40 years later

A reflection of McMaster’s medical pioneering

First male midwife graduates

Funds advance bone health research
This is the ruby anniversary for the first graduates – the Class of ’72 – of the Michael G. DeGroote School of Medicine. In the past 40 years many of these pioneers have gone on to have profound impact on the health care of their own communities, on the country and the world.

For that, we thank our founders who established a revolutionary medical program introducing the idea of problem-based learning along with small group, self-directed learning. It has influenced health care education around the world.

The feature spread of this issue of Network highlights the journey of the inaugural graduating class of 1972. That small class was the seed for what has become an internationally renowned medical school, now with campuses in Hamilton, Waterloo and Niagara, which this year will graduate more than 200 physicians.

This issue of Network also focuses on the ongoing achievements of our School of Nursing and School of Rehabilitation Science, as well as our many education and research programs.

The Faculty of Health Sciences, initially made up of the School of Nursing and the School of Medicine, has seen a tremendous expansion. We have the School of Rehabilitation Science, a midwifery program, a physician assistant program, a Bachelor of Health Sciences program, various post-professional diploma programs and graduate studies. The newest is our master’s program in health sciences education which began this fall.

The Faculty is often recognized for its excellence. This summer, McMaster was one of only three Canadian universities ranked in the top 50 world universities in clinical medicine and pharmacy in the annual Academic Ranking of World Universities by Shanghai Jiao Tong University, and one of four Canadian universities in the top 100 world universities overall.

In July, I had the pleasure of welcoming federal Health Minister Leona Aglukkaq to campus when she announced national research awards to improve Canadians’ health, including $2.5 million for the work of School of Rehabilitation Science professor Joy MacDermid.

In September we celebrated the official opening of the Niagara Regional Campus of the Michael G. DeGroote School of Medicine. This campus is based in the new Cairns Family Health and Bioscience Research Complex on the Brock University in St. Catharines. We are growing wonderful partnerships in the region.

But it is also important to remember that our excellence comes from our roots. A few months ago, the nursing school celebrated one of its founding faculty members, Henrietta Alderson, who joined the nursing school in 1947 and retired in 1975. Now the main hall of the school in the Health Science Centre has a plaque honouring Alderson and a gallery of pictures of all the graduates since its first class of 1946. Alumni are invited to return to view their class pictures at any time.

Within these pages, we also look back and commemorate the individuals who have brought distinction and recognition to McMaster and the Faculty as our founders paved the way by recruiting remarkable researchers and educators. This year’s Community of Distinction inductees, Gerhard Gerber, John Sellors and Frank Graham are representative of the leaders who put McMaster on the map.

John G. Kelton, MD
Dean and Vice-President
Faculty of Health Sciences
McMaster graduates first male midwife

Wearing red shoes on graduation day, Otis Kryzanauskas carried on the tradition of the University’s graduates of the Bachelor of Health Sciences (Midwifery) program.

At 25, he is the first man to graduate from a Canadian midwifery program.

Midwifery has been a part of his life. His mother is a midwife and his girlfriend Melissa is a fourth year midwifery student at McMaster. Kryzanauskas’ interest in the human body and biology made midwifery the right fit for him. He also has a Bachelor of Science degree with a major in physiology from the University of Western Ontario.

As a man in the profession, he says he has experienced some discrimination, sometimes from pregnant women’s partners. But, he says, it’s an issue resolved early, many months before the birth event.

“I think people have preferences for their health care,” he said. “I try not to take it personally.”

However, he believes more men should consider becoming a midwife.

Since 2005, the number of registered midwives has doubled in Canada and there are still women who want midwifery services but do not have access, reports the Canadian Association of Midwives. There are now more than 1,000 registered midwives across the country.

Lifelong patient gives back as a nurse

Michael Rosati grew up with his summers in the hospital, having 25 facial reconstruction surgeries. He is now dedicating himself to taking care of others as a nurse.

The Mohawk College student was one of 45 men among 445 students who graduated from the McMaster Mohawk Conestoga Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BScN) program in June.

The 22-year-old was born with Crouzon syndrome, a rare genetic disorder characterized by the premature fusion of certain skull bones, which prevents the skull from growing normally and affects the shape of the head and face. Symptoms are very pronounced features, especially in the face, including: low-set ears; the appearance of a short and broad head; and a compressed nasal passage. Hearing loss, vision and dental problems are also common.

Rosati’s surgeries were performed at The Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto. The Stoney Creek native said he wanted to become a nurse because of the great care he has received and since his mother has been a nurse for 30 years.

“I’m a product of a hospital and this is my way of giving back,” Rosati said. “To me, I’ve grown up having surgeries so it’s the norm. The hospital is a temporary home. I’ve grown up there.”

Rosati, who has a full-time job in the Clinical Neurosciences Unit of the Hamilton General Hospital, said he doesn’t let the social stigma around his appearance affect him.

“I’m used to it. I could take it down a positive road or a negative road. I choose the positive side of life because it has been challenging, but I am just grateful for being healthy and happy,” he said. “I look at myself in the mirror and I say ‘This is who I am and I’m happy with it.’”
The Chanchlani Research Centre, in the Michael G. DeGroote Centre for Learning and Discovery, is designed to investigate health differences by ethnicity, including genetic factors.

The new centre is dedicated to understanding the genetic and environmental causes of common diseases among diverse cultural groups, women and the socially disadvantaged while providing innovative training to the next generation of health researchers.

“As health challenges are increasingly understood in a global context, focus on ethnic and local issues promises to bring benefit not only to those specific communities, but to humanity at large,” said University President Patrick Deane at the grand opening in March.

The centre’s director is McMaster professor and research scientist Sonia Anand, a Canadian leader in the research of genetic and environmental causes of vascular disease.

Recently, Anand led a study, published in the medical journal Public Library of Science ONE, which found South Asians are more likely to be adding dangerous fat to their internal organs, like the liver, which can lead to diabetes and coronary artery disease.

