

Rural Docs Honoured with Provincial Awards

Two rural physicians were honoured in October at special events co-sponsored by their communities and The RPAP. The events were organized to recognize these physicians selected as recipients of 2006 RPAP awards following a public nomination process.

A beautiful wine and cheese reception at the Sawridge Hotel in Slave Lake on 6 October was enjoyed by Dr. Ian Seal, 2006 Recipient of the Rural Physician Early

Careerist Award, his family, friends, as well as representatives and residents of the Kee Tas Kee Now Tribal Council member Nations, Driftpile Cree First Nation, Aspen Regional Health, Alberta Treaty 8 Health Authority and The RPAP.

Touching tributes were delivered during the evening program that spoke to Dr. Seal's outstanding energy and passion for rural medicine and the rural lifestyle. Seal was selected for the award based on his contributions to rural medicine, his service to First Nations in his community and his positive promotion of the attributes of a successful rural practice.

One week later, on 14 October, an enthusiastic Spirit River community honoured Dr. Tom Phillips as the 2006 Recipient of the Rural Physician Award of Distinction. An afternoon tea held at the Pleasant View Lodge launched the day's festivities followed by a gala evening dinner and program held at the Centennial Hall. About 100 community residents were on hand to congratulate Phillips at the tea while more than 300 people attended the evening event. A video, produced by The RPAP about Phillips and the Spirit River community, was



Dr. Ian Seal

showcased at both events. Many pieces of Phillip's beautiful watercolour artwork were on display at the two venues for all to enjoy.

Dignitaries representing various levels of government, friends, patients and colleagues provided tributes to Phillips' many contributions to medical practice, teaching, sports, the Spirit River community and the arts over the past 35 years.

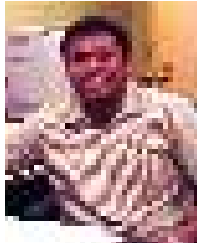


Dr. Tom Phillips

NEW FACES

Visitors to RPAP's Edmonton office are now greeted by

Varghese John, RPAP's new Evaluation and Research Coordinator, replacing the previous coordinators Brenda



Gaida and Kim Simmonds. John's office is just inside the door and visitors walk past his desk to access other RPAP staff.

Born and raised in India, John first did a physiotherapy (PT) degree and worked for four years as a PT in Mumbai, India before deciding to pursue an MBA through the UofA in Edmonton. Upon completing this degree in 2006, John first worked for Alberta Health and Wellness before joining The RPAP.

John's responsibilities include developing Key Performance Indicators for all areas of RPAP programming, developing surveys and other tools to measure performance and analyzing the results and providing reports.

Tricia Macdonald the new Regional Site Academic Support Assistant in Red Deer, was born and raised in Calgary. Her first job was in the oil patch but when the oil boom was



over, Macdonald went to college and graduated with an Associate Degree in Criminal Justice. A law enforcement career was not to be, however, and over the ensuing eleven years she worked in a variety of human resource positions.

Looking for a change, Macdonald took medical terminology courses and started her career in healthcare, working first at a busy

walk-in clinic then went on to work for the Calgary Health Region as a Clerk in the HPTP clinic at the Foothills Medical Centre. Two years ago, Macdonald accepted a position as the Program Secretary for the Postgraduate Emergency Medicine Program. Her responsibilities for this program included resident scheduling, academic rounds, exams, off-service residents/clerks and CaRMS.

In 2005, Macdonald moved to Red Deer to become a Unit Secretary for Emergency. When the DTHR recently posted the position for a person to work with RPAP and its Alberta Rural Family Medicine Network, she accepted and has never looked back. Macdonald says, "my challenges have been to differentiate between Emergency Medicine and Family Medicine and the differences between the University of Alberta and the University of Calgary. The only continuity is that THE RESIDENTS ARE AWESOME"!

Rebekah Seidel

recently joined The RPAP Team as the Rural Physician Consultant (North) replacing Nancy Rowan who retired in June. She brings a wealth of international and community development experiences to this position.



Born in Turner Valley, Seidel was raised in the Bluffton area and in her mid 20's attended Red Deer College, followed by UofC, where she studied community development in the social work faculty. Upon graduation, Seidel moved to Nicaragua in Central America where she

lived for the next 5 years doing community-based work. In the early 1990's, Seidel returned to Canada where she did international social development-focused graduate work with particular attention to the Nicaraguan community organizations and their work in the 1980's.

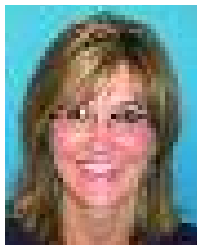
Upon completion of her studies, Seidel worked for CUSO in Canada for just over eight years in a variety of capacities. In 2001, she went overseas with CUSO to fill the position of South Pacific Program Coordinator. Seidel was based in Vanuatu while coordinating the programming there, in the Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea and Fiji. In 2005, Seidel and her son, Javier, returned to Canada and settled in Rimbey, just down the road from Bluffton where she grew up. Since her return, she has had a variety of contracts working with urban neighbourhood initiatives, rural Alberta communities and non-profit organizations. Over the last winter, Seidel did a community asset mapping process with six rural communities in south east Alberta.

"What really does excite me about this job is working with rural communities in northern Alberta on physician recruitment and retention," says Seidel. "I look forward to involvement in community development work, relationship building, and matching individuals to communities and the environment that they'll be living and working in. I bring years of experience with CUSO recruiting professionals to long-term placements overseas, often in isolated rural communities and within a new cultural environment, as well as skills related to a lot of the processes involved in the work of this position with RPAP."

Highlights from RPAP's Rural Academic Development Coordinator

Besides her work supporting rural physicians, Seidel is eager to meet with rural physician spouses and their families to support their integration into their new communities. A third area of her responsibilities is awareness raising with young people in high school and with medical students in order to help them understand what practising as a rural physician in Alberta is all about. To contact Seidel, call 403-843-4879 or rebekah.seidel@rpap.ab.ca

RPAP welcomed **Pamela Hoskin** to the team on 30 October. Hoskin will be covering Jean Blinkhorn's maternity leave for a one-year term as RPAP's Rural Unit Coordinator for Rural Alberta North (RAN).



