

CFAS 2024 70th Annual Meeting

Canadian Fertility and Andrology Society

Past, Present and Future: Celebrating 70 **Years of Science, Innovation and Medicine**



September 12th - 14th, 2024

The Westin Bayshore Vancouver, BC

info@cfas.ca





www.cfas.ca



514-300-1333



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About CFAS

The CFAS is a multidisciplinary national non-profit society that serves as the voice of reproductive specialists, scientists, and allied health professionals working in the field of assisted reproduction in Canada. Celebrating its 70th year, the mission of the CFAS is to responsibly advance reproductive science and medicine in Canada through leadership, research, and guidance. Through its multidisciplinary membership of nearly 1000, the CFAS aims to promote excellence in the field of assisted reproduction to the benefit of Canadians and children born of this technology.



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PRIME MINISTER · PREMIER MINISTRE

September 12-14, 2024

Dear Friends:

I am pleased to offer my warmest greetings to everyone attending the Canadian Fertility and Andrology Society (CFAS) 2024 Annual Meeting, being held in Vancouver, BC



This event provides an important platform for reproductive

specialists in a wide range of disciplines to learn from and network with their peers. I am certain that delegates will find the many educational opportunities centered on this years theme, "Past, Present and Future: Celebrating 70 Years of Science, Innovation and Medicine," both informative and rewarding.

I would like to commend CFAS for its commitment to advancing knowledge in the field of assisted reproduction through research, education and practice, and to supporting its members in their pursuit of professional excellence.

Please accept my best wishes for a productive conference.

Sincerely,

w

The Rt. Hon. Justin P. J. Trudeau, P.C., M.P. Prime Minister of Canada





MAYOR KEN SIM



September 12-14, 2024

A MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

On behalf of the residents of Vancouver and my colleagues on City Council, I want to extend my warmest greetings to everyone attending the 70th Canadian Fertility and Andrology Society Annual Meeting.

As Mayor, I am excited to welcome reproductive specialists, scientists, and allied health professionals from across the country to gather in our beautiful city. This event presents an exciting opportunity to exchange valuable insights and share knowledge with a goal to advancing reproductive science and medicine through leadership, research, and expert guidance.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the organizers for planning the event against the backdrop of our vibrant and dynamic cityscape.

Enjoy the event!

Sincerely,

Mayor Ken Sim





Welcome From The President **Mr. Alexander Lagunov**

Dear Friends and colleagues:

As our event quickly approaches, we are looking forward to seeing you in the beautiful and exploratory city of Vancouver. We thank you in advance for participating in our 70th Canadian Fertility and Andrology Society annual meeting.

The last few years have taught us all that we can excel, thrive and continue to advance our field of reproductive medicine within our new reality. Our collective resilience and strength is apparent in our everyday and professional lives as we continue to move forward with the same dedication to our patients and practice. Our members attendance at our annual meeting and ongoing participation in the CFAS is exemplary of this dedication and is both appreciated and applauded.

We have a full agenda of plenary sessions, concurrent sessions, and a wonderful lineup of preconference symposia!

We have been grateful to be able to explore Canada from coast to coast in the last few years for our annual meetings, and now returning to the popular city of Vancouver.

The CFAS is honored to have you join us at the Westin Bayshore to share in our ongoing education, continuing to progress the field of ART and maintain our strong connections.

We wish you safe travels to Vancouver, and a wonderful conference experience.

Sincerely,

Alexander Lagunov CFAS President 2023-2024



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Advisory Council

Dr. François Bissonnette, MD Dr. Albert Yuzpe, MD



Award of Excellence

Awarded to any individual who demonstrates tremendous dedication to advancing the field of Reproductive Medicine and Science.





Marc-André Sirard

Dr. Marc-André Sirard, a Full Professor and Canadian Research Chair in Reproduction Genomic at Laval University, has made remarkable contributions to reproductive medicine and science. Since joining Laval in 1987 and being appointed an industrial chair in 1990, he has been a pioneering force in both animal and human reproductive research. His groundbreaking work includes developing advanced methodologies for in vitro maturation and ovulation stimulation, particularly in cattle, which has deepened our understanding of gene expression in oocytes and ovarian follicles.

Dr. Sirard founded the Groupe de Recherche en Biologie de la Reproduction in 1992 and the Centre de Recherche en Biologie de la Reproduction (CRBR) in 1995, serving as its director for a decade. Under his leadership, CRBR became one of Canada's largest and most influential reproductive research centers. His creation of the Reproduction Network of Quebec (RQR) in 2005 further advanced reproductive biology in the region.

Internationally, Dr. Sirard established the EmbryoGENE network, a consortium dedicated to the genomic study of early embryos, involving six countries and significantly contributing to global reproductive research. His innovative work includes developing a diagnostic tool for predicting embryo viability based on ovarian follicular cell transcriptome analysis.

Dr. Sirard's extensive research has resulted in over 350 peer-reviewed publications and numerous awards, including the Leo Pariseau Award and the International Embryo Transfer Society Pioneer Award. His leadership roles, including on the CFAS Board of Directors, and mentorship of over 100 graduate students underscore his profound impact on the field. Dr. Sirard's career exemplifies excellence in reproductive science and dedication to advancing the field.



Award of Excellence

Awarded to any individual who demonstrates tremendous dedication to advancing the field of Reproductive Medicine and Science.





Mary Stephenson

Dr. Mary D. Stephenson is a distinguished leader in the field of Obstetrics and Gynecology, renowned for her groundbreaking work in reproductive endocrinology and infertility. With a medical degree from the University of Illinois College of Medicine, she completed her residency in Obstetrics and Gynecology and a fellowship in Reproductive Endocrinology. Dr. Stephenson has served as Chair of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at the University of Illinois College of Medicine and has held notable positions at the University of British Columbia and the University of Chicago.

Her research has been instrumental in advancing the understanding of reproductive immunology and recurrent pregnancy loss, leading to innovative treatment approaches. Dr. Stephenson's contributions are widely published in leading medical journals and are frequently cited by peers. She has received numerous accolades, including listings in "America's Top Doctors" and "Best Doctors in America," and has secured significant research funding from the National Institutes of Health.

