



# CFAS EMBRYOLOGY SUMMIT 2025

Contending With Change in The Evolving  
Clinical Embryology Laboratory



## PROGRAM

SATURDAY, MARCH 22ND, 2025

CROWNE PLAZA TORONTO AIRPORT

33 CARLSON COURT, TORONTO



# CFAS Embryology Summit 2025

8:30 AM - 5:30 PM EST

Exhibit Hall Open

9:30 AM - 9:45 AM EST

Introduction and Welcome

**Pauline Saunders**

9:50 AM - 10:30 AM EST

Moderated by: Pat Chronis-Brown

Sample Transport and Safety



**Patrick Storr**

Patrick Storr is an expert in cryogenic shipping and storage with a decade of experience in the healthcare industry. As the former VP of Marketing and Sales at Core Cryolab, he was instrumental in overseeing the changes required to grow the business from hundreds of shipments per year to thousands. This led to Core Cryolab's 2022 acquisition by CooperSurgical. He is now the Senior Manager, Cold Chain Logistics for CooperSurgical and is responsible for global cryogenic, media, genomics testing, and reagent transportation. He holds an MBA from the Schulich School of Business.

Learning Objectives

- TBD
- TBD
- TBD

10:35 AM - 11:05 AM EST

Health Break



11:10 AM - 11:55 AM EST

Moderated by: Pauline Saunders

## AI in Embryology, what works and what doesn't?



### Dr. Nikica Zaninovic

Nikica Zaninovic, Ph.D., is the Embryology Laboratory Director and Associate Professor of Embryology in Obstetrics and Gynecology at the Ronald O. Perelman and Claudia Cohen Center for Reproductive Medicine of Weill Cornell Medical College. In 2012, Dr. Zaninovic's laboratory became one of the first to initiate clinical use of the pioneering new embryo incubation system, the EmbryoScope®. He and his staff are currently focused on developing new embryo selection/deselection protocols using data collected by the EmbryoScope time-lapse microscopy of growing embryos. In recent years, his interest expanded to apply artificial intelligence in ART and IVF. He is double-certified as a High-complexity Laboratory Director (HCLD) and Embryology Laboratory Director (ELD) by the American Association of Bioanalysts.

### Learning Objectives

- Novel AI application in ART
- How AI can improve and facilitate the IVF process
  - Clinical
  - Laboratory
- Automatization of the IVF lab; the role of AI

12:00 PM - 1:00 PM EST

## Lunch

1:05 PM - 1:50 PM EST

Moderated by: Pat Chronis-Brown

## Achieving optimal success in vitrification: Don't be a robot!



### Debbie Venier

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.

### Learning Objectives

- Understand the difference in media composition between vitrification companies
- Understand the difference in protocols between vitrification companies.
- Understand what to look for and how to adapt during vitrification when embryos and eggs don't respond as expected.



1:55 PM - 2:25 PM EST

## Health Break

2:30 PM - 3:15 PM EST

Moderated by: Scot Hamilton

### Panel: Tips for Navigating the Health Canada Inspection of your ART laboratory (under the "Safety of Sperm and Ova Regulations")

#### Simon Phillips



Simon Phillips is a clinical embryologist with 30 years experience in the field of human embryology. He earned a bachelor's degree in biological sciences from the University of Portsmouth, a master's in clinical embryology from the University of Leeds and his PhD from the University of Plymouth; all in the UK where he started his career. Having worked in IVF laboratories in the UK and Canada, Simon is currently the Regional Scientific Director for The Fertility Partners / OVO Fertility where he has worked for over 20 years and oversees the laboratories in three IVF centres. He is a Past President of the Canadian Fertility and Andrology Society and a clinical lecturer in the faculty of medicine at the University of Montreal.