Anand is also leading the START (SouTh Asian biRth cohort) study, which is studying two birth cohorts of South Asians in Southern Ontario and another in urban and rural India, to find out why central obesity and diabetes are so prevalent among the South Asian population.

She received international attention with an earlier study, which showed a diet high in fruits and vegetables appears to lessen the genetic risk of heart disease. This led to the SAHARA (South Asian HeArt Risk Assessment) study, which intends to find out if knowing about this gene motivates individuals at risk of a heart attack to change their habits and DIGEST (Diet Intervention and GEnetic Study).

The Chanchlani Research Centre is funded with a $1-million donation from Vasu Chanchlani, an entrepreneur, philanthropist and founding member of the Canada India Foundation, and his wife, Jaya, a family physician in Brampton for more than 20 years.

Chanchlani has said the goal of the centre is to “leverage the resources, passion and influence of people of South Asian origin by engaging them in a serious social cause that is afflict[ing] people of South Asian origin around the world.”

The couple has also given an additional $250,000 to fund an award for an international scholar in the field.

The Chanchlani centre works closely with other McMaster scientists working to improve South Asian health, such as Salim Yusuf, director of the Population Health Research Institute (PHRI) and professor of medicine.

The PHRI is involved with several studies involving South Asians, such as the INTERSTROKE study examining how stroke is managed, its risk factors and outcomes as well as the PURE study looking at the health influences of societal changes and urbanization. The institute has also worked on building research capacity within South Asia and with the government to reduce the burden of heart disease and stroke.
Hay fever, eczema, asthma and other allergies are plaguing more and more Canadians. But in March, the battle against these allergies and immune disease received a $36.5 million boost from the federal government.

Gary Goodyear, Minister of State for Science and Technology announced the renewed federal funding for the AllerGen Network of Centres of Excellence over the next seven years. The network, headquartered at McMaster University, includes almost 200 researchers from 23 universities and organizations.

“These diseases cause a lot of suffering and create an immense economic burden,” Goodyear said. “AllerGen NCE has already had a very positive impact on Canada’s ability to understand and prevent these illnesses and to improve care for patients.”

The funding allows researchers to pin down underlying causes, develop new treatments and prevention methods for people living with allergies, asthma and anaphylaxis.

Judah Denburg, scientific director and chief executive officer of AllerGen and professor of medicine for the Michael G. DeGroote School of Medicine, said his team will work to decrease the burden of allergic and immune disease on Canadian’s productivity and economic growth and lead major Canadian innovation and commercialization.

“We will be recognized globally,” he said.

AllerGen was initially funded through the federal Network of Centres of Excellence (NCE) program in 2004.
Cancer-killing drug

McMaster University scientists have discovered a human-ready drug that transforms human cancer stem cells into non-cancerous ones. Mick Bhatia, scientific director of McMaster’s Stem Cell and Cancer Research Institute, says thioridazine kills human cancer stem cells while avoiding the side effects of conventional cancer treatments. The next step is to test thioridazine in clinical trials, focusing on patients with acute myeloid leukemia whose disease has relapsed after chemotherapy. The research was published in the journal CELL. The University has also partnered with Actium Research Inc. to commercialize Bhatia and his team’s results.

Mick Bhatia and Jennifer Russell talk while running an assay with the Cell Growth and Discovery Workcell.

Aspirin breakthrough

Aspirin has additional health benefits, says a study by researchers, including Greg Steinberg, an associate professor of medicine and the Canada Research Chair in Metabolism, Obesity and Type 2 diabetes. It found salicylate, the active ingredient in aspirin, increases the activity of the protein AMPK (AMP-activated protein kinase), a key player in regulating cell growth and metabolism. When salicylate was tested on mice, it was discovered it increased fat burning and reduced liver fat in obese mice. The study’s results were published in the journal Science.

Time to intervene

A blood test, Troponin T (a protein marker of heart injury) can now identify patients at high risk of dying in the first month after non-cardiac surgery. P.J. Devereaux, associate professor of medicine and clinical epidemiology and biostatistics, says results demonstrate that most patients did not die until after an average of six or more days after their Troponin T blood test was identified as elevated, so there may be time to intervene. The study, published in the Journal of the American Medical Association, has the potential to change how patients are monitored after surgery.

Get kids moving

Steer children under two away from television, computer and electronic games. Brian Timmons, assistant professor of pediatrics, was one of two lead researchers who developed the first Canadian Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines, which stress the need for children under five to remain active. Children one to four years old should accumulate at least 180 minutes of physical activity per day, the guidelines recommend. By five, children should get at least 60 minutes of activity.

Better care

Proactive, targeted nurse-led care with a focus on preventive patient self-management for people with chronic disease are more effective or equally effective than the usual model of care, says a report by School of Nursing and Department of Clinical Epidemiology and Biostatistics professor Gina Browne. Better Care: An Analysis of Nursing and Healthcare System Outcomes was released at Vancouver’s 2012 Canadian Nurses Association’s Biennial Convention. Nurse-led health promotion interventions also significantly improve quality of life for older home care clients, says associate professor of nursing Maureen Markle-Reid’s research appearing in the Journal of Evaluation in Clinical Practice.

Insulin myth

Long-term insulin use is not risky for those with diabetes or pre-diabetes, says a study published by McMaster researchers in the New England Journal of Medicine. Hertzel Gerstein, professor of medicine and principal investigator, says using insulin long-term does not cause heart disease, despite years of debate over the issue. It was also found people with pre-diabetes who received daily basal insulin injections with insulin glargine had a 28 per cent lower chance of developing Type 2 diabetes, even after the injections stopped.

Groundbreaking trial

Patient-specific decisions for bypass surgery may be possible. André Lamy, an associate professor of surgery, along with researchers from the Population Health Research Institute of Hamilton Health Sciences and McMaster University, found heart bypass surgery done with a heart-lung machine (on-pump) and without it (off-pump) could be done safely. Lamy said his goal is to persuade surgeons to individualize the technique. Data from the world’s largest randomized trial appeared in the New England Journal of Medicine.
Step into Hartley Jafine's Theatre for Development Class and you get to play for three hours.