A committed advocate for global women's health, Dr. Stephenson has been involved in initiatives to improve reproductive care in underserved regions. Her dedication to mentorship has profoundly impacted the careers of many medical professionals, guiding them with her expertise and compassion. Dr. Stephenson's career exemplifies excellence in clinical care, research, and education, marking her as a leading figure in her field and a beacon of progress in women's health.



Carole Rhéaume Award

Given to a nurse who successfully enhances the patient experience or clinical practice or engages the public.





Bethann Wright

Bethann Wright is a distinguished fertility nurse whose remarkable contributions have greatly impacted reproductive medicine at the Pacific Centre for Reproductive Medicine (PCRM) in Burnaby, BC. Since joining PCRM in 2011 as the IVF Nurse Coordinator, Bethann has excelled in managing complex third-party fertility programs, including donor oocytes, donor sperm, and surrogacy, particularly supporting international and LGBTQ patients. Her deep understanding of Health Canada regulations and international fertility care has been crucial in ensuring seamless patient experiences.

Bethann's most notable achievement is the establishment and ongoing leadership of the PCRM Support Group, initiated in 2012. Recognizing the emotional toll of infertility, she created this group to provide a supportive community where patients can share experiences and receive emotional guidance. Her adept transition of the group to virtual meetings during the COVID-19 pandemic ensured continued support for patients. Her efforts have significantly enhanced patient satisfaction and reduced anxiety.

Her clinical skills, including transvaginal ultrasound scanning and intrauterine inseminations (IUI), are complemented by her comprehensive patient education and emotional support. Prior to PCRM, Bethann gained valuable experience at fertility centers in the Caribbean and the UK, enriching her practice with a global perspective.

Bethann also actively engages in professional development and public advocacy, participating in training and awareness initiatives like the Vancouver Pride Parade. Her exceptional dedication, expertise, and compassionate care make Bethann a deserving

recipient of the Carole Rhéaume Award recognizing her significant contributions to enhancing the patient experience and advancing fertility nursing.



CFAS SMART Grants

The SMART (Science and Medicine in Assisted Reproductive Technology) Fund Grants are to provide financial assistance to explore important issues related to fertility that are not currently funded by other granting agencies. CFAS wants to support projects related to data analysis with BORN or other valid sources of information.





Project Title:

Analyze the trends, clinical patterns, oocyte donor cycles, and neonatal birth outcomes through gestational carriers among single men and same-sex males couples (SM&SSMC) using BORN (Canada) and SART (US) registries

> Samantha Yee, PHD, MSW Dr. Clifford Librach, MD CReATe Fertility Centre

Dr. Brent Monseur, MD, SCM Stanford University



CFAS Training Grants

The Training Grants are meant to support REI (Reproductive Endocrinologist) fellow's projects that are accepted by related department in higher education institutions. Training Grants serve to provide financial assistance to initiate new research or to analyze relevant clinical practices.



Project Title:

Feasibility of wearable technology to collect biometric data compared with monotoring endocrinological profile(s) to predict ovulation and early pregnancy/pregnancy loss in women seeking infertility treatment: a pilot study. WIIT.

Vasilia Vastis, MB, BCH, BAO, FRCSC GREI Fellow McMaster University/ONE Fertility



Project Title:

Qualitative Study on Experiences of Black Patients Accessing Ongoing Fertility Care Upon Completing One Cycle of Government-Funded IVF Treatment

Heather Shapiro, MD FRCSC Professor University of Toronto/Mount Sinai Fertility



Project Title:

Trans female sperm parameters prior to gender affirming hormone therapy compared to WHO sperm reference standard; a retrospectove, descriptive cohort study

Lara Des Roches, BScN BA MD FRCSC GREI Fellow McMaster University

CFAS SEED Grants

The Research Seed Grants promote collaboration across distinctly different fields. Seed Grants serve to provide financial assistance to initiate new research or to obtain the preliminary results necessary to start a new research program that could subsequently be funded by regular grant agencies – a great opportunity to start a new and exciting project!



Project Title:

Bisphenols, AMH and sperm fertilization capability

Laura A. Favetta, PhD Associate Professor University of Guelph



Project Title:

Origin of Cell Free Embryonic Genetic Material in Spent Blastocyst Media

Anja Stojsin Carter, PhD Senior Embryologist Generation Fertility Waterloo



Project Title:

Quantum sensing of human semen for direct oxidative stress detection

> Dr. Veronika Magdanz Systems Design Engineering University of Waterloo

Science Light

Science Light

Date: Thursday, Sept. 12th, 2024 Time: 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM PDT

11:00 AM - 12:00 PM PDT

Science Light

Clinical Applications of AI in Reproductive Medicine



Dr. Clifford Librach

CReATe Fertility Center

Dr Clifford Librach completed his Medical School and Obstetrics and Gynecology Residency training at the University of Toronto, followed by fellowship subspecialty training in Reproductive Endocrinology and Infertility (REI) at the University of California, San Francisco. Dr. Librach is the founder and Director of the CReATe Fertility Centre in Toronto. He is a Full Professor in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at the University of Toronto. Dr Librach has made significant contributions to current fertility practice in Canada and Internationally. He has served on provincial and national committees for the development of standards for the practice of REI in Canada. Dr Librach is a past president of the Canadian Fertility and Andrology Society (CFAS). Dr. Librach is a leader in the field of reproductive biology research. From a clinical research standpoint, Dr. Librach has been a pioneer in the study of the medical and psychosocial aspects, as well as pregnancy outcomes, related to IVF and third party reproduction (surrogacy and gamete donation). Some of his major basic science contributions include identifying the role of HLA-G in pregnancy and preeclampsia, uncovering important factors indicative of embryo quality, developing new methodologies in preimplantation embryo genetics, improving andrology diagnostic testing, and he has carried out pioneering research on the use of a novel multipotent progenitor cell from umbilical cord perivascular tissue for regenerative therapy in both reproductive and non-reproductive applications. Dr Librach has published over 150 peer-reviewed publications, over 750 abstracts, and 6 book chapters. Dr Librach has been an invited speaker at greater than 50 international and national meetings. He has also been interviewed extensively on ART-related topics in the media.

