

NEWSLETTER

FALL 2021: CLINICIAN INVESTIGATOR TRAINEE ASSOCIATION OF CANADA (CITAC)

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Message from the President

Hello physician-scientist trainee community!

I hope you're taking care and found some time to relax this summer. A new semester may mean a big transition—some folks are starting their graduate studies, re-entering clerkship, starting residency or entering a fellowship. For some, there will be little or no change at all; but just a continuation of one of the many phases of the physician-scientist training pathway. Whatever stage you're at, the Clinical Investigator Trainee Association of Canada (CITAC) community is here to support and advocate for you!

I have a few CITAC updates that I'm very excited to share with you:

- We have [a new website!](#) Here you can find info on what CITAC is, what we do, and how to connect with the team.
- We have a new [Canadian Physician-Scientist Community](#) Facebook group- all are invited to join!
- Our [CSCI/CITAC Annual Joint Meeting 2021](#) is to be held virtually November 14–16, 2021 and we look forward to connecting with you all there!
- Elections for CITAC Board of Director positions will be held end of November following our Annual Joint Meeting (AJM)—details to come soon.

I am always happy to connect and hear your feedback on how we can best serve the physician-scientist

community. Feel free to give me a shout whenever at president@citac-accfc.org.

Adam Pietrobon, BSc

MD/PhD Candidate, Class of 2023

Faculty of Medicine, University of Ottawa

President, Clinical Investigator Trainee Association of Canada (CITAC) (2020–2021)

CITAC LEADERSHIP TEAM 2021

Board of Directors

- President - Adam Pietrobon
- Past President - Tina Marvasti
- Director of Communications - Melissa Phuong
- Director of Operations - Heather Whittaker
- Director of Student Affairs - Wenxuan Wang
- Director of Research Sr. - Andy Zeng
- Director of Research Jr. - Bryce Bogie
- Director of Partnerships Jr. - Danny Jomaa
- Director of Partnerships Sr. - Sophie Hu
- Director of Finance - Matthaeus Ware
- Internal Communications Chair - Jillian Macklin
- Social Media Chair - Valera Castanov
- AGM Co-Chair - Emma LeBlanc
- AGM Co-Chair - Sangmin (Sarah) Lee
- Mentorship Chair - Yujin Suk
- Vice-président du bilinguisme - Zacharie Saint-Georges

MESSAGE FROM THE CITAC DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

It's been an exhilarating year for CITAC, with a bold new vision for our governance structure, renewed focus on strategic planning and the launch of several exciting initiatives. One such change was a redefined role for our institutional representatives (iReps) with the aim of facilitating the flow of ideas between physician-scientist training institutions and enhancing bidirectional communication between trainees at these institutions and CITAC leadership. We assembled the first ever CITAC Representative Advisory Committee (RAC) composed of iReps in MD+ training programs and key partner organizations. We held two Roundtable Meetings wherein we consulted the RAC on issues including the following: reconsidering the terminology used to describe physician-scientist trainees; establishing an online forum to connect trainees across the country; and expanding our outreach efforts for recruiting trainees from underrepresented groups. The RAC provided invaluable feedback that informed CITAC decision making, and contributed novel ideas for discussion in true Roundtable fashion. For example, the idea of formalizing the iRep role within local student councils has spread from the University of Toronto to McGill University and the University of Ottawa MD-PhD programs. I'm looking forward to continuing these conversations with our amazing iReps!

Heather Whittaker

MESSAGE FROM CITAC DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS

This past year has been an exciting opportunity to expand our outreach to membership. In addition to our usual efforts to connect with trainees via social media, CITAC started a Canadian Physician-Scientist Community Facebook Group for trainees and alumni. We encourage all those in the physician-scientist path to seek out the group and use it to network, learn, share opportunities and ask career-related questions. In addition, CITAC sought out a collaboration with the University of Toronto's Community of Support (COS) to support students' journeys while pursuing medicine and/or research. We're happy to share that, through this collaboration, we were able to help expand mentorship efforts for existing COS programs and hold an MD/PhD Seminar that was attended by approximately 50 students interested in the physician-scientist career path. Our hope is to continue this work to help share more resources and provide additional support for students who come from underrepresented backgrounds interested in this career. In the meantime, continue to follow our accounts on social media, tag us in your achievements and nominate yourself to be featured in the Humans of CITAC initiative!

Melissa Phuong

MESSAGE FROM DIRECTORS OF PARTNERSHIPS

The Director of Partnerships portfolio has had a productive and exciting term to date. As described in the Spring 2021 Newsletter, we have continued working with the International Consortium of Clinical Scientist Training Organizations (ICCSTO) to characterize physician-scientist training pathways across the world. Over the coming months, ICCSTO plans to publish an article that synthesizes the data we have collected.

The portfolio has established formal partnerships with medical organizations, including the Canadian Association of Pathologists and the Canadian Child Health Clinician Scientist Program. Through these collaborations, we intend to connect members with professional resources, mentorship and opportunities throughout your training and as you develop your career. We are also in the process of developing and expanding our partnerships with Community of Support, the Canadian Association of Women Clinician Investigator Trainees (CAWCIT) and other groups. Along with members of the CITAC Board of Directors, the Partnerships portfolio has worked on developing the Career Information for Physician-Scientist Trainees seminar series to bring trainees career advice and to connect the physician-scientist community across Canada.

For the remainder of our term, and into the next year, we hope to expand on these initiatives and bring trainees more career and training-related opportunities. We are always interested in hearing input from members; if you have any ideas for the Partnerships portfolio, please let us know!

Sophie Hu and Danny Jomaa

MESSAGE FROM DIRECTOR OF STUDENT AFFAIRS ON ANNUAL JOINT MEETING

The Canadian Society for Clinical Investigation (CSCI) / CITAC Annual Joint Meeting will be held on November 15–16, 2021, and will be hosted by the University of Toronto. Dr. Tim Caulfield, Canada Research Chair in Health Law and Policy, is our invited keynote speaker for this conference and will discuss the “infodemic” of misinformation amidst the pandemic. The AJM will be held on the Pheedloop virtual platform, and will allow attendees to customize their participation and engagement. Planned workshop sessions over the two-day conference will cover topics including the following:

- early career researcher workshop, with panelists discussing the first steps to establishing your career after the training process encapsulate a diverse range of research expertise;
- mentorship session with faculty members from the CSCI and CIP committees, as well as current mentors to MD/PhD students in the national mentorship

program. This session focuses on using an interactive problem-solving approach to discuss challenges and solutions in a mentor-mentee relationship; and

- communication of scientific findings to the wider public through social media, graphical data visualization and development of a strong elevator pitch.

Registration will be available to students in September

along with a call for abstracts for poster and oral presentations.

Wenxuan Wang

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

CITAC-ACCFC acknowledges financial support from the Canadian Institute of Health Research, the Burroughs Welcome Fund and MD Financial Management.

RESOURCES FROM MD FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

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A professional student line of credit is generally used for school-related expenses like tuition, books and exam fees. If you don't need the full amount for schooling, should you take advantage of that "cheap money"? Here's what some medical students use their line of credit for and what to consider if you do the same.

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