On any given day, the Bachelor of Health Sciences (B.H.Sc.) instructor and facilitator will come to class with toys, clothes, a cane, a faux fur hat and a lab coat and ask students to assume a personality using the objects they select.

Student Melissa XP Koh said she was initially skeptical of the relevancy of Jafine's class since it was an arts-based course, offered as an option in the B.H.Sc. program. “Hartley showed me though that arts-based research and skills often goes hand-in-hand with science,” said the 20-year-old.

McMaster students cited in The Lancet

Bachelor of Health Sciences students got a nod in the prestigious medical journal The Lancet. A 2011 report, Student Voices 2, written by fourth-year students in the global health governance course, was cited in the July 28, 2012 issue of the journal. The students conducted evidence-informed analyses of 13 proposals for global health governance reform. The report was the first-ever comprehensive assessment of a broad range of potential global health governance reforms. Del Harnish, assistant dean of the B.H.Sc. program, said the report “represents a particularly good example of the integration of research and teaching and involvement of McMaster students in authentic learning on community and global issues.”

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Learning and play mix in the classroom

“And, I learned the importance of having role play in my life.” Jafine won the 2011-2012 McMaster Students Union’s Excellence in Teaching Award.

In his class capped at 15 students, Jafine teaches students to use creativity through scene work and drama exercises, designed to develop transferable skills, such as communication and collaboration.

“Theatre skills are life skills,” he said. “People think play is frivolous, but it can be very useful and in the class, we play, and through the play, the learning happens.”

For this fall, Jafine and assistant professor of clinical epidemiology and biostatistics Steven Hoffman developed extra-curricular workshops, which are a pilot project for the students. The workshops will touch on presentation skills and communicating with others in different fields.

Cancer patients follow their doctor into her lab

Diagnosed two years ago with a brain tumour, Moses Cook was inspired at seeing the scientific work of his surgeon, Sheila Singh, when he got behind-the-scenes at McMaster University’s Stem Cell and Cancer Research Institute. “It’s incredible what they are doing in the lab,” said the 16-year-old, who has undergone two surgeries and radiation treatment. “It’s science fiction.”

The tour of the research labs was organized in July for about 20 parents and children of the b.r.a.i.n.child support group of the McMaster Children’s Hospital. The group is for families caring for a child with a brain tumour.

Singh is an associate professor of surgery, a principal investigator at the Stem Cell and Cancer Research Institute and a pediatric neurosurgeon for McMaster Children’s Hospital. She led the tour with her lab team. Cook, who has wanted to be a neurosurgeon since he was 10 years old, had donated tissue samples from his tumour to be studied by Singh’s lab.

Her research is unique in that she uses actual human brain tumour stem cells rather than mouse models or cell lines grown in culture. The lab’s work is driven by patient samples. “We know at the end of the day there’s accountability to the public and to patients and we want to deliver,” Singh said. “We want to find a cure, a treatment.”
Research award pushes ahead bone health research

Federal Minister of Health Leona Aglukkaq visited the McMaster campus to announce three national awards for research to improve Canadians’ bone health, including an award of $2.5 million for investigations by a McMaster University rehabilitation science professor.

Joy MacDermid, a professor and assistant dean of McMaster’s School of Rehabilitation Science, along with researchers at the University of Toronto and Simon Fraser University, received a total of $7 million from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research.

“Our government is committed to helping Canadians lead healthy, active lifestyles,” Aglukkaq said. “I am pleased that we are supporting research to help people maintain strong bones, providing the foundation for healthy lives.”

MacDermid’s research team is using the funds to examine the extent to which a bone must be displaced before it requires surgery, conduct studies on how to best screen for fracture risks and how to use these screening methods in everyday practice.

Broken wrists are quite a common injury, MacDermid said, adding that it’s a mistake not to take the injury seriously as some people end up with chronic pain or arthritis.

“We do not want to use costly investigations or treatment when they are not needed; nor do we want to miss potential problems like chronic pain, arthritis or osteoporosis that is best managed in the early stages, when treatment is easiest and most effective.”

Health minister tours Institute for Infectious Disease Research

On campus for an announcement in July, federal Minister of Health Leona Aglukkaq took the opportunity to tour the Michael G. DeGroote Institute for Infectious Disease Research in the Michael G. DeGroote Centre for Learning and Discovery.

Led by the institute’s scientific director Gerry Wright, the tour visited the Centre for Microbial Chemical Biology, where clinicians and scientists work on novel approaches to speed the discovery of new antibiotics.

“The centre is a gem,” Wright said, “a focal point of transdisciplinary research that links pressing medical and biological questions with advanced chemical technology. This will lead to new drugs, a clearer understanding of fundamental biology, the development of new analytical techniques and technology and the training of researchers.”

On the tour, Wright discussed the institute’s opportunities, including commercial potential in the area of drug discovery, antimicrobial resistance, the chemical biology of pathogens and diagnostics research.

“The minister’s visit allowed us to showcase our unique and diverse strengths in antibiotic resistance research,” Wright said. “Maintaining our scientific excellence and infrastructure in the face of research funding constraints is one of our most difficult challenges; yet, it is encouraging that there is political interest in curbing antibiotic resistance, ranked as one of the three greatest risks to human health.”
McMaster gives birth to a medical school

John Evans was just 35 when he was hired in 1965 to create a new medical school at McMaster University. He gathered a small group that had learned together at the University of Toronto. All physicians frustrated with traditional medical education and its tendency to neglect important community problems.

Together they shaped a radically different medical school program based on small group, problem-based learning taken over three years. They felt the need was great for medical graduates who could tackle unresolved questions of health care with new ideas.

The first class began in 1969, graduating in 1972.

The school has become renowned globally for its innovative approach, as well as being consistently one of the top Canadian medical schools for world-class research.