#### Sergey Moskovtsev



Dr. Sergey I. Moskovtsev received his MD specializing in Urology and Reproductive Medicine from the Kursk State Medical University in Russia. After completing extensive research he obtained PhD degree and completed postdoctoral fellowships in the United States at the Department of Biochemistry, Molecular Biology and Biophysics, University of Minnesota and at the Division of Andrology, Department of Urology, University of Utah, in Salt Lake City. In Canada, Dr. Moskovtsev completed a three year Research Fellowship at the Department of Pathology & Laboratory Medicine at Mount Sinai Hospital in Toronto with both clinical and research responsibilities.

#### Jason Au



Jason Au obtained his MSc in Clinical Embryology from the University of Leeds and his BSc in Biochemistry and Chemistry from the University of British Columbia. He is currently pursuing his PhD in Reproductive Clinical Science at Eastern Virginia Medical School. He is a CFAS certified Embryology Lab Director and has served as an executive in the ART Lab SIG for the past 6 years taking on the roles of the Treasurer, Vice Chair and Chair. He is currently the Regional Laboratory Director at the Pacific Centre for Reproductive Medicine in Western Canada. Jason brings with him the perspective of the ART Lab scientists and the understandings of their unique challenges. He is motivated to promote clear communication and high-quality professional development opportunities to the members.

### Learning Objectives

- Provide the audience with the history of Health Canada's oversight of ART in Canada
- Provide a summary of general findings of compliance with Health Canada regulations (SSOR)
- Provide tips for preparing for and navigating a Health Canada inspection



3:20 PM - 4:20 PM EST

Moderated by: Scot Hamilton

## Student Debate: Embryos Derived From Oocytes with Smooth Endoplasmic Reticulum Bodies Should Not be Utilized



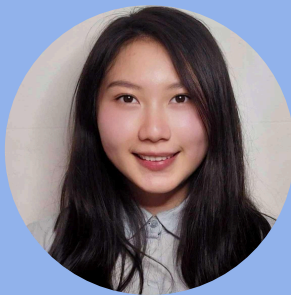
### Raquel Rodrigues

Raquel Rodrigues is a dedicated laboratory technician with four years of experience in the Andrology Lab at TRIO. Her passion for reproductive physiology and a broader understanding of infertility led her to pursue a Master of Health Science in Clinical Embryology at the University of Toronto, where she is currently entering into her final semester. As an aspiring embryologist, Raquel is committed to patient-centered care, continuous education, and upholding the highest laboratory standards.

### Learning Objectives

- Define the role of the smooth endoplasmic reticulum in fertilization and early embryonic development.
- Contrast the historical recommendations against using SER-A+ oocytes with the latest research advancements in this area.
- Understand the risks and benefits of using SER-A+ oocytes and guide patients to make informed decisions.

### Thien Hy Quach



Thien Hy Quach obtained a Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Anatomy and Cell Biology from McGill University and is currently completing a Master of Health Science in Clinical Embryology at the University of Toronto. Her passion for embryology was ignited during her study of developmental biology, where she gained a deep appreciation for the extraordinary precision required for proper embryo development. This fascination led her to research embryonic neural development, focusing on disease morphology and mechanisms. In one project, she worked with chick embryos, and upon opening the eggshell to observe its tiny, beating heart, she was struck by the precious and fragile nature of life. Driven by compassion for embryos and a desire to support those facing infertility, she chose embryology as her professional path. Currently, under the supervision of Dr. Vanessa Bacal at Mount Sinai Fertility, she is researching the impact of PGT-A on embryos from patients with male factor infertility. She finds IVF to be an extraordinary field with immense potential, offering life-changing possibilities to families worldwide.

4:25 PM - 4:40 PM EST

### Closing Remarks

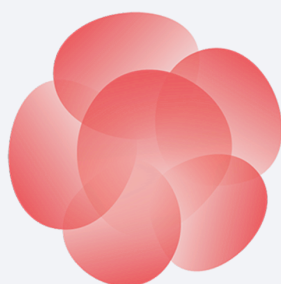
4:45 PM - 5:45 PM EST

### Cocktail & Social Networking

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