



Dr. Cheryl Barnabe – *Awarded the 2025 Killam Annual Professorship*

Dr. Cheryl Barnabe, Professor of Medicine and Community Health Sciences and Director of the McCaig Institute for Bone and Joint Health at the University of Calgary, was selected as a 2025 Killam Annual Professor. This honour recognizes excellence in research and teaching, and service to the university and the wider academic community. The nomination recognized Dr. Barnabe's commitment to addressing disparities in arthritis care that exist for Indigenous persons. Achievements include her research program centered on innovations in health service delivery, teaching in relational communication skills, advocacy, and mentorship of Indigenous graduate students. Leadership activities include co-authoring the Cumming School of Medicine's Indigenous Health Dialogue which has now been adopted fully in the school's strategic plan, in addition to her contributions to the Canadian Rheumatology Association, the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, and the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada.



Dr. Erkan Demirkaya – *Appointed Executive Chair of TARN and ex-officio member of the ERN-RITA*

Congratulations to Dr. Erkan Demirkaya on his appointment as Executive Chair of the Translational Autoinflammatory Research Network (TARN) and as an ex-officio member of the European Reference Network for Rare Immunodeficiency, Autoinflammatory and Autoimmune Diseases (ERN-RITA).

Dr. Demirkaya is a globally recognized leader in pediatric rheumatology, with a particular focus on autoinflammatory disease research. He brings more than two decades of experience as a clinician-scientist, academic educator, and international network builder. As Professor of Pediatrics and Epidemiology & Biostatistics at Western University, and President of the International Society of Systemic Auto-Inflammatory Diseases (ISSAID), he has led national and global initiatives that continue to shape clinical care, education, and research worldwide. He also launched the ISSAID Early Career Program, including its inaugural Global Summit in 2025, and is a highly respected mentor to the next generation of researchers.

As founder and Executive Chair of TARN, Dr. Demirkaya has led the development of a global, multicentre initiative integrating genomics, registries, biobanking, and clinician- and patient-reported outcomes across more than 70 institutions and in collaboration with six patient organizations worldwide. His work has focused on defining genotype-phenotype correlations, developing and validating clinical outcome measures in systemic autoinflammatory diseases (SAIDs), and co-creating consensus-based management tools with international partners, including the National Institutes of Health, the Paediatric Rheumatology European Society (PReS), the American College of Rheumatology, and the European Alliance of Associations for Rheumatology (EULAR).

With his new role as an ex-officio member of ERN-RITA, Dr. Demirkaya's leadership is expected to further strengthen collaboration between Europe and North America, particularly in advancing research and care for rare and ultra-rare disorders.

His current efforts focus on enhancing clinical trial readiness, modernizing outcome measures, advancing translational research and quality improvement, and expanding collaborative networks to improve outcomes for patients with systemic autoinflammatory diseases.

AWARDS, APPOINTMENTS, AND ACCOLADES



Dr. Lynn Hamilton – *Recipient of the ORA Distinguished Member Award*

I am honoured to receive the Ontario Rheumatology Association (ORA) Distinguished Member Award.

I feel lucky to have had a career which was always interesting, challenging and satisfying.

From the time I completed my Rheumatology and Metabolic Bone Disease fellowships at University of Toronto, there has been enormous progress in therapeutics in our field.

Not only has the specialty been fascinating but there is now so much we can offer our patients.



Dr. Gillian Hawker – *Recipient of the 2025 ACR Master Award*

At the American College of Rheumatology's Convergence Meeting in Chicago in November 2025, Dr. Gillian Hawker was awarded the American College of Rheumatology (ACR) Master designation. The designation of ACR Master is conferred on members who have made outstanding contributions to the field of rheumatology through service to the American College of Rheumatology/Association of Rheumatology Professionals (ARP); and advancements in research, practice, education, and/or advocacy.

