

# OHNS Newsletter

Fall / Winter 2025



Otolaryngology – Head & Neck Surgery  
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

## CHAIR'S MESSAGE



I want to wish all of you a joyous and blessed holiday season and a very happy, healthy, and successful New Year.

I am proud to share with you our fall and winter newsletter which highlights yet another remarkable six months of academic and clinical excellence. Our collective achievements are highlighted. This is a testament to all of your incredible work and hopefully serves as a reminder of how privileged we are to be part of this world-leading department.

Our residents and fellows remain a great source of pride. Please join me in congratulating our fifth-year residents Drs. Mandalin Bartling, Tania Chen, Elysia Grose, Pouyan Namavarian and Gianluca Sampieri who all passed their Royal College Examinations. They all have incredibly bright futures, and we will be watching with great pride. I also want to congratulate Dr. Ben Levy who was the recipient of the SENTAC Scholar Award at this year's annual SENTAC 2025 meeting for his paper titled "3-dimensional Assessment of the Nasal Airway in Children with Syndromic Craniosynostosis". Big congratulations to Ben and his mentors for this tremendous accomplishment. In November our residents attended the annual Resident Development Day which was held in conjunction with Faculty Development Day. This was a very well attended and impactful day for both faculty and learners alike.

This academic year has seen a major change to our undergraduate medical education program. I would like to sincerely thank Dr. Ambrose Lee, our director of undergraduate medical education, for helping our department navigate the significant changes that have taken place. The new undergraduate medical education program now includes a three-week selective in otolaryngology. Although this change means that not all of our medical students will rotate in otolaryngology it does give interested students the opportunity to immerse themselves in the specialty. I want to thank all departments that have participated in this new program already for a job well done. Early feedback has been tremendous. Interest in our specialty is at an all-time high. The Otolaryngology- Head & Neck Surgery interest group at the University of Toronto hosted a fantastic event on October 1. Fifty eight students interacted with Drs. Yvonne Chan, Sharon Cushing, Joel Davies, Ambrose Lee and Nik Wolter. Several of our residents also participated. Thanks to all for your time and energy. These efforts are so important to our future and to the recruitment of the best and brightest to our program.

Our newsletter is published twice annually in June and December.

Please send any items you would like included in subsequent issues to:  
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*Leading Innovation. Achieving Impact*

I would like to also extend my congratulations to our three most recently promoted faculty Jamil Asaria, Susan Druker, Janet Chung, and Christopher Yao - all of whom were promoted to the rank of Assistant Professor. Last year we were very happy to announce Dr. Yvonne Chan's promotion to Full Professor. We had the opportunity to celebrate with Yvonne and her family and loved ones on October 27 at the Faculty Club. This was a wonderful opportunity to celebrate this milestone accomplishment.

As always, our department continues to produce dynamic and effective leaders. Effective July 1, 2025, Dr. John de Almeida became the new Otolaryngologist-in-Chief and the Gullane/O'Neil Family Chair in Otolaryngology- Head & Neck Surgery at University Health Network. John takes over from Dr. Ralph Gilbert who had an incredibly successful tenure as the outgoing chief. We look forward to John's vision, energy, and leadership as he assumes this important role.

In September of this year our department underwent its internal review by the University of Toronto. An enormous amount of preparatory work was necessary. I would like to sincerely thank Dr. Vincent Lin and Ms. Andrea Donovan for the tremendous amount of work that went into our successful review. I also want to extend my sincere appreciation to all of our faculty and learners who participated in this review. It was a marvelous opportunity to showcase the greatness of our educational program.

So far this academic year we have welcomed several distinguished professors to our department to give grand rounds. We had the privilege of celebrating the memory of our dear colleague Dr. David Pothier - taken from us far too early - through the inaugural David Pothier Lecture. First and foremost, I would like to thank our partners at University Health Network, whose support made this special event possible. We were honoured to invite Professor Livio Presutti from the University of Bologna to deliver this inaugural lecture. Dr. Presutti paid tribute to David's legacy with a remarkable presentation on the state of the art of middle ear endoscopic surgery. This was a wonderful testament to the lasting legacy of Dr. Pothier's vision and passion for the field. I would like to thank all of our grand round speakers both local and invited, for such an outstanding educational program.

