chief, Chief of the Division of Plastic Surgery and the SHSC senior management team successfully recruited Dr. Shar Sharhoki as a new Burn Surgeon at the RTBC. Dr. Shahroki is appointed to the Department as a Lecturer and a Surgeon-Teacher. On behalf of the Division of Plastic Surgery, we welcome Shar and his partner Summer to our Plastic Surgery family.

#### **Appointment to the Division of Plastic Surgery**

#### **Dr. Brett Beber, Plastic and Reconstructive Surgeon, TEGH**

Along with Dr. Laura Tate, Surgeon-in-Chief at TEGH, I am pleased to announce that Dr. Beber has been appointed to the Department of Surgery as a Lecturer. Dr. Beber graduated from our program in 1999 and has been on staff at TEGH since 2000. His clini-

cal interests include breast reconstruction, cutaneous malignancies and general plastic surgery. As our training program continues to expand, we will need to ensure adequate training sites and increase our compliment of clinical teachers. In collaboration with Drs. Tate and Beber, the Division looks forward to re-establishing TEGH as a clinical rotation for plastic surgery trainees.

### **Dr. Paul Binhammer**

I am extremely pleased to announce the appointment of Dr. Binhammer as Chief of the Division of Plastic Surgery at Sunnybrook Health Sciences Center (SHSC). Dr. Binhammer has been on staff at SHSC since 1994 and holds an Assistant Professor position at the Department of Surgery in the University of Toronto.



### **(b) Maintain excellence in breadth of training**

Our training program is the largest in Canada and looks forward to further growth. Following my meeting with Dr. Verma, I received indication that we may receive an additional CaRMS resident bringing us to a total of 4 funded trainees per year. This along with VISA and IMG candidates, we have the potential to have a total of 6 trainees entering this year. Once again, reiterating the importance of identifying additional training sites and clinical teachers.

As many of you know, Dr. Mitchell Brown has been appointed the Program Director for the Division of Plastic Surgery. Mitchell succeeds Dr. Ronald Levine who served the Division as Program Director for 14 years. I know that Mitch will be an excellent Program Director and that he will grow into this important leadership role helping us maintain our position as an international leader in plastic surgery research, education and clinical practice. During the next several months of transition, Mitch will work with Ron and learn from his wisdom and experience.

Please join me in congratulating Dr. Mitchell Brown on his new appointment. A special thanks also to Mrs. Amy Brown, Mitchell's wife and their children Joey, Eli and Leah for supporting Mitchell as he assumes this important University role.

(For more about Dr. Brown, click [here](#).)

On behalf of the Division of Plastic Surgery,

I want to thank Dr. Levine for his enormous contribution to the Division over the past 14 years in his role as Program Director. Over the past year, I have come to respect the magnitude of the position and how well you have managed our training program and helped guide the Division. I am also grateful to Ron for his patience as we went through the process of identifying and selecting the current Program Director. Finally, I look forward to celebrating Dr. Levine's contributions to the Division in the near future.

It is with great pleasure that I announce the appointment of Dr. Joel Fish as the new Research Director for the Division of Plastic Surgery. Joel succeeds Dr. John Semple who has served our Division as Research Director with distinction.

Please join me in congratulating Dr. Joel Fish on his new appointment. A special thanks also to Mrs. Valerie Fish, Joel's wife and their children Jessica, Ruth, Isaac, and Elliot for supporting Joel as he assumes this important University role.

(For more about Dr. Fish, click [here](#).)

### **(3) Aware, Informed Stakeholders and Public**

As discussed at our retreat, the term "plastic surgery" means something quite different to the average member of society who often sees plastic surgery and cosmetic surgery as one of the same. Rarely, does the average person understand the diversity of work performed by plastic surgeons. This "nip and tuck" perception associated with "Plastic Surgery" is a major obstacle to our Division as we move forward with identifying major donors to academic chairs, as we negotiate variances in the AFP with government and academic health centres, and as we try to secure additional resources within in our own teaching hospitals.

