Celebrating Prof. Jim Kronstad's tenure as the MSL Director (2008-2017)
June 2, 2017

Prof. Jim Kronstad was honoured on Thursday May 4th in a celebration commemorating his 9 years as the MSL Director. In the words of his predecessor, Prof. Phil Hieter, the event was for a man “with a lot of honour and integrity”. These heartfelt sentiments resonated throughout the afternoon as Prof. Kronstad received praise for his creativity, wisdom, strength, hard-working nature and leadership as Director of the MSL. Each of these were reflected in the presentation of a traditional First Nation talking stick, carved by artist Jim Yelton of the Coastal Salish Nation. The talking stick bared...

Use of a microfluidic chip for whole genome library preparations of single-cell DNA without preamplification
June 1, 2017

Hans Zahn, a PhD student in the research lab of Dr. Carl Hansen, and Adi Steif, a PhD student in the BC Cancer Agency, are the joint first authors on a recent publication in Nature Methods: “Scalable whole-genome single-cell library preparation without preamplification”. The protocol describes a direct library preparation (DLP) method for downstream sequencing that is robust, scalable and reliable. The described method uses nanoliter-volume transposition reactions for single-cell whole genome library preparation without preamplification. Tumors consist of heterogeneous cell populations....

Innovative researcher honoured as Fellow of the National Academy of Inventors
May 2, 2017

Dr. Terrance (Terry) Snutch was recently inducted as a Fellow in the National Academy of Inventors, receiving the highest professional distinction accorded to academic inventors in recognition of his work as a “luminary of innovation and invention.” Dr. Snutch, Director of Translational Neuroscience at the Djavad Mowafaghian Centre for Brain Health and Canada Research Chair in Biotechnology and Genomics – Neurobiology, holds 28 US patents and 87 foreign patents licensed to biotech and pharma companies and has made pioneering contributions to molecular neurobiology."In addition to Dr. Snutch's...
Screening of the Pathogen Box reveals promising antifungal compound against Cryptococcus and Candida species
April 24, 2017

Dr. Francois Mayer, a Postdoctoral Fellow in Dr. Jim Kronstad's research lab, is the lead author on a recent publication in mSphere: “Discovery of a Novel Antifungal Agent in the Pathogen Box”. The study identifies a promising compound from a chemical library with strong antifungal activity against Cryptococcus neoformans and Candida albicans under nutrient-limited conditions. Read the full article here. Human fungal pathogens cause over 2 million infections per year and are major drivers of morbidity and mortality, especially in immuno-compromised patients. Currently only a limited number of... Read More

Dr. Leonard Foster receives the 2017 Ken Standing Award
April 4, 2017

Congratulations to Dr. Leonard Foster on receiving the 2017 Ken Standing Award presented at the Enabling Technologies (ETP) Symposium in Ottawa. The award honors the career of Ken Standing who was a major figure in the development of time-of-flight mass spectrometry for bioanalytical applications. The award is presented biennially to honour a young scientist who has made a significant contribution to technology development in support of research in the life sciences. Dr. Foster's is being recognized for his work on the development and application of protein correlation profiling... Read More

Researchers identify genes that give cannabis its flavour
March 29, 2017

UBC scientists have scanned the genome of cannabis plants to find the genes responsible for giving various strains their lemony, skunky or earthy flavours, an important step for the budding legal cannabis industry. “The goal is to develop well-defined and highly-reproducible cannabis varieties. This is similar to the wine industry, which depends on defined varieties such as chardonnay or merlot for high value products,” said Jörg Bohlmann, a professor in the Michael Smith Laboratories and faculty of forestry at UBC. “Our genomics work can inform breeders of commercial varieties which genes to... Read More

Dr. Brett Finlay makes the cover of Allergic Living magazine
March 14, 2017

Yeast Found in Babies' Guts Linked to Childhood Asthma

Researchers at the University of British Columbia have identified a yeast in the guts of children in Ecuador that they say contributed to the likelihood of the children having asthma. Dr. Brett Finlay, a world-leading microbiologist at UBC and author of the book Let Them Eat Dirt, says he and his colleagues performed the research after data from a large study group of Canadian children identified four gut bacteria that seemed to have a protective effect against asthma. The question was: Is this protective effect universal? “We found in... Read More

MSL Recipients Pal Bains And Natalie Marshall Recognized With A Dean Of Science Excellence In Service Award
March 1, 2017

Left to right: Jim Kronstad, Director of the Michael Smith Laboratories; Pal Bains (recipient), Finance Manager in the Michael Smith Laboratories; Simon Peacock, Dean of Science; Natalie Marshall (recipient), Graduate student in Microbiology & Immunology and the Michael Smith Laboratories; and Mike Gold, Head of Microbiology & Immunology. Each year the Faculty of Science recognizes staff, students and faculty whose service contributions have had a significant positive impact in achieving UBC Science’s mission. This year the Michael Smith Laboratories is thrilled to have two of our... Read More

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