For the last 14 years, Hoskin has worked full time for the David Thompson Health Region (DTHR), Human Resource Department in Red Deer. She has a Certificate in Management and a wide range of healthcare knowledge and experience. Prior to DTHR, she worked in Drumheller for RHA 5.

Born and raised in central Alberta on a farm just west of Sylvan Lake, Hoskin feels blessed to live in a community with so many wonderful people and opportunities. In her spare time she likes to spend time with her family and friends and is enjoying raising her two teenage children.

To contact Pamela, call toll free 1-866-444-6353 or pamela.hoskin@arfmn.ab.ca

After a quiet summer, educational meetings burst upon us with a vengeance in September. First off was WONCA, the world organization of family doctors, with its biennial rural meeting in Seattle. The attendees were mostly from the US, Canada, South Africa and Australia but there were some fascinating insights from South America and the Philippines, where establishing a new rural medical school has helped reduce the perinatal mortality rate by 75%. RPAP maintained a high profile with poster presentations (one from a recent RAN graduate), workshops and short papers.

Closer to home, the workshop season opened up with highly successful sessions in Peace River and in Edmonton at the University of Alberta's annual Fall Harvest. Dr. Mike Kolber once again organized a tremendous weekend of CME for Peace Country physicians, together with all the rural program residents. Featured speakers were the "Mythbusters" team of James McCormack, Robert Rangno and Adil Virani from the BC Therapeutics Initiative, ably supported by Michael Allen from the Department of Family Medicine in Edmonton. This was a highly entertaining yet thought provoking review of evidence-based medicine covering a huge range of issues from constipation to clopidogrel and hypertension to hyperactivity.

Mike kindly allowed Dr. Fred Janke and me to open the conference with a teaching workshop, where we introduced SNAPPS, a new technique for clinical teaching. If you are interested in learning more, plan to attend Dr. Shirley Schipper's session at the UofC/RPAP Cabin Fever (8-11 February 2007) or our repeat performance of "Schnapps or SNAPPS: how to enjoy teaching in the office," at the 52nd ASA in Banff on 24 February.

Dr. Miriam Boillat from McGill University was the keynote speaker at the UofA/RPAP Fall Harvest in September as she guided 35 preceptors through the minefield of working with the struggling learner. For the first time, the attendees included dentists as well as MD's. If the topic is of interest in your community, we have a road show prepared and ready to roll – just let me know. To contact Hugh, call 403-396-1748 or hugh.hindle@arfmn.ab.ca



News *in brief*

RPAP Launches New Website to Support Physician Recruitment

Be sure to check out RPAP's new Alberta Rural Physician Link website at www.RuralPhysicianLink.ab.ca. Besides providing information on specific practice opportunities in the province, this new tool links interested physicians with information on practice requirements, immigration information, health region services, Alberta tourism and lifestyle information as well as key links to other organizations.

Additional RPAP Supports for Recruitment

Besides the new recruitment website described above, The RPAP has developed a new recruitment display that will be used to attract potential candidates to the province.

Free SRPC membership for new rural doctors

The Society of Rural Physicians of Canada (SRPC) is offering one year free membership to doctors who have recently started in rural practice. The Society is the voice of rural physicians in Canada and membership benefits include a subscription to the Canadian Journal of Rural Medicine, access to the web list for rural physicians, Ruralmed, and reduced rates at SRPC courses across the country.

The offer is available for those starting in rural practice in Canada, whether they come from Canadian residency programs, urban settings or from overseas. Please contact admin@srpc.ca for further details.

Rural Faculty Development has New Name and Logo

Preceptors looking for additional ideas on how to better support learners will soon be able to access new information on The RPAP's new Practical Prof website (www.PracticalProf.ab.ca). Under the logo of Practical Prof, preceptors will soon find a wide variety of practical information to help support them in their important role. Stay tuned!



New School Video Available on Web

Using its ongoing education pipeline strategy in support of rural physician recruitment and retention, The RPAP produced a new video aimed at encouraging junior and senior high school students to consider a career in rural medicine. The video follows Dr. Mike Kolber, a Peace River physician and recipient of RPAP's 2005 Early Careerist Award, through a day in his family practice. The web version of RPAP's new school outreach video is now available at <http://tinyurl.com/y8e647>.

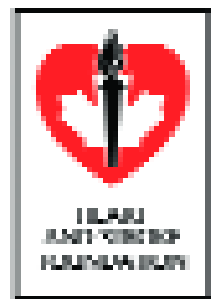
Changes to CaRMs Process

The Canadian Residency Match Service (CaRMS) process by which medical students gain access to residency spots has changed in Alberta. The PGME advisory group recommended to the Minister of Health and Wellness that both the first and second iterations of the match be reserved for Canadian medical students only. Alberta resident IMGs will apply for separate additional seats through the Alberta

International Medical Graduate Program (AIMG). The timing for the matches remains the same.

New PD Bursary Program

The Heart and Stroke Foundation of Alberta, NWT and Nunavut (HSFA) encourages and supports the continuing education of health professionals working in cardio and/or cerebro-vascular disease prevention, intervention, rehabilitation and health promotion. HSFA may be able to assist you if you require financial assistance to attend a workshop, conference, seminar, scientific meeting or symposium. HSFA supports applications from urban, rural, central and remote locations throughout Alberta, NWT and Nunavut. For more information regarding eligibility criteria and the application process for this Bursary Program, visit www.heartandstroke.ca and select the province of Alberta



RPAP Award and Bursary Recipients Announced

The RPAP recently announced the recipients of two financial support initiatives for medical students. These two initiatives aim to encourage students who come from a designated rural area to pursue a career in rural medicine by reducing their financial burden.

Erin Thompson, Ian Armstrong, Julie Kromm, Lindsay Nanning-Penner, Tara Martin, Garland Jonker and Regan Steed are 2006 recipients of RPAP Rural Medical Student

Are you Interested in Becoming a Better Researcher?

The RPAP wants to identify rural physicians who would be interested in enrolling in the next iteration of the SEARCH program.

Making the right decisions about key health issues is a critical challenge. Research enables informed decisions but sometimes questions need answers that can't be addressed through traditional health research programs. In Alberta, an innovative program trains people in applied health research so they can ask and answer questions about the priority health issues in their own community. The Swift Efficient Application of Research in Community Health (SEARCH) trains health practitioners in the "how-to's" of conducting relevant research, accessing and assessing high quality information, and applying it in decision making.

