

Special points of interest:

- ARTC welcomes Dr. Rick Audas as the new Principal Investigator at the MUN site.
- End-of-Semester Workshop for first-year students was held in St. John's, NL, April 11-13.
- Mark Embrett, a graduate from the ARTC program at Dalhousie University, has been accepted into the PhD program in Health Policy at McMaster University
- Shanna Trenaman from Dalhousie was admitted into the CIHR Training Program in Bridging Scientific Domains for Drug Safety and Effectiveness for 2011/2012. She was also nationally recognized by the Canadian Society of Hospital Pharmacists, receiving the New Hospital Pharmacy Practitioner Award for 2010/2011
- Mercy Dhlakama from MUN was awarded the Applied Health Services Research Award at Memorial University
- Jill Duncan from Dalhousie was awarded a 2011 Fellowship through the Pharmaceutical Policy Research Collaboration

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Introductory Message

This is a milestone year for the ARTC. Our ninth class entered the program in the fall of 2010 and began their summer research residencies in early May. Overall there have been nearly 100 students grace the doors of the ARTC since the program's inception in 2002.

This year marks a time of renewal for the ARTC as the original 10-year funding commitment from CHSRF and CIHR draws to a close. We say good bye to some cherished members of our team, but welcome some new ones. We are revisiting the partnership agreements and looking for new opportunities to broaden and strengthen the program. As a result, we have decided to not have an intake of

students for 2011 but expect to have an intake to a somewhat revised program in 2012. We are optimistic that the ARTC will continue to provide high quality training and education opportunities in the Atlantic Region.

But rest assured, this latest newsletter still reflects exciting things happening with our students, instructors, and management team. Inside you will learn about some of our recent graduates who have explored diverse career paths post-graduation. Our key contributor profile features Dr. Anne Kearney and her involvement with the program as MUN's Principal Investigator. We are blessed with a strong team of seasoned instructors and this edition profiles UPEI's Dr. Jenni-

fer Slemmer. Cathy Peyton provides an update about the EXTRA program—who continue to play an important role in our student workshops and residencies. And, as always, we highlight some of our current students who continue to do amazing things in pursuit of their graduate degrees.

We hope you find our 11th edition of the ARTC newsletter an interesting and informative reflection of our latest happenings. We welcome any comments, suggestions, and submissions you may have for a future edition. Enjoy your summer and happy reading.

Ed Biden is the Principal Investigator from the University of New Brunswick

Key Contributor Profile: Anne Kearney

Anne Kearney has been a Principal of the ARTC program at Memorial University (MUN) since 2006. She received her Bachelor of Nursing degree from Memorial University (MUN), a Master of Health Science degree from the Faculty of Medicine, University of Toronto, specializing in Community Health, and a Doctor of Philosophy from the Faculty of Medicine at MUN, also specializing in Community Health. Anne's doctoral thesis explored the social and personal factors influencing women's practice of breast self examination. Anne has practiced in a variety of positions including acute care nursing, public health nursing, HIV community education, addictions, breast screening, as well as

teaching at MUN and the Centre for Nursing Studies (CNS). She has devoted much volunteer time to cancer, and breast cancer in particular, and has served on



four provincial, national, and international Boards of Directors. While teaching at CNS, Anne was privileged to be involved in international development pro-

grams in Nicaragua and Malawi, strengthening nursing education and HIV prevention activities respectively. Anne's current joint appointment with the School of Nursing and Faculty of Medicine at MUN has enabled her to teach health policy, community health nursing theory, and also lead numerous interprofessional education initiatives with faculty, staff, students, health care practitioners, community and health care representatives, and patients. She is currently Co-Director of the Centre for Collaborative Health Professional Education.

Anne's research is multi-faceted including studies related to breast screening, living with multiple sclerosis and breast cancer, and work-life issues of novice

Key Contributor Profile (continued from page 1)

nurses. She has received several research and community grants and has published in a variety of peer-reviewed publications. In July 2011, Anne will assume the role of Director, CNS, and she looks forward to this exciting new role during the consolidation

of nursing education in Newfoundland and Labrador. Because of this new role, Anne will be stepping down as Principal of the ARTC program at Memorial. She has truly enjoyed her time with the ARTC and wishes the program continued success during

its exciting transition. ARTC will miss Anne's dedication and contribution to the program but are excited for her as she embarks on this new and exciting phase in her career.

Graduates: Where Are They Now?