Faculty have agreed that it is a priority to alter physician, stakeholder, media and public perceptions about plastic surgery. In regards to this priority, through the efforts of Ms. Susan Lenard, we have established a relationship with Naked Creative Consultancy Inc. ([www.nakedcreative.com](http://www.nakedcreative.com)), one of Toronto's leading branding and communications consulting firms, who will be working with us on a pro bono basis to improve awareness and perception of Plastic Surgery and the work carried out by



our discipline. Naked Creative was founded on the belief that creativity is the driving force of business.

I met with the senior creative team early in September and shared with them some of the concerns and challenges we discussed at our retreat. They are working towards developing an integrated and innovative communications strategy geared at improving awareness and perceptions of plastic and reconstructive surgery. We are very appreciated of the energy, creativity and commitment that Naked Creative is offering to the Division. As we move forward with this firm I may call on faculty members in our Division to meet with the creative team and educate them of the work we do.

**Dr. Stefan Hofer** (linked from previous page)

Clinical and research interest:

Dr. Hofer's general interest is in reconstructive surgery, with a special emphasis on oncology. He was responsible for all Plastic and Reconstructive Surgical Oncology at the Erasmus Medical Centre.

Clinical Research:

Clinical research focuses on technical improvements of reconstructive techniques, and functional and aesthetic outcomes after reconstructive surgery. Main topics are head & neck and breast reconstruction. Dr. Hofer has been acknowledged by his peers as one of the best reconstructive surgeons in the Netherlands.

Experimental Research:

Dr. Hofer has a strong interest in angiogenesis and tissue engineering, more specifically the vascularization of three-dimensional tissue engineered constructs. Three years ago he has started a research group for tissue engineering with special emphasis on mucosa and fat tissue. The tissue engineering group, within the Plastic Surgery Research Unit, employs two full-time researchers, two lab technicians and students. Dr. Hofer directs currently five PhD projects.

Teaching:

Dr. Hofer is actively involved in clinical skills training to students and residents. He is a teacher of postdoc courses on specialized oncology at the "Opleidingsinstituut" and microsurgery at the skills lab of the Erasmus Medical Centre. He teaches medical students in their curriculum on reconstructive oncologic surgery.

Management and Organization:

Dr. Hofer was the head of subsection Plastic

and Reconstructive Surgical Oncology and medical coordinator for Plastic Surgery at the Daniel Cancer Clinic, Erasmus Medical Centre. He is continuously active as organizer of national and international conferences on tissue engineering and reconstructive surgery.

**Dr. Mitchell Brown** (linked from previous page)

Dr. Brown is an Associate Professor and is on staff at Women's College Hospital. Dr. Brown has gained an international reputation for his work with cohesive silicone gel breast implants in aesthetic and reconstructive breast surgery. Mitchell completed his medical degree in 1988 from the University of Western Ontario. He went on to complete a comprehensive surgical internship at Toronto Western Hospital, followed by a five-year residency in plastic surgery at the University of Toronto.

In addition, Mitchell completed a Masters in Education as part of the Fellowship in Surgical Education and was involved in developing new techniques to teach and evaluate technical performance in the operating room. In 1994, Dr. Brown became a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada in Plastic Surgery. Dr. Brown has always been closely involved with the residency training program and has been a member of the Residency Program Committee for the past seven years. Mitchell brings to the Program Director position numerous skills and traits including a strong commitment to postgraduate education and a desire to help shape the future of plastic and reconstructive surgery at the University of Toronto. Dr. Brown has a strong background and understanding of adult learning. His past educational research attests to his creative abilities, another skill required in this position. Mitchell has exceptional organizational skills. He is direct, fair, and an effective communicator.

**Dr. Joel Fish** (linked from previous page)

Dr. Fish is an Associate Professor and is on staff at Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre and St. Johns Rehabilitation Hospital. Dr. Fish is the Medical Director of the Ross Tilley Burn Centre and has achieved international recognition for his work in burn surgery and research. Joel completed his undergraduate degree in 1982 from the University of Toronto.