Our department's commitment to humanitarian outreach continues. Highlighted within this newsletter are our faculties contributions in Kenya, Ukraine, and Canada's North. These activities represent selfless contributions from our faculty and wonderful opportunities for our learners to engage in global citizenship. We should be very proud of this continued effort.

As always, I want to thank all of you, our faculty, residents, fellows and alumni for your contributions, dedication, and sacrifice on behalf of this great department. Our success is a collective achievement that we should all take pride in. Once again, I wish all of you and your loved ones Happy Holidays.

*Danny*



*2025-26 Departmental  
Executive Committee  
Holiday Dinner  
on November 24, 2025*

# FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

Promotions Celebration  
October 27, 2025 @ Faculty Club

*Congratulations*

**Dr. Yvonne Chan**



**on her promotion to Full Professor!**

Her leadership and passion for Otolaryngology and medical education inspire us all.

Surrounded by students, colleagues, and loved ones, it was a night full of pride & celebration.

So proud of all she's achieved and excited for what's next!





## Christopher Yao

Was selected as a recipient of a Wightman-Berris Academy Individual Teaching Excellence Award in the Undergraduate category for the 2024-2025 academic year.

*Congratulations*

## John de Almeida

Congratulations to Dr. John de Almeida for his appointment as the new Department Head of Otolaryngology-Head & Neck Surgery, and as the Gullane Family/O'Neil Family Chair in Otolaryngology-Head & Neck Surgery, effective July 1, 2025.

In this role, Dr. de Almeida will lead the Department and its day-to-day operations, ensuring we deliver the highest standards of patient care while advancing surgical research and education.

Dr. de Almeida completed his residency in Otolaryngology - Head and Neck Surgery at the University of Toronto. He then pursued advanced fellowships in Head and Neck Oncologic, Robotic, and Microvascular Reconstructive Surgery at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai in New York, followed by a second fellowship in Open and Endoscopic Cranial Base Surgery at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center.

Currently a Professor of Otolaryngology-Head & Neck Surgery at the University of Toronto, Dr. de Almeida also holds a cross-appointment at the Institute of Health Policy, Management, and Evaluation, and holds a Master's degree in Clinical Epidemiology. His research spans clinical trials, health technology assessment, and patient-reported outcomes. He has published over 250 peer-reviewed papers and nearly 20 book chapters.

Dr. de Almeida has led several investigator-initiated and co-operative group trials at Princess Margaret Cancer Centre and the Canadian Cancer Trials Group (CCTG). He plays an active leadership role in the CCTG, NRG Oncology, and the Previously Untreated Locally Advanced (PULA) task force for head and neck cancer at the National Cancer Institute. He currently serves as the principal investigator of the SELECT Trial, a Phase III randomized controlled study investigating the use of lymphatic mapping with SPECT-CT to tailor radiation therapy for oropharyngeal cancer—funded by both the National Cancer Institute and the Canadian Institutes for Health Research. His work has garnered over \$9 million in peer-reviewed funding.

At UHN, Dr. de Almeida has consistently demonstrated a deep commitment to the care of patients with head and neck cancers. He helped establish one of Canada's first transoral robotic surgery programs, with a focus on minimally invasive surgical techniques. His leadership will ensure we continue to responsibly introduce and evaluate new technologies in head and neck surgery while upholding our long-standing tradition of excellence in clinical care and education.

At this time of leadership transition, please join us in thanking Dr. Ralph Gilbert, who has very ably served as Department Head of Otolaryngology-Head & Neck Surgery. His leadership and dedication have been greatly appreciated.



## Congratulations to our Faculty who have been promoted to Assistant Professor!



Jamil Asaria



Janet Chung



Susan Druker



Christopher Yao

## POSTGRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION

### Congratulations to our residents!



Mandolin Bartling



Tanya Chen



Elysia Grose



Pouyan Namavarian



Gianluca Sampieri

On behalf of our department, we want to congratulate all of them on their successful completion of their Royal College Exams.

We are all so proud of you and look forward to hearing about your future successes!

We would also like to acknowledge and sincerely thank all the Faculty for their dedicated teaching during the Fellowship Study Course & throughout the residency program.



**Ben Levy** was named as the top ranked scholarly project at the annual SENTAC 2025 meeting for his work entitled: Three-Dimensional Assessment of the Nasal Airway in Children with Syndromic Craniosynostosis: A CT-Based Morphometric Analysis.

# UNDERGRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION



Awareness in action! Beating Button Batteries, led by our resident Carlos Khalil, and Kids2Hear, led by Harrison Gao, Subin Park, and Vetri Thangavelu, worked with 10 community and school partners to provide on-site hearing screenings and button battery safety education to more than 700 children and their families.

University of Toronto medical students, trained and supported by SickKids audiology and otolaryngology residents, conducted hearing screenings and arranged follow-up care in newcomer and underserved communities. Button battery safety was highlighted and promoted through workshops and discussions with parents, guardians, and school staff.

On October 1, 2025, the OHNS Interest Group at U of T hosted an outstanding event with more than 58 students in attendance. The evening featured five faculty panelists who shared their career journeys and insights across subspecialties, including pediatrics, oncology and reconstruction, rhinology, and otology/neurotology.

### **Thank you to our amazing faculty:**

Drs. Yvonne Chan, Sharon Cushing, Joel Davies, Ambrose Lee, and Nik Wolter

And a huge shoutout to our student leads – Emily He, Labeeb Hassan Kutty, and Jinny Choi – for organizing such a successful evening.



# CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

## November 11, 2025–Faculty and Resident Development Day

The Resident Development portion of the annual Faculty Development Day was a great time for our residents to learn from amazing mentors on ways to personally and professionally develop, plus get a couple hours to reconnect with the entire team!



OHNS PGY1-4  
Residents on  
November 11, 2025

Coming up in 2026....

## Otolaryngology Update 2026

Saturday, February 7, 2026

7:30 AM – 4:30 PM

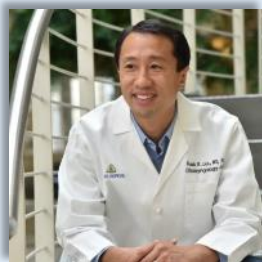
Peter Gilgan Centre for  
Research and Learning  
686 Bay Street, Toronto



[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)

**Join us on Friday May 1, 2026 at the Chestnut Conference Centre  
for our 34th Annual Percy Ireland Academic Day**

**Visiting Professor**  
**Frank R. Lin, MD, PhD**  
Professor  
Johns Hopkins University



**Guest of Honour**  
**Raymond Ng, BSc, PhD, MD,  
FRCSC**  
Assistant Professor  
University of Toronto

# Visiting Professors & Guest Lecturers (Grand Rounds)



**October 17, 2025 - Yael Bensoussan, MD, MSc, FRCSC**

Assistant Professor, Otolaryngology- Head and Neck Surgery  
Chief, Laryngology Division  
Director, USF Health Voice Center  
Director, Institute for Voice and Hearing Innovation  
University of South Florida

**Leveraging Large Consortiums for High-Impact Research: The Bridge2AI-Voice Project to Fuel Voice as a Biomarker of Health**



**October 31, 2025**

**Tiffany Hwa, MD**

Assistant Professor  
Division of Otolaryngology & Neurotology  
Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery  
University of Pennsylvania Health System

**Night of the Living Metrics: Challenges in Measuring Complex Auditory Perception**



**November 7, 2025**

**Deepika Chugh, BSc, DDS, MSc, FRCDC**

Assistant Professor  
Faculty of Dentistry, University of Toronto  
Associate, Department of Dentistry  
Mount Sinai Hospital



**Iona Leong, BSc (Hons), BDS, MSc, FRCDC**

Associate Professor  
Faculty of Dentistry, University of Toronto  
Head, Division of Oral Pathology and Oral Medicine  
Department of Dentistry, Mount Sinai Hospital  
Department of Laboratory Medicine and Pathobiology, University of Toronto



**Marco Magalhaes, DDS, MSc, PhD, FRCDC**

Associate Professor  
Director, Cancer Invasion and Metastasis Laboratory (CIMlab), Faculty of Dentistry  
Departments of Laboratory Medicine and Pathology  
University of Toronto

**The Oral Cavity: Normal, Abnormal, and Everything in Between**



**November 14, 2025 - Saul Frenkiel, MD.C.M, FRCS(C)**

Professor  
Department of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery  
McGill University