Through each SEARCH iteration, RPAP supports two rural physicians. The next intake takes place in May 2007.

For more information, contact RPAP at 1-866-423-9911 or Alberta-RPAP@rpap.ab.ca

Bursaries. These bursaries provide full tuition including differential fees for each year of medical studies to reduce the financial burden faced by rural medical students and their families. Once accepted, the student receives the Bursary every year until medical school graduation, contingent upon their meeting the program requirements, which includes a five-year Return-in-Service Agreement (RiSA). Bursaries are offered through The RPAP and jointly funded by Alberta Health and Wellness and Alberta Advanced Education.

Ali Iglesias, Daisy Hartmann and Stephen Swainson are 2006 recipients of RPAP Rural Medical School Awards. These awards provide \$5,000 for each year of medical studies to assist with the student's tuition, accommodation, living and/or travel expenses. The Award is available to students in any year of their medical degree. Once accepted, the student receives the Award every year until medical school graduation, contingent upon their meeting the program requirements.

UofA/Capital Health Authority Head and Neck Mass Clinic Expands

The Head and Neck Mass Clinic at the University of Alberta Hospital is undergoing expansion with the addition of another Fellowship-trained head and neck oncologist. The purpose of this clinic is to provide rapid access to care for patients with

head and neck masses. This would include patients with thyroid or parathyroid masses, salivary gland masses, mucosal or skin lesions, lymphadenopathy, or any other abnormal mass of the head and neck. Patients referred to this clinic will be triaged within two days of receipt of a referral letter. Urgent cases will be seen within a one-two week period. Through this clinic, there will be expedited access to pathology and radiologic imaging.

If you wish to refer a patient to this clinic, please fax your referral letter to 780-407-3885, and indicate "Head and Neck Mass Clinic" on your referral letter. If you would prefer to use a standardized head and neck referral form, contact 780-407-7958 or JeffreyHarris@cha.ab.ca

RPAP Partnering on Best Practices with AAMD&C

With an aim at improving the capacity of rural community in support of the recruitment and retention of rural physicians, The RPAP partnered with the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties (AAMD&C) to host the AAMD&C's first pre-conference workshop. David Kay, RPAP Executive Director, and Richard Larson from Alberta Community Development ran a successful mini workshop on community participation for effective physician recruitment and retention at the AAMD&C's annual conference on 13 November.

Warm Welcome Extended to New Hanna Docs

Residents of Hanna held a local event last November to warmly welcome three new physicians to their community. With the arrival of **Drs. Nella Mabunda, Isaac Mdawe and Nicolaas Walters** joining Drs. Emad Hanna and Daniel Kilian, Hanna now has a full complement of physicians.

"We recruited three new physicians over a period of a few months so, after they got settled, we thought it might be timely to hold a 'meet and greet' so families in the community could get introduced to the new doctors," says Ken Hansen, Site Leader at the Hanna Health Centre. "Representatives from the David Thompson Health Region (DTHR) and members of the Hanna Ambulance and Medical Society Board first went out for supper with the physicians and their significant others and then joined with 100 local residents to get to know one another over coffee and donuts. It sure seemed to help make our physicians feel at home here."



From left to right in the back row are Dr. Hanna, Dr. Walters and Dr. Mdawe with some of the local residents who came out to greet them.)

Courtesy of the Hanna Herald

UofA Dr Gerald Stewart Memorial Award

Dr. Nathaniel Day, a second year Rural Alberta North (RAN) resident, is the 2006 recipient of the Dr Gerald Stewart Memorial Award for Resident Well-Being and Morale. The Award recipient is selected on the basis of demonstrated care and compassion for others, enthusiasm, love of the outdoors, athleticism, and dedication to community involvement. Congratulations Nathaniel!

New Rural Health Office Launched

The UofA Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry announced the launch of its new Office of Rural and Regional Health on 7 June 2006. The mandate of the Office is to strengthen and expand the rural/regional footprint within the Faculty, including:

- The support for rural clinical teachers and recruitment of new teachers;
- Assistance with the inclusion of rural strategies within admissions, curriculum and faculty development;
- Support for existing rural programs;
- Facilitation and development of new rural/regional programs;

- Liaison between the Faculty and RPAP; and
- Support for and development of clinical teaching sites.

Led by the Associate Dean, Rural and Regional Health, Dr. Jill Konkin (who's position is co-funded by The RPAP), the Office also includes Ms. Tamara Mitchell Schultz, Administrative Assistant and Ms. Giselle Horne, Secretary. The Office is located at 205 College Place. For more information, call 780-492-0582.

AMA Michael Tarrant Award

Four Alberta medical students were awarded Tarrant Scholarships by the AMA's Section of Rural Medicine. The 2006

recipients are all third-year medical students. They are UofA students **Brenda Nakashima** of Taber and **Scott Smith** from Cardston and UofC students **Reta Blakely** from Didsbury and **Heather Ringrose** from Waterford, Ontario. The Tarrant Scholarship provides a full year's tuition to medical students who seek careers in rural medicine in Alberta.

New RPAP Hot Sheet for MLAs

In order to keep Members of the Alberta Legislative Assembly (MLAs) apprised of the latest developments in physician recruitment and retention, The RPAP launched its first edition of a brief newsletter that provides information related to physician recruitment and retention and which identifies how they can support health regions, physicians and community recruitment and retention initiatives.

Upcoming CME events

23 Annual Emergency Medicine for Rural Hospitals Conference

19-21 January 2007, Banff Park Lodge

UofC/RPAP Cabin Fever Faculty Development Workshop

8-11 February, Kananaskis

SRPC's 15th Annual Rural and Remote Medicine Course

10-12 May, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

Crisis Management in the Simulator

16 March 2007, Edmonton Contact: Andrew Reid
780-735-4363 or areid@cha.ab.ca

UPCOMING Spousal and Family Event

As part of the January 2007 Banff Emergency Medicine Conference, RPAP will sponsor a morning event for physician spouses and children on Saturday, 20 January at the Banff Park Lodge. Following breakfast at 0830 hours, families will learn the basics of Chinese cooking before delving into a practical and informative workshop on Feng Shui. The roots of Feng Shui are in rural life and is the study of natural cycles and successful living. To register or for more information, contact Monica Kohlhammer, RPAP Rural Physician Consultant (South) at 403-283-1480 or monica.kohlhammer@rpap.ab.ca



Mentoring a Future Doctor?