Named in tribute to its benefactor, the Michael G. DeGroote School of Medicine has grown to have more than 600 undergraduate students and 850 residents. Campuses include the Waterloo Regional Campus in Kitchener and the Niagara Regional Campus in St. Catharines.

Here is a summary of the history of those founders and the members of the first class.

**Dean**

John Evans, a young Toronto physician and a Rhodes Scholar was recruited in 1965 as the founding dean. In him, McMaster found a super salesman with refreshing ideas. Under Evans’ leadership, grew an innovative medical program emphasizing self-directed learning. The “problem-based learning” curriculum Evans pioneered has travelled across the globe. He became University of Toronto’s president in 1972 and went on to hold posts, including the founding director of the World Bank’s Population, Health and Nutrition Department and chair of Allelix Inc., one of Canada’s first biotechnology companies.

**Assistant Dean**

Bill Walsh, a leading internist in Hamilton and former chief of medicine at the Hamilton Civic Hospitals, was appointed assistant dean in 1965 and remained until his retirement in 1990. His reputation within the medical community helped the school gain acceptance among Hamilton’s medical professionals and he played a key role in developing the school’s curriculum. He chaired McMaster’s first admissions committee and went on to become the associate dean of education. He was also the president of the Hamilton Academy of Medicine and president of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario. He lives in Dundas.

**Associate Dean**

Bill Spaulding, an internist and behavioural scientist began as associate dean in the fall of 1965, a position he held until 1970. He was pivotal in shaping the self-directed, problem-based approach. As chairman of the education committee, he led intense discussions on new methods of learning. When he retired in 1987, he published the book *Revitalizing Medical Education McMaster Medical School The Early Years 1965-1974*. He died in 1993.

**Anatomy department chair**

James Anderson, an anatomist was recruited in 1966. He devised a unique multimedia, multi-disciplinary lab that used pre-dissected specimens, models, medical images and demonstrations. The anatomy lab has since been a model for other medical schools. He also began an alternative high school. Anderson was honoured as Hamilton’s Citizen of the Year in 1974. He died in 1995.

**Pathology department chair**

Fraser Mustard, a hematologist, was recruited in 1966 to chair the pathology department. At the time, he was researching the role that blood platelets play in cardiovascular disease. It remained his research focus as he recruited international scientists to help establish McMaster as a major global centre for thrombosis research. From 1972 to 1982, he was dean and vice-president of the Faculty and was also responsible for the School of Nursing. In 1982, he founded the Canadian Institute for Advanced Research and in 1999, he co-authored the *Early Years Study* for the Ontario government and became a strong advocate for early childhood education. Mustard was a Companion of the Order of Canada. He died in 2011.
Medical class of ‘72:

Ralph Bloch, after his residency and a fellowship in Los Angeles, joined McMaster’s Department of Medicine in 1976. He practiced rehabilitation medicine and was active in education and research until 1991, when he was appointed director of the Institute for Medical Education at the University of Bern in Switzerland. Following his retirement in 2004, he returned to live in Dundas and accepted a part-time appointment with the Department of Clinical Epidemiology and Biostatistics at McMaster.

John Cunnington completed an anesthesia internship at the University of Toronto and two years of diving research at the University of Pennsylvania. He later trained in internal medicine and respirology at Dalhousie University and McMaster. For 10 years, he had a private practice in medicine and respirology and was staff at Oakville-Trafalgar Memorial Hospital. He also spent a year working in Bancroft and Fort Frances. He is the inaugural assistant dean for the Physician Assistant Education Program.

Russell Emerson finished his residency in family practice at McMaster before he entered into a private practice in Woodstock, Ont. with Robert Jones in 1974. In 1992, he moved to Gastonia, N.C. where he continues to practice with CaroMont Medical Group, a hospital-owned network. He was medical director of the network from 1995 to 2010.

Stephen Foster went on to a general surgery residency at the University of Toronto. In 1978, he became the sole surgeon for a rural hospital in Angola. In partnership with McMaster University’s Centre for International Health, he developed a post-graduate training program for medical graduates in Lubango, Angola, where he has also created a mini referral tertiary care unit. Foster is now developing training for health professionals, without medical school training, to perform surgery. He is an associate clinical professor of surgery at McMaster University and director of The Evangelical Medical Center of Lubango.

Jack Franaszek completed his residency in emergency medicine at the University of Chicago. He taught at the University of Chicago and Brown University before becoming an attending staff physician at Adventist Hinsdale Hospital in Chicago. At the same time, he maintained an academic affiliation at the University of Chicago. He is past president of the American College of Emergency Physicians and a physician for the Holland America Line. He continues to practice emergency medicine and is currently the medical director of emergency services for Northwestern Lake Forest Hospital and Northwestern Grayslake Emergency Centre.

Richard Haber completed a pediatric residency at The Montreal Children’s Hospital at McGill University. He was hired on staff as an attending physician, while he also juggled a community pediatric practice. Haber became an associate professor of pediatrics at McGill University and for the last 12 years, he has been the director of the Pediatric Consultation Centre at the children’s hospital. He was appointed co-ordinator
of the family medicine residence trainees at the hospital by the Department of Family Medicine at McGill University in 2010.

Sheila Mason (née Jemaiga) worked as an emergency room physician at several Hamilton hospitals. She later switched to student health services at Mohawk College and at McMaster, where she spent 14 years before retiring in 2005. Mason has two children: a daughter who is a physician in Ottawa and a son who is a mechanical engineer in Cambridge, Ont. Mason now spends her time with her two grandchildren.

Robert Jones completed his family practice residency at McMaster and entered private practice in Woodstock with Russ Emerson from 1974 to 1978. He later moved to Lawton, Okla. and practised privately until 2000. He also holds a master’s in medical management from Carnegie Mellon University. He now has an active practice in geriatrics and family medicine with the Memorial Medical Group in Lawton. Jones also serves as medical director of McMahon-Tomlinson Nursing Centre, Montevista Rehabilitation and Skilled Care and the Comanche County Memorial Hospital’s nursing transition unit.