**Mentorship, Coaching, and My 10 Golden Rules for Effective Leadership**



### **Krista Riko Lecture** **November 21, 2025 - Melissa Hazen, PhD, MSc, Aud(C)**

Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Vestibular and Balance Research Laboratory,  
Boys Town National Research Hospital, Omaha, NE, USA  
Clinical Audiologist and Lecturer,  
The Hospital for Sick Children and University of Toronto

**Balancing Development: Motor, Cognitive, and Spatial Outcomes  
in Children with Hearing Loss**



### **Inaugural David Pothier Lecture** **December 5, 20 25 - Livio Presutti, MD**

Chairman, Department of Surgery, Modena Hospital  
Full Professor of Otolaryngology, University of Bologna  
Emilia-Romagna, Italy

**Ear Surgery: Surgical Techniques and Surgical Education**



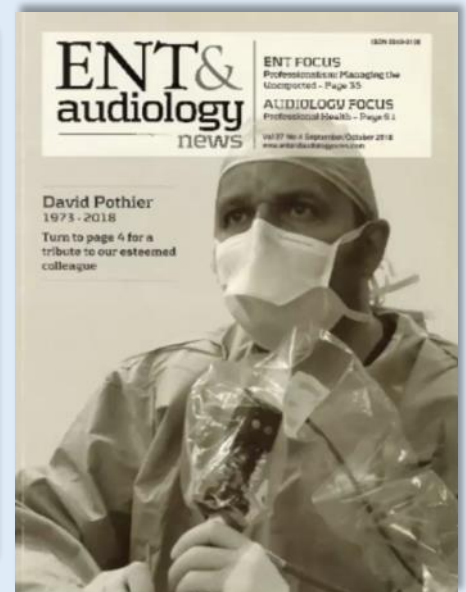
**Dr David Pothier – 15 December 1973 - 27 July 2018**

David Pothier passed away on July 27, 2018 in the early hours of the morning following a struggle with recurrent brain cancer. His passing extinguished a brilliant light, the likes of which few of us will witness in our lifetime. Here we have gathered a selection of moving tributes from some of his dear friends and colleagues.

Please visit our website to see more tributes to Dave Pothier.  
[www.entandaudiologynews.com](http://www.entandaudiologynews.com)

**EAR SURGERY:  
Surgical techniques and surgical education**

**Prof. Livio Presutti**  
Otolaryngology - Head and Neck Surgery Department, University of Bologna, Italy  
Full Professor of Otolaryngology, University of Modena and Bologna



### **December 19, 2025 - Raewyn Campbell, FRACS, BMed (Hons), BAppSc (Physio), GradDip Ex & Sport Sc, FARS**

President, Australia and New Zealand Rhinologic Society  
ENT Research Lead, Institute of Academic Surgery, Royal Prince Alfred Hospital  
PhD Candidate in Ergonomics, The University of Sydney

**Ergonomics in Rhinology and Beyond: What You Can Do to Avoid Pain  
and Improve Your Performance**



## **CaRMS INTERVIEWS: Friday February 6, 2026**

Information sessions were held on October 28, November 6 & 25, 2025  
Medical students had the opportunity to meet with the Chair, Vice Chair, Program Director  
and Residents and were able to ask any questions they had.

# HUMANITARIAN MISSIONS



So proud of our amazing faculty Drs. Kevin Higgins, Manish Shah, & Vincent Lin who joined a surgical outreach mission in **Migori, Kenya** with [@kenyarelieff](#)

They worked alongside local healthcare heroes and colleagues from across Canada and the US, providing life-changing surgical care.

Then, they topped it off by summiting Mount Kilimanjaro – Africa's highest peak!  
What a journey of compassion, courage, and adventure.



Dr. Enepekides was in Lviv and Lutsk Ukraine on humanitarian mission with the Canada Ukraine Surgical Aid Program and the **Sunnybrook Ukraine Surgical Educational Initiative** from Sept 24-Oct 6.





A beautiful sight to see for our amazing faculty, Drs. Campisi, Lin and Monteiro, and PGY3 residents Melissa and Ryan during their time providing essential care to northern reserves in **Sioux Lookout** Dec 7-12



**Face The Future Foundation** had its 62nd surgical mission since 1996 to the Ivano-Frankivsk Regional Hospital in Ukraine in October. This was its 6th mission to Ukraine, and on this mission, 34 soldiers with complex war injuries were operated upon, performing 76 procedures. The team consisted of 19 members, including Dr. Peter Adamson, the Founder and President of Face the Future and Dr. Matthew Brace (faculty).



