

# AYA NEWSLETTER

Adolescent and Young Adult (AYA) Program Newsletter

June 2018

## 2018 Michael Kamin Hart Award

Three outstanding Princess Margaret Cancer Centre staff members who made an exceptional impact on the care of an AYA (Adolescent & Young Adult) patient have been recognized with a 2018 Michael Kamin Hart Award. Established in 2014, the annual awards and lectureship are held in memory of Michael Kamin Hart, a young man who lost his battle with lymphoma in 2011 at the age of 25.

Clinical Nurse Specialist Kelly McGuigan and Palliative Care Physician Dr. Breffni Hannon received the award from members of the Hart family during a ceremony at The Princess Margaret on May 7. Nurse Practitioner Simone Charles also received an award but was unable to attend.

"It's a huge honour to be nominated for this award and caring for young adults with cancer," says McGuigan.

She was nominated by a colleague for providing exceptional care to a young woman who was not expected to live until her 19th birthday. McGuigan helped organize an early birthday celebration for her. The patient died the day after the party.

"(I just wanted) to allow her to live as well as she could and ensure she got her high school graduation and her birthday a month before she was expected to celebrate it. This was a team effort ... we all participated in supporting her and her family through her illness and her death."

Dr. Hannon was nominated by a patient's wife, who praised how comfortable the palliative care physician made her husband feel in his final days.

"It's such an honour and a privilege. You don't expect people to honour you with the work that we do but it's such a wonderful thing to know that you've touched somebody in such a way," says Hannon.

The AYA Program, open to patients under 39 who have been diagnosed with cancer, was established in June 2013. The program addresses unique psychosocial and medical oncology needs of young patients including fertility, sexuality, school/work, social relationships and finances. It also provides supportive care counseling and resources to patients.

Dr. Mary Elliott, a Psychiatrist with Supportive Care who received the first Michael Kamin Hart Research Award in AYA Oncology in 2017, spoke at the event about the importance of mindfulness and meditation for young adults with cancer. She teaches a Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) workshop that helps participants live in the present moment.

"We're trying to teach these young adults to build the skills to really inhabit life fully no matter where they are in the cancer journey."

Participants who have taken part in the program have reported improvements in their quality of life, as well as reduced depression, anxiety, insomnia and fatigue.

"I really teach the AYA population from a place of empowering them and mindfulness-based interventions are about empowering people to build skills and develop tools."

Elliott was also a nominee for the 2018 Michael Kamin Hart Awards, along with Music Therapist SarahRose Black, Medical Oncologist Dr. Neesha Dhani and Surgical Oncologist Dr. Fayeze A. Quereshy.

The 2018 awards helped kick off AYA Week at The Princess Margaret.



**Clinical Nurse Specialist Kelly McGuigan and Palliative Care Physician Dr. Breffni Hannon (middle) are pictured with members of the Hart family**

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*- Kelly McGuigan*




**Gyne nurses wearing AYA shirts for AYA Week from May 7 to 11 at Princess Margaret**



Adolescent and  
Young Adult Program

[aya@uhn.ca](mailto:aya@uhn.ca) // [ayaprincessmargaret.ca](http://ayaprincessmargaret.ca) // 416 946 4501 x 5579

 [ayaprogram\\_uhn](https://www.instagram.com/ayaprogram_uhn)

 [AYA Program at Princess Margaret](https://www.facebook.com/AYAProgramatPrincessMargaret)

 [@ayaprogram](https://twitter.com/ayaprogram)

# MONTHLY COMMUNITY UPDATES

## GILDA'S CLUB

24 Cecil St. Toronto, ON  
www.gildasclubtoronto.org  
416 214 9898



## Writing through Cancer

An expressive writing program for anyone living with cancer

June 6 and 13, 1 to 3 PM

## Zumba

Fun dance activity on the 3rd floor

June 13, 20, 27, 6:30—7:30 PM

## WELLSPRING



4 Charles St E  
Toronto, ON  
www.wellspring.ca  
416 961 1928

Visit online for upcoming program event dates this month: <http://bit.ly/2sGqCdy>

# AYA PROGRAM UPDATES

## AYA MICHAEL KAMIN HART SCHOLARSHIP

Are you a cancer patient or survivor between 18 to 39 who are applying to go or currently attending to university or college in Ontario? **Apply for the MKH Scholarship, due June 11, 2018.** Visit <http://goo.gl/Wc3qRm> to apply!



