I would like to begin this letter with a note of appreciation.

Here in the Faculty of Health Sciences everyone is working very hard, and I would like to recognize and thank faculty and staff members for your creativity and effort. Together, this team works well to enhance the student experience and to continue to foster innovation at all levels.

In keeping with the Faculty of Health Sciences’ commitment to produce the leaders of tomorrow, the first half of 2013 saw wonderful achievements within our classrooms, laboratories and the community. In this newsletter, I am pleased to update you with a sampling of our most important accomplishments.

The School of Nursing hosted an initiative this year, creating bridges with the Hamilton community. A three-day think tank explored current community engagement activities; priority issues in Hamilton neighbourhoods; and guiding principles for working together on Neighbourhood Action Plans.

Construction of the Halton McMaster Family Health Centre in Burlington began in March. The centre will move to the new building, shared by Joseph Brant Hospital and the University, early next year. Health care providers will see about 45,000 visits per year and care for 10,000 patients.

In January, we opened a $1.3-million anatomy laboratory for students of the Waterloo Regional Campus of the Michael G. DeGroote School of Medicine and the University of Waterloo’s School of Pharmacy students, as part of further collaborations with the UW school.

I was pleased to have a Canadian midwifery pioneer Elaine Carty accept an honorary degree of science from McMaster at our Faculty’s convocation in May. The founding director of the University of British Columbia’s midwifery program is a renowned scholar who helped introduce midwifery into the Canadian health care system.

In addition, the work of our professors and researchers has led to substantial research investment in our Faculty. We have had good success with tri-council grants and received a $30-million commitment for research funds over the next decade from the Heart and Stroke Foundation.

Faculty members garnered three of the 11 large grants from the Health System Research Fund competition of the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long Term Care. This included professors Michael Boyle and Katholiki Georgiades; professor John Lavis as well as professor Jenny Ploeg and associate professor Maureen Markle-Reid of the School of Nursing.

In May, Walter Reinisch, a professor with the Medical University of Vienna, was recruited as the first holder of the Audrey Campbell Chair in Ulcerative Colitis Research. This new endowed chair was established to improve the health of people with ulcerative colitis.

As well, Cisco Canada and the University announced the creation of two positions. The Professorship in Integrated Health Biosystems and a Research Chair in Bioinformatics are part of a plan to establish a university-wide research cloud computing environment and infrastructure.

The Faculty was also awarded two Canada Research Chairs: Maureen Markle-Reid is our first Canada Research Chair in Aging, Chronic Disease and Health Promotion Interventions and Nathan Magarvey is the Canada Research Chair in Natural Product Drug Discovery.

The Canadian Institutes of Health Research also awarded the Chair in Gender, Work and Health — Muscle and Tone to Joy MacDermid, assistant dean and professor of the School of Rehabilitation Science.

I want to recognize the many hours of commitment that staff involved in McMaster’s Mosaic project are devoting to ensure the University operates in an efficient and effective manner. The enterprise resource planning system, along with the preparation for the University’s new budget model, will bring important changes to McMaster’s operations.

I have only briefly touched upon the achievements of some of our faculty and staff in the last few months. This newsletter shares much more of their successes. Remember, the most up-to-date news is available on our website at http://fhs.mcmaster.ca.
The following people have been appointed or reappointed to senior roles in the Faculty of Health Sciences:

Sonia Anand, has been appointed as director of the Chan Chlani Research Centre. The professor of medicine and clinical epidemiology and biostatistics holds the Eli Lilly Canada-May Cohen Chair in Women’s Health and the Heart and Stroke Foundation/Michael G. DeGroote Chair in Population Health Research.

Jonathan Bramson has been appointed as director of the McMaster Immunology Research Centre. The professor of pathology and molecular medicine holds the John Bienenstock Chair in Molecular Medicine.

Jan Willem Gorter has been appointed director of the CanChild Centre for Childhood Disability Research. An associate professor in pediatrics and an associate member of the School of Rehabilitation Science, Gorter is also the Scotiabank Chair in Child Health Research.

Jennifer McKinnell has been named director of the Health Sciences Library. The former head of public services and coordinator of undergraduate liaison support joined McMaster’s Health Sciences Library in 2000 as an education liaison librarian.

Peter Margetts has been re-appointed as director of the MD/PhD program of the Faculty of Health Sciences. An associate professor in the nephrology division in the Department of Medicine, Margets has been director since 2008.

Kevin Sulewski has been appointed chief operating officer of the Faculty of Health Sciences. Sulewski has been with the Faculty since 1991 and has held various leadership roles, including his most recent position as executive director of clinical services.

Mohit Bhandari, professor of surgery, has been recognized with an award of outstanding merit by the American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery Inc., the American Society of Plastic Surgeons and the American Academy of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery. He also received the Canadian Orthopaedic Association's Award of Merit for outstanding service.

