

# University briefs

## UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO



Dr. Brian Kavanagh, a University of Toronto professor, has performed the first successful transfusion of a cell-free blood product in a pediatric patient. The product used in the transfusion was biochemically manufactured and contained hemoglobin, but no red blood cells. While more studies need to be done with pediatric patients to determine further risks and benefits, the advance could be a solution for patients opposed to transfusions due to religious beliefs.

## McMASTER UNIVERSITY



Boris Sakic, a McMaster researcher and professor of psychiatry and behavioural neurosciences, has been awarded almost \$400,000 Cdn by a branch of the U.S. National Institutes of Health to study brain cell death. Recent research has shown that proteins seen in autoimmune diseases may destroy the brain stem cells needed for normal brain development and repair. Dr. Sakic hopes his research will shed new light on degenerative brain disorders.

## MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY



Patrick Parfrey, research professor at Memorial University and director of the Patient Care Centre at the Health Care Corporation in St. John's, Newfoundland, has received the Kidney Foundation of Canada's 2002 medal for research excellence. The award is presented annually to a researcher studying kidney disease and related conditions. Dr. Parfrey has been investigating the causes, risk factors, and treatment of kidney disease for 20 years.

## MCGILL UNIVERSITY



Dr. Michael D. Rosengarten has been named the associate dean for continuing medical education at McGill University. Dr. Rosengarten brings to this position his interest in education, as well as a great deal of hands-on experience in the development and delivery of pedagogic material via Web-based and computer methodologies. He is also a cardiologist at the McGill University Health Centre and an associate professor in the department of medicine.

## DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY



Dalhousie University, in collaboration with the Nova Scotia department of education, recently released a survey indicating that fewer students are smoking and more young Nova Scotians are drug-free. Dr. Christiane Poulin, a professor at Dalhousie, says the decrease is very significant. The decline in tobacco use is likely the result of higher cigarette prices, smoke-free legislation, greater media awareness of the harms of smoking, and greater support systems for quitting.

## UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY



Dr. Dean Sandham, professor in the University of Calgary's department of critical care, along with a group of Canadian researchers, conducted a clinical trial of pulmonary artery catheterisation (PAC). The study was designed to find out whether the use of PAC in the perioperative period for high-risk elderly surgical patients improved survival. Results showed there was no difference in the survival rate for patients managed with PAC, as opposed to those without. In fact, the risk of pulmonary embolism actually increased.