Opening Ceremony

Keynote Speaker & Symposium I

Date: Thursday, Sept. 12th, 2024 Time: 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM PDT

1:00 PM - 1:15 PM PDT

Opening Remarks -

Introduction, Land Acknowledgement & Award Ceremony



Mr. Alexander Lagunov

CFAS President

Alex completed his Graduate studies at McMaster University. Alex has been the Laboratory Director of CCRM Toronto/Hannam Fertility since clinic conception in 2014. He successfully led the highly professional and dedicated team of Andrologists and Embryologists at CCRM Toronto in achieving accreditation through the College of American Pathologists (CAP)—the only available peer-reviewed Reproductive Lab Specific Certification Program in the Country. Alex is actively involved in cutting-edge clinical research with various University-based investigators in North America. His work has been published in numerous scientific peerreviewed articles, conference publications and book chapters in the ART field.

1:15 PM - 2:15 PM PDT

Keynote Speaker The IVF Clinic: Fertile Ground for Leader Development



Jordan Swain

United States Military Academy

Jordon Swain is a Colonel in the United States Army and Associate Professor at the United States Military Academy where he teaches management and leadership courses and serves as an Associate Dean. He has over 25 years of organizational leadership experience in the military, having served in various command and staff positions both overseas and in the United States during both peacetime and war. Colonel Swain graduated from West Point with honors, holds an MBA from the Wharton School of Business at the University of Pennsylvania, and earned a Ph.D. in Organizations and Management from Yale University. Jordon is also a graduate of the Army's Command and General Staff College, Army Airborne School, Army Assault School, and US Navy Dive School. He has earned a number of awards including the Bronze Star medal. He has published numerous papers and book chapters focused on leadership and leader development and has provided leadership training to a wide variety of teams and organizations in both the public and private sectors.



Symposium I

2:15 PM - 3:15 PM PDT

Symposium I - Lecture I

The First Century of the IVF Laboratory: From Artisanal to Automation



Dr. Jacques Cohen Reprogenetics LLC

Jacques Cohen is a Dutch embryologist based in New York, U.S. He is currently Director at Reprogenetics LLC, Laboratory Director at ART Institute of Washington at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (a joint fertility program with NIH), and Scientific Director of R & D at IVF-online. Cohen is known for the application of micromanipulation techniques to operate on eggs, sperm and embryos. Intracytoplasmic Sperm Injection (ICSI) and are now routinely used worldwide to aid in helping couples achieve pregnancy.

3:15 PM - 4:00 PM PDT

Symposium I - Lecture 2

The Vaginal and Endometrial Microbiomes as They Impact Fertility



Dr. Deborah Money

UBC Faculty of Medicine

Dr. Deborah Money is Professor and Head of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, at the University of British Columbia (UBC). She is a clinician/scientist in Reproductive Infectious Diseases, based at the Women's Health Research Institute, leading several large multicentered research projects in the vaginal microbiome, HIV in pregnancy, studies of the HPV vaccine in women living with HIV. Since March 2020, she pivoted her research group to lead three large pan-Canadian projects to study the impact of COVID-19 on pregnant women and their infants and is now studying syphilis in pregnancy. She is the Chair of the Infections in Pregnancy committee for the International Federation of Gynecology and Obstetrics (FIGO). She has been a successful teacher, mentor and research team builder and has published more than 250 peer reviewed publications.

- To review the composition of the vaginal microbiome by traditional and genomic based approaches
- 16
- To review the microbiome of the uterus in health and in association with endometritis
- To review the relationships between the vaginal and endometrial microbiomes with
- infertility and pregnancy loss

Symposium II

Symposium II

Date: Friday, Sept. 13th, 2024 Time: 8:00 AM - 10:30 AM PDT

8:00 AM - 8:35 AM PDT

Van Campenhout Lecture

Controversies in IVF: Can the Laboratory Influence Embryo Aneuploidy? Jason Swain



CCRM Fertility Network

Jason E. Swain, PhD, HCLD is the Chief Laboratory Officer and President of Laboratory Operations for the CCRM Fertility Network, overseeing laboratory operations of a growing network of clinical IVF centers in North America.Dr. Swain completed his BSc at Hillsdale College in his native Michigan, his MSc in Animal Science at Purdue University and his PhD in Molecular & Integrative Physiology at the University of Michigan. Prior to helping start the CCRM Fertility Network, Dr. Swain was a Clinical Associate Professor at the University of Michigan where he directed the ART laboratories and was an active member of the Reproductive Sciences Training Program. He has held adjunct faculty roles at the University of Minnesota and Rutgers University and is currently an instructor for the Reproductive Sciences program at Eastern Virginia Medical school. Dr. Swain has published extensively on topics related to the ART lab and has held various leadership roles with professional societies within the field of assisted reproduction, such as SART and SRBT. He serves on the editorial board and is an active reviewer for various journals. Jason has given numerous regional, national and internationally invited lectures on topics related to the IVF laboratory. His primary research interests include pursuit of methods to enhance in vitro embryo culture through development and implementation of new technology aimed at improving physical and chemical culture environment.

