

CWHC Atlantic Region honored with PEI Heritage Recognition Award



Photo: L-R **Tessa McBurney, Darrien Washinger, Dr. Laura Bourque, Dr. Megan Jones, Dr. Wassim Salamoun** Lieutenant Governor, **Fiep deBie, Dr. Scott McBurney.**

The Canadian Wildlife Health Cooperative-Atlantic Region (CWHC-Atlantic Region), based at the Atlantic Veterinary College, University of Prince Edward Island, has been honored with a Heritage Recognition Award from the PEI Museum and Heritage Foundation.

The annual PEI Heritage Awards celebrate individuals and organizations that have made outstanding contributions to preserving and promoting the provinces' heritage, including both human and natural history. The award was presented to members of the CWHC-Atlantic Region by the Honorable Dr. Wassim Salamoun, Lieutenant Governor of PEI, at a ceremony held in Charlottetown on March 23rd.

The CWHC-Atlantic Region was recognized for its dedication to protecting and documenting wildlife health, an essential part of the Island's environmental and cultural heritage.

"It was an honor to be included in such a deserving group of recipients," said Dr. Megan Jones, regional director of the CWHC –Atlantic Region. "I particularly appreciate that our work to understand and track wildlife health was recognized for its contribution to the natural heritage of the Island. That's the big picture, and it's why we do what we do— to help preserve and protect our environment."

"Congratulations to the CWHC-Atlantic Region team on this well-deserved recognition," said Dr. Dominique Griffon, Dean of the Atlantic Veterinary College. "Your work continues to have a lasting impact on wildlife conservation and heritage preservation in Prince Edward Island."

Credit: Apryl Munro, External Engagement Officer, AVC

Former PhD Graduate Student Appointed Dean of Vet School in Sri Lanka



Photo: Dr. Anil Kalupahana, dean of the faculty of Veterinary Medicine and Animal Science, University of Peradeniya.

Congratulations to **Dr. Anil Kalupahana** who has been appointed dean of the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine and Animal Science, University of Peradeniya, in Sri Lanka for a three-year term effective November 1, 2024.

Dr. Kalupahana earned his PhD in Pathology and Microbiology from AVC, where he was co-supervised by **Dr. Fred Kibenge** and **Dr. Scott McBurney**. He successfully defended his thesis, "Characterization of orthoreoviruses isolated from American crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*) winter mortality events in eastern Canada," in July 2017. He was awarded his degree at Convocation in the spring of 2018.

During his studies, he received the AVC Department of Pathology and Microbiology Graduate Student Scholarship in 2009-2010 and the Dr. Douglas W. Ehresmann Graduate Award for outstanding research in virology in 2013 and 2017.

Following his doctoral studies, he returned to Sri Lanka as a lecturer in veterinary virology at the University of Peradeniya, later advancing to senior lecturer grade 1.

In 2019, Dr. Kalupahana was unanimously elected head of the Department of Veterinary Pathobiology, a position he held for two consecutive terms until his recent appointment as dean. The Department of Veterinary Pathobiology is responsible for teaching veterinary bacteriology and mycology, virology, parasitology, pathology, and immunology to second-year veterinary students.

Dr. Kalupahana's achievements highlight the global impact of AVC's graduate programs. His leadership at Sri Lanka's only veterinary school is a testament to his dedication to veterinary education and research.

"We are proud to celebrate an AVC alumnus reaching the highest position in veterinary education in Sri Lanka," said Dr. Fred Kibenge of his former student.

Congratulations, Dr. Kalupahana!

Credit: Apryl Munro, External Engagement Officer, AVC

Funding Success



Congratulations to **Dr. Nina Germitsch** who received \$21,000. in funding from the Nova Scotia Habitat Conservation Fund for her project entitled '*Echinococcus canadensis* in Nova Scotia's coyotes, foxes, and moose - an increasing threat?'

Successful Thesis Defenses



The Pathology and Microbiology department wish to extend congratulations to:

Crystal Veltman who successfully defended her MSc thesis titled "Expression and Identification of Biomarkers in Complex Gill Disease: Using Jellyfish Toxins and Hydrogen Peroxide Treatments as Laboratory Models of Gill Disease in Atlantic salmon (*Salmo salar*)" on December 13, 2024. Crystal was supervised by **Dr. Mark Fast**; **Dr. Shona Whyte** chaired the Supervisory Committee and **Dr. Jordan Poley** chaired the Examination Committee.



Laura Groves who successfully defended her MSc thesis titled "Immunological responses of Atlantic salmon (*Salmo salar*) against Infectious Salmon Anemia (ISAv) with increasing temperatures" on January 7, 2025. Laura was supervised by Dr. Mark Fast; Dr. Dave Speare chaired the Supervisory Committee and Dr. Chelsea Martin chaired the Examination Committee.

