



Lab Med News—Quarterly Newsletter for the Laboratory Medicine Program at UHN

### Staff Appreciation BBQ

Although the weather was a bit windy on August 11, overall it was a nice day for a BBQ. It was a great opportunity to meet and mingle with other colleagues from LMP and a great day for the entire leadership team to show their gratitude and say “thanks” to all the hardworking LMP staff.

The annual Leadership Awards were also handed out to non-medical staff who exemplify qualities of leadership that are outstanding and produce effective results for staff and the organization.

This year’s deserving winners were Cherry Have, Shawn Brennan and Eva Villareal. Congratulations to the winners!



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QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER  
FOR THE  
LABORATORY MEDICINE  
PROGRAM

# Lab Med News

### 11th Floor Construction Updates

It’s the end of summer and we are done—essentially constructing 10 new offices without adding any extra square footage and just some creative engineering, but now there is additional office space for our new and growing pathology team.

The staff on the 11th floor have been very patient and accommodating—the lunch room and second conference room are now open again.

Up next? The autopsy suite. And then? We’ll see!

### Dr. Chan takes a tour

Dr. Charlie Chan, VP Medical Affairs and Quality, took some time and toured a few of our lab spaces—we have a lot to show off, but with just two short hours of his time we toured the pathology lab, surgical pathology suite, blood bank and core lab.

During the tour we spoke about our commitment to relationship building, the quality and quantity of work and the overall theme: how hard everybody works. Special thanks to Ivana Vidovic, Charge Technologist, Clinical Hematology, who gave a detailed demonstration of the CellaVision system to Dr. Chan.



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## Making it Work and Making it Hum in LMP

Did you know that there over 400 staff members that work in the Laboratory Medicine Program at UHN? We have people looking down scopes, people processing slides, some collecting samples, others coordinating financials and some writing newsletters. And yes, a few of us even go to an awful lot of meetings.

We stand firm in our conviction that the team across the entire Laboratory Medicine Program is part of what makes UHN hum so smoothly. A colleague in one of our partner hospitals remarked that laboratory medicine is one of the few areas of healthcare where—if a hospital was a large ship—we serve in the engine room (processing and diagnosing specimens in order for patients to get the treatment they need), we serve as the “official greeters” (blood and specimen collection) and we sit right up there next to the captain as we drive UHN’s strategy through our global leadership in research, education and clinical service. Our colleague noted “that labs are the closest thing in a hospital to the actual science of medicine.”

In the recent Staff Forum, Brad spoke about how years of planning have allowed us to establish a solid yet flexible laboratory program that is ready to adapt – and lead—the changes that are coming in the healthcare world.

We are fully committed to a strategic plan that has connected us with healthcare centres across the region. Really, is there any hospital we are not currently engaged with?

We have plans and strategy—but the most important fact ensuring our success is that we have great people

Trust us when we say that the need to have good people driving strategy is the least stressful part for us, because we know that here in LMP we’ve got good people in spades.

Our technicians and technologists are world class, the members of our medical team are all leader in their fields, and our administration and support staff are unparalleled. We are one giant team—a team of 400 plus—and we are working in synch like never before to deliver reliable, high quality test results and accurate diagnoses to more patients than ever. And because of your hard work, we have never been more efficient—we are performing more tests, more complex tests at an ever increasing speed. The demand for diagnostic testing is growing exponentially!

When we go out to make various presentations on behalf of the Laboratory Medicine Program, the feedback we receive most often is that we all make it look so simple. If someone needs a test result or diagnosis, they know we’ll do it and do it right. They don’t always realize that a large, well-tuned machine is working behind the scenes to deliver that result in a timely manner that is dependable and accurate in a way that will positively affect patient care. But rest assured—we know, your managers know, and we are committed to communicating our story better so that everyone knows!