Learning Objectives

- Review preimplantation embryo aneuploidy and mosaicism and possible causative factors.
- Discuss embryology laboratory environmental variables procedures and their potential impact on embryo chromosomal dynamics
- Describe the impact of the genetics lab on clinical PGTA results

8:35 AM - 9:10 AM PDT

Symposium II - Lecture I

Artificial Intelligence to Identify Sperm Epigenome Signatures that are Predictive of Environmental Factors and Clinical Outcomes Dr. Sarah Kimmins



СНИМ

Dr. Sarah Kimmins is a Full Professor in the in the Department of Pathology and Cell Biology at the University of Montreal, Canada and a senior group leader at the Hospital Research Center of the University of Montreal. She was awarded a Junior then Senior Canada Research Chair as a professor at McGill University, Montreal (2005-2022). She is the Co-director of the Quebec Research Network Developmental and Intergenerational Origins of Child Health. Her achievements in reproduction and fertility have been recognized with multiple international research awards. She was the co-director of the McGill Center for Research in Reproduction and Development, served on numerous international society committees as Chair and as an Executive Council Member. She was the Andrology Chair for the Canadian Fertility and Andrology Society, is a working group member of the international Male Reproductive Health Initiative funded by the European Society of Human Reproduction and Embryology and is on the Executive Council of the Canadian Epigenetics and Environment Health Research Consortium. She is a reviewer for national and international funding

agencies and has published her work in Science, Nature, Nature Communications and Developmental Cell. Her research focus is paternal health and how environmental exposures (diet, BMI, toxicants) alter fertility, clinical outcomes, the sperm epigenome, embryo development and health of offspring. Her research has been featured in more than 100 national and international popular press publications including: Time magazine, the New York Times, the Economist, the LA Times, the Washington Post, and the Times UK. Her mission is to drive research and policy that invests i n human health before birth, to give each child the best start in life.



Symposium II

9:10 AM - 9:45 AM PDT

Symposium II - Lecture 2

Posthumous Sperm Cryopreservation

Dr. Ariel Revel

Tel Aviv University

Ariel Revel is an expert in ObGyn and professor at Tel Aviv University, with visiting roles at Oxford and Stanford. Board-certified in Israel, he completed a fellowship in Reproductive Endocrinology and Infertility at the Toronto University. Ariel has held positions at Hadassah and Shamir hospitals, specializing in IVF and minimally invasive surgery. As Medical Director at Kadimastem, he advances cell therapy for ALS and diabetes. A pioneer in ovarian cryopreservation and transplantation, he developed methods to restore fertility in young cancer patients, leading to deliveries using transplanted ovarian tissue. He has tutored PhD students on endometrial receptivity markers..." in Human Reproduction Update has been cited over 1,000 times. A certified ultralight pilot and amateur triathlete, he also studied cinema and created two short fiction films. He lectures on health span and longevity, blending professional expertise with ethics and biotechnology. As a published author and community volunteer, he contributes significantly to medical research and literature, volunteering with "Etgarim" and "Physicians for Human Rights" in Jaffa.

9:45 AM - 10:30 AM PDT

Symposium II - Lecture 3

The Art of Creation: New approaches to reproductive science communication

Dr. Deborah Sloboda



McMaster University

Dr Deborah Sloboda is a Professor and the Associate Chair of Research in the Dept of Biochemistry and Biomedical Sciences at McMaster University, Canada. She holds a Tier I Canada Research Chair in Early Origins of Health and Disease. She completed her PhD training at the University of Toronto in Physiology in 2001 following which she was a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the University of Western Australia. In 2006 she was recruited to the Liggins Institute at the University of Auckland in New Zealand and where from 2008 -2011, she was the Deputy Director of the National Research Centre for Growth and Development. In 2012, she left Auckland to take up a faculty position at McMaster University and held a Tier 2 Canada Research Chair in Perinatal Programming for 10 years from 2012-2022.

- To provide an in-depth overview of the Art of Creation Project at McMaster University, showcasing its role in fostering innovation and collaboration among scientists and artists.
- To enhance understanding new approaches for engaging diverse audiences and demonstrating the impact of clear, accessible scientific dialogue on public understanding of early life development.





Concurrent Session A



1:30 PM - 2:10 PM PDT

Session A - Lecture 1

Reproductive Tissue Organoids



Dr. Alexander Beristain

University of British Columbia

Dr. Alexander G. Beristain is an Assistant Professor in the Division of Maternal Fetal Medicine. He received his Ph.D. in Reproductive and Developmental Sciences from UBC in 2007 and completed a postdoctoral fellowship at the Ontario Cancer Institute in 2012. His research focuses on maternal immune function and placental biology, aiming to understand and improve pregnancy outcomes, especially in the context of complications like pre-eclampsia and miscarriage.Dr. Beristain is a Principal Investigator on grants from CIHR, NSERC, and BCCHR, and a Co-Investigator on an NIH grant with Wendy Robinson. He has received the New Investigator grant from Sick Kids Foundation and the John R. Evans Leaders Fund from the Canadian Foundation for Innovation.

2:10 PM - 2:50 PM PDT

Session A - Lecture 2

Pluripotent Stem Cell-Derived Models of the Human Ovary



Merrick Pierson Smela

Harvard University

I am currently a 6th-year PhD student in Prof. George Church's lab, where I am generating human ovarian cell types from induced pluripotent stem cells by overexpressing transcription factors and other regulatory proteins. I have published methods for producing granulosa-like and oogonia-like cells, and my most recent work is a protocol for directly inducing meiosis. Before beginning my PhD, I did my MPhil in Prof. Azim Surani's lab from 2018–2019 through the Churchill Scholarship program. I studied the role of transcription factors in human primordial germ cell specification. I am broadly interested in developing transformative reproductive therapies, such as in vitro oogenesis, using the tools of synthetic biology.

- Identifying regulatory genes that drive the formation of cell types of interest.
- Generate human granulosa-like, oogonia-like, and meiotic cell in vitro.
- Establish stem cell-derived models of reproductive development.



Concurrent Session A

2:50 PM - 3:30 PM PDT

Session A - Lecture 3

New Methods for the Preservation and Reanimation of Oocytes and Ovarian Tissue

Dr. Pierre Comizzoli

Wildlife Science

Pierre Comizzoli started his career 30 years ago as a research veterinarian in French Guyana and Northern Africa studying reproductive biology of various animal species. He completed a PhD in 2000 on in vitro fertilization in bovine and deer species. He then worked on the implementation of reproductive biotechnologies and Genome Resource Banking for the conservation of wild ungulates at the National Museum of Natural History of Paris. In 2002, Dr. Comizzoli joined the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, DC as a staff scientist to develop new cryo-banking projects on gametes and gonadal tissues from rare and endangered species. His comparative research on gamete biology and fertility preservation (mainly using the domestic cat as a model) has been supported by multiple grants from the National Institutes of Health. Interestingly, his studies on germplasm cryobiology and alternate preservation methods in non-traditional animal models build new bridges with human reproductive medicine.