Jennifer (Thornhill) Verma holds a Master of Science in Medicine in Applied Health Services Research (2007) from Memorial University of Newfoundland (MUN). Before graduating, Jenn took a position with the Canadian Health Services Research Foundation (CHSRF) in Ottawa, Ontario, where she has lived and worked for over six years. Currently, Jenn is the Director of Policy at CHSRF, managing a small staff and overseeing the Foundation's policy analysis and knowledge exchange portfolio as well as the patient and citizen engagement file. In 2010, Jenn took a hiatus from CHSRF to work as Manager of the Knowledge Exchange Centre in the Ottawa office of the Mental Health Commission of Canada. Prior to moving to Ottawa, Jenn interned in the Department of Quality and System Improvement at Eastern Health, the largest regional health authority in Newfoundland and Labrador (NL). She also worked over five years as a radio reporter and producer for Steele Communications in Corner Brook, NL – all while completing her journalism and biology degree from the University of King's College in Halifax, Nova Scotia. On a personal note, Jenn credits the Atlantic Regional Training Centre for not only launching her health policy career, but also for introducing her to her husband (Raman Verma, MUN MED graduate 2007).

Mark Embrett graduated from the MAHSR program at Dalhousie in 2010. His thesis work involved evaluating the Canadian Fabry Disease Initiative. He is

currently working on publishing his work in an academic journal.

In September 2009, while finishing his MAHSR thesis, Mark began working for Dr. Patrick McGrath at the Izaak Walton Killam (IWK) Health Centre as a Research Coordinator for the Centre for Research in Family Health. During his time there Mark's focus was on managing several research studies of children's mental health and children's access to mental health services. Currently, he is managing a project which delivers Dr. McGrath's Strongest Families® as a web based learning program in Finland.

In September 2011, Mark will be attending McMaster University to pursue a PhD in Health policy under the supervision of Dr. Glen Randall. Mark plans on studying the managerial processes of policy adoption in health care organizations.

Kara Roberts graduated from Memorial University's MAHSR program in 2010. While engaged in the program, Kara joined Eastern Health (St. John's, NL) as an HR Strategist (Organizational Health) where she applied her skills as a Registered Dietitian to promote the health of the organization's workforce. Transferring into the role of Research Analyst, she then worked to advance recommendations from the Cameron Inquiry Report on Hormone Receptor Testing. Kara now works as Manager of Learning and Development with Eastern Health where she is focused on enhancing the development of health care leaders, advancing regional

volunteer services, and leading an engaged volunteer and learning and development team. Kara attributes her professional and academic success to the ARTC program as it has strengthened her capabilities as a health care professional and leader. She continues to be a strong advocate for the program and wishes all current students and new graduates success in their future endeavours!

Betty Daniels graduated from UNB in October 2010 with her MAHSR, at which time she accepted a position in the Village of Gagetown as the Administrator of Orchard View Long Term Care. Her work involves managing the day-to-day operations of the facility including administration and planning considering the impact on residents, staff, and families. Betty is also involved in a research project for the Atlantic Institute on Aging, entitled "Improving Cognitive Wellness for the Aging New Brunswick Population".

Betty continues to be involved in dental research working with the Canadian Dental Assistants Association revising continuing education modules, and is currently working with Dr. Kate Weaver developing an Ethics module for the association. In March of 2011 Betty presented her thesis work (poster presentation) at the International Association for Dental Research in San Diego California, and has recently been approached by the Dalhousie College of Pharmacy to collaborate on a research project relating to her summer residency project on xerostomia.

RESEARCH RESIDENCIES

First year students have begun their summer research residencies in the following organizations:

- Department of Health & Community Services, Health Promotion and Wellness Division, Government of NL
- The NB Association of Nursing Homes Inc.
- Saint John Regional Hospital, NB
- NB Department of Health Baby-Friendly Initiative
- Drug Safety and Effectiveness training program, McMaster University
- Canadian Centre for Vaccinology, IWK, NS
- Southlake Regional Health Centre, ON
- Atlantic Health Promotion Research Centre, NS