Mick Bhatia, professor of biochemistry and biomedical sciences and scientific director and senior scientist of the Stem Cell and Cancer Research Institute, found the antipsychotic drug, thioridazine, kills cancer stem cells responsible for initiating leukemia without harming normal stem cells. The Canadian Cancer Society selected the discovery as one of the top 10 significant cancer research breakthroughs of 2012.

Gina Browne, professor of nursing and clinical epidemiology and biostatistics, has been honoured with the 2013 Canadian Foundation for Healthcare Improvement (CFHI) Excellence through Evidence Award. The award recognizes a health services leader who has implemented evidence-informed innovations in care and service delivery.

Hertz Gerstein, professor of medicine and clinical epidemiology and biostatistics, received the Canadian Diabetes Association’s 2012 Lifetime Achievement Award. The award is given to a prominent Canadian physician or medical scientist who is a leader in diabetes research and has made long-standing contributions to the Canadian diabetes community.

Amanda MacLennan, an assistant clinical professor of family medicine, received the Elizabeth J. Latimer Prize in Palliative Care. The award is named in honour of Canadian pioneering palliative care physician and educator Elizabeth Latimer, a professor emeritus of McMaster’s Department of Family Medicine who died last year.

Nathan Magarvey, assistant professor in biochemistry and biomedical sciences, has been named McMaster’s Innovator of the Year. His most recent research discovered gold resistant bacterium can turn toxic water-soluble gold into a solid gold form, the first demonstration that gold resistant microbe secretes a metabolite that can protect against toxic gold. His projects have led to technologies and patent applications and connections with industry, including mining companies who are further validating the use of his discovery on the level of gold in soil samples.

Akbar Panju, professor of medicine and chief of medicine for Hamilton Health Sciences, was the recipient of the 2012 Hamilton Academy of Medicine’s Distinguished Service Award. The award recognizes outstanding service to the community both as a physician and a public citizen.

Jeff Pernica, assistant professor of pediatrics, and his research team has been selected as Grand Challenges Canada Stars in Global Health. The prize funds a clinical trial at a Botswana hospital that will use the newest molecular methods to identify which children have diarrhea caused by bacterial and parasitic intestinal infections or viruses. It is expected to identify patients who can benefit from treatment much sooner.

David Price, professor and chair of family medicine, is the recipient of the Hamilton Academy of Medicine’s Distinguished Service Award for outstanding service to the community.

Scott Wooder, assistant clinical professor with family medicine, is the new president of the Ontario Medical Association. He has also been practising family medicine in Hamilton for more than 27 years.

Gerry Wright, professor of biochemistry and biomedical sciences and director of the Michael G. DeGroote Institute for Infectious Disease Research, has been elected to the fellowship of the American Academy of Microbiology. The Academy recognizes excellence, originality and creativity in the microbiological sciences.

Salim Yusuf, professor of medicine and scientific director of the Population Health Research Institute and Hamilton Health Sciences, is to become president of the World Heart Federation in January, 2015. The federation is recognized by the World Health Organization as its leading non-government organization (NGO) partner in cardiovascular disease prevention.
New Canada Research Chairs:

Gérard Simon, a professor emeritus in pathology and molecular medicine, who spearheaded the Faculty of Health Sciences’ electron microscopy laboratories and became chairman of anatomical pathology for the laboratory medicine program, died in January at 82.

He organized the first electron microscopy laboratory for the pathology department at the University of Geneva, Switzerland. He came to Canada in 1967 and worked at the Banting Institute in Toronto, eventually heading the Electron Microscopy Department.

In 1979, he directed the McMaster University Faculty of Health Science’s electron microscopy laboratories and became chairman of Anatomical Pathology for the laboratory medicine program in Hamilton. He was a founding member of and major contributor to the Microscopical Society of Canada.

Clyde Hertzman, MD ’79, who was an expert in early learning, died suddenly at age 59 in February.

He was recently awarded the Order of Canada for the central role he played in creating a framework linking population health to human development, and emphasizing the special role of early childhood development as a determinant of health. He had three degrees and his residency in community medicine from McMaster.

“He is wonderful ability to energize and excite so many people in different walks of life was electric,” said Jean Clinton, McMaster associate professor of psychiatry and a colleague of Hertzman.

He was director of the Human Early Learning Partnership at the University of British Columbia, and a professor at UBC’s School of Population and Public Health which he joined in 1985.

Gérard Simon

Clyde Hertzman
Other awards this spring went to:

Louise Sims, adjunct assistant clinical professor of family medicine, Waterloo Teaching Award.

Kim Hewitt, assistant clinical professor of the School of Rehabilitation Science, occupational therapy preceptor of the year award

Michael Greenspan, assistant clinical professor of urology, John C. Sibley Award for 2013. The award, named for a former associate dean of the Faculty, recognizes part-time faculty’s outstanding contributions to the education of health professionals.

These excellent achievements are significant contributing factors to our national and international reputation as a leader for research and education. Congratulations to all of you.

Sincerely,

John G. Kelton, MD
Dean and Vice-President

McMaster University
HEALTH SCIENCES

TOGETHER, ADVANCING HEALTH THROUGH LEARNING AND DISCOVERY