



# 2020 Spotlight on FCIHR

December 2020

No. XI



## Participants in the Virtual Launch of the 2020 Friesen Prize Program October 6, 2020 – “Health Research Funding in a Post-COVID-19 World”

Left to Right: **Her Excellency Janice Charette**, High Commissioner of Canada in UK; **Principal Nathalie Des Rosiers**, Massey College; **Dr. Aubie Angel**, President, FCIHR; **Dr. Mona Nemer**, Chief Science Advisor of Canada; **Dr. Michael Strong**, President, CIHR; **Dr. Rémi Quirion**, Chief Scientist of Québec, FRQ-S, and **Prof. Santa Ono**, President, University of British Columbia (UBC)

## PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

We are in the midst of a brutal pandemic and 2020 will be remembered because of the rampaging disruption of COVID-19. While the prospect of effective vaccines is promising, at this writing, rates of infection and its consequences continue to increase unrelentingly.

In March 2020, we were advised that Massey College at the University of Toronto would close and that access to our office would be severely limited. While administrative management of our affairs were addressed, programmatic activities were disrupted. A number of sponsoring institutions cancelled in-person events and indicated a preference for virtual lectures, given the circumstances. As a result, **Prof. Bartha Knoppers’** (2019 FP) planned Western Canadian Tour to four university centres (U Calgary, U Alberta, U Manitoba, UBC) was cancelled and may not be reinstituted in the year to come. However, Prof. Knoppers will participate in future FCIHR events. Being limited to virtual programs is disappointing because the success of the Friesen Prizewinner’s visit is best realized by virtue of its in-person character.

On the bright side, **Sir Mark Walport**, past Chief Executive, UKRI, was confirmed as the 2020 Friesen Prizewinner. Sir Mark Walport is a physician-scientists, academic leader and visionary health research planner. He is a regular TV commentator and currently a popular spokesperson for COVID-19 mitigation, on behalf of UKRI. Plans for his Canadian inaugural visit this fall were suspended because of pandemic related travel restrictions. In its place, an International Virtual Launch event was arranged in collaboration with the High Commission of Canada in



**Sir Mark Walport**  
2020 Friesen Prizewinner  
Past Chief Executive, UKRI



**Dr. Henry Friesen**  
Distinguished Prof. Emeritus  
University of Manitoba

London, UK, thanks to **Her Excellency Janice Charette**. With Canada House as a setting, Sir Mark gave a videorecorded Keynote address on health research priorities in the post-COVID-19 world.

On October 6, 2020, the International Virtual Launch of the 2020 Friesen Prize Program featuring Sir Mark Walport and a Roundtable of distinguished UK and Canadian health science leaders was organized at Massey College. Thanks to advanced ZOOM technology, participants spanning eight time zones participated in honouring Sir Mark and commented briefly on science priorities in the years to come. It is noteworthy that six Friesen Prizewinners participated in this unique international gathering (see banner on page 2). Sir Mark Walport’s in-person visit to Canada is planned for 2021, as COVID-19 pandemic restrictions permit. A videorecording of the International Virtual Launch can be seen here: <https://youtu.be/u2ZrJADFMAA>

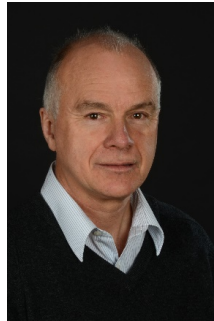


**Participants in the Virtual 2020 Friesen Prize Program – October 6, 2020 – “Health Research Funding in a Post-COVID-19 World”**

Left to Right: **Sir Mark Walport**, 2020 Friesen Prizewinner & Past Chief Executive, UKRI; Prof. **Bartha Knoppers**, 2019 Friesen Prizewinner and Director, Centre of Genomics and Policy, McGill; **Dr. David Naylor**, 2018 Friesen Prizewinner and Emeritus President, University of Toronto; **Dr. Alan Bernstein**, 2017 Friesen Prizewinner and President, Canadian Institute For Advanced Research (CIFAR); **Dr. Janet Rossant**, 2016 Friesen Prizewinner and President, Gairdner Foundation; **Sir John Bell**, 2009 Friesen Prizewinner and Regius Professor of Medicine, Oxford; **Dr. Marie-Josée Hébert**, Vice-rector of Research, Discovery, Creation and Innovation, Université de Montréal.