Instructor Profile: Jennifer Slemmer

Jennifer Slemmer joined the ARTC program in 2010 as the Instructor for the Quantitative Statistics portion of the 'Qualitative and Quantitative Methods' course. She is currently a Post-doctoral fellow, Sessional Lecturer and Adjunct Faculty in the Department of Biology at UPEI. Prior to joining UPEI in 2006, Jenn completed her PhD in Neuroscience at the Erasmus Universiteit in Rotterdam, The Netherlands, where she lived and studied from 2000-2005. Part of her thesis work involved a detailed examination of what occurs in brain tissue after trauma, such as injuries sustained from sports or car accidents. Her current research focuses on the potential human health benefits of functional foods found on PEI, namely cranberries and wild blueberries. In particular, she and her research team are interested in chronic disease states

such as hypertension, obesity, diabetes and stroke. Much of this research involves the use of animal models as a means to investigate the progression of disease states and their subsequent treatment through the inclusion of berries in the diet. It was found that wild blueberries are capable of lowering blood pressure and cranberries are able to reduce atherosclerotic plaques in rats and mice respectively.

Jenn has worn many hats at UPEI, teaching a variety of courses from Human Physiology to Biochemistry to Research Methods, as well as laboratory sections and tutorials for several classes. Although she has used quantitative statistics in her research life since her undergraduate days in the mid-90s, teaching stats in the ARTC program was a new experience, made particularly challenging by the fact that it was taught completely through

file-sharing. As always, Jenn felt like she learned as much as her students did!

Without a doubt, she has thoroughly enjoyed her participation as an Instructor in the ARTC program: from meeting new students and fellow instructors, to the engaging workshops in Halifax and St. John's. Sadly, her affiliation with UPEI will end in August of this year, at which point she will begin a new position at Holland College (also on PEI) as a Learning Manager in their Bioscience Technology program. This two-year diploma program prepares individuals for employment as industrial/laboratory technicians. She thanks her colleagues for having included her in the ARTC family, and wishes the current ARTC students the best of luck in their upcoming thesis work!



Dr. Jennifer Slemmer is a post-doctoral fellow, Sessional Lecturer and Adjunct Faculty in the Dept. of Biology at UPEI and an instructor in the ARTC program.

EXTRA Program Update

It has been a busy and thought-provoking year in the EXTRA Program. We welcome a new cohort of Fellows while an 'older' cohort prepare to graduate. Fellows in their second and final years also attended and/or participated in two ARTC workshops held in Halifax, NS, and St. John's, NL.

This year's graduating Fellows Heather Brown and Doug Prince from Central Health, NL, and Wayne Miller from Eastern Health, NL, presented their Intervention projects at the ARTC December workshop in Halifax. This exercise gave the Fellows an opportunity to "practice" their intervention project presentations on a panel comprised of CEO's, faculty, and graduate students. The panel, in return, provided feedback to the Fellows which they were able to use in preparation for their final presentation in the EXTRA program. The Fellows find this a beneficial exercise—giving them further insight, expertise, and guidance. We

congratulate Heather, Doug and Wayne as they prepare for their upcoming graduation in August.

The second year Fellows from NS—Shannon Ryan, Lynn Edwards and Rick Gibson (all with Capital District Health)—remain actively engaged in their respective intervention projects. They also attended the ARTC December workshop in Halifax and supported their fellow EXTRA colleagues from NL.

Elaine Warren, a second year Fellow from NL, presented on the topic of wait-times at the April workshop in St. John's, NL. Elaine's academic mentor Dr. Marie Pascale-Pomey also attended the April workshop and presented on a similar topic. The Fellows and graduate students alike found these presentations on wait-times enlightening, valuable, and timely.

This year, the EXTRA program welcomes 5 new Fellows for 2011. They include:

- Lisa Adams from Eastern Health, NL

Intervention Project: Educating for a Senior Friendly Hospital and Efficient ER

- Stephanie Connidis, Sandra Janes and Stavros Savvopoulos, a team from Capital District Health, NS

Intervention Project: Quality Transitions Across Inpatient Settings and to the Community

- Jane Newlands from Guysborough Antigonish Strait Health Authority, NS

Intervention Project: Transition to Interdisciplinary Community Care Teams in Rural Nova Scotia as Part of 'Better Care Sooner' (Primary Health Care Quality Initiative)

The new Fellows will attend an orientation in Halifax, NS, on June 13. The EXTRA Team for the Atlantic Regional Mentoring Centre look forward to meeting this new cohort and are excited about working with them as they progress through their intervention projects.

The ARTC program prepares students for careers in a variety of health services and research settings. To date, approximately 42 students have graduated from the program. Read about the interesting paths some of them have since taken in the 'Graduates: Where are They Now?' article.