Peter Lapsley joined the Caledonia Medical Centre where he practised as a family physician for 37 years. At the same time, he was involved with a weekly clinic at the Six Nations Native reserve in Ontario. He found family practice extremely rewarding as he was able to meet different people, families and gain a knowledge of different cultures. He retired in June 2010.

Arthur Leader worked as a research management consultant at the World Health Organization in Geneva. He completed his training in obstetrics, gynaecology and infertility in Europe and Canada. Leader co-founded academic In Vitro Fertilization (IVF) programs in Calgary and Ottawa. His research on infertility therapy is both nationally and internationally recognized. In 2006, he co-founded the Ottawa Fertility Centre.

Philip Maurice finished an internal medicine internship as well as his residency at McMaster. In 1975, he went on to a neurology residency at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center in Torrance, Calif. He began a private practice in 1978 in neurology and opened two offices in Thousand Oaks and Camarillo, Calif. Maurice has three daughters and three grandchildren. An avid reader, he also enjoys tending to his cactus and rose garden in his home in Thousand Oaks.

Werner Meier did his internship in anesthesiology at St. Joseph’s Healthcare Hamilton and pursued an anesthesiology residency at the Oregon Health and Science University, with the last part of his residency completed at the University of Otago in New Zealand. From 1977 to 2005, he worked at a community hospital in Gresham, Oregon where he had various responsibilities, such as department chair of anesthesia, teaching residents and supervising nurse anesthetists. In 2005, he joined the Physicians’ Hospital in Portland, Oregon and since 2007, he has practised at the Olympic Medical Center in Port Angeles, Wash.
Peter Milder finished his residency in family practice at McMaster before beginning a 20-year practice in Peterborough. He later moved to Alexandria, La. where he continued in family practice under the auspices of Christus Health. He is chairman of the Department of Medicine at Christus St. Frances Cabrini Hospital and board chairman for the Christus Provider Network.

Andrew Padmos trained in medicine and hematology in Calgary, Alta. before moving to Saudi Arabia’s King Faisal Specialist Hospital and Research Centre in 1978 where he introduced a transplant program and served as head of oncology. He returned in 1993 and became chief executive officer (CEO) of the Kingston Regional Cancer Centre and head of oncology at Queen’s University, Kingston General Hospital and Hotel Dieu Hospital. He then became commissioner of Cancer Care Nova Scotia, head of the Cancer Care Program at the QEII Health Sciences Centre, associate dean for cancer programs in the faculty of medicine at Dalhousie University and vice-president, research, academic affairs and quality for Capital District Health Authority. He became the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada’s CEO in 2006.

Stan Rodier did his internship at McGill University, his residency in dermatology at New York University and his fellowship at the University of Wisconsin in micrographic and skin cancer surgery. He started a private practice in San Diego, Calif. and is now semi-retired.

Robert Ross practised clinical care pulmonary medicine in Houston, Texas for about 25 years. He consults in medical law cases and has published several articles and a cardiopulmonary exercise testing interpretation software program. Ross also taught at the Baylor College of Medicine. He started his own computer software company in the late ‘70s. He is semi-retired and remains a clinical associate professor of medicine at Baylor.

John Sellors had a family practice in Stoney Creek, Ont. for 25 years where he mentored more than 25 family medicine residents. He went on to enhance health care in developing countries, notably in the area of cervical cancer prevention. He worked with the World Health Organization and the Seattle-based PATH with funds from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Sellors also taught in family medicine at McMaster from 1979 to 2011. He passed away on Dec. 31, 2011 at the age of 65.

David Storey completed an internship in Calgary and became an emergency room doctor in Kelowna, B.C. before moving to the Yukon to start a general practice. Following that, he worked as a registrar in anaesthesia and as a general practice anaesthetist in New Zealand, before finishing a surgical residency in Calgary. Since 1986, he has maintained a general surgery practice in the Yukon. He lives with his family on a farm on the Yukon River.

Silvia von Hanna (née Szachniewicz) completed an internship at Women’s College Hospital in Toronto before becoming a general practitioner in Toronto, Ont. In 1976, she became a general practitioner psychotherapist and worked in Toronto for 20 years, before moving her practice to Richmond Hill and then to Hamilton in 1999. She continues to practise in the city.
There was applause at the open house of the Niagara Regional Campus of the Michael G. DeGroote School of Medicine in September as visitors admired the new state-of-the-art facility in the Cairns Family Health and Bioscience Research Complex of Brock University.

The tours were part of the official opening of the new building on the St. Catharines campus that will be home for Brock's science and health science research. The medical school campus, with more than $1 million in installed technology, is in the middle of the first floor of the large building.

“This campus is built for collaboration both across McMaster's medical education network and with local partners including Brock University,” said Karl Stobbe, regional assistant dean for the Niagara campus. “The natural light and open design, combined with state-of-the-art infrastructure, will make for an excellent student experience.”

At the event McMaster University President Patrick Deane thanked Brock, the Niagara Health System and the people of Niagara for their warm welcome of the campus established four years ago.

“This collaboration leverages the strengths of each institution and I look forward to seeing how the Cairns Family Health and Bioscience Research Complex expands our partnership, amplifies our abilities and recalibrates our ambitions.”

The campus has a lecture hall, tutorial rooms, clinical skills rooms and anatomy and computer labs, some of which are designed to be shared with Brock and other partners. All rooms have advanced video conferencing technology, and there is a “continuous presence” wall where students at any of McMaster’s three medical school campuses can meet simultaneously.

The campus has 84 undergraduate medical students as well as a growing number of residents.

Lynn Johnston, later creator of the comic strip called For Better or For Worse, was among the first medical illustrators hired to produce anatomical drawings for McMaster University’s new medical school.