“I’ve wanted to become a doctor since I was nine years old,” says Lindsey Campbell. Campbell was born and raised in Red Deer, and is currently in her third-year BSc - Honours Physiology at the UofA. For the past three summers, Campbell has been working at the Sylvan Family Health Centre to gain some practical experience in the medical field. She wrote her MCATs this summer, and will be applying to Medicine in November. She would prefer to go to the UofA medical school so that she can be close to her family.

“I want to eventually go into The RPAP residency program,” says Campbell. “I’ve been researching it and I’ve had exposure to the residents and students coming through the clinic and I’ve talked to them about it. You get exposure to so many different areas and it’s a very well-rounded education,” she continues.

For the last few summers, Campbell has been learning about the business side of the



medical clinic. During her first summer, she did reception. The next summer she did some reception and a lot of clerical work, including filing lab reports and consults. This past summer she was helping with nursing. “I do everything that the nurses do except I don’t give medicines or anything like that but I had a lot of patient exposure - taking patient histories, and doing blood pressures and temperatures. I’ve been assisting in procedures such as suturing and



surgical incisions and basically helping out the doctors wherever I can. I’ve absolutely loved it so much because I’ve developed a relationship with a lot of patients already. Many have even asked me to be their doctor eventually. I really enjoy it,” says Campbell.

She really enjoys working in a rural clinic, and looks forward to becoming a rural doctor in the future. “Being in a small community atmosphere with the close relationship that you have with your patients and the variety that you get exposed to — I just really enjoyed it. I just like the small town community feeling. It’s very personal, which is really good,” says Campbell.

Student Outreach Update

Students Job Shadow in Lethbridge

A group of 20 Grade 11 and 12 students from southern Alberta learned about life as a rural doctor through a job shadow experience organized through Chinook Regional Career Transitions for Youth in April. Area students with an interest in medicine as a career learned about working as a doctor, the education required and career prospects from Rural Alberta South (RAS) Resident Dr. Gavin Parker. They also toured the hospital. Parker advised the students to make sure that they have the necessary prerequisites, to take on volunteer and leadership roles in their communities and not to worry if the sight of blood makes them weak in the knees - they’ll get used to it.

Winter/Spring Activities

The following student outreach activities were held or are planned for this winter and next spring:

- 20 November, “A Day in the Life of a Medical Student” provided opportunities for students to shadow a UofC medical student, tour the hospital and medical school facilities, participate in simulated small group discussions/physical exam sessions and sit in a lecture with the Class of 2009
- Late November, presentation at a UofC Family Medicine/Rural Medicine student information night
- 5 December, Lethbridge Career Fair at Lethbridge Collegiate Institute
- 15 February 2007, Okotoks Career Expo

For more information on RPAP’s School Outreach activities, contact Rebekah Seidel at rebekah.seidel@rpap.ab.ca or Monica Kohlhammer at monica.kohlhammer@rpap.ab.ca

Medical Student Initiatives Coordinator's

Shadowing Program

Requests for shadowing opportunities have increased this year. About 1.5 times as many experiences have been arranged year-to-date as this time last year, reports Rosemary Burness, RPAP's Medical Student Initiatives Coordinator. UofA and UofC students requested 121 shadowing experiences with rural physicians between 1 April and 8 November 2006. 71 experiences have been established so far.

Clinical Skills Days Held

A Clinical Skills Day was held for 25 UofC medical students in Brooks on 27 May in collaboration with Dr. Vince Elgersma. Peace River physicians hosted a clinical skills day for 26 UofA medical students 15 – 17 September. We thought you would be interested to see some of the positive comments received from students attending the events.



"It was very interesting to see first hand what practicing in a rural community means; the way in which a rural physician practices but also the type of lifestyle that he or she leads. On this trip, we had the opportunity to talk with residents and doctors and they shared with us both the advantages and disadvantages of working in a small community (although to them the benefits far outweighed any disadvantages). In addition to interacting with physicians, we also gained some clinical skills...and were also exposed to the human aspect of disease. In the latter component we had the opportunity to sit down with an individual who had suffered from a disease, and this person shared how their life experiences had changed as a result of their disease. I thought this section was very valuable because it showed us students how important it is to treat patients as a whole person, rather than as a subset of symptoms. It really made me aware of how cool it is to work in a rural community and has definitely made me consider pursuing a career in rural family medicine."

"An interview we had with a native patient will stay with me always."

"The last presentation really gave a good idea as to what rural medicine is about. I would definitely say that it gave a lot of people something to think about and opened up our eyes to what rural medicine offers."



Mark Rieder, Peace River Record-Gazette

Mark Rieder, Peace River Record-Gazette

New UofA / UofC RMIG Reps

Glenn Armstrong is the UofA's representative for the Rural Medical Interest group on that campus. **Garland Jonker, Heather Hurdle** and **Robert Warren** are the three rural representatives for first-year medical students in the UofC's Rural Medical Interest Group (RMIG).



Garland Jonker



Heather Hurdle



Robert Warren

update



Rosemary Burness



"I really enjoyed the presentation the doctors gave and all the input the team had. It was neat seeing the camaraderie they have there... Everyone was super nice and friendly!"

"I really LOVED my experience and it did make rural medicine a possible career choice. In fact, I'm already planning on doing a rural studentship this summer."

"The human aspect of patient care was a real eye opener...The weekend honestly made me think of rural medicine and I totally thought that I'd never even consider it but now I am."



"What struck me the most was the degree to which each of the physicians that we had a chance to interact with were able to focus on a particular area of interest. Secondly, I was impressed by the enthusiasm each of the members of the team demonstrated in the sessions and in common meetings. Finally, horseback riding and our time at the ranch was a blast. Opportunity for these outdoor pursuits is one of the strong advantages of rural medicine...I was already thinking about rural medicine but the weekend definitely made me aware of additional pieces of information that will allow me to make the best possible decision."

"The weekend was great and has definitely sparked some interest in rural medicine."



Student Reflects on Summer Experience

Karen Naert took part in RPAP's Summer Experience program over the summer. She provided this feedback on what happened.

"I've had a great time – Bassano is a really great town to be in. I've seen a wide variety of patient cases and see/take part in lots of procedures. Dr. Richards has been wonderful; always willing to answer questions, talk about cases, and let me do as much as possible hands on. He's been a great teacher who has really made me feel like part of the team. The time has flown by.

