

University briefs

UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY



The University of Calgary and the Alberta Cancer Foundation have established the \$3 million Chair in Brain Tumour Research. The Chair's goal is to lead the development of a world-class brain tumour research program in Calgary by promoting interdisciplinary research, establishing strong links with similar programs worldwide and attracting students, fellows and research associates to the university. Dr. J. Gregory Cairncross has been named the Chair's first recipient.

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO



Dr. Blake Woodside, associate professor in the University of Toronto's psychiatry department, has been named president of the Canadian Psychiatric Association. Dr. Woodside has a very active academic career and a long history of involvement in organized medicine, both provincially and nationally. His presidential theme for 2002-2003 is "Under One Roof: A Tapestry of Families."

UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA



The University of Manitoba has become the first Canadian institution to offer an interdisciplinary Master's degree in disability studies. The program is a joint initiative with the Canadian Centre on Disability Studies and will present a core body of courses while providing a range of electives in other departments and faculties. Dr. Zana Lutfiyya, the program's interim director, says it will enhance employment opportunities and promote greater access to the university for persons with disabilities.

DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY



Dalhousie Medical School psychiatrist, Dr. Martin Alda, is trying to find the genes responsible for bipolar disorder, a serious mental illness affecting 40,000 Nova Scotians. Left untreated, this disorder can lead to broken families and careers, financial ruin and even suicide. Subtypes of the disease respond differently to treatment, therefore, finding the genes for the different forms of the illness would allow doctors to avoid "trial and error" in prescribing medications.

UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



Dr. B. Brett Finlay has been named the Peter Wall Institute Distinguished Professor, the University of British Columbia's most prestigious academic honour. Dr. Finlay has developed a vaccine to prevent the growth of *E. coli*, a discovery that could save millions of lives and protect Canada's food and water supply from contamination.

UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



Natalie Strynadka, a University of British Columbia associate professor, and Daniel Lim, biochemistry PhD student, made an important discovery. They found that an enzyme in one of the notorious hospital superbugs is abnormally structured, allowing it to survive in the presence of antibiotics. The finding could lead to new drugs that would conquer the lethal infections. Antibiotic-resistant hospital bacteria are prevalent and, according to Health Canada, cost \$24 to \$33 million annually to manage.