Sylvia Asa  
Medical Director

Brad Davis  
Executive Director



## Meet Dr. Paul Yip



### 10 Questions for Dr. Yip

#### What is your position?

Clinical Biochemist, UHN Assistant Professor, U of T, Dept. Laboratory Medicine and Pathobiology

#### What do you do here?

Most of my time is spent supporting the UHN Core Laboratory and Specialty Laboratory. We have over 200 biochemical assays in house and almost 5 million test results are produced yearly. I'm also responsible for point-of-care testing (POCT) where testing is done outside the lab. I couldn't do this alone and I have a great team to work with.

#### Why did you get into lab medicine?

The lab is a great place because it measures what we cannot see by our human senses alone. Medicine because it tells so much about how our body functions in health and disease. Lab medicine enables us to understand our biological processes and improve our well being.

#### How did you get started at UHN?

I had a rotation at UHN in my first year as a fellow in clinical chemistry. It was a wonderful experience and I met a very knowledgeable and dynamic team. After my program, I was seeking position in an academic environment and was fortunate to know this organization. I applied for my first job at UHN and have never looked back.

#### How long have you worked here?

Almost 6 years.

#### What is the favourite part of your job?

Learning from others. Whether from within the lab, the organization, or elsewhere. Laboratory testing has been around for ages—others impart much wisdom in what they do and their new ideas.

#### What is the most challenging part of your job?

Multitasking. I have diverse roles and responsibilities. And keeping a cool head, optimistic outlook, and staying enthusiastic must be at the core to meet these challenges.

#### What value would you say you add to patient care?

Labs have always been viewed as a black box. The lab staff deserve the credit for getting the actual results out which ensures patient care takes place. For me, I'd like to be a face for the lab when there is a question about interpreting results, the lab operation, or research/educational collaboration.

#### How would you say you support the LMP mission to advance lab medicine in its three foundational pillars: research, education and clinical service?

Academically, education is my main focus. I coordinate the clinical chemistry rotation at UHN for residents and fellows. I also teach and serve on education committees with UofT. My research activity is primarily in collaboration with other investigators from UHN and elsewhere.

#### In LMP, we often talk about serving as "global leaders" – what do you do to serve as a "global leader"?

Engaging with others from around the world. By working together, we will have innovation and new thinking close to us at all times.

## Meet Lisa Thorpe



### 10 Questions for Lisa Thorpe

#### What is your position?

Technician 3

#### What do you do here?

Receive specimens, order specimens, sample sort, aliquot, deliver or send specimens to the appropriate testing areas in a timely manner

#### Why did you get into lab medicine?

To provide a quality of care, that I would expect for myself.

#### How did you get started at UHN?

At the age of 21 I had applied at Toronto Western as a blood technician, and was given the opportunity of employment.

#### How long have you worked here?

I have worked for UHN since 1989.

#### What is the favourite part of your job?

I am always pleased when I have performed to the best of my ability and been as helpful as possible. To both our internal and external clients and patients. A kind word or gesture can also make a difference.

### Retirement Updates:

Over the past few months, a few staff have retired from LMP, including: *Eva Maassarany* (right image); *Nancy Kuek* and *Ellie Williams*, Core Lab. (back page, centre image)

#### What is the most challenging part of your job?

Trying to understand unique personalities.

#### What value would you say you add to patient care?

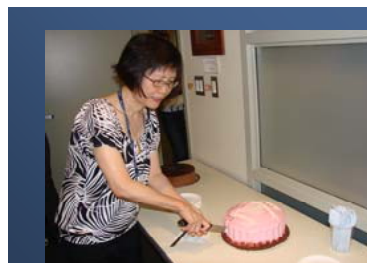
I am a hard working individual who is very conscientious and a caring person.

#### How would you say you support the LMP mission to advance lab medicine in its three foundational pillars: research, education and clinical service?

I fully support any advancement forward to provide the best quality of care.

#### In LMP, we often talk about serving as "global leaders" – what do you do to serve as a "global leader"?

We have a standard of professionalism, conduct and integrity and work ethic—all of which we do our best to achieve.



