

# THE MUSE

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FALL 2013



The HHS Medical  
Staff Association  
Newsletter

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## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dr John and Dr Eiko Mernagh at the Annual  
Awards Dinner

Welcome to those new members of the MSA who have joined HHS since our last newsletter.

The MSA executive has gotten off to a good start this year. At our last retreat we identified a number of issues that are important to MSA members.

**Changes to the hospital bylaws.** The most important point for the MSA is the creation of a new category of staff: "affiliate staff". This is aimed at attracting community physicians, who do not hold staff positions at HHS, but wish to become more involved in the HHS community. As a result we may see our organization growing even bigger than it is now.

**The new MSA Constitution.** This will be presented to the membership for approval. See page 6.

**My Voice Matters Survey.** We were all given the opportunity to participate in this survey last year. I think it's fair to say that the results showed a need for improvement in the relationship between physicians and management at HHS. The hospital has initiated a new working group called the Physician Hospital Partnership Working

Group. MSA has representation in this group. We will be keeping you up to date on developments from this committee. As well we are going to initiate our own series of discussions with senior management. The November business meeting will be our first opportunity to engage in discussions with senior management on how we feel we can improve the working environment at HHS.

**Hospital Physician Disputes.** The MSA will continue to provide representation for members involved in any dispute. Members are asked to contact the MSA Office at the onset of notification of a dispute to request the presence of an MSA Executive member at meetings. The role of the MSA representative at meetings is to witness procedure and to ensure timely process if necessary.

**Code of Conduct.** We all know that there is a RESPECT code in effect for those working at HHS. However it is recognized that in many instances it is difficult to understand the mechanisms and communications pathways that are necessary to make the RESPECT code workable. We are going to be working on this with senior management in an effort to make our present working relationships better. More of this in future newsletters.

**Executive Recruitment.** Finally, we are continually on the lookout for members who wish to join in the MSA Executive Team. If you're interested in participating please give us a call or send us an e-mail.

Sincerely

*John Mernagh*

# Profile:

## Dr. Chitra Rao FRCP(C) Forensic Pathologist



Dr. Chitra Rao, recipient of the 2013 MSA President's Award for Distinguished Long Service, is an accomplished physician, wife, mother, grandmother, and a woman of striking contrasts. You might catch a glimpse of her perennial smile, warm and welcoming in the drafty corridors of Level 1 at the General, and were left to wonder how anyone manages to remain caring and compassionate against the backdrop of such grueling, and what to most would seem, gruesome work. But among her colleagues and associates, she is known for her remarkable investigative skills coupled with her steely determination in relentless pursuit of the end goal, the science-based truth about how a life has ended. Her reputation has garnered wide respect among police, coroners and the courts extending across Canada, the US and beyond. In her realm, few cases escape into the 'unknown' cause of death file.

Dr. Rao's present appointments include Senior Staff, Regional Forensic Pathology Unit, Hamilton General Hospital; Associate Professor, Faculty of Medicine, McMaster University; Registered with OFPS under Category A, and beyond Canada, Dr. Rao is Forensic Pathology Consultant providing services for Bermuda Police Service since 2008.

A significant portion of Dr. Rao's work involves child abuse cases. Her expertise has been sought and evidence provided in court cases inside and outside Ontario, from the Province of Nova Scotia, to reviewing cases in New Brunswick and British Columbia. Determining the causes of death in children is also the focus of several of Dr. Rao's award-winning publications and presentations. As much as she is valued for her expertise in the lab, she is equally sought after as an invited keynote speaker at conferences around the globe, for radio interviews and for a TV segment on Global News with Peter Kent. Her name is listed in the 'Who's Who' in Ontario.

Dr. Bashir Khambalia, Coroner writes, "I have known Dr. Rao since 1993, when I was appointed as Coroner. Dr. Rao has been my mentor, valued associate and close colleague. She has provided me with insight in complicated cases which have been solved because of her guidance and expertise. Dr. Rao has been professional, approachable, down to earth and straight forward, both at work and in social settings. Her expertise in complicated cases involving pediatric patients, especially shaken baby syndrome, has been invaluable."