In fact, I can't think of anything that I would recommend be changed for future summer students. I've learned a lot and really feel like this experience has advanced my medical education and also has made me excited about choosing rural family practice for my career."

Profiles of R2 Residents

R2 RAN Residents

Kyle Garrett



Kyle Garrett is looking for the right opportunity! This second-year resident is looking to move to a rural community with the right fit for him when he completes his residency.

Kyle was born and raised in Rocky Mountain House. He then moved to Calgary where he did his undergraduate degree and medical school at the UofC. He is currently a RAN resident based out of Grande Prairie, and has been there for a couple of years. Professionally, Kyle is interested in full service medicine. Although he was always interested in emergency and family medicine, he has developed a real interest in anaesthesia during his residency. He is now applying for a third year of residency training in anaesthesia.

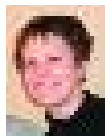
When looking at where to move upon completion of his residency, Garrett says, "there isn't just one thing that makes or breaks a community. It is important that you're working with a good group of physicians that you enjoy working with, and that the community has the right amount of resources - specialists who you can refer to and things you can keep and do yourself. I would like to be in a community that does obstetrics, and obviously, if I'm interested in anaesthesia, a place that has an operating room." The additional training for anaesthesia runs from July to July,

and Garrett is anxiously awaiting acceptance into it. He is currently doing a rural family medicine rotation in Rocky Mountain House after which he will finish his residency in another rural family medicine rotation for eight weeks, followed by emergency medicine for eight weeks, and psychiatry for four weeks.

"I am still trying to figure out how to have a fulfilling practice and a decent family life," says Garrett. "I think most people struggle with that most of their career," he continues. He is also a mountain biking enthusiast, and despite not having mountains in Grande Prairie, Garrett says that there are lots of good trails around.

Jacqueline Holm Jhass

Jacqueline Holm Jhass was born in Westlock and raised in St. Albert. She attended the UofA medical school, and wants to pursue a rural family practice.



Holm Jhass really likes the community aspect of working in a smaller town. "There just seems to be a much stronger sense of community and there is often more continuity of care when you are in a small town," says Holm Jhass. "The team environment can be a lot stronger in a small hospital. Everyone knows each other and often work together a lot better." Holm Jhass learned many new skills as a result of doing her residency in a rural location. "There are procedures you do

here that you might not do if you were in the city," she says. Holm Jhass is currently doing a palliative care rotation in Red Deer. After a few weeks, she will move to Bonnyville to do an obstetrics rotation. Then she will move back to Red Deer to do an emergency rotation, and will finish up her residency training in Drayton Valley with a family

practice rotation. Looking to the future, she would like to have a family practice in a rural location so that she can do obstetrics, hospital, and emergency work. Holm Jhass is hoping to begin her new medical career in a rural location north of Red Deer but she is keeping her options open. Her husband Kiron Jhass is currently a nurse in Red Deer.

R2 RAS Residents

Colin Sentongo



Colin Sentongo is up for just about any challenge! From living all over southern Africa to attending an all-Spanish medical school in the Dominican Republic, Colin has overcome a lot of obstacles on his road to success. Sentongo was born in Uganda and raised in several different countries in southern Africa. His parents worked for the United Nations so they moved to a new country approximately every two years. He did an International Baccalaureate in Africa and then moved to Canada for university. Sentongo graduated from Queen's University before moving to the Dominican Republic for medical school. Everything was in Spanish so he had to learn it very quickly! "It was a challenge - learning medical school and Spanish at the same time. It was a big

challenge," explains Sentongo. After medical school, Colin moved to Ohio to complete one year of residency, and then decided it was time to move back to Canada. During medical school, we were required to go to the rural areas for community service. That is where, Colin says, "a lot of the residents and students who went there had a lot of the skills that the doctors and students in the city didn't. They had to manage a lot of things that the doctors in the city wouldn't have to because there were specialists for it. When I read about the rural program and found out about the training you could get, it just seemed that they had a wider base set of skills than the average physician. In Carseland and Drumheller, you get to do surgery, anaesthesia, ophthalmology, and they ask you what you would like to do, and you do that." Colin is very interested in doing emergency

room work, and plans on doing an extra year of emergency medicine just to prepare himself to do a lot more emergency room work in the future.

When Colin completes his residency, he would like to move to a community with a population of about 15,000 people where he could do primarily emergency and hospital work. Colin enjoys participating in outdoor activities and sports so that will also factor into where he decides to locate. In his free time, Colin enjoys playing the Spanish guitar and reading. In particular, he reads about international development as that is a special interest of his. At some point in his career, he would like to get involved in NSF (National Science Foundation), especially in third world countries and areas that have had natural disasters.

Malgorzata Kaminska



Malgorzata Kaminska is a big city girl turned rural resident and she just loves it! Born in Poland, her family then moved to Algeria. Then at the age of eight years, she and her family migrated to Ottawa. There, she did her undergraduate degree in biochemistry and chemical engineering at the UofO, and then went to the UofT for medical school. She is currently doing her residency based out of Lethbridge. "I come from big towns so I was actually quite surprised by how much of a variety of people you encounter in rural settings. They always say it's all farmers or oil workers but you also find gifted artists, entrepreneurs, retired scientists, and so many more; it is really a very rich culture. That's what makes it so interesting to work here," says Kaminska. "I like the hands-on work – you do anything and everything. Unlike a big city, you don't actually have the backup necessary to refer right away so you are frontline for everything and I just love that adrenaline rush," she continues. She also finds the rural area to be more laid back in terms of lifestyle and in terms of how people interact with you. "It is very different from the city. In a big city you are just a doctor. In a

small town, you are a friend, a confidant; someone other than just a doctor." She also likes the camaraderie that develops between doctors in a rural region, and feels that it is a more cohesive team of doctors and nurses. "The reason I went into medicine," she continues, "was to get that connection with patients and colleagues, and I don't think there is a better place to get that than in a rural setting." Kaminska has a special connection with her patients, however, as she is a patient as well as a doctor. She is scheduled for a kidney transplant this winter, and says, "I go through a lot of the same frustrations that patients go through. I know how the system works; both on the inside and the outside, and I hope that this helps me understand what other patients are going through on a more personal level."