## Telepathology and UHN

It has been a long time coming, but the new OMNYX telepathology suite at UHN in the Laboratory Medicine Program is finally up and running.

"We've already looked at 97 cases as part of our validation study. While the OMNYX team has a few issues to work on with their scanner, everything in terms of the quality of scans and the ability to make digital diagnoses is right where we anticipated," said Dr. Andrew Evans.

"The feedback from UHN pathologists who have used the system has been extremely positive. The potential of using digital pathology to make remote diagnoses and provide consultation support will really be demonstrated as we get more pathologists involved."

"They will be comparing cases side-by-side with their microscopes and getting input from a large group of sub-specialty pathologists is critical if we are to integrate this technology into widespread use throughout the department. It is possible that each sub-specialty area will identify strengths and/or limitations with the current technology that are specific to their area."

The project uses second generation scanners allow for higher through-put and scan a much larger volume than the systems currently used for niche applications in telepathology at UHN.

This validation trial is the first of its kind and UHN is the first site in the world to assess the performance of the OMNYX system in a clinical setting.

"This project is the natural evolution of UHN's use of telepathology. The fact that OMNYX/GE Canada approached us about this venture in order to leverage our expertise really demonstrates that we are global leaders in lab medicine and are the right people to tackle such a ground-breaking and important project."

Several pathologists have already been using the new system as part of the validation project, with at least 34 pathologists expected to be trained on the system over the coming weeks.

**We are the right people to tackle such a ground-breaking project.**

## LMP visits Kuwait

This past summer, Pam McCartin, a technologist in the immunohistochemistry lab, along with Laurie Mason, Pathology Manager and John Racher, Senior Director, Special Projects headed to Kuwait to help in the labs at the Kuwait Cancer Control Centre (KCCC) in Kuwait City. Pam, Laurie and John worked with the team at KCCC to start the process of achieving internationally accepted quality and reproducibility standards in immunohistochemistry stains in the KCCC labs.

"KCCC will gain valuable assistance with preparation for their accreditation and better knowledge of best laboratory practices, process and procedure in the labs," said Pam. "It will really help to foster quality patient care and safety from a laboratory perspective."

The labs in Kuwait, while small in size, are big in heart and "were very welcoming and hospitable" said Pam.

Pam, and other members of the LMP team, including Cherry Have. Mary Fountas and Drs. Kamel-Reid and Perez-Ordenez went back to Kuwait in early September to assist the KCCC labs in other areas, including enhancing their quality control, developing Kuwait's molecular genetics lab and improving the grossing and diagnosing of specimens.



## Conferences - OSMT September 23—25.

The conference will include an exhibitor trade show, education sessions and the OSMT General Meeting. Speakers include members of the Laboratory Medicine Program, including **Tom Clancy, Dr. Andrew Evans** and **Dr. Ken Craddock**.

For more information, visit [www.osmt.org](http://www.osmt.org).

## LMP Conference October 22

The 5th Annual LMP Conference, will include presentations from **Michele Henry, Dr. Theo van der Kwast, Dr. Jacob Pendergrast, Dr. Sylvia Asa**—and more. Hardcopies of the registration form are available and a website will be online soon.

## Staff Forum

On August 30, Brad Davis, Executive Director of the Laboratory Medicine Program walked everyone through the past year in LMP.

Brad spoke about LMP's long-term goals and strategies and what lies ahead for the business.

Brad also gave a financial report, highlighted the HR Pulse results, listed off the recent media highlights, gave a TC LHIN summary and answered questions.

The presentation will soon be posted on the LMP Staff site for those who were unable to attend. Brad will also be visiting the lab space at all our hospital sites to touch base and answer questions about the presentation.

Keep an eye on your email box for dates and times.



Did you know that LMP is on twitter? Visit [twitter.com/UHN\\_LMP](http://twitter.com/UHN_LMP) to join the conversation!