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Canadian Society for Molecular Biosciences La Société Canadienne pour les Biosciences Moléculaires

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Dear CSMB Member,

Thank you for your continued support of the CSMB/SCBM and our mission to support Canadian Bio-scientists. After a few years of major changes, including a merger and a change in name to reflect our increased scope, for 2013, we are taking a bit of a break. This year we are focused on our core mandates of promoting Canadian Bio-Science and more importantly representing and informing Canadian researchers. In terms of information, we are now engaging with our members and supporters worldwide using social-media sites such as Facebook and Twitter. This allows us to dialog with our members more quickly than our traditional web-site and Bulletin annual review formats. Note that we are still updating our web-site and the bulletin which we feel is still important avenues of communication to a significant segment of our membership.

A second major area where we are promoting Canada and Canadian research to the world is our initiatives to attract major world scientific congresses to Canada. There are several initiatives in the works, but finally we can officially let you know that Canada will be hosting the International Union of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology (IUBMB) in Vancouver in 2016.

In 2013 we have spearheaded a campaign to inform the Federal government about the impact and importance of grants to Canadian scientists. The current government has not been particularly supportive of growth of funding for the fundamental sciences, choosing to focus and more disturbingly divert significant funds to “research of immediate translational impact”. While our society certainly supports research translation, we are attempting to remind the government that without a strong pipeline of fundamental research, the wellspring of knowledge to potentially be translated will dry up quickly. To that end we have been, and will continue to coordinate a letter writing campaign by those lucky few that are receiving research grants from NSERC or CIHR. We encourage those that are funded by these agencies to compose letters expressing thanks for their new funding and point out a few key ways in which these dollars will benefit Canadians.

Recently there have been significant changes in terms of the Federal ministers responsible for Health, Science and Industry. I personally contacted each of these new ministers on behalf of the CSMB/SCMB informing them of our society and the importance for fundamental research in Canada. I received a response from the Honorable James Moore - Minister of Industry. His reply clearly illustrates that the government is aware of fundamental research but it is clearly not a priority at this time. Our letters will hopefully keep them from proposing further cuts to the grants for basic science. Note that in dealing with governments, the most

significant impacts come from a large group of people speaking with one voice. We encourage you to convince your colleagues and trainees to keep their membership in the CSMB active year after year to help maximize the impact of our lobbying efforts. The more of you that support us, the stronger mandate we have to support you.

Finally, a reminder that the 57th annual CSMB conference is approaching fast. It will be held April 9-13, 2014 at the beautiful Banff Centre, Alberta and focused on Membrane Proteins in Health and Disease. We believe that our CSMB meetings are great forums for trainees to present their research. This meeting is no exception and we are planning CSMB awards, lectures and poster sessions featuring presentations by graduate students and postdoctoral fellows. Travel awards are available for trainees and prizes will be given for the best posters. More information is available at:

https://www.csmb-scbm.ca/meetings/57th_Annual_Conference.aspx#Mtg

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andrew Simmonds', written in a cursive style.

Andrew Simmonds
Department of Cell Biology,
University of Alberta