He went on to complete his medical degree in 1986 from McMaster University. Dr. Fish completed his Plastic Surgery training at the University of Toronto and became a Fellow of the College of

Physicians and Surgeons in Plastic Surgery in 1994. Dr. Fish was an ABA Traveling Fellow and visited Harborview Medical Burn Centre in Seattle Washington, Brooke Army Medical Burn Centre, San Antonio Texas, and the Shriners Burns Institute in Boston.

Dr. Fish has had extensive research training including completion of a MSc. degree in skeletal muscle ischemia from the University of Toronto. His research experience included work with Drs. Nancy McKee and Ralph Manktelow on the anatomy of the gracilis muscle for vascularized functional transfer. Joel was part of the Surgical Scientist Program from 1987-89 in the Microvascular Surgery Laboratory. Joel is a member of the Institute for Medical Science and the School of Graduate Studies at the University of Toronto. Joel has supervised numerous graduate students at both the Masters and PhD level during his tenure. He has published and presented widely.

Joel brings to Research Director position a wealth of research experience and a passion for scholarship and resident education and development. Dr. Fish is an innovative and collaborative researcher with a wealth of leadership experience. In the expanded role of Research Director, Joel will help our Division fulfill its' research related goals and priorities and will help reshape the future of plastic and reconstructive surgery research at the University of Toronto.

### Message from the new Program Director

Dear Colleagues:

It is with great excitement that I have taken on the role of Program Director for the Division of Plastic Surgery. Educating our residents is one of the primary and most important goals of the Division of Plastic Surgery and I look forward to working with all of our residents both now and in the future. I am fortunate to be working alongside Dr. Dimitri Anastakis as the Chair of our Division and Dr. Joel Fish, who was recently appointed as the Research Director.



A great deal of thanks must go to Dr. Ron Levine, who has been the Program Director for over

12 years (this dates back to when I was a resident, sorry Ron!) Dr. Levine has been extremely generous with his time and advice during this transition period. The entire division looks forward to thanking Dr. Levine more formally at a dinner and roast on November 29. We hope to see all of you there.

I look forward to providing regular updates as to the progress of our training program at the University of Toronto.

Yours Sincerely,

Dr. Mitchell Brown  
Program Director

### Message from the new Research Director



Research in the Division of Plastic Surgery is what attracted me to this program as a resident.

We have a rich history of research in our division that makes our plastic surgery program unique. My belief is that the future of academic plastic surgery will include providing expert specialized patient care that is directly linked to research initiatives. Innovation is what makes Plastic Surgery so attractive to young medical students and it is through research that innovation becomes a clinical reality. We are uniquely positioned to grow using the Surgical Scientist program, which allows us to continue training individuals in many areas of research. We are able to offer residents the opportunity to spend time in a research setting during the residency and my goal is to ensure that these 'research years' become the best years of our training program!

Our Division also have an incredibly diverse group of faculty with research training in epidemiology, surgical education, ischemia research, craniofacial biomechanics/analysis, wound healing, medical informatics, burn research and numerous clinical projects which positively impact our specialty.

There have been numerous people that have influenced the generations of scientists that have come out of our division. I must personally thank Dr. John

Semple who has provided leadership in his capacity as Director of Research for the past ten years. I will take his lead in continuing to direct people into research and attempt to mentor them, as did John.

The main reason why I accepted this position is because of Dr. Nancy McKee's influence. Nancy McKee's personal input and encouragement before I even attended medical school influenced in my career choice. She taught me to pursue research because I enjoy it and nothing else!

I look forward to being your research director.

Yours,

Dr Joel Fish  
Research Director

### Accomplishments

Congratulations to Dr. Ronald M Zuker who has won the 2007 Art of Listening Award. He was nominated by the Moebius Syndrome Foundation and was selected from over 50 nominations of different positions. The Art of Listening Award honours a health professional who models the importance of caring, receptive professionals in the lives of individuals and families with genetic conditions.

