

University of Western Ontario

By Andy Thompson, MD, MHPE, FRCPC

The Division of Rheumatology at the University of Western Ontario (UWO) continues to hum along nicely. Under the excellent guidance of “the Pope” the division is as academically and clinically busy as ever! We have been very fortunate to have two new rheumatologists join the fray. Dr. Lillian Barra joined the division a few months ago and is a very welcome addition. Dr. Barra is stepping into some big shoes (left behind by Dr. David Bell) as she is working with Dr. Ewa Cairns in the lab. Dr. Barra is also travelling back and forth to Boston where she is attending Harvard University (really cool). Dr. Sara Haig joined the division at the end of September and we are really excited to have her back. After a brief stint in the community, Dr. Haig realized that “the Pope” would come calling and calling she did. “The Pope” worked her magic and voilà, Dr. Haig is back. Her strengths in teaching and clinical care are a huge asset to our division.

The twins, Drs. Gina and Sherry Rohekar (a.k.a chit and chat) are also busily working away on research. Dr. Sherry Rohekar took the bait (hee hee) and is now our new Program Director — she is doing an amazing job. This leaves me a wee bit more time to focus on our undergraduate program. Dr. Nicole LeRiche continues to work diligently, participating in clinical trials and taking care of a large rheumatology practice. Not many people know this but Dr. LeRiche was voted the best-dressed rheumatologist in Canada (she narrowly beat out Dr. Gunnar Kraag).

Dr. Janet Pope (a.k.a. “the Pope”) continues

to do 384 things at once (well, actually maybe it is 385 to be fair). This woman is unbelievable and we are all so privileged to have the opportunity to work with her everyday. We are also really lucky to have Bob Harris (nurse practitioner) and Marlene Thompson (advanced clinician practitioner in arthritis care [ACPAC] therapist) working with us caring for a large population of inflammatory disease patients.

As for myself, this was a year of reflection as I turned 40. So Marlene and I threw a huge toga party. Why? Because I have never actually been to a toga party. It was a blast. If you want to see cool inflammatory diseases and work with a group that really likes each other (I think they like me?) then UWO is the place to be! Beware, “the Pope” could come calling for you.

*Andy Thompson, MD, MHPE, FRCPC
Associate Professor of Medicine,
Division of Rheumatology,
University of Western Ontario (UWO)
London, Ontario*



The team at UWO do it up, toga-style.