Dr. Michael Pollanen, Chief Forensic Pathologist for Ontario writes, “Dr. Rao has been a respected leader in forensic pathology in Ontario for many years. She has provided highly professional forensic pathology services to the death investigation system, the criminal justice system and the people of Hamilton. As a senior forensic pathologist, Dr. Rao has contributed to high quality practices across the province through her participation in the Forensic Pathology Advisory Committee and her role in quality management for Ontario Forensic Pathology Service”.

Dr. Rao has been the Medical Director, Regional Forensic Pathology Unit, designated by the Chief Coroner, Dr. Barry McLennan of Ontario and Dr. Michael Pollanen, the Chief Forensic pathologist for Ontario from 1993-2010, and on full-time staff at Hamilton Health Sciences since 1984. In contrast to what is often considered a transient discipline, Dr. Rao’s passion for her work and the congeniality of her ‘family’ of colleagues has kept her at Hamilton Health Sciences for 30 years.

And her workload is staggering. On top of the more than 800 autopsies performed by Dr. Rao and colleagues per year, her schedule overflows with meetings and consultations, teaching and mentoring, conferences, speaking engagements, lab work, myriads of documentation, not to mention the numerous court dates where she is called upon to give expert witness to her findings. Often, on police request, Dr. Rao herself visits the death scene where she is asked to determine whether the death appears due to natural causes, accident, suicide or homicide. But after the autopsy is performed, lab tests ordered, and all possible evidence comes under her microscope, what Dr. Rao takes to court is pure science. Just the cold hard facts. The remaining tasks are the purview of police investigators, prosecutors, defense attorneys and other specialists.

Yet, sadly obscure is the far-reaching impact of Dr. Rao’s work that lives on long after the evidence is given, court decisions have been announced, the documentation completed, and the case is finally closed. In cases of homicide or in-

fanticide, it is often Dr. Rao’s expert testimony that provides the key evidence to ensure a killer is brought to justice and will never kill again. But what science cannot predict is the afterlife of Dr. Rao’s work; science cannot calculate how many lives have been ultimately protected from violence and death over the span of her 30-year career as a forensic pathologist. And, if it could be known, no doubt the figure would be enormous.



Dr. Jack Stanborough (MCSCS), Regional Supervising Coroner writes, “I have known Dr. Rao since 2003 in my capacity as an Investigating Coroner and since 2006 as the Regional Supervising Coroner.

Dr. Rao is the consummate professional widely respected in the forensic community and recognized internationally for her leadership in the investigation of pediatric and infant deaths. Very much a “team player” she interacts with the Police, students, Residents and colleagues with equal respect and consideration.

Dr. Rao and I have travelled together to many corners of the earth to give talks. She has always been extremely difficult to follow to the podium due to the excellence of her teaching. On a personal level, I consider her a true friend who always has my interest and the interests of others in her heart.”

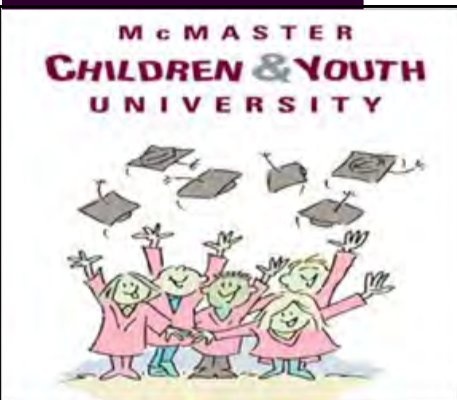
## The Medical Staff Association Proudly Announces a New Annual Award for Physicians for Their Outstanding Contribution to the Hamilton Community



MSA member Dr. Katrin Scheinemann, Assistant Professor, Division of Hematology & Oncology, Department of Pediatrics, receives the inaugural award for Outstanding Contribution to the Hamilton Community for 2013, presented by MSA past President Dr. John VanderMeulen at the Annual Dinner and Awards celebration in June.