- Understand the challenges related to the cryopreservation of germ cells or gonadal tissues in large animal models.
- Appreciate the comparative value of domestic cat models for wild species and human fertility preservation.
- Understand new opportunities and new challenges associated with the dehydration of cells and tissues for long-term storage at non-freezing temperatures.



Concurrent Session B

Session B: Counselling and Ethics SIGs

1:30 PM - 2:10 PM PDT

Session B - Lecture 1

Surrogacy Laws in Canada: Exploring Intended Parents' Experiences &

Perspectives



Professor Stefanie Carsley

University of Ottawa

Dr. Stefanie Carsley is an Assistant Professor at the University of Ottawa's Faculty of Law, Common Law Section where she researches and teaches in the areas of family law, health law and tort law. Her research focuses on Canadian law and policy responses to assisted reproduction. She is currently the principal investigator for a <u>SSHRC-funded qualitative study</u> entitled "Surrogacy Laws in Canada: Exploring Intended Parents' Experiences and Perspectives" (2021-2023). She is a member of uOttawa's Centre for Health Law, Policy and Ethics and uOttawa's Public Law Centre, and is called to the Bar in Ontario.

Learning Objectives

- To explore the experiences of intended parents who work with a surrogate in Canada
- To examine the role of third parties, including agencies, lawyers and health care providers, in Canadian surrogacy journeys.
- To identify the legal and ethical issues that arise when building a family through surrogacy in Canada.

2:10 PM - 2:50 PM PDT

Session B - Lecture 2 Surrogates' Voices: Exploring Surrogates' Experiences and Insights

Professor Vanessa Gruben

University of Ottawa Vanessa Gruben is a professor in recognized expert in Canadian H

Vanessa Gruben is a professor in the Common Law Section of the University of Ottawa's Faculty of Law. A recognized expert in Canadian health law and policy, her scholarship probes some of the most difficult contemporary legal and ethical issues related to health care. Specifically, her research explores the law and ethics regarding assisted reproduction, harm reduction, organ donation and transplantation, and health care professional self-regulation. Professor Gruben is the co-editor of the 5th edition of Canada's leading health law text, Canadian Health Law and Policy (LexisNexis, 2017). She is also co-author of Families and the Law in Canada: Cases and Commentary (Captus, 2019). Her research has been funded by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), Canadian Blood Services, and the Foundation for Legal Research. In addition to her research, Professor Gruben teaches courses on introductory health law, reproductive health law, property law, and family law. She has also taught courses on access to health care and public health law.

Learning Objectives

- To explore the experiences of surrogates in Canada (or intended parents).
- To examine the role of third parties, including agencies, lawyers and healthcare providers, in Canadian surrogacy journeys.
- To identify the legal and ethical issues that arise when building a family through surrogacy in Canada.

2:50 PM - 3:30 PM PDT

Session B - Lecture 3 Group Panel - Small group discussion and open discussion

Concurrent Session C



1:30 PM - 2:10 PM PDT

Session C - Lecture 1

Treatment of Sperm DNA Damage

Dr. Armand Zini

ELNA Médical



Dr. Armand Zini is Professor of Surgery at McGill University and Head of the Division of Urology at St. Mary's Hospital in Montreal. Dr. Zini is also the Director of the Andrology Fellowship program at McGill University. Dr. Zini received his medical degree and completed his urology training at McGill University in Montreal. He then completed a fellowship in Male Infertility at the New York Hospital-Cornell Medical Centre and The Population Council in New York. Dr. Zini's main expertise is in male infertility. His clinical research interests include varicoceles and sperm retrieval techniques. He has focused his basic research activity on the study of semen oxidants and antioxidants, sperm DNA damage and the impact of this damage on male fertility potential. Dr. Zini has participated in several national and international guidelines committees on the management of male infertility and related disorders.

Learning Objectives

- Discuss the etiology of sperm DNA damage.
- Discuss the clinical utility of sperm DNA tests.
- Discuss the treatment options in men with sperm DNA fragmentation.

2:10 PM - 2:50 PM PDT

Session C - Lecture 2

Clinical Application for Sperm RNA Assessment

Dr. Stephen A. Krawetz Wayne State University



Dr. Stephen A. Krawetz is the Charlotte B. Failing Professor of Fetal Therapy and Diagnosis, Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology and Center for Molecular Medicine and Genetics, Wayne State University School of Medicine, Detroit, Michigan. He received his Ph.D. in Biochemistry from the University of Toronto, then trained with Gordon Dixon at The University of Calgary as an AHFMR postdoctoral fellow. Professor Krawetz is the founding Editor-in-Chief of Systems Biology in Reproductive Medicine. He has served as a member of Federal and State White Paper Committees, emphasizing the impact of the male contribution to the birth and lifecourse of the couple's child.His group established that the fitness of the paternal contribution reflects the relative diversity of sperm RNAs that continually respond to the environment. These RNAs can lend to early paternal genome reprogramming, acting as genetic and epigenetic impactors of the fetal onset of adult disease. They offer a personalized timestamp of the physical and reproductive health of the father that promotes and extends beyond the birth of the couple's child.

- To review the discovery of sperm RNAs and their delivery to the oocyte at fertilization.
- To assess the utility of sperm RNAs predicting birth outcomes.
- To examine sperm RNAs as predictors of a male's health and his contribution to his children's health.



Concurrent Session C

2:50 PM - 3:30 PM PDT

Session C - Lecture 3 Fluidics and AI for Male Fertility

Dr. Reza Nosrati

Monash University



Dr. Reza Nosrati is an NHMRC Fellow, a Senior Lecturer, and the Director of the Applied Microfluidics & Bioengineering (AMB) Lab at Monash University. Dr. Nosrati received his Ph.D. from the University of Toronto in 2016, and prior to joining Monash, he was an NSERC postdoctoral fellow at Queen's University (2016-2018). Dr. Nosrati's research focuses on small-scale fluid mechanics with applications in cell biology and reproductive medicine. He is a pioneer in microfluidics for fertility and assisted reproduction. His work has resulted in important advances in the fundamental understanding of sperm motion, and he has invented novel biomedical technologies to overcome infertility. Dr Nosrati has received numerous prestigious recognitions, including the 2023 Dean's Award for Research Excellence, the 2021 Newcastle Emerging Research Leader Award and the 2016 Colton Medal due to his outstanding international contributions to the field.