Congratulations Crystal and Laura!

Karen Roche Retires from UPEI

Karen Roche retired from UPEI on March 31, 2025, after 34 years of service. Karen started work at the Atlantic Veterinary College (AVC) in January of 1991 as an Administrative Assistant in the Radiology Department of the Veterinary Teaching Hospital (VTH). Her time at the AVC included time in the Veterinary Teaching Hospital, the Dean's Office and the Office of Academic and Student Affairs. Most recently, the Department of Pathology and Microbiology was fortunate to have Karen work with us from November 2018 onward until her retirement.

During her time in the Department of Pathology and Microbiology, we were fortunate to benefit from Karen's strong work ethics, intuitive handling of situations and a well-developed knowledge of campus areas and personnel. Karen's ability to rapidly grasp nuances of financial and other situations was a tremendous benefit to the department and directly contributed to the success of many individuals.

A retirement party was held for Karen on March 26, 2025, where faculty, staff and students were able to bid Karen a fond farewell. Karen will now have more time to travel and enjoy family and friends. We wish her the very best in her retirement!

Contributed by Dr. Shelley Burton







Publications

Speare D, Nowak BF, Schmidt-Posthaus H, Senapin S. Medicinal herbs, bioactives, phytochemicals and functional foods for health of aquatic species: Exploring a burgeoning focus for fish health sciences. *Journal of Fish Diseases* 2025;48:e13999. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jfd.13999>

Mandrioli L, **Brocca G**, Zamparo S, Orioles M, Morini M, Cortinovi L, Fiocchi E, Anjomanibenisi M, Toffan A, Pretto T, Verin R. Multiple cutaneous nerve sheath tumours with myxoid differentiation in farmed Russian sturgeons (*Acipenser gueldenstaedtii*, Brandt and Ratzeburg 1833). *Vet Res Commun*. 2025 Feb 1;49(2):95. doi: 10.1007/s11259-025-10662-7.

McLaughlin A, Giacinti J, Sarma SN, Brown MGC, Ronconi RA, Lavole RA, Eng ML, Enright B, Lang AS, Rahman I, Wight J, Hargan KE, Mallory ML, Baak JE, **Jones M**, Saunders M, Dupuis-Smith R, Elliott K, Gilchrist HG, Hennin H, Guillemette M, Martigny P, Montevecchi W, Petersen A, Berhane Y, Provencher JF. Examining avian influenza virus exposure in seabirds of the northwest Atlantic in 2022 and 2023 via antibodies in eggs. *Conservation Physiology* Volume 13 2025 <https://doi.org/10.1093/conphys/coaf010>

Polinski M, Gross L, **Groman D**, Alarcón M, Braceland M, Booman M, Dilecadet D, May S, Gagné N, and Garver K. PRV-1 Virolence in Atlantic Salmon is Affected by Host Genotype. *Viruses* 2025;17;285 <https://doi.org/10.3390/v17020285>

Germitsch N, Kockmann T, Schnyder M, Tritten L. N-terminomics profiling of host proteins targeted by excretory-secretory proteases of the nematode *Angiostrongylus vasorum* identifies points of interaction with canine coagulation and complement cascade. *PLOS ONE* 20(1):e0316217. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0316217>

MacMillan, KM, Burns Jj, John E, **Clancey N**, Stull JW. Investigation of the occurrence of low thyroxine concentrations and response to thyrotropin-releasing hormone using equine and canine assays in a population of Standardbred races horses in Prince Edward Island, Canada. *J. Equine Veterinary Science* 2025 in print. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jevs.2025.105400>

Ignatz EH, Allen MS, Hall JR, Sandrelli RM, **Fast MD**, Perry GML, Rise ML, Gamper AK. Application of genomic tools to study and potentially improve the upper thermal tolerance of farmed Atlantic salmon (*Salmo salar*). Ignatz et al. .*BMC Genomics* 2025;26;-294 <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12864-025-11482-4>

Fajei E, Méndez LR, **Whyte SK**, Velazquez J, Dantagnan P, **Soto-Davila M**, Rodriguez-Ramos T, Proskos E, Dixon B, Carpio Y, Estrada M, **Fast MD**. Investigation of two different PACAP-38 (Pituitary Adenylate Cyclase Activating Polypeptide) formulated feeds on Atlantic salmon (*Salmo salar*) Immune responses with Enteric Red Mouth disease (*Yersinia ruckeri*). *Comparative Immunology Reports* 2025;8;200221. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cirep.2025.200221>

For comments or suggestions for our newsletter,

please contact: Ingrid MacLeod (imacleod@upei.ca) (902) 566-0541.

Editor/ Reviewer Dr. Fred Kibenge and Dr. Shivani Ohja