Dr. Peter Adamson (center) and Dr. Mathew Brace (second from right) with the other members of the surgical team on the October 2025 Ukraine Mission.



Dr. Peter Adamson with the nursing team on the October 2025 Ukraine Mission.



*In addition to treating injured soldiers, there were 30 surgical, nursing and anaesthesiology presentations and more than 450 Ukrainian participants in the weeklong educational programs, master classes and hands-on training sessions.*



Dr. Peter Adamson examining a soldier from Ukraine during the Foundation's October 2025 mission



Dr. Matthew Brace, a facial plastic and reconstructive surgeon, University of Toronto, examines a patient on the Foundation's sixth mission to Ukraine in October 2025

## U of T in the News...



*U of T President Melanie Woodin said she is honoured to follow in the footsteps of U of T's 16 former presidents including, to her left, Meric Gertler, David Naylor and Robert Prichard. Claire Sault, chief of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, and Trevor Young, U of T's vice-president and provost, are immediately to her right, while Shannon Simpson, senior director of Indigenous initiatives, and Sheree Drummond, secretary of the Governing Council, can be seen near the back. (photo by Johnny Guatto)*

[Read full article](#)

[The University of Toronto placed 2nd in the world and 1st in Canada in the QS World University Rankings: Sustainability 2026](#)



Photo by Matt Volpe

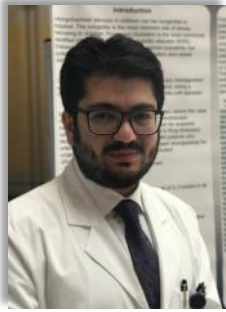
[Read full article](#)

Garett Horton  
March Levin  
Justine Philteos  
Ahmed Saleem  
Lily Wang

Abrar Al Jassim  
Hani Alanazi  
Abdullah AlDaihani  
Abdullah Arafat  
Robert Calvisi  
Alessandra Cataldo  
Russomando

John Curran  
Gia Gill  
Jumana Hussain  
Ethan Moritz  
Alon Pener-Tessler

Brigitte Routhier-Chevrier  
Alessandra Ruaro  
Jennifer Spiegel  
Daniel Wong  
Michael Xie



**Abdullah Arafat**

I'm currently doing a Laryngology Fellowship at Stanford University.



**Garret Horton**

I'm currently running a general otolaryngology practice in Victoria, British Columbia.

I've been busy setting up my practice and exploring the natural attractions that Vancouver Island and the surrounding Gulf Islands have to offer.

Here is a photo of my wife Hannah and I in the Glass House Mountains during a recent trip to Australia.

**Mark Levin**



I am thoroughly enjoying my facial plastic surgery fellowship in Beverly Hills.

My time is focused on learning all things deep plane face/neck lifts, full facial rejuvenation surgery, revision rhinoplasty with rib grafting as well as primary preservation rhinoplasty from world-renowned FPRS experts in Beverly Hills.

I am also starting to see and operate on my own patients which has been exciting!

Outside of the OR, life in LA is incredible - I am spending lots of time outdoors hiking, running along Santa Monica beach and with my wife/dog. I miss the U of T OTOHNS family and think of my friends and mentors in Toronto very often. Please contact me if you are in LA at any point!



**Justine Philteos**

It's hard to believe it's the halfway point of my fellowship! Boston has been nothing short of incredible, and fellowship is a lot of fun!

This year has made me appreciate our amazing training and phenomenal mentors back home!  
Missing you all!

When I am not operating, you can find me cheering for (and getting my heart broken by) the Raptors and the Leafs. I am looking forward to what the second half of the year brings!



**Lily Wang**



I've been settling into general community practice and have really enjoyed teaching residents rotating through the hospital - it's been great working with them from the other side!

Outside of work this summer, I've spent time golfing and traveling. My short game has improved, and I had an amazing time exploring both Japan and Korea! In the coming year, I'm excited to continue growing clinically and becoming more involved within our department.



**Michael Xie**

I am currently in Pittsburgh completing additional fellowship training in Skull Base Surgery. I look forward to bringing back complementary expertise and skills for my future practice incorporating head and neck and skull base oncology.

*Wishing everyone*



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