Overview

Microfluidic methods offer numerous advantages over their traditional macro-scale counterparts by extending the possibility of biomedical research through miniaturization. These miniaturized platforms enable the manipulation of cells and biological processes at the single-cell level, fostering the development of nature-inspired technologies for diagnostic and therapeutic applications. In the context of fertility, microfluidics can match the geometry of micro-confined regions within the female reproductive tract, thus, presenting opportunities for fundamental understanding of the event of fertilization and biomimicry-based selection of sperm that reflect the *in vivo* process. In this talk, I will provide an overview of our work in developing microfluidic technologies in combination with machine learning strategies for sperm analysis and selection in assisted reproduction.

State of the ART Lecture

State of the ART Lecture

Date: Friday, Sept. 13th, 2024 Time: 4:00 PM- 4:45 PM PDT

4:00 PM - 4:45 PM PDT

State of the ART Lecture

The Future of Genetic Therapeutics in Fertility



Dr. Pranam Chatterjee Duke University

Pranam Chatterjee is an Assistant Professor of Biomedical Engineering and Computer Science at Duke University. Research in his Programmable Biology Group exists at the interface of computational design and experimental engineering, specifically employing generative artificial intelligence (AI) to generate programmable proteins for applications in genome, proteome, and ovarian cell engineering. Having completed his SB, SM, and PhD from MIT, he has engineered genome editing technologies that represent some of the broadest, safest, and most effective CRISPR enzymes to date. More recently, his research at Duke has extended to the emergent field of "proteome" editing, where his team leverages generative language models to design potent "guides" peptides that bind and posttranslationally modify pathogenic proteins, including those implicated in genetic diseases, viral diseases, and cancer. His established expertise in deep learning-based design have further being applied to develop transcription factor-based stem cell differentiation protocols for ovarian cell types, including primordial germ cells, granulosa cells, and oocytes. Overall, the long-term goals of his lab are to de novo design protein-based therapeutics for reproductive disorders by integrating the newest advances in generative AI with robust experimental engineering platforms.

Overview

Professor Chatterjee will be presenting on his recent work prioritizing transcription factors for the generation of ovarian support cells and mitotic oogonia, as well as new generative algorithms to design proteins that can probe and alter disease-causing targets, focusing on those that may be implicated fertility-related diseases. He will highlight new advances in AI that can aid in efforts to therapeutically treat these disorders as well as predict new areas for intervention.



Symposium III

Symposium III

Date: Saturday, Sept. 14th, 2024 Time: 8:00 AM- 10:30 AM PDT

8:00 AM - 8:35 AM PDT

John Collins Lecture

When Euploid Embryos Don't Succeed

Dr. Jeremy Grushcow

Juniper Genomics



Dr. Jeremy Grushcow, Ph.D., J.D., is a co-founder and the CEO and acting CSO at Juniper Genomics. Jeremy has over twenty years' experience in business development, strategy, operating and transactional roles for genomics and biotech companies. Prior to founding Juniper, he worked in population genomics and in Al and traditional drug discovery companies and was part of the S19 cohort at YC. Before his operating roles, Jeremy practiced law for a decade, working on transactions from tech transfer to VC to public markets, starting as an associate at Kirkland & Ellis in Chicago and ending as a partner at Norton Rose Fulbright in Toronto. Jeremy has a B.Sc. (Human Biology) from the University of Toronto, a Ph.D. (Molecular Genetics & Cell Biology) from the University of Chicago, and a J.D. with honors from the University of Chicago Law School, where he's proud to have been awarded the John M. Olin Prize, given to the outstanding student in Law and Economics.

Learning Objectives

- To review current and historical per transfer success rates and understand the current unmet need
- To understand the relevance of product of conception data for explaining euploid losses
- To discuss how whole genome and transcriptome data should and should not be used for embryo selection

8:35 AM - 9:10 AM PDT

Symposium III - Lecture I Racial Inequities in Access to Fertility Care

Dr. Marjorie Dixon





her as a respected figure and standard of excellence within the industry.



Symposium III

9:10 AM - 9:45 AM PDT

Symposium III - Lecture 2

Treating Obesity and Fertility in the Era of Glucagon-like Peptide 1 Receptor Agonists



Dr. Alyse Goldberg

Anova Fertility

Dr. Alyse Goldberg practices as a consultant Endocrinologist at fertility centres in Toronto, as well as a part of the Women's and Babies team at Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre managing patients with gestational diabetes. She is a member of the International PCOS Network that authored the 2023 International Evidence based Guidelines for Assessment and Management of PCOS. She focuses on care of patients with polycystic ovarian syndrome as well as pregestational metabolic optimization.

Learning Objectives

•Appreciate known associations of obesity and adverse fertility outcomes, but inconclusive evidence for recommending weight loss prior to pregnancy

•Review the current approach to GLP1 RA use in PCOS

•Develop an approach to use and limitations of GLP1 RA as a tool to assist weight loss prior to fertility interventions

9:45 AM - 10:30 AM PDT

Symposium III - Lecture 3

Business of REI/Reproductive Medicine

Dr. Tom Molinaro

IVIRMA Innovation



Dr. Thomas A. Molinaro, MD, MSCE is an attending physician at Reproductive Medicine Associates of New Jersey where he serves as lead physician of Eatontown office and Clinical Assistant Professor at Robert Wood Johnson Medical School. Dr. Molinaro graduated from Loyola College in Maryland and then pursued a Masters in Physiology from Georgetown University. He went on to graduate medical school at New Jersey Medical School and completed his residency in Obstetrics and Gynecology as well as a fellowship in Reproductive Endocrinology and Infertility at the University of Pennsylvania. During fellowship, Dr. Molinaro completed a Masters of Science in Clinical Epidemiology through an NIH sponsored grant. While at the University of Pennsylvania he was awarded the Mikuta Award for Professionalism in Medicine as well as the Touchstone Award for excellence in research. Upon graduating from Fellowship, he joined Reproductive Medicine Associates of New Jersey as an attending physician. Dr. Molinaro is double board certified in both Obstetrics and Gynecology as well as Reproductive Endocrinology and Infertility. He serves as Ad Hoc Reviewer for the Journal of Reproductive Genetics and Fertility and Sterility.



