

University briefs

UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY



People infected with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) develop dementia because of the death of neurons in the brain, says a research study being conducted by the University of Calgary.

Dr. Christopher Power, a physician-scientist in the department of clinical neurosciences at the University of Calgary, is the only neurologist in Canada treating people with AIDS-dementia while also investigating treatments for AIDS-related neurologic diseases in the research lab.

The findings, which were published in the September issue of *Nature Neuroscience*, will help scientist develop new drugs for the treatment of HIV.

UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN



The Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) awarded three separate grants to the University of Saskatchewan totalling \$3.1 million, in late September.

The grants will cover areas including developing a new vaccine to fight well-established cancer tumours, a new model for ovarian function during women's menstrual cycles, an effective treatment for marijuana addicts, and gene therapies that protect the heart from damage during a heart attack.

UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



Psychiatry professor Bill Honer, of UBC, has made a breakthrough that promises new treatment for schizophrenia patients.

Dr. Honer discovered patients with schizophrenia show a significant loss of myelin—the material that surrounds and insulates brain cells and helps transmit messages within the brain—compared to people without the disease. He believes the myelin abnormality could be a factor in patients' slow recovery from the illness.

McMASTER UNIVERSITY



McMaster University announced the launch of the new mental health resources Web site in September (www.psychdirect.com). The site aims to offer down-to-earth and accessible information on mental health and psychiatric disorders to the general public.

The site, which features a wide range of topics, will include information from clinicians and researchers at the university and affiliated hospitals.

The site grew out of a successful telephone service that provided depression information.

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO



Deep brain stimulation improves motor skills in patients who suffer from advanced Parkinson's disease, says a new long-term study conducted by the University of Toronto and the Toronto Western Hospital.

Dr. Anthony Lang, professor of neurology, and his colleagues monitored and evaluated 25 patients. They discovered deep brain stimulation demonstrated sustained improvement in motor function for an average of two years after the procedure, as well as a reduced need for medication.

UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO



A new study looks at the long-term medical effects of people infected with E. coli to help guide screening and treatment.

The study, led by Dr. Amit Garg, was published in the September 10 issue of the *Journal of The American Medical Association*. Garg is an assistant professor in the departments of medicine and epidemiology & biostatistics at The University of Western Ontario. He chairs the Scientific Committee for the Walkerton Health Study, a seven-year initiative monitoring 4,000 people in the Walkerton area for long-term medical difficulties.