Based on the European Children's University model that has expanded to 200 universi-

ties throughout Europe and the US, Dr. Scheinemann formed a partnership with Dr. Sandeep Raha, Assistant Professor, Pediatric Research, to bring about the McMaster Children and Youth University, the first of its kind in Canada. In 2011, the MYCU experienced immediate success and is now beginning its 3<sup>rd</sup> year, offering free Saturday morning interactive lectures in a university setting for all children between the ages of 7 to 14 years. For more information see MSA article in the Spring edition of the MUSE at: [MCYU in MSA Newsletter](#).



**Dr. Katrin Scheinemann**  
(back row left) and  
**Dr. Sandeep Raha**  
(back row right)  
with graduating class of 2012.  
**GOT KIDS?**  
View the MCYU 2013-2014 calendar and **Sign up NOW** at:  
<http://www.fhs.mcmaster.ca/mcyu/>

THE MUSE

Hamilton Health Sciences  
Medical Staff Association  
In appreciation of the

Outstanding Contribution to the Hamilton Community

The McMaster Children & Youth University  
presented to

**Dr. Katrin Scheinemann**  
Department of Pediatrics

Inaugural MCYU Graduation Class 2012



### ***Important Message from the MSA Executive Committee.....***

#### **The MSA Executive Committee proudly announces the NEW – MSA Constitution!**

Developed over the past year by the HHS Medical Staff Association Executive Committee with guidance and advice from Robert Lee, OMA Legal Counsel, the MSA Constitution is based on a merger of the best and most relevant segments of several documents including the MSA Mission and Values Statement (D. Psutka 2002), MSA Executive Committee Guidelines (2008) and other Medical Staff Associations constitutions as researched by Robert Lee. A great deal of credit belongs to Robert who has guided the Executive Committee through several drafts and has been instrumental in ensuring that the document aligns with the Public Hospitals Act and the Hamilton Health Sciences By-laws where required. The MSA Executive wishes to thank Robert Lee for the many hours he has spent on this project and for his help and guidance in representing the Medical Staff interests throughout the HHS By-laws revisions process over the years.

#### **The Purpose of the Constitution:**

The Medical Staff Association has expanded its mandate in several directions over the past few years, from our primary purpose, to report patient care issues to the hospital, to supporting members who find themselves involved in hospital dispute, promoting its members' talents and skills in the arts and music, linking to the community in support of worthy organizations through its charitable donations, and globally by showcasing the humanitarian work of its members in 3<sup>rd</sup> world countries in the MSA quarterly newsletter and at General Business Meetings. We realized that it is time to catch up to the MSAs evolution with a document that truly reflects its dynamic identity, captures its essence, and clearly defines the MSA as a values-based, egalitarian, transparent and wholly accountable organization, whose service to its members embraces community and extends globally.

The MSA Constitution also addresses the need for continuity and clear direction for the Executive Committee, providing the grounding principles to ensure good stewardship and relevant services to members independent of who occupies the transitory Executive Offices from election to election.

Now it's up to you. The Constitution, in final draft, is being circulated by email prior to the November 6 General Business Meeting for your review. You are encouraged to participate by sending in your vote to approve and/or comments and recommendations, and to attend the General Business Meeting on November 6. Robert Lee will be on hand to answer questions. Watch for the draft Constitution in your email in the coming week!

Sent with sincere best wishes,

The MSA Executive Committee: Dr. John Mernagh, President; Dr Chris Ricci, Vice President, Dr. Dereck Hunt, Secretary; Members-at-Large: Dr. Paul Miller, Dr. Paul Missiuna, Dr. Bruno Salena, Dr Kevin Zbuk; past President Dr. Frank Baillie.