Hired in 1969, Johnston drew detailed drawings of the specimens at different stages of dissection. Using her animation background from the Vancouver School of Art, Johnston illustrated various stages of surgical procedures, such as heart operations and plastic surgery, using acetate overlays on her drawings. The individual acetate cells was photographed with a special camera and turned into animated films for students.

The technique was used until the development of computer-assisted animation and magnetic resonance imaging (MRI).

Although she left in 1972, that was not the end of her connection to the Michael G. DeGroote School of Medicine.

In 2009, she was asked to draw a thank you card featuring a diverse collection of medical students. The card given out by students to patients has won both national and international awards.

As well, OMNI.1 television featured Johnston in a one-hour documentary about McMaster medical students called M.Diversity, which aired in March 2012.

Lynn Johnston’s comic of the rapid retrieval information system.

The film crew met her in her home in North Bay to speak about the characters she designed for the card.

The Niagara Regional Campus is in the Cairns complex.

There was applause at the open house of the Niagara Regional Campus of the Michael G. DeGroote School of Medicine in September as visitors admired the new state-of-the-art facility in the Cairns Family Health and Bioscience Research Complex of Brock University.

The Niagara Regional Campus moves into high-tech home
McMaster University researchers and clinicians have banded together to address the childhood obesity epidemic. There’s no doubt there’s an issue: In Canada the number of children with obesity has tripled in the past 25 years and now more than one in four is overweight. Of those seen for weight management at McMaster Children’s Hospital, 80 per cent are at risk of heart disease and one in five has pre-diabetes.

Science hasn’t found a cure, yet. “We can’t simply keep saying eat less and exercise more – we know that hasn’t worked to improve health,” said Katherine Morrison, associate professor of pediatrics. “We need to focus on how to help patients change behaviours and on improving how our bodies regulate themselves and use energy.”

The new team is called the MAC-Obesity Research Program, short for Metabolism And Childhood Obesity Research Program. By combining expertise across a wide variety of areas including genetics, metabolism and biochemistry, physical activity, surgery and inflammation, the team hopes to develop new ways to prevent and treat obesity-related diseases.

Start-up funding for the program includes $450,000 from the Hamilton Health Sciences Foundation and physical space at the McMaster Children’s Hospital, in addition to $1 million and equipment and research infrastructure from McMaster University.

The research program has set up a website at http://fhs.mcmaster.ca/macobesity/.

Just call her doctor

Graduating from medical school is tough, and graduating with a PhD doctorate is hard too. Lindsay MacGillivray has done both together.

The 29-year-old graduated in May as a physician scientist and the first graduate of a MD/PhD program of the Michael G. DeGroote School of Medicine, which allows students to achieve both degrees in seven years.

Physician scientists simultaneously work to advance medicine through research while caring for patients. In 2007, McMaster introduced its combined MD/PhD program to help address what appeared to be a trend indicating the career path for the physician scientist was in trouble.

“Medical science has exploded over the past 50 years, as we know so much about what causes disease at a molecular level, but what has been somewhat slower is the translation of these findings into actual benefits for patients,” said Peter Margetts, director of the MD/PhD program. “The role of the clinician-scientist is to advance medical science but, more importantly, to bring those advances back to the clinic.”

The 11 students enrolled in McMaster’s program are combining their physician training with research in such diverse areas as asthma, peanut allergies, microbial drug resistance and the treatment and prevention of clotting and blood disorders.

MacGillivray’s focus is neuropsychiatry and she intends to try and uncover the neurobiological underpinnings of psychiatric diseases, such as depression.

She’s leaving behind a handbook for future students on what to expect, compiled from her own experiences and through discussions with other students.

Up to three applicants who demonstrate academic excellence and a strong interest in research are admitted each year into the MD/PhD program.
Gerhard Gerber, PhD

Gerhard Gerber was a biochemistry researcher and professor who became an entrepreneurial visionary in developing McMaster as one of Canada’s top research intensive universities. He joined McMaster in 1978 and created an innovative co-op educational program while chair of the Department of Biochemistry for five years from 1991. However, it was during his term as McMaster’s vice-president research and international affairs from 1996 to 2001 that he attracted significant new federal funding, established important research infrastructure and created a culture stressing the economic and social value of research that still impacts the Faculty of Health Sciences and the University. He became a professor emeritus in 2007.

Frank Graham, PhD

Frank Graham developed an international reputation for himself and McMaster University with his pioneering developments in the field of gene therapy and his reputation for innovation and excellence in molecular virology. He joined the cancer research group of the departments of pathology and biology in 1975 and became one of the most cited scientists in biology for his work defining mechanisms of cancer transformation caused by adenoviruses. Renowned as an effective mentor and collaborator, accolades include being named a McMaster Distinguished University Professor and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada. The professor emeritus retired to Italy in 2003.

John Sellors, MD

John Sellors was a graduate of the first class of the Michael G. DeGroote School of Medicine at McMaster in 1972 who went on to exemplify the impact primary care physicians can make locally, nationally and globally. A Stoney Creek doctor for 22 years, he was a faculty member in family medicine at McMaster from 1979 to 2011, including a term as the department’s director of research. He was internationally known for his work in reproductive health, particularly cervical cancer prevention. An exceptional researcher and educator, he used his sense of humour to bring people together. He was also responsible for building new collaborations between pharmacists and family physicians.

Community of Distinction - 2012 inductees

A champion of research at McMaster University; an internationally renowned researcher in reproductive health, and a pioneer in the field of gene therapy were honoured by McMaster University’s Faculty of Health Sciences in September. Gerhard Gerber, John Sellors and Frank Graham were inducted into the Faculty’s Community of Distinction in a ceremony attended by faculty, staff, family and friends. For each inductee, a colleague shared a few words about their contribution.

The Community of Distinction honours alumni, faculty and staff of the Faculty of Health Sciences who have brought distinction and recognition to McMaster University and the Faculty through innovative scholarship and outstanding research.