**Dr. Bev Holmes**  
President, MSFHR  
VP, FCIHR



**Dr. Alex MacKenzie**  
Senior Scientist, CHEO  
Secretary, FCIHR



**Dr. Reinhart Reithmeier**  
Prof., Biochem, U of T  
Treasurer, FCIHR



**Dr. Bruce McManus**  
Prof. Med, UBC  
Hon. Director, FCIHR

An **Executive Summary** of Sir Mark Walport's Keynote talk and the Roundtable deliberations of international opinion leaders was prepared by **Dr. Bev Holmes** and **Dr. Alex MacKenzie**. It highlights a number of important principals and approaches to the future of our science enterprise. These include: i) culture of the research enterprise; ii) balance between discovery research and the needs of society; iii) empowerment of the next generation of scientists; iv) effective engagement with the public.

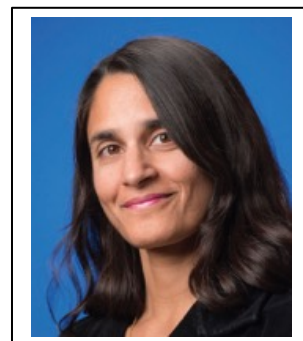
<http://www.fcihr.ca/prize/2020-friesen-prize-program>

**SUCCESSION PLANNING** Last January 2020, I announced my intention to retire from leadership responsibilities in Friends of CIHR. This seemed appropriate after 20+ years at the helm. I also suggested that a process be put in place to facilitate an orderly succession. The FCIHR Executive (Dr.'s Bev Holmes, Reinhart Reithmeier, Alex MacKenzie plus Dr. Bruce McManus) constituted a succession planning team and developed a draft Terms of Reference document. The FCIHR Board of Directors at its recent teleconference meeting on October 28, 2020, ratified the undertaking and “the team” was officially designated the Succession Planning Committee (SPC) and was instructed to begin deliberations. Additional members (2 to 3) will be appointed to give broader representation. The SPC will soon be in touch with FCIHR members and

Sponsors with Terms of Reference and to invite submissions of names of suitable candidates for the FCIHR Presidency.

Finally, on behalf of the FCIHR Board and membership, I would like to express heartfelt thanks to our Sponsors and Donors for their abiding interest and financial support of FCIHR programs.

Dr. Aubie Angel, President, FCIHR



**Dr. Sonia Anand**  
2020 Rossant Lecturer

The program was supplemented to include **Dr. Gillian Hawker**, Chair, Department of Medicine, U of T

**The 2020 Janet Rossant Lecture** and visit to Massey College by **Dr. Sonia Anand** (McMaster University) was presented as a ZOOM webinar on September 16, 2020, as part of the inaugural 2020 Massey Grand Rounds Symposium. Dr. Anand spoke on “*Understanding the influence of gender and ancestral origin on the development of*



**UK Participants in the Virtual Launch of the 2020 Friesen Prize Program  
October 6, 2020 – “Health Research Funding in a Post-COVID-19 World”**

Left to Right: **Sir John Bell**, Regius Professor of Medicine, Oxford; **Sir Jeremy Farrar**, Director, Wellcome Trust; **Prof. Janet Hemingway**, Prof. of Vector Biology, Liverpool School for Tropical Medicine; **Prof. Stephen Toope**, Vice-Chancellor, Cambridge U; **Sir Patrick Vallance**, UK Government Chief Scientific Adviser.

*“Impact of Population Studies on Individual Care”* and **Dr. Sheldon Tobe**, Professor of Medicine, U of T, *“The Defeat of End-Stage Diabetic Kidney Disease in Indigenous Communities”*. Dr. Anand will visit Massey College in person in March 2021. **Dr. Anand’s** 2020 Rossant Lecture can be viewed here: <https://youtu.be/Ydz1Jxl-Tpg>

**THANKS TO SPONSORS & DONORS!**

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University of Ottawa – Heart Institute  
Diabetes Research and Treatment Centre (DRTC)  
CBC Radio One “Ideas”

\*Sponsors of the International Virtual Launch of the 2020 Friesen Prize Program

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**FCIHR Spotlight – An Annual Report of Activities**

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**2019  
PROCEEDINGS –  
FCIHR  
ROUNDTABLE**

Roundtables have become an integral element of the Friesen Prize Program because they focus on significant policy issues that inform society as a whole. In this Roundtable on

the impact of disruptive new technologies, “