Please note that **AYA MEET-UPS IN JUNE, JULY & AUGUST ARE CANCELLED.** Stay tuned in September for more information about ongoing meet-ups.

## NEW OPPORTUNITY: MUSIC MEET-UP FOR AYA

Music meet-up is a 6-session group program specifically offered to support young people dealing with the challenges that come with having a cancer diagnosis and its treatment. Each session is centred on a specific theme and includes music-based activities and development of practical coping skills. Participants should be well enough and willing to attend all 6 weekly, 1.5 hour sessions. There is no fee for this program and no previous music experience is required. Sessions 1-6 start **Wednesdays from June 27 to August 1st from 11 am to 12:30PM.** Email [chana.korenblum@uhn.ca](mailto:chana.korenblum@uhn.ca) or [aya@uhn.ca](mailto:aya@uhn.ca)

# COMMUNITY EVENTS & UPDATES

## JUNE 9 LOCALIFE: YOGA FOR EVERY BODY, MIND, SOUL

Come join Young Adult Cancer Canada for a free gentle yoga and meditation class with Certified Yoga Instructor Marguerite Arbour. It will be taking place **Saturday, June 9 from 12 to 1:30 PM at Wellspring Downtown Toronto (4 Charles Street, Toronto).** All equipment including mats are provided. This event is open to young adults and supporters between the ages of 18 and 39. RSVP to [localifetoronto@youngadultcancer.ca](mailto:localifetoronto@youngadultcancer.ca)



## ON THE TIP OF THE TOES: TREKKING JULY 15—25, 2018

ON THE TIP OF THE TOES

Around you between the ages of 19 to 29? If you are, sign up to attend **On the Tip of the Toes' Trekking Expedition at Mt. Assiniboine and Banff National Park from July 15 to 25, 2018.** This expedition offers 14 young adults in cancer remission to trek with other participants their age living a similar reality. To be eligible you must have been diagnosed with cancer and needed treatments and medical interventions but have ideally completed this and is currently in remission for less than 5 years. **Applications are due on June 1, 2018.** To register and learn more, visit: <http://bit.ly/2I9L8uq>

## HELPING WOMEN WITH METASTATIC CANCER

Melanie's Way is an organization that helps women with metastatic cancer by creating a personalized experience, a "wish" that brings them and their loved ones joy and creates memories. To learn more about the program, visit [www.melaniesway.com](http://www.melaniesway.com)



SURVIVE & THRIVE  
Cancer Programs

## SURVIVE & THRIVE EXPEDITIONS

Join Survive and Thrive on any of their outdoor summer expeditions including:  
**June 16 to 24:** Kayaking on Owyhee River (June 16 to 24)  
**July 28 to August 3:** Canoeing at Lake Superior  
**August 16 to 21:** Rock climbing in the Canadian Rockies in Canmore, Alberta

Visit [www.surviveandthrive.org](http://www.surviveandthrive.org) for more information on how to apply!

## GIVE US YOUR FEEDBACK!

We are interested in gaining your feedback on a video we have designed to teach adolescents and young adults about female fertility preservation. This research study is completely voluntary. If you are interested in participating, you will be asked to complete a short survey before and after viewing a short video on female fertility preservation. Feedback gathered from this survey will help us to ensure that the video is effective at meeting your informational needs on fertility preservation. **For more information, email the AYA Program at [aya@uhn.ca](mailto:aya@uhn.ca) or call 416-946-4501 ex 5579.** Please note that communication via email is not absolutely secure. Please do not communicate personal sensitive information via email.