## Dr. Stephen Garnett Distinction Award 2013



**Richard H. Hunt, FRCP, FRCPEd, FRCP(C), AGAF, MACG**  
Professor, Emeritus  
Farncombe Family Digestive Disease Research Institute  
Department of Medicine  
Division of Gastroenterology  
McMaster University



# MSA President's Award for Distinguished Long Service 2013



**Dr. Edward M. Dore** B.Sc. DDS  
Department of Surgery



**Dr. Desmond C. Kwok** BSc, MD, FRCS  
Department of Surgery



**Dr. Chitra Rao**, MBBS ECFMG  
FRCP(C) L.M.C.C.  
Department of Pathology



**Dr. Irene Turpie**, MD MB ChB MSc  
FRCPS  
Department of Medicine





## Outstanding Resident & Fellow Awards 2013

### Junior

Dr. Julia Frei	PGY2 Pediatrics
Dr. Erin Hanley	PGY2 Psychiatry
Dr. Jennifer Ruzhynsky	PGY2 Psychiatry

### Senior

Dr. Julie Arsenault	PGY5 Radiation Oncology
Dr. Lindsay Crabbe	PGY5 Internal Medicine
Dr. Stephanie Fedak-Tanopolsky	PGY5 PM&R
Dr. Andrew Heikkila	PGY4 Anesthesia

### Fellow

Dr. Siwar Albashir	Gastroenterology
Dr. Osama Al-Shaya	Orthopedic Oncology
Dr. David Dawe	Medical Oncology



**Celebration of Excellence**

HAMILTON HEALTH SCIENCES  
**Medical Staff Association**  
**Annual Dinner & Awards**  
**2013**

Friday June 14  
at the  
Art Gallery of Hamilton





# Celebration of Excellence

HAMILTON HEALTH SCIENCES  
Medical Staff Association  
Annual Dinner & Awards  
2013

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## MSA Community Outreach 2014 Call for Nominations

The Medical Staff Association invites submissions from members for worthy community groups in need, as recipients of the

**8th Annual MSA Charitable Donation of \$5,000**

### Criteria for this Donation:

- Must be a registered charitable organization.
- Must serve the Hamilton Community
- Must have a specific need.

### Submit your letter by mail,

The MSA Office, Room 8N-02, Hamilton General Hospital,  
237 Barton St. East, Hamilton ON L8L 2X2, or

**email :** [msa@hhsc.ca](mailto:msa@hhsc.ca) or **Fax:** 905-577-1479

**Deadline: December 15, 2013**

to be presented at the Winter GBM on January 23, 2014.

*looking back through the years .....*

## MSA Annual Charitable Donations

- 2007 YMCA - Camp Wanakita  
to replace children's safety equipment
- 2008 T.E.A.D. Equestrian Association for  
Developmentally Handicapped
- 2009 The Good Shepherd & The Salvation Army Food Banks
- 2010 The Mark Preece Family House
- 2011 The Hamilton Association for Recreational  
and Redevelopment programs (HARRP)
- 2012 Community Child Abuse Council &  
The St. Matthew's House
- 2013 Refuge Hamilton Centre for Newcomer Health &  
Wellwood at JHCC



**Medical Staff Association  
Hamilton General Hospital  
8 North, Room 8N-02  
237 Barton St. East  
Hamilton, ON L8L 2X2  
905-527-4322 ext 46770**