Concurrent Session D

Session D: Clinical

1:30 PM - 2:10 PM PDT

Session D - Lecture 1

Fertility Preservation for Transgender and Gender Diverse Patients

Dr. Molly Moravek

University of Michigan



Dr. Molly Moravek is a Clinical Professor in the Department of Obstetrics, Gynecology, and Reproductive Biology in the College of Human Medicine at Michigan State University and the Division Director for Reproductive Endocrinology and Infertility at Henry Ford Health in Detroit, Michigan. Dr. Moravek also serves as the Executive Director for the Oncofertility Consortium. She received her bachelor's degree at the University of Michigan, then attended the University of Michigan Medical School, where she received both her medical degree and a master's degree in public health. She completed her residency in Obstetrics and Gynecology at the University of Michigan, and her fellowship in Reproductive Endocrinology and Infertility at Northwestern University, where she also received a master's degree in clinical investigation.

Learning Objectives

- Explain what is and is not known about the effect of gender-affirming hormone therapy on future reproductive capacity
- Discuss unique considerations for fertility preservation in the transgender and gender diverse patients
- Create a more inclusive clinical environment for transgender and gender diverse patients

2:10 PM - 2:50 PM PDT

Session D - Lecture 2

Endometriosis Management and Advanced Ultrasound Techniques



Dr. Tinya Lin

University of British Columbia

Dr. Tinya Lin is a Gynaecologist at the BC Centre for Pelvic Pain & Endometriosis. She completed residency in Obstetrics and Gynecology at the University of Calgary followed by fellowship in Endometriosis, Pelvic Pain, and Advanced Laparoscopic Surgery at the University of British Columbia, and advanced gynecologic ultrasound training with Specialized Ultrasound Gynecology & Obstetrics at McMaster University. Dr. Lin's clinical practice is primarily focused on chronic pelvic pain and endometriosis. She has particular interest in use of pelvic ultrasound and advanced laparoscopy in complex benign gynecologic conditions.

- To understand the challenges with diagnosing endometriosis
- To learn how ultrasound can be used to diagnose and phenotype endometriosis
- To discuss how diagnosis of endometriosis can impact fertility and subsequent management



Concurrent Session D

2:50 PM - 3:30 PM PDT

Session D - Lecture 3 Optimizing REI Practice

Tom Hannam

Hannam Fertility Center



Dr. Tom Hannam is one of Canada's leading fertility experts. He has spent over 25 years helping patients navigate the everevolving path to parenthood. After earning his medical degree at the University of British Columbia in 1995, Dr. Hannam went on to specialize in Obstetrics and Gynecology at McMaster University. His interest in reproductive health led him to a two-year fellowship in Reproductive Endocrinology and Infertility at the University of Toronto, followed by executive education at Stanford. In 2006, he founded Hannam Fertility Centre in Toronto, where he leads a team of health professionals dedicated to patient-centred fertility care. Hannam Fertility Centre is the only clinic in Canada partnered with the world-renowned Colorado Center for Reproductive Medicine. The clinic provides options for patients with a range of fertility needs, from IVF and egg freezing to lower-intervention methods in the clinic's Natural Conception Program.

Concurrent Session E

Session E: Nursing SIG

1:30 PM - 2:10 PM PDT

Session E - Lecture 1

Perspective on Abandoned Embryos: Legal Aspect

Catherine Wong

Guild Yule LLP



Catherine J. Wong is a family and fertility law lawyer and mediator based in downtown Vancouver, B.C. Her law practice includes the full range of family law services relating to marriage and cohabitation, guardianship and parenting, separation and divorce, and property division and support. She is a certified family law mediator and a collaborative divorce practitioner and regularly acts as a mediator in family law files. Her law practice has a particular focus on fertility law and on working with 2SLGBTQIA+ and poly/multiparent families. In addition to presenting on matters related to fertility law, she is also regularly asked to consult on fertility law matters by other family law lawyers in the context of cohabitation and separation.

2:10 PM - 2:50 PM PDT

Session E - Lecture 2 Perspective on Abandoned Embryos: Ethical Aspect



Nipa Chauhan

Mount Sinai Hopsital

Nipa Chauhan, MHSc (Bioethics), is a bioethicist specializing in reproductive ethics, currently based in Toronto. She provides ethics consultation and education to fertility clinics across Canada by engaging with seasoned clinicians and their teams. She currently supports the bioethics department at Sinai Health Toronto, and teaches undergraduate and graduate courses at the University of Toronto. Her expertise extends to exploring the ethical implications of emerging technologies in fertility treatment and reproductive healthcare systems. Nipa is passionate about promoting patient rights and ethical stewardship in healthcare settings. To learn more and connect with Nipa, please visit nipachauhan.com



Concurrent Session E

2:50 PM - 3:30 PM PDT

Session E - Lecture 3

Perspective on Abandoned Embryos: Patient Aspect

Liz Ellwood

LE Strategies

Liz Ellwood's journey epitomizes resilience, compassion, and a relentless commitment to positive change. Liz is an Ottawa based marketing and business development professional with over 18 years of experience in establishing and growing businesses focused on improving the health journey and experience for patients.

Her passion for healthcare stems from real life experience. Liz's life took an unexpected turn at age 24 when she was diagnosed with cervical cancer, leading her to become a multifaceted entrepreneur and advocate. In the wake of her battle with cancer, Liz founded Fertile Future, a national charity supporting cancer patients in preserving fertility. To date, close to 1000 fellow cancer patients have found hope and funding through this initiative.