Recently, Kaminska finished her emergency rotation. Her next rotation is an elective in gynaecology, and then a rural rotation in Cardston. She says, "I don't think there's another province that compares to Alberta for rural family doctors in terms of the respect that we get; in terms of the money put into us... the locum programs and the enrichment programs. I think Alberta has a very strong sense of who a rural family physician is and what kinds of services they can provide. We are actively encouraged and supported in providing those services, and that is really something. And now there's RPAP that really helps us incredibly. Without it, we would be pretty much lost in the system as rural family doctors, as I have seen in other provinces." Kaminska and her husband Richard Franke currently live in Lethbridge. Franke is a computer science major in his second year at the UofL. Kaminska has accepted a position and will be moving to Bassano at the end of her residency. For fun, the couple enjoys cooking gourmet meals of various nationalities. Kaminska enjoys sewing and decorating and would like to learn how to quilt and fish, and perhaps return one day to her musical theatre roots.

Medical Information Service (MIS)



RPAP is pleased to bring you a new column designed to bring you the latest news related to RPAP's Virtual Library and Medical

Information Service. In this first issue, we talk to Barrie McCombs, RPAP's Medical Information Service Coordinator, to find out what services are offered.

The RPAP Medical Information Service (MIS) provides Alberta's rural physicians with **free** access to up-to-date medical information. Our "Medical Information Service" website is open to the public, while our "Virtual Library" website is available to physicians who practice in towns covered by The Alberta Rural Physician Action Plan.

The **Virtual Library** is user-friendly and is available from any computer with an Internet connection. It provides the full text of textbooks in most medical specialties, the full text of selected medical journals, clinical practice guidelines and patient handout materials. The library includes the following major resources:

- 1) **ACP Medicine** is an Internal Medicine database sponsored by the American College of Physicians. It is updated monthly, making it a strong rival for the "Up To Date" database.
- 2) **ACS Surgery** is a General Surgery database sponsored by the American College of Surgeons. It is also updated monthly.
- 3) **Harrison's Online** is an on-line version of the well-respected "Harrison's Principles of Internal Medicine" textbook. It is updated regularly.
- 4) **Tintinalli's Emergency Medicine** is a practical textbook of Emergency Medicine. The on-line version is more up-to-date than the paper edition.
- 5) **E-Therapeutics** includes an on-line version of the Canadian Compendium of Pharmaceuticals and Specialties (CPS), plus recommendations for treating common medical conditions.
- 6) **MD Consult** is our most popular resources, because a single search finds information in textbooks, journals and patient handouts. This is very useful when physicians need information quickly. The information may not be as current as in our other resources.

Rural physicians may register to use the Virtual Library by contacting The RPAP MIS Coordinator (Dr. Barrie McCombs) at 403-289-4227 or barrie.mccombs@rpap.ab.ca

Dr. McCombs will begin providing tips and relevant information in future issues of RPAP News. Stay tuned!

What does RPAP's accommodation coordinator do?

Bunny Edwards (picture) began her career with RPAP in 2002 as the Rural Accommodations Coordinator. She is an Urban Planner with a degree in Geography from the UofA. Before joining RPAP, Edwards was a Research Assistant with Criterion Research in Edmonton, one of a team doing market research and evaluation projects. As well, she was a Program Consultant with Advanced Education for many years.

Edwards ensures that medical students and residents who are doing rotations in rural or regional sites have a comfortable place to stay.

In her role as the Rural Accommodations Coordinator, Edwards ensures that medical students and residents who are doing rotations in rural or regional sites have a comfortable place to stay. Between the UofA, the UofC and the RAN and RAS programs, she is kept very busy doing over

400 accommodation bookings per year.

The type of accommodation that RPAP makes available for rotations varies from place to place. Although RPAP has over 40 leased accommodations throughout the province (houses, apartments, and condos), in the busier sites, it is often necessary to use bed and breakfasts or space in private homes in some communities. "Frequently when I get to work in the morning, there is an email from somebody going somewhere, or an elective or some last minute schedule change, that requires accommodation on very short notice," says Edwards. She tries to meet all requests but says "we are facing additional challenges at the moment: finding accommodation that is suitable for spouses or children who may be accompanying the individual on rotation, and finding any space at all with the current housing shortage almost everywhere in the province."

Other duties in Edward's portfolio include searching for and establishing quality spaces; handling all of the paperwork involved in leasing property; purchasing furniture and household items for new leases or replacing worn out items for existing leases; monitoring feedback from students and residents on the accommodation and addressing issues. She says "there's a range of normal to sometimes bizarre things that come up, like assessing and dealing with



flood damage, finding out that a B&B has two huge dogs that the student is allergic to, the phone doesn't work, or the furnace has ceased to function and it is freezing in the townhouse"!

Edwards tours the province visiting The RPAP leases and other accommodation, and meeting people. "The success of this area of work is greatly dependent on the strength of the partnerships that RPAP has with local people in rural areas. We are sincerely grateful for the help we have in looking after RPAP accommodations.....clinic staff, cleaners, property managers, bed and breakfast owners and private "hosts" – local people who want to help students, residents and their rural community. It is wonderful for us and the programs," says Edwards.

PHYSICIAN *recruiters*

Two of Alberta's rural Regional Health Authorities (RHAs) now have a staff person dedicated to physician recruitment. We speak to these recruiters to find out what they do.

Northern Lights

If you are a physician or medical student looking for work in Alberta, it is very likely that you'll run into **Brenda Gilboe** at some point in your recruiting process. Gilboe has been a Physician Recruiter with Northern Lights Regional Health Authority since November 2005. Due to physician shortages, recruiting has become an overwhelming burden for many local physicians who are also operating their busy practices. They now count on recruiters like Brenda to help them with the process.

Aside from actively going out to various locations across Alberta to recruit, Gilboe is also involved with many other components of the recruitment process: advertising; receiving candidate resumes, "qualifying the candidates" or determining the candidate's eligibility to work as a physician in Alberta; checking references; determining suitability of a candidate for a particular community; and acting as an information contact for the candidates she has already recruited.

According to Gilboe, one very important part of the screening process is the site visit. "That's where you either make it or break it for a candidate," says Gilboe. "For the international candidates, we prefer that they have the opportunity to go to the community and try it out. Because when you are recruiting for somewhere like Fort Vermillion or High Level, which are fairly isolated and also fairly demanding practices, the candidate should really have a trial – we usually suggest a three-month period. During that time, they are assessed and that gives the individual and the community an opportunity to see if there is a fit."