Dr. Hawker is a Professor of Medicine and Rheumatology in the Department of Medicine, and a Clinician Scientist/Health Services Researcher and Staff Rheumatologist at Women's College Hospital, at the University of Toronto. Her research is focused on identifying, understanding and addressing disparities in access to and outcomes of care for people living with osteoarthritis (OA). This research has helped redefine OA as a serious disease with multifaceted impacts, advanced understanding of how OA pain affects sleep, mood, comorbidities, and health care costs, documented sex- and gender-based disparities in OA care and demonstrated the importance of patient preferences and values in surgical outcomes. She has over 500 co-authored publications including original research, reviews, white papers, and book chapters. Her impact on the field has been recognized through numerous honours, including the Canadian Rheumatology Association Distinguished Investigator Award (2011), the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal (2012), Fellowship in the Canadian Academy of Health Sciences (2014), and the Osteoarthritis Research Society International (OARSI) Clinical Research Award (2022). Dr. Hawker has held many leadership positions within the national and international rheumatology/OA communities. Nationally, she previously co-led the Arthritis Alliance of Canada and national standards of care for OA. Internationally, she has served as Chair of the ACR Quality of Care Subcommittee on Classification & Response Criteria, Board Member of OARSI, and co-leader of international efforts to develop classification criteria for RA (the first ever ACR/EULAR collaboration) and early-stage OA for OARSI. Dr. Hawker has also been recognized for her leadership in advancing inclusive excellence in academic medicine. She has supervised and mentored numerous trainees and received honours for exceptional mentorship.

Dr. Hawker's quote on this honour:

"It is so special to know that others you respect and admire feel your contributions have been useful. I am indebted to the outstanding colleagues who nominated me and to those who decided I was worthy."



Dr. Catherine Ivory – Recipient of the ORA Early Career Rheumatologist Award

Dr. Catherine Ivory received the Ontario Rheumatology Association (ORA) Early Career Rheumatologist award in May 2025. She is currently an Assistant Professor at the University of Ottawa, practicing at the Ottawa Hospital. She has been a member of the board of directors of the ORA since 2022, representing Eastern Ontario. This award highlights Dr. Ivory's commitment to the priorities of the ORA, dedication to engaging early career rheumatologists with the ORA, as well as helping recruitment to rheumatology with the RheumOpps committee.



Dr. Shahin Jamal – Recipient of the BC Society of Rheumatology/UBC Award for Teaching

Congratulations to Dr. Shahin Jamal on being the recipient of the BC Society of Rheumatology/University of British Columbia (UBC) Award for teaching. This award is voted on by rheumatology residents and recognizes excellence in teaching and commitment to education. Dr. Jamal is a Clinical Professor at the University of British Columbia and a Clinician Investigator at Arthritis Research Canada. She is past Program Director of Adult Rheumatology at UBC and current co-director of the CRA RheumReview Course. She is the co-principal investigator of CanRIO, the Canadian Research Group of Rheumatology in Immuno-Oncology. She is honoured to receive this award, particularly as it was voted on by the residents. She enjoys teaching and mentoring students at all levels and feels privileged to have had the opportunity to work with so many talented trainees, many of whom are now esteemed colleagues.



Dr. Brent Ohata – Recipient of the VMDAS Award for Community Excellence

Dr. Brent Ohata was recently awarded the 2025 Vancouver Medical, Dental and Allied Association (VMDAS) Community Excellence Award, in recognition for the impact he has had beyond his Burnaby community practice to rural regions across British Columbia (BC), Indigenous communities, and Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. He is most proud of the deep relationships he has formed as the rheumatologist for the Nisga'a Nation and Carrier Sekani Family Services. He has launched numerous programs with the First Nations Health Authority, Doctors of BC, and BC Pathways to improve specialist access to care for rural and Indigenous communities in BC. He is also the co-founder and director of Mary Pack Arthritis Centre's Downtown Eastside Rheumatology clinic, providing rheumatologic care to patients experiencing extreme poverty. He has involved UBC rheumatology residents through all these endeavours, inspiring a new generation to incorporate advocacy and equity into their future careers.