Concurrent Session F

Session F: ART Lab SIG

1:30 PM - 2:10 PM PDT

Session F - Lecture 1

Lab KPI's

Rebecca Holmes

CCRM



Rebecca "Bec" Holmes, DPhil, HCDL is the Senior Vice President of Lab Operations for the CCRM network. She is responsible for overseeing protocol/procedure implementation, as well aiding in staff training and ongoing quality control monitoring for the network embryology, andrology and endocrinology laboratories. She is involved in bring new technology and interfaces to the lab

Originally from England Dr Holmes obtained her BSc at Brunel University and her D. Phil in Biochemistry from the University of Oxford where she studied epigenetics. She completed her postdoctoral studies at Cornell University. After completing embryology training in the Boston area she went on to become Technical Director of IVF at Brigham and Women's Hospital before helping establish the Boston CCRM laboratory and now directing multiple labs within the CCRM network. She has given regional, national and international invited lectures on various topics related to the IVF laboratory, contributed to numerous peer-reviewed articles and runs an embryology society meeting in the New England area.

Patients facing the woes of infertility are desperately in need of researchers who can help them navigate the biological, technical, and emotional challenges of their effort to have a baby. Dr Holmes receives an immense amount of joy for being able to make this happen for thousands of people.

Learning Objectives

- Identifying the key performance indictors of an IVF lab
- · Identifying other performance indictors that can affect an IVF lab
- Learn tools for tracking and troublshooting

2:10 PM - 2:50 PM PDT

Session F - Lecture 2

Leadership and the Art of Training the New Generation of Embryologists



Debbie Venier

World Embryology Skills and Training

Debbie is an experienced embryologist with over 30 years in the IVF field. She is the co-founder of WEST (World Embryology Skills and Training) which offers full training in all aspects of IVF for both new embryologists as well as existing embryologists looking to increase their skill level. Her passion and skill lie in teaching embryology to the next generation. Debbie holds a Masters degree in Reproductive Physiology from UC Davis and is certified as a technical supervisor through AAB and licensed through the state of California. She taught embryology and genetics at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo for 10 years where she developed her revolutionary course in applied embryology for undergraduates. Many embryologists today started their careers after taking this course. Debbie's expertise lies in ICSI and Biopsy techniques and has trained embryologists at

workshops worldwide. She serves as a board member for PCRS (Pacific Coast Reproductive Society), a committee member for CRB (College of Reproductive Biology) and is a revered speaker for many companies and organizations in the IVF field. She is currently a full-time trainer at WEST where she has trained 100's of embryologists. When looking for an international expert trainer with the record and reputation to support it, Debbie is the best person to ensure success in her embryology trainees.



Concurrent Session F

2:50 PM - 3:30 PM PDT

Session F - Lecture 3 The Internet of Things in the IVF Lab

Giles Palmer

International IVF Initative



Giles A Palmer is a senior clinical embryologist with over 35 years of experience in staff training and laboratory management. He has served as a business and quality manager, overseeing regulatory compliance, clinic operations, bidding for service contracts, and designing laboratories. Additionally, he has extensive experience in conducting clinic audits, inspections and troubleshooting.

He is the Executive Director of the International IVF Initiative (I3), a non-profit global educational project supporting assisted reproduction technology professionals through insightful webinars and is an honorary lecturer at Bristol University. He has a keen interest in teaching and introducing innovations to the fertility sector serving as the Director of Global Communications for IVF 2.0 Ltd. and an assessor for the ESHRE accreditation of training centres in clinical embryology.

Giles is a well-known reproductive scientist and frequent invited congress speaker. He began his career after graduating in Genetics from Leeds University, UK and working as a research officer at London's esteemed Hammersmith Hospital IVF unit with pioneers Professors Lord Winston and Alan Handyside. He then moved to Greece and worked as a laboratory manager and clinic director in IVF clinics in Athens while consulting in Iceland, Nigeria, Albania, Bulgaria, and Romania. His research collaboration with St. Sophia's Children's Hospital (Athens University) resulted in Greece's first births following embryo-biopsy and preimplantation genetic diagnosis and the first PGT cycles screening for Beta Thalassemia.

He has published in leading scientific journals on pre-implantation genetic testing, embryo morpho-kinetics, quality management, staff wellbeing, artificial intelligence, and the latest laboratory technologies. He is a certified HCPC clinical scientist in the UK and has been accredited with Senior Embryologist Status by ESHRE. Recently, Giles has become a consultant for IVF clinics, Institute of Life, Athens and Embryorigin in Cyprus, and is a product developer in various areas within the assisted reproductive technologies industry.



Debate & Closing Ceremony

Debate

Date: Saturday, Sept. 14th, 2024 Time: 4:00 <u>PM - 5:00 PM PDT</u>

4:00 PM - 5:00 PM PDT

All Women Should Electively Freeze Their Eggs by Age 30



Dr. Crystal Chan Markham Fertility Center

Dr. Crystal Chan is the Scientific Director of Markham Fertility Centre. She is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology (OB/GYN) and the Department of Lab Medicine and Pathology (LMP) at the University of Toronto. She trained at University of Toronto for residency, and Mt Sinai Fertility for fellowship. She started as an academic REI at Mt Sinai Fertility, and moved to Markham Fertility 3+ years ago, where she now practices "privademics". Dr. Chan is passionate about research on the molecular mechanisms behind implantation and conception. Her areas of interest include studying uterine receptivity in IVF, pre-implantation genetic testing, as well as reproductive immunology. She has received national and international accolades for research, including awards from the American Society for Reproductive Medicine (ASRM) and the Canadian Society for Clinical Investigation (CSCI).



Dr. Caitlin Dunne Pacific Center for Reproductive Medicine

Dr. Caitlin Dunne is a co-Director at the Pacific Centre for Reproductive Medicine, here in British Columbia. She attended medical school at the University of Western Ontario before moving to Vancouver for residency and fellowship. Dr. Dunne is also a Clinical Associate Professor at UBC and the Editor-in-Chief of the British Columbia Medical Journal.



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