It really does come down to the fit of the candidate with the physician group. As

Gilboe explains, "one of the most important things is that you are recruiting the right person for the position because in a demanding practice environment like High Level and Fort Vermillion, you really need people with special skills. You also need people who will fit in with existing groups because it's a small group and they depend so much on each other. However, it is ultimately up to the local physician group who makes the decision about whether we recruit the individual."

Having been with the Northern Lights health region for over a year, Brenda Gilboe is retiring at the end of January 2006. The region is currently in the process of recruiting a full time staff replacement. The RPAP wishes Brenda well.

David Thompson

"There is strength in a cooperative effort," says

Jaqui Joys, a Physician Recruitment Retention Coordinator with the David Thompson Health Region (DTHR). Joys began her career with the DTHR in May of 2004. Due to the large region, the health region needed to find a solution to recruitment and retention difficulties experienced by many of its rural communities. "The region took responsibility to do the recruiting, and it put more of the communities on an even playing field," says Joys.

By asking the communities to work with a centralized person, Joys finds that the health region is also better able to stay on top of what the communities' physician needs are. In previous years, recruitment was left up to

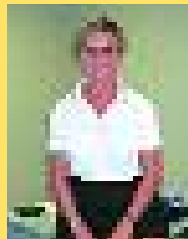
physicians themselves but doctors found that they just did not have the time or energy to put into recruiting because they were already running their busy practices.

"We are competing in a global market," says Joys. "We are in a tougher position than perhaps we have ever been and that necessitates working smarter. Instead of our rural communities competing against each other for doctors, they are working together to maximize the number of candidates brought into the region from within Canada and around the world. By pooling resources in the region, we are able to create one advertising campaign for physicians."

The health region has, in many cases working with RPAP, already created recruitment and retention committees to assist with the recruitment and retention process in eight communities: Hanna, Stettler, Drayton Valley, Three Hills, Trochu, Rocky Mountain House, Olds, and Sundre. The recruitment and retention committees work toward making their community as appealing as possible to attract and retain physicians and also look at issues that new physicians to the community might face such as housing or brainstorm ways to reduce stressors that might affect a person's day-to-day life.

Joys says that the committees have come up with some excellent ideas for physician retention. For instance, children developing e-mail pen pals before they arrive and buddy systems to work with the family and children. Gestures like these can prevent new physician families from slipping through the cracks.

Consistent with The RPAP approach, "we are also putting a new emphasis on the fact that we are not only recruiting a doctor, we are recruiting a family. And a family that is happy will stay," says Joys.



PROFILE OF A NORTHERN ALBERTA PHYSICIAN

Dr. Albert Harmse — *This doc really is on the run!*

It's hard to keep up with this doctor! **Albert Harmse** is a doctor, a marathon runner, a trainer for a national athlete and a family guy. Born and raised in Johannesburg, a large city in South Africa, Harmse attended medical school and received his MBSHB degree and a Masters' degree in sports medicine from the University of Pretoria. After medical school, he became a family physician in a small town in South Africa called Witbenk.

In 1998, one of Harmse's colleagues was recruited and came to work as a physician in St. Paul. In 1999, this colleague, Dr. Sonnenberg, came home for holidays and recruited Harmse. The Harmse family made the decision to move to Alberta, mainly out of concern for their children's lives as there was a lot of political turmoil in South Africa.

Harmse says he runs a typical rural practice in St. Paul — about 50% hospital-

based and 50% office-based work. Although his group currently has seven practising doctors, he indicates that there should be 10. *Please contact Harmse if you are interested in discussing an opportunity to join the practice.*

Aside from medicine, this rural physician has another passion – running. Over the years, he has run more than 30 ultra-marathons (each approximately 42 kilometres). In addition, he has run the Comrades Marathon (a 90 kilometre road race held to commemorate the fallen heroes of WW1) 16 times; a 100 kilometre road race a few times; and a one hundred mile race twice. Harmse was also the president of one of the provincial governing bodies for track and field in South Africa. His interest in sports is now helping him train his son Henry for national and international levels of competition.

Henry just placed 4th in National Decathlon at the National Junior

PROFILE OF A SOUTHERN ALBERTA PHYSICIAN

Dr. Lloyd Clarke — *Kiwis adapt well to Cardston*

Lloyd Clarke always thought he would become a trauma surgeon and live in New Zealand. He was born there, and then immigrated with his parents to Canada in the 1970's. Lloyd grew up and finished high school in Cardston. But in 1986, he went to New Zealand to visit his parents, who had moved back, and ended up moving back there himself.

Clarke attended medical school in New Zealand where he met his wife. Then, in 1996, he received a call from the doctors in Cardston. They knew he was a doctor in New Zealand, and they offered him a position at the clinic. In 1996, Clarke once again made the long journey to Canada. He

believed he would stay for a couple of years, and then move back to New Zealand to pursue his dream of becoming a trauma surgeon. Fortunately, Cardston won him over.

Clarke, along with Drs. Brian Low, Jim Taylor, and Johannes Meyer, operate a busy medical practice in Cardston. The four doctors all have a general practice, and serve three distinct populations; First Nations; Mormons; and Hutterites. Their clinic has a combination of hospital and ER work. Clarke boasts that it is one of the busiest ERs south of Calgary outside of Lethbridge and Medicine Hat.

Clarke's wife, Shelley, is also a New Zealander. He says of his wife that "some

RPAP Enrichment Program provides Rheumatology Training

Championships this year. "I am looking after his fitness and conditioning," says Harmse, "and he is also being coached by Reg Green and Ron Pike. Track-wise, he would like to represent Canada. He would like to go to the Olympics. He is a national level athlete but would like to become an international level athlete." If anyone can help Henry achieve his dream, Albert Harmse will be the one to do it.