### Nov. 29: Celebration Dinner for Drs. Levine and Semple

On Thursday, November 29th, our plastic surgery community will come together to celebrate the contributions of two important members of our Division, Ron Levine and John Semple. Ron and John have given tirelessly to our division including providing leadership for the development of our education and research programs.

Ron has provided stewardship for one of the country's largest training programs and has seen some of the brightest and best plastic surgeons graduate from our program. Under John's leadership our Division has seen almost 46% of our trainees complete either a Masters or PhD degree, placing our Division third highest in the Department of Surgery in terms of trainees completing graduate degrees.

It will be an evening of celebration, story telling and good humor that you won't want to miss. The event will

be held at -



The Oakdale Golf and Country Club  
2388 Jane Street  
Downsview, Ontario  
M3M 1A8  
Location Map: <http://www.oakdalegolf.com>  
Telephone: 416-245-3500  
Fax: 416-245-9764

Cocktails at 6:30pm and dinner at 7:30pm.

We are currently finalizing the details of the evening and a formal invitation will be sent to you shortly. The Division will cover the cost for residents and their guests. We look forward to seeing you all on Thursday November 29, 2007.

### Alumni News

Welcome back after a wonderful and hopefully relaxing summer! The Division of Plastic Surgery at the U of T has been quite busy over the summer and since our last newsletter. We have had several functions including the W.K. Lindsay Club Meeting at the CSPS, the Strategic Planning session, and we finished up the summer season with our annual Prefer Golf Tournament. The popularity of this event increases with each year. It's such a wonderful opportunity for our Plastic Surgery community to come together, socialize, and contribute to such a worthwhile cause. It was a beautiful day for golfing and it was great to see so many of our Plastic Surgery family. The only thing missing was an "Administrative Assistants" (aka Office Goddess) team! What an awesome idea!!!

Work continues on our Alumni database. Many of you have received calls and e-mails from me in the past few months trying to update contact information. This has been a lengthy process and I offer my sincerest appreciation for all your co-operation. I am very pleased to announce that this database has now grown to almost 500 people and includes Graduates, Faculty, Residents, Fellows, Students, Researchers, and Clinical Observers.

As we work towards further strengthening our connections with Alumni, I thought it would be interesting to hear from those in our Alumni family who may be far away but still near and dear to our hearts. My first thought was of Dr. Lowell Hughes. I remember Lowell from when I first started working in the Division of Plastic Surgery at the U of T. Lowell graduated from the Plastic Surgery program in 1994. Lowell was very happy to hear from us and sent us a very nice message as well as some photos of himself and his family.



*Greetings to the U of T Faculty and past colleagues.*



*I returned to Anguilla immediately in 1994 and started my practice. Initially, I did quite a bit of traveling through the islands doing clinics and surgery. The traveling is now less as my practice & family in Anguilla have grown. In 2001 we opened the Hughes Medical Centre, a private medical and surgi-*

*cal centre. Although my great love is for reconstructive work, most of the cases are cosmetic. Very little trauma encountered here relative to Toronto!*



*A few colleagues have visited us in Anguilla and I hope to entice even more to come down. A perfect opportunity may be for the annual Caribbean Cosmetic Surgery meeting which we hope to host in Anguilla in November 2008.*

Regards to all  
Lowell Hughes



**If there is someone in particular you would like me to follow-up with and feature in an up-coming column, please let me know and I would be happy to do so.**

Sincerely,  
Sandy Davies  
Alumni Coordinator  
Division of Plastic Surgery  
University of Toronto

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Please turn over to the next page for some great pictures from the CSPS Conference at Banff



CSPS Conference, Banff 2007 - in pictures



*47 alumni and a great gathering at the W.K Lindsay Club and Chicken Toss football game made the Banff meeting a phenomenal success*

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