The biographies and photographs of the inductees have joined the gallery, located in the Ewart Angus Centre within the Health Sciences Centre. Each year, up to five individuals are selected to join the Community of Distinction. The gallery was established in 2003.
The President’s Awards for outstanding contribution to McMaster were received by two Faculty of Health Sciences teams and one individual.

The Mark Loeb Research Group won for its conduct of complex and large-scale research studies. One of the team’s study papers was named article of the year by the prestigious medical journal The Lancet.

The McMaster University Animal Facilities Team won for establishing a care program considered the gold standard in Canada, along with its training program for new researchers that is copied by similar institutions across the country. The team has developed a research training program that includes 25 different courses and labs.

Karin Dearness, a research co-ordinator in medicine, was recognized for her resourcefulness and her commitment to using evidence-based medicine to improve patient care. She is the managing editor of the Upper Gastrointestinal and Pancreatic Diseases Cochrane Review Group which collates research on an international basis.

Winnie Doyle, an assistant clinical professor of nursing is this year’s recipient of the John C. Sibley Award. The award is presented annually to part-time faculty members who have made outstanding contributions to the education of health professionals.

Doyle also holds three executive roles at St. Joseph’s Healthcare Hamilton, including vice-president, patient services; chief nursing executive and senior vice-president for acute and chronic disease management.

Gerry Wright, a professor of biochemistry and biomedical sciences and scientific director of the Michael G. DeGroote Institute of Infectious Disease Research, has been elected as a fellow of the Royal Society of Canada. Founded in 1882, it is the country’s oldest and most prestigious scholarly organization. Wright is recognized for his research on understanding the origins, evolution and molecular mechanisms of antibiotic resistance in bacteria.

Gordon Guyatt, Distinguished University Professor in clinical epidemiology and biostatistics and medicine, has been named an officer of the Order of Canada and elected a fellow of the Royal Society of Canada.

Both honours recognize Guyatt’s contributions to the advancement of evidence-based medicine and its teachings—an approach which uses critical appraisal and applies the best available evidence from science to decisions on patient care.

Elizabeth Latimer, a professor and a Canadian pioneer in palliative care, passed away in April after a sudden illness. Latimer, 67, joined McMaster in 1975 and retired in 2011 as professor emeritus of the Department of Family Medicine. In her 39 years as a palliative care physician, Latimer published extensively on control of chronic cancer pain, delivery of health care to the terminally ill, and the ethical basis of practice and decision-making while caring for thousands of patients at Hamilton Health Sciences. She was also a consultant and lecturer in several countries.

In 1999, Latimer received Canada’s highest palliative care award, the Award of Excellence in Palliative Care from the Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Association.

William Shragge, a distinguished cardiac surgeon and professor emeritus, passed away in April at the age of 64.

He joined McMaster in 1978. He was assistant dean of the undergraduate medical school program from 1985 to 1990 and chief of staff at Hamilton Health Sciences from 1996 to 2001. He left the university in 2003 and became the founding chief of staff of the Niagara Health System. He actively supported the establishment of the Niagara Regional Campus of the Michael G. DeGroote School of Medicine.

Recently he had been CEO of Associated Medical Services and he was focused on a large project to engage all the Ontario medical schools in collaborations in the medical humanities and the hidden curriculum.

He also served as chair of the Ontario Health Technology Advisory Committee and was a founding member of the Cardiac Care Network.
The School of Nursing celebrated 65 years of nursing graduates in May by unveiling the Henrietta Alderson Gallery of Graduates. The photographs of all the graduates stretch down a long hall in the centre of the school.

It was named for one of the school’s first professors, Henrietta Alderson, who was conscientious in ensuring the pictures of all the early graduates were collected. She, along with Alma Reid and Florence Greenaway, were the core faculty members who developed the five-year Bachelor of Science in Nursing program, which was later shortened to four years.

Alderson was the driving force in ensuring that students had a solid science base for the practice of nursing. She was a professor at the school from 1947 to 1975.

“We take great pride in the success of our graduates and it is special for us to be able to honour each and every one of them,” said Catherine Tompkins, associate dean of health sciences, nursing and director of the nursing school. “It is fitting that we are naming this wall after Henrietta because she is an important part of our past, and I believe that only by paying tribute to those from our past, will we truly be able to appreciate our present and future and how far we’ve come as a school.”

Doug Csima, who earned his Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BScN) degree in 2007, was one of two McMaster alumni who rowed to an Olympic silver medal on Aug. 1.

He made his Olympic debut in London this summer.

Csima, along with Jeremiah Brown, who graduated with a degree in commerce in 2007, were part of Canada’s men’s eight rowing team. Canada finished just behind Germany and ahead of Great Britain in a thrilling race at the Eton Dorney Rowing Centre in Eton, west of London.

Csima picked up rowing at McMaster, helping the Marauders’ coxed fours win a silver medal at the Ontario University Athletics rowing championships.

He is also a two-time World Championship medalist, winning silver in 2009 and bronze in 2011.

Olympic silver medal for McMaster nursing alumnus

Nursing school marks 65 years of graduates

Doug Csima (back row, left) and Jeremiah Brown (back row, right) pose with their brand new Olympic silver medals.
When an earthquake hit Haiti in January 2010, Julie Hard (B.Sc. ’97, M.Sc. (PT) ’03) didn’t stop to think twice. She took a leave of absence from her position at St. Michael’s Hospital in Toronto and put herself on the list of emergency personnel to fly to the Caribbean nation to assist.

“It felt right,” said the 37-year-old McMaster alumna, “It seemed very clear that I needed to go.”

Hard arrived at one of the local hospitals and encountered patients sleeping inside tents on the parking lot. As a physiotherapist, she treated countless amputations, fractures, spinal cord injuries, burns, head injuries and tended to many wounds.

What was to be a six-month stint, turned into one year, and one year turned into two years.

“You can’t just provide a bandage and walk away,” she said. “If I am doing something, I want to see long term impact.”

It all began for Hard in the summer of 2001, when she volunteered at an orphanage in Zimbabwe. Since then, she has spent much of the past decade working in developing countries, such as Kenya and Haiti.

