

# CBR GRADUATE AWARD PROGRAM (GAP) COHORT 2023 - 2024



## Alek Lazarski, Strynadka Lab

I am Aleksander (Alek) Lazarski, PhD Candidate, Dr. Natalie Strynadka Lab. I perform functional and structural characterization on *S. aureus* secretion and export systems through techniques such as isothermal titration calorimetry, X-ray crystallography, and Cryo-EM. Determination of these protein structures allows for a greater understanding of *S. aureus* pathogenesis, as well as provides a foundation for novel therapeutic development.

Hobbies: Fly fishing, Hockey/Softball, and walking my dogs.

If I were an animal: I'd be a bald eagle as it would symbolize my love of the outdoors and the great pacific northwest. I would also be free to catch fish easier.

## David Lim, Kizhakkedathu & Straus Lab



My name is David Lim and I am a PhD student in chemistry under the supervision of Dr. Jayachandran Kizhakkedathu and Dr. Suzana Straus. My research focuses on developing novel thrombosis inhibitors for the prevention and/or treatment of immunothrombosis, while still maintaining haemostatis. I hope that my work will allow the more in-depth understanding of immunothrombosis, besides providing a novel strategy which has the potential to significantly improve the clinical outcomes of many Canadians suffering from thrombotic and associated inflammatory diseases.

Hobbies: I like staying active at the gym, going on a hike, or biking. I'm also learning how to skateboard and play guitar.

If I were an animal: I would be a panda so I could be snoozing and people would think I was still cute!



## Debajeet Ghosh, Karsan Lab

I am Debajeet Ghosh, a PhD student working in Dr. Aly Karsan's Lab. Currently, I am working on investigating the role of different genetic elements in propagating different models/subtypes of Acute Myeloid Leukemia. The first model involves the impact of a DNA damage protein in instigating AML-associated chromosomal abnormalities. My second project involves an inflammatory positive feedback loop that we hypothesize promotes clonal hematopoiesis of indeterminate potential (CHIP).

Hobbies: I love reading fiction, staying active/exercise, and video games.

If I were an animal: I'd be a bat because I love spooky things. I hate the sun, from my perspective, life is often times upside down, and I love a good berry.





**Grace Kuo, McNagny Lab**

My name is Grace Kuo and I am a Master's student in the McNagny Lab. My research focuses on generating ILCs from engineered pluripotent stem cells and exploring their functionality as a next-generation toolset for understanding ILC cell fate decisions, lineage plasticity, and advancing CAR-ILC immunotherapy.

Hobbies: I enjoy doing yoga, snowboarding, hiking and pencil sketching.

If I were an animal: I would be a koala so that I could sleep all day and still have all the koalifications!

**Iryna Liubchak, Cheung Lab**



Hi, my name is Iryna Liubchak, MEdSc, 2<sup>nd</sup> year PhD student in Dr. Karen Cheung's Lab. I'm working on the interdisciplinary collaborative project named Mend the Gap which aims to develop a treatment for spinal cord injury. My research focus is on the fabrication and *in vitro* testing of injectable hydrogel biomaterials. I'm developing a hydrogel that can be quickly polymerized through exposure to visible light, and I'm applying this hydrogel for 3D culture of neurons using microfluidic devices to study axonal growth.

Hobbies: I like hiking, skiing, going to the gym, reading and listening to music.

If I were an animal: I would probably be a dog because I love going on long walks with friends!



**John Perrier, Pryzdial Lab**

My name is John, I am a Master's student in the department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine. In the Pryzdial Lab, my research focuses on the exploitation of a host encoded protein, tissue factor, by a diverse range of enveloped viruses. Tissue factor initiates clotting and has important roles in cell signalling; on the surface of enveloped viruses, tissue factor has been shown to be required for *in vitro* and *in vivo* infection. The aim of my research is to identify the decryption of viral tissue factor as the basis for enhanced *in vitro* infection across distinct virus families, supporting tissue factor as a target for broad-spectrum antiviral therapeutics.

Hobbies: I like to camp, eat grilled cheese and go for the occasional run.

If I were an animal: I would be a chipmunk because I am curious and love to explore.

**Joyce Teodoro, Ma Lab**



My name is Joyce and I am a PhD student in Dr. Hong Ma's Lab. My research involves developing a method for separating cells according to selection criteria derived from microscopy images.

Hobbies: I love spending time with family, watching the Whitecaps play at BC place and recently, I have also been enjoying swimming.

If I were an animal: I would really like to be a bird! Wouldn't it be nice to be able to fly anywhere and not need a passport?



**Juliet Zama, Côté Lab**

My name is Juliet Kien Zama, a 1<sup>st</sup> year Master's student in the department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine. I'm currently working in the Côté Laboratory! My research is focused on examining markers of immune aging and inflammation among women living with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and hepatitis C virus (HCV) over time.

Hobbies: I like to cook, listen to music, or just take a short nap.

If I were an animal: I would be an eagle because they have great vision and are fearless. No matter the strength of a prey, the eagle does not move their focus from it until it's captured. That's how I see myself!

**Kiran Toor, Brown Lab**

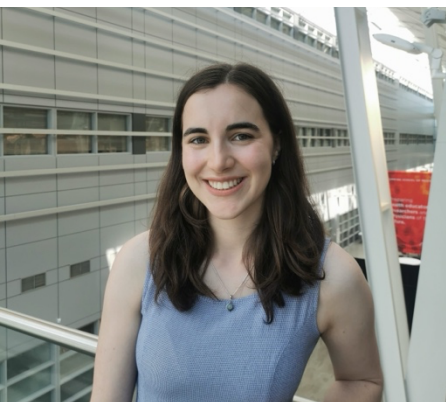


My name is Kiran Toor, and I am a Master's student in the Women+ and Children's Health Sciences Program in the Brown Lab. My research focuses on evaluating renal and pulmonary disease in pediatric-onset ANCA-associated vasculitis. This is a rare disease that causes inflammation and damage to small and medium sized blood vessel. I hope to evaluate disease course, outcomes and predictors of outcomes. Ultimately, having direct implications for patient care by improving the ability to counsel pediatric patients and their families, anticipating disease course and prognosis and by discovering what factors may predict worse or milder renal and pulmonary disease.

Hobbies: I enjoy hiking, exploring new spots in Vancouver, reading and baking.

If I were an animal: I would be a butterfly as they like to explore the world and nature, and they are often symbols of transformation and growth!

**Stephanie Besoiu, Jeffries Lab**



My name is Stephanie and I am a PhD student in the Jeffries Lab! I am studying a relatively new type of immune cell called type 2 innate immune cells (ILC2s), in a process called antigen presentation, an important component of cancer and vaccine immunity.

Hobbies: I love crocheting, playing volleyball and going to concerts. (I'm always interested in hearing new band recommendations!)

If I were an animal: I would be a cat, as I also just want to lounge and take naps in the sun!

**About the CBR Graduate Award Program (GAP):**

*The CBR Graduate Award Program (GAP) is an educational development program available to MSc and PhD students, providing successful applicants with funding, as well as a chance to develop professional experience that is useful in and beyond academia.*