Student News

Brittany Lockwood is UPEI's only first year student enrolled in the MAHSR program this year. Brittany graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology from UPEI in 2010 after transferring from the University of Toronto in 2008 where she began in chemical and physical sciences. Always interested in science and health care she initially thought pharmaceuticals and lab research would be the right path for her; however, after an isolated feeling in the laboratory Brittany soon switched majors to sociology where she could focus on the social inequalities relating to health and health care in Canada. Brittany has returned to Ontario for the summer where she will be eagerly completing her residency, a prerequisite of the MAHSR program, at Southlake Regional Hospital. Under the supervision of the Director of Medicine and the Director of Research, Brittany will be responsible for the following 3 main tasks: evaluating data from surveys she will create to analyze the Research Ethics Board members and external users; evaluating the Hospital Elder Life Program (HELP) that was implemented in April to assist patients experiencing delirium; and compiling data on lengths of stay for each nursing unit, readmission rates for COPD and congestive heart failure, and the number of nosocomial infections.

Also over the summer, Brittany will begin the first stages of her thesis under the supervision of Dr. Jennifer Taylor from UPEI. Brittany will be focusing on the parent's perspectives of the nutrition policies that have been implemented in PEI schools for the past five years.

Joni Leger completed her BA with honours in psychology from Mount Allison University in 2004. Her personal experience with birth trauma and postpartum depression (PPD) led Joni to become active in her community working to raise awareness and create change around maternal health care in her home province of New Brunswick. Joni volunteered with the 'Mothers Of-

fering Mentorship and Support' (MOMS) research project conducted out of the CHILD studies lab at UNB under the direction of Dr. Nicole Letourneau. This volunteer experience peaked Joni's interest in health research and in 2008 she entered the ARTC program at UNB with Dr. Letourneau as her thesis supervisor. For her thesis Joni conducted a qualitative analysis of the experiences of women who volunteered as peer mentors for new mothers with PPD. In the second year of the program Joni received a CIHR Master's award to support her studies.

With her coursework now complete and her thesis on the verge of completion, Joni, with her passion for women's issues, has recently accepted a position with YWCA Canada as their Atlantic Region Extension Strategy Coordinator. Joni is grateful to the ARTC program knowing that what she learned and experienced with the ARTC will contribute to her success in this new position.

Jill Duncan is currently working part time on her MAHSR degree through Dalhousie University. She took some time after her first degree from the University of Toronto (Pharmacy) before plunging back into academics. She has thoroughly enjoyed the graduate experience, especially interacting with and learning from other ARTC students. Jill's thesis explores trends over time in visits to family physicians and resulting prescriptions captured through provincial administrative databases. She is hoping that her work will provide a clearer understanding of the factors specific to Nova Scotia that are driving the rise in drug expenditures, in particular the impact of chronic disease.

Jill was recently awarded a 2011 fellowship through the Pharmaceutical Policy Research Collaboration (PPRC), which is a network of university-based experts in pharmaceutical policy. This fellowship will give Jill an opportunity to

present her research and participate in various knowledge translation activities.

In her other life, Jill works as a pharmacist within the Nova Scotia Drug Evaluation Unit, providing evidence support for the Nova Scotia Pharmacare programs. As she works towards completing her MAHSR degree, she hopes to extend her current role and become more involved in provincial initiatives and projects related to pharmaceutical policy and data analysis, with a focus on economics.

Mercy Dhlakama is enrolled in her first year of the ARTC master's program at MUN. Born and raised in Zimbabwe, Mercy came to NL to complete a B.Sc. in Biochemistry-Nutrition. In her second year of that program, she returned home to a country that was in the midst of an economic crisis, and, while visiting, was posed the following question: How do you eat healthy when you have little or no access to food? For Mercy that was the beginning of a journey where she sought to 'change the world.' Her first step was to join the ARTC program to gain a solid foundation in health research and policy and decision-making. With the skills she is developing through this program, Mercy believes she will be able to start making steps in changing—maybe not the world (for now)—but the body of knowledge around access to healthy food.

Under the guidance of Dr. Martha Traverso-Yeppez, Mercy's research project will explore the various factors that influence the development of favorable attitudes towards local food production in individuals participating in the Farmers' markets and community gardens in the Northeast Avalon Region. She is presently completing her residency with the Department of Health and Community Services in St. John's where she hopes to gain valuable skills and knowledge around policy and decision-making that will guide her current (and future) research projects.

Funding by:



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