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### Let's Talk Science

University of Toronto - St. George

**Annual Report** 

July 2016



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## SCIENCE OUTREACH

The Let's Talk Science program is a national science outreach organization that strives to improve science literacy in the community through leadership, innovative educational programs, research and advocacy. We motivate and empower, children as young as three years old and youth up to grade 12, to use science, engineering and technology to develop critical skills, knowledge and attitudes needed to thrive in our world.

Let's Talk Science outreach sites can be found at over 40 university and colleges across Canada. With over 3500 post-secondary student volunteers, Let's Talk Science is able reach over 230 000 children and youth annually through our science outreach efforts! Not to mention that these programs come free of charge and provide an excellent platform on which to build positive attitudes towards science to enhance life skills, including critical thinking, problem solving, teamwork, and communications.







The Let's Talk Science Challenge is a free, team-based, competitive enrichment event for students in grades 6 to 8. The science challenge takes place each spring at over 20 Let's Talk Science Outreach locations across Canada. Here at the University of Toronto – St. George site we hosted 30 teams from across the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) at the University of Toronto's Hart House Great Hall on April 25th 2016.



Teams of four were allowed to interact with university graduate students, professional scientists and our amazing guest speakers! Throughout the day students were given the chance to test their abilities against peers in an exciting question and answer competition, an interactive hands-on design challenge and variety of graduate student run research demonstrations.



We were very lucky to have George Kourounis as our guest speaker this year. George Kourounis is a world renowned global adventurer, storm chaser and host of 'Angry Planet'. George shared his first hand experiences with attending students from some of the world's most interesting destinations.

> Total teams took part in a this year's LTS Science Challenge!!!

30

Over \$3,000 dollars worth of prizes were awarded to young bright students.





Spirit Award

"The Order of the Pharynx" Holy Name Gifted Centre





## **StemCell**Talks

StemCellTalks is a national stem cell biology outreach initiative in partnership with Let's Talk Science and the Stem Cell Network. It was established to facilitate knowledge transfer between academia and high school students pertaining to the science and practical ethics of stem cells. We want to improve the public's understanding of basic stem cell science in combination with facilitating the development of ethical frameworks in which to address practical ethics, such to independently contemplate contemporary bioethics in a field characterized by rapid scientific advancement.

#### FUN FACT:

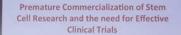
StemCellTalks was developed here at the University of Toronto by founders Paul Cassar, Angela McDonald and David Grant. Since its inauguaral symposium StemCelltalks has now expanded to over 7 cities across Canada -which include Vancouver Edmonton, Hamilton, Calgary, Ottawa, Montreal and London





Senior highschool students from 16 different secondary schools across the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) attened the 7th Annual StemCellTalks









# LET'S CANCER

May 3rd 2016 marked our first ever Let's Talk Cancer event here in Toronto. Let's Talk Cancer is a one-day event, tailored for senior high school students, hosted by Let's Talk Science at the University of Toronto and the Canadian Cancer Society's Research Information Outreach Team (RIOT). The Let's Talk Cancer series has been developed to inspire the next generation of cancer researchers by introducing youth to the science behind cancer research. This year we were fortunate enough to have world renowned scientists, Drs. Rama Khohka, Ana Guerreiro Stucklin, Sarah Crome and Trevor Pugh, share with students the wealth of knowledge researchers have acquired and how we using this knowledge to ultimately combat this devastating disease.



Students from 8 different schools in the GTA attended.

















This year LTS expanded our annual health and diabetes camp in the Sandy Lake First Nation in northern Ontario. Together with the Sandy Lake Health and Diabetes centre, we planned a full week of programming to teach over 500 students in the community about healthy eating, gardening, and living a healthy lifestyle. In several hands-on workshops, students learned about sugar content in food, food groups and portion sizes, gardening, and the weather. In this year's program our team has grown to include three volunteers from U of T partnered with three local health and diabetes centre workers, all supported by a team of six LTS volunteers in Toronto. Our team also experienced the local culture in Sandy Lake including fishing on the fish fry, and ATV lake, a riding.



Our site continues to contribute to the Sandy Lake radio show throughout the year. Topics covered include sports nutrition and sugar substitutes



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This year we held our first annual "LTS Symposium" to provide LTS volunteers an opportunity to build upon the career skills which are being developed our outreach activities. For this year's inaugural event, the theme was "Impactful Communication". The evening began with an interactive workshop where attendees learned about various strategies of becoming a better communicator. In the open panel discussion, five industry professionals from biomedical communications, knowledge translation, science writing, government, and science outreach shared their insight about communicating science to different audiences and through different forms of media. The event concluded with a networking dinner where participants were able to interact with the panelists in an intimate setting and hear about the panelists' career paths and experiences.





In partnership with the Department of Physiology, senior high school students were invited to take part in this year's Physiology Day event. This year, we brought in 71 students from 9 different schools for a day-long visit. Students had the great opportunity to experience education in a university setting and the science of physiology through hands-on experiments and lectures.

### IMMUNOLOGY DAY

In partnership with the Department of Immunology, 32 immunology graduate students on World Immunology Day were sent out to 12 different high schools -- reaching a total of 37 classes. For this event, students learned about the immune system and diseases related to immune malfunction through in-class activities and hands-on demonstrations.



## A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL OUR SPONSORS & DONORS

**Faculty of Medicine Faculty of Engineering Faculty of Arts & Science** Let's Talk Science (National Office) **Department of Physics McEwen Centre for Regenerative Medicine Ontario Institute for Regenerative Medicine** CCRM Stem Cell Network **Department of Nutritional Sciences** Institute of Medical Science **Department of Immunology Training Program in Regenerative Medicine** Institute of Biomaterials and Biomedical Engineering **Department of Physiology** MaRS

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All the gracious professors at U of T and UHN!