**MSA Executive Committee**

**Dr John Mernagh, President**

**Dr Chris Ricci, Vice President**

**Dr Dereck Hunt, Secretary-Treasurer**

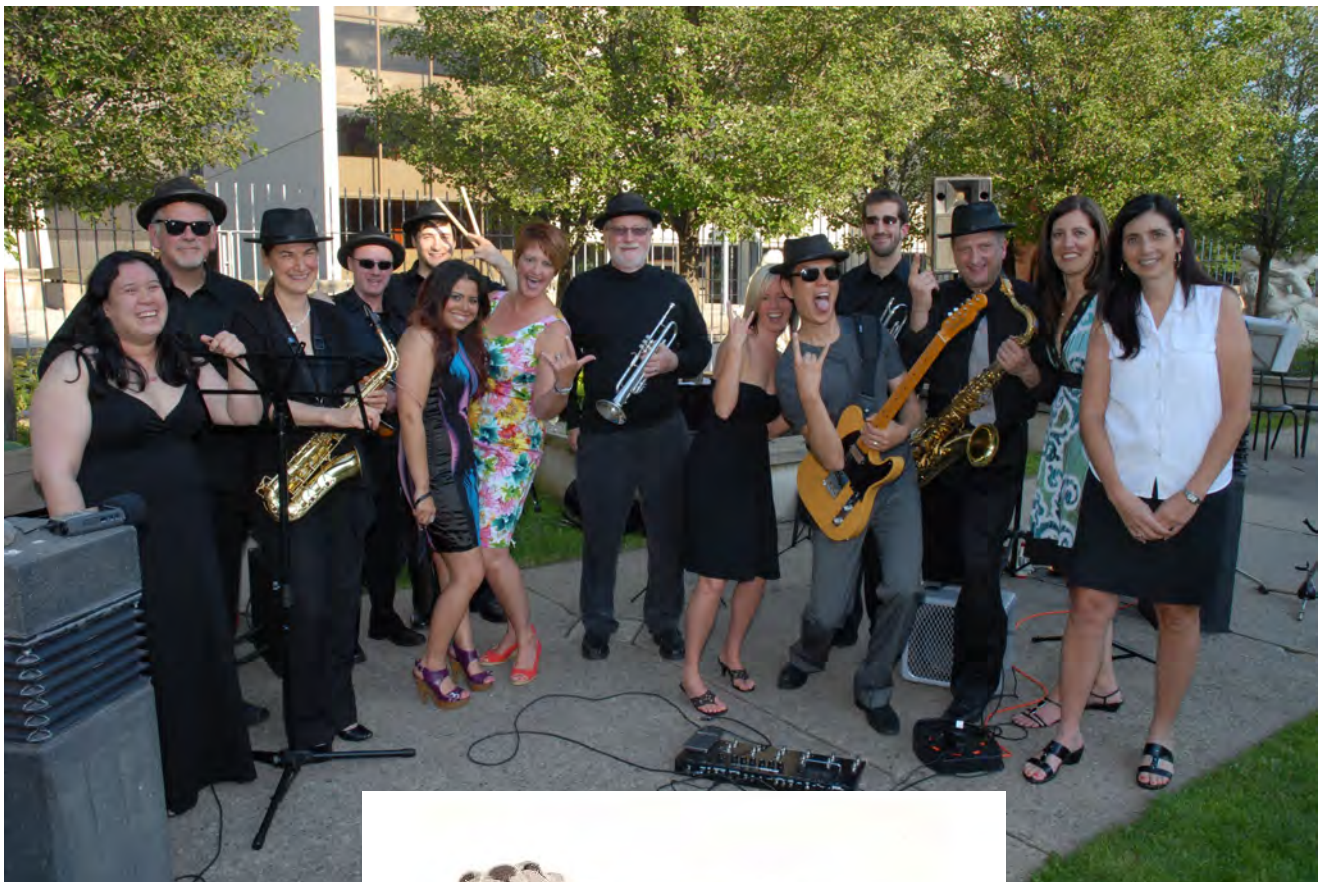
**Dr Frank Baillie, Past President**

**Members at large: Dr Paul Miller, Dr Paul Missiuna,**

**Dr Bruno Salena, Dr Kevin Zbuk,**

**Administrative Assistant: Catharine Griffin**

**We' re on the web [www.hhs-msa.ca](http://www.hhs-msa.ca)**



# Calendar of Events 2013-2014



**FALL GENERAL BUSINESS MEETING**  
Wednesday November 6, 2013  
The McMaster University Club  
5:30 pm Flu Shot Clinic  
6:30 pm Business Meeting

**WINTER GENERAL BUSINESS MEETING**  
Thursday February 6, 2014  
The Sheraton Hotel, Hamilton  
5:30 pm *Medical Staff Art Show*  
6:00 pm Buffet Dinner  
6:30 Business Meeting



**SPRING GENERAL BUSINESS MEETING**  
Thursday April 17, 2014  
Margaret R. Charters Auditorium  
Hamilton General Hospital  
6:00 pm Buffet Dinner  
6:30 pm Business Meeting



## The MSA ANNUAL DINNER & AWARDS 2014

Friday June 6, 2014 6:00 PM  
The Art Gallery of Hamilton