



Canadian Society for Molecular Biosciences Société Canadienne pour les Biosciences Moléculaires

December 3rd, 2015

Executive / Exécutif

President / Président

Dr. Kristin Baetz
University of Ottawa

Past-President / Président

Précédent
Dr. Christian Baron
Université de Montréal

Vice-President / Vice-Président

Dr. Philip Hieter
U of British Columbia

Treasurer / Trésorier

Dr. Arthur Hilliker
York University

Secretary / Secrétaire

Dr. Randal Johnston
University of Calgary

Councillors / Conseillers

Dr. Andrew Simmonds
University of Alberta

Dr. Martin Bisailon
Université de Sherbrooke

Dr. Jan Rainey
Dalhousie University

Dr. James Davie
University of Manitoba

Dr. Logan Donaldson
York University

Dr. Tarik Moroy
Institut de recherches cliniques
de Montréal IRCM

Dr. Justin Nodwell
University of Toronto

Trainee Representatives

Dr. Anastassia Voronova
Hospital for Sick Children

Mr. Mustapha Lhor
Université Laval

Bulletin Editor / Éditeur du

Bulletin
Dr. Frances Sharom
University of Guelph

Secretariat & CSMB Office:

Mrs. Wafaa H. Antonious
Canadian Society for Molecular
Biosciences
C/O Rofail Conference and
Management Services (RCMS)
17 Dossetter Way
Ottawa, ON K1G 4S3
Canada
Tel.: 613 421 7229
Fax.: 613 421 9811
Email: Contact@csmb-scbm.ca

Dear Member,

As president of the society I would like to thank you for your continued or new support. The CSMB serves a large constituency of scientists at the graduate student, postdoc and faculty level. The CSMB continues to do many activities, and here I want to highlight our exciting initiatives in Advocacy and Meetings.

Advocacy

2015 has been a remarkable year for the CSMB in which we continued to focus on advocating for increased funding for fundamental research. Due to the unprecedented efforts of many societies, individual scientists and the public, science became a part of the discussion during Election 2015. The Liberal Government has strongly indicated that Science will once again become a priority. Not only does Canada now have two Ministers with science portfolios, but remarkably Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has mandated that Minister of Science Kirsty Duncan “examine options to strengthen the recognition of and support for fundamental research to support new discoveries.”

Here I want to highlight what the CSMB has done this past year and our future plans to ensure the Liberal Government delivers on increasing support for Canada’s outstanding research labs.

1. Member Letter Writing Campaigns. In 2015 we continued our letter writing campaigns suggesting that recently funded scientists thank the government, thereby underlining the importance of funding for research. Post-election we have asked our members to tell our new government how the decline in funding for fundamental research is impacting their studies and the training of the next generation of students, but to also provide them with suggestions to improve science funding. Letters/emails to Members of Parliaments (MPs) remain an incredibly powerful tool to bring issues to the forefront for our parliamentarians, especially if received in large numbers. I encourage you to keep writing and talking to Prime Minister [Justin Trudeau](#), Minister of Health [Jane Philpott](#), Minister of Science [Kirsty Duncan](#), and Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development [Navdeep Singh Bains](#) and your local [MP](#). Let them know about how decreases in success rates and changes to CIHR and NSERC are impacting your research. It is essential that they hear from you!

2. CSMB Outreach to Parliamentarians. The CSMB continues to take every opportunity to educate our government on the value of fundamental research for Canada. We continue to officially respond to the Federal Budget and make submissions for Pre-Budget Consultations to the House of Commons. We continue to advocate for budget increases for NSERC and CIHR to be directed to non-targeted open operating grant competitions and for continued investment in research infrastructure. In 2015 CSMB Past-President Christian Baron and I met with both NDP and Liberal Science Critics to discuss the major challenges of our members. Further working with our lobbying partner Research Canada we participate in events on Parliament Hill to get our message directly to MPs. Moving forward we will take every opportunity to meet with our new government to keep pressure on them to indeed strengthen support for fundamental research.

3. Petition. To help ensure that Science was part of the pre- and post-election discussions, the CSMB launched a petition to increase support of basic discovery research in Canada. With over 4000 signatures, this campaign was noticed by mainstream media, the public and politicians. Further CSMB ran an [ad in the Hill Times](#) to ask Prime Minister Trudeau to work with us to get researchers back into their labs. Stay tuned for future initiatives.

4. Working with other Societies. The CSMB is just one of many volunteer based science societies in Canada that are concerned about the sustainability of discovery research in Canada. Going forward it is essential that we work together to ensure we are all staying on message, coordinating our efforts, and helping each other out. For example this year [Evidence for Democracy](#) asked us to help increase survey participants from the biomedical sciences. Your response overwhelmed them and has had impact. This year we also joined the [Partnership Group for Science and Engineering](#) (PAGSE) to add our voice to their agenda and we will be coordinating a “Bacon and Eggheads” on Parliament Hill at which scientists present their work to and meet with MPs.

Meetings.

To become more relevant to our members going forth we will strive to offer you affordable national and international conferences that will be of interest to larger numbers of our members. Not only will our CSMB conferences continue to be outstanding scientific meetings but we will be offering various trainee career workshops. Three meetings of note:

2016: [Signaling Pathways in Development, Disease and Aging](#). The CSMB in collaboration with the International Union of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology (IUBMB) and the Pan-American Association for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology (PABMB) will be hosting our 59th annual conference in Vancouver July 17th – 21st, 2016. With an anticipated attendance of over 1000 this diverse conference will have a little something for everyone. On July 15th and 16th the satellite [Young Scientists Program](#) will offers young scientists from all over the world the opportunity to share and exchange scientific experience, present their work to an international audience, meet with internationally renowned professors, promote their scientific future and, why not, have fun. Online registration is available through www.iubmb2016.org!

2017: For Canada’s Centennial year we will be hosting our 60th annual conference in Ottawa from May 16th to 21st 2017 called “Celebrating Canadian Molecular Biosciences: from organelle to systems biology”. Not only will this meeting strive to offer a diverse range of speakers, but we are planning many events to show-off Canada’s outstanding researchers (that means YOU!) to politicians and the public. Come join the party in Ottawa in 2017.

2018: The world will come to Vancouver again for the 61st annual CSMB conference, held in July in partnership with the International Congress of Genetics and the Genetics Society of America (GSA).

I hope that this letter illustrates the dynamic efforts of the CSMB working for and with you. Moving forward, you will be hearing more from us and we want to hear from you too. Indeed we will be introducing new subcommittees and looking for volunteers to help us further develop the CSMB. We should all work together towards getting the support we need to do our work and to pay back to society by breaking new ground in basic and applied research in the molecular biosciences.

To help us continue our work in your interest we would greatly appreciate if you renewed your membership, and even more so, if each of you motivated one or two of your fellow students or colleagues to join the CSMB. Having more members would give us more authority to speak up in your name. Thank you for your consideration.

Best regards,



Kristin Baetz
President of the Canadian Society for Molecular Biosciences
Interim-Director of the Ottawa Institute of Systems Biology
Associate Professor, Department of Biochemistry, Microbiology and Immunology
University of Ottawa