While in Zimbabwe, the kinesiology graduate’s eyes opened to the disparities in the world and she began to consider a career in physiotherapy.

“There was no medical treatment for people living with HIV, so they were dying in droves,” Hard said, in a telephone interview from her home in Mississauga.

“I felt limited with what I could do for the kids in the orphanage, but I knew if I got an education, I could do some work in the area of rehabilitation.”

She returned to McMaster University to pursue physiotherapy. Her last student placement was in rural Kenya in a disabled children’s program and a community-based rehabilitation program for people with HIV and AIDS.

She saw many people with issues relating to polio, children with cerebral palsy, congenital malformations, as well as amputations and burns.

Hard returned to McMaster and spoke to the 2004 graduating class about the opportunity to get involved in Kenya. From that began the Kenya Working Group, which is made up of volunteers in the rehabilitation sector improving services in the developing country.

Volunteers from McMaster University, the University of Toronto and other parts of Canada continue to head to the country to volunteer.

Hard founded the group, but since making her decision to head to Haiti, her husband Michael Willekes has assumed the position of co-chair.

While in Haiti, Hard originally provided hands-on care to those injured, eventually training Haitians on rehabilitation as it was more sustainable.

She later became the health program manager for CBM, an international organization improving the lives of people with disabilities in low-income regions, and worked on creating partnerships with local organizations to set up rehabilitation services in a number of facilities.

Her final post was country co-ordinator for a number of programs, such as health, inclusive education, child protection and community-based rehabilitation.

Haiti has a long way to go in overcoming its challenges, but Hard takes some satisfaction knowing that she has been able to improve some people’s lives. She has also received applause for her work.

In 2007 she received an Arch Award, which specifically recognizes recent graduates, from the McMaster Alumni Association.

Hard returned to Canada in October to give birth to her baby girl Ruby and although she doesn’t plan to return to Haiti in the near future, Hard and her family intend to relocate soon to help in another part of the developing world.
Alumni Notes

FHS alumni: Where are they now?

1970s

Achilles Thoma, MD '76, M.Sc. '02

Achilles Thoma received both his undergraduate medical education and his residency in plastic surgery from McMaster, followed by fellowships in head and neck and cancer surgery while at St. Joseph’s Hospital in Hamilton. In 1982, he went to Louisville, Kentucky for two fellowships in reconstructive microsurgery and hand surgery as a McLaughlin Fellow, before setting up his practice in Hamilton in 1983. He obtained his master’s in health research methodology with the Department of Clinical Epidemiology and Biostatistics at McMaster. He was program director for the plastic surgery training program at McMaster for 14 years and is currently the division head in plastic surgery. He is now the director of the Surgical Outcomes Research Centre within McMaster’s Department of Surgery.

1980s

Annita Damsma-Young, B.Sc.N. ’89

After graduating from the School of Nursing at McMaster, Annita Damsma-Young went on to pursue a master’s of nursing/certificate of nurse-midwifery at the University of Alberta. Damsma-Young was among the first to become registered as a midwife in Alberta. In 2000, she returned to Hamilton to practice and since 2007, she has been working with the Burlington & Area Midwives. While balancing her midwife duties, Damsma-Young was also a sessional instructor in the midwifery education program at McMaster and she is currently a faculty member at Laurentian University.

1990s

Stephanie Nixon, B.H.Sc. (PT) ’96

Until 2000, Stephanie Nixon worked as a physiotherapist with The Wellesley Hospital in Toronto. She then pursued a master’s in rehabilitation science and a PhD in public health at the University of Toronto. In 2006, a post-doctoral fellowship took her to South Africa, where she conducted critical social science research on HIV and global health at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. In 2007, she returned to Toronto to become assistant professor in the Department of Physical Therapy at the University of Toronto. This year, she was appointed director of the university’s International Centre for Disability and Rehabilitation.

2000s

Patrick Martin, B.H.Sc. ’10

Patrick Martin is in his third year of studying law at York University’s Osgoode Hall Law School. Last year he had the opportunity to represent a patient before the Health Professions Appeal and Review Board, which gave him first-hand experience in health law. In the future, he is interested in working in the area of personal injury or medical malpractice. Martin says his McMaster education and the problem-based learning in the Bachelor of Health Science courses prepped him for law school.

2010s

Melissa Decloe B.H.Sc. (Physician Assistant) ’11

Melissa Decloe is working with the Infectious Diseases Consultation Services at Toronto East General Hospital. Under the supervision of three infectious diseases specialists, she is responsible for seeing patients admitted to hospital with bacterial, viral and fungal infections. Decloe conducts patient interviews, performs physical exams and collaborates on treatment plans with her supervising physicians. She entered the second class of the Physician Assistant Program (PA) after completing a master’s in sport medicine and epidemiology at the University of Calgary. Decloe said the McMaster program prepared her well for transitioning into her new workplace where she continues to learn more every day.
Reunions & Events

Nursing classes of ’72, ’77, ’82, ’87, ’92
Date: Saturday, Nov. 10, 2012
Time and location: 10:30 a.m. School of Nursing Open House, McMaster University Health Sciences Centre, HSC 2J13
Noon: Buffet lunch at CIBC Hall, McMaster University Student Centre, third floor, featuring special guest Catherine Tompkins, associate dean, School of Nursing.

If you plan on attending the reunions, please register online at www.alumni.mcmaster.ca or contact the McMaster Alumni Association at 1-888-217-6003.

Save the Date
On Oct. 19, 2013, the Faculty of Health Sciences is looking forward to celebrating milestone class reunions for the MD classes of ’73, ’78, ’83, ’88, ’93, and ’03. Details and reunion packages will be sent early in 2013.

For information about assisting with outreach to your class, contact Josie Bufalino-Jasek, Alumni Relations, Faculty of Health Sciences at jasekj@mcmaster.ca, 905-525-9140, ext. 21874.