Family life is important to Harmse. He is married to Amelia, who was a social worker in South Africa and obtained her doctorate in social work before moving to Canada. Albert and Amelia have a blended family of four children: Erlene is working in rehabilitation at Portage College in Lac La Biche; Quinny Ferreira has a diploma in Architecture but is currently studying general studies at the University of Calgary; De Ridder is in his first year of the BSc program at the UofA; and Henry Ferreira is in Grade 12.

people are shocked that a Kiwi could live in Canada and love it here but Kiwis are very adaptable birds. And anyone who's been to Australia or New Zealand will understand that bird's name is also a colloquialism for a girl." Lloyd and Shelley have six children aged 16 – 4 (Jordan, Brittney, Ashley, Erin, Marshall, Adrienne). What does the Clarke family do for fun? "Everything," says Clarke. "Literally, we roll from one season to the next. In the summertime, we go to the cabin at Echo Lake in Montana; we wakeboard; we golf all summer; we have quads and dirt bikes; and in the wintertime we go skiing and snow boarding."

A few years ago, Les Cuning took five weeks of specialized rheumatology training through RPAP's Enrichment Program. Cuning had practised in Black Diamond for the past 30 years and felt that, since many of his patients were senior citizens and since there have been lots of changes in the drugs and newer disease-modifying agents, he would take some time to update his skills and knowledge in the area of rheumatoid arthritis. "There has been such a change in the science of the use of these agents that I felt that I was about 25 years out of date," explains Cuning.

His enrichment process was a flexible five weeks where he could build a mini curriculum for himself around joint diseases. "All the Calgary rheumatologists work together quite closely and have an excellent round structure. They also have very interesting rotating courses that they do for people coming in for training - each rheumatologist has their own area of specialty. We had one-on-one instruction plus excellent rounds. I spent a fair amount of time with Dr. Ray Lewkonka, who sees kids with rheumatological and inflammatory diseases at the Children's Hospital, which is an area I had never done clinically in my life." Cuning was able to see additional musculoskeletal areas such as a hand clinic and sports medicine clinic at the UofC.



Photo courtesy of the Primary Care Initiative Program

Besides the hands on – learning with the rheumatologists, Cuning spent some time in the library reading the latest journals about the changing science related to inflammation and control. "It was just a wonderous medical cruise," says Cuning. "It is a great luxury to be able to carve out time from your practice and go back to real basic science and re-educate yourself – quite a luxury. Urban docs just don't have access to this, which is a huge problem."

As a result of his enrichment training, Cuning says he is a bit better with joint aspirations and injections and much more comfortable about what the requirements are for specialists in terms of consultative needs. His training has also allowed a better discourse between himself and the Department of Rheumatology at the UofC and rheumatologists generally. "The rheumatologists had had a previous discussion about how they could have linkages outside the department and have a better two-way flow of information," continues Cuning. "Subsequent to my training, we have had a rheumatologist coming out to Black Diamond on a regular basis. We are looking at that in our PCN as well. The Department of Rheumatology also now has their own referral hot line that has standardized the interaction between rural docs and the specialists.

Besides his work as a family doc, Cuning is also the MD Lead for the Calgary Rural Primary Care Network (PCN), which includes over 70 docs in a PCN covering the areas of Okotoks, Black Diamond, High River and Nanton, Claresholm, Vulcan and Strathmore.

Welcome

New Rural Alberta Physician Families

Please join us in welcoming to rural Alberta the following physicians and their families. Note this list is supplied by the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta and may include a full range of practice categories ranging from temporary locums to fully licensed and practising physicians. Errors or changes to this information should be reported directly to the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta.

RPAP Office to Move

The RPAP office will be moving to a more functional and less expensive location effective 1 April 2007. Our new address shall be:

Suite #2801,
Telus Plaza South,
10020-100 Street NW,
Edmonton, Alberta,
Canada T5J 0N3.

We are confirming that our telephone numbers will remain unchanged.

MARCH

Dr. Tracey Gordon – *Cochrane*
Dr. Dennis Hall – *Redcliff*
Dr. Stella Jansen van Rensburg – *Olds*
Dr. Petrus Kruger – *Bonnyville*
Dr. Ricardo Mentz – *Bonnyville*
Dr. Daniel Tlhape – *Drumheller*

APRIL

Dr. Petrus van der Walt – *Cold Lake*

MAY

Dr. Jacoba Coetzee – *Okotoks*
Dr. Hendrik Lourens – *Smoky Lake*
Dr. Ibrahim Moshood – *Drumheller*

JUNE

Dr. Susan Christenson – *Stand Off*
Dr. James Clayton – *Lake Louise*
Dr. Johann de Wet – *Brooks*
Dr. Douglas Elliott – *Denwood*

JULY

Dr. Susan Byers – *Milk River*
Dr. Candace Chow – *Hinton*
Dr. Robert Davidson – *Rocky Mountain House*
Dr. Jacobus Erasmus – *Redwater*
Dr. Jaco Joffman – *Provost*
Dr. Melanie Murphy – *Jasper*

Dr. Margaret Naylor – *Rimbey*
Dr. Anton Nel – *Okotoks*
Dr. Abdul Satar – *Two Hills*
Dr. Robert Simpson – *Claresholm*
Dr. Ryan Torrie – *Taber*
Dr. Janna Van Tonder – *Okotoks*

AUGUST

Dr. Trevor Bernhardt – *Vermilion*
Dr. Rashaad Bhyat – *Lake Louise*
Dr. Gerben de Graad – *Peace River*
Dr. Gert Grobler – *Viking*
Dr. Maria Hoffman – *Provost*
Dr. Melissa Mirosh – *High River*
Dr. Paul Miskiewicz – *Fort Macleod*
Dr. Estelle Roos – *Vermilion*

SEPTEMBER

Dr. Nathalie Cayer – *Sundre*
Dr. Pieter Horn – *Camrose*
Dr. Rafeeq Kagee – *Didsbury*
Dr. Nasrin Maiter – *Didsbury*
Dr. Stephanus Van Zyl – *Vermilion*

OCTOBER

Dr. Belinda Bester – *High Level*
Dr. Wouter Hugo – *Camrose*
Dr. Sonnie Oyama – *Whitecourt*
Dr. Oyebanjo Soyegbe – *St. Paul*

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Further information and details on The RPAP and its initiatives may be obtained from:



The Alberta Rural Physician Action Plan
1000 Manulife Place
10180-101 Street Edmonton
Alberta, Canada T5J 3S4

Phone: (780) 423-9911
Toll free 1-866-423-9911
Fax: (780) 423-9917
Alberta-RPAP@rpap.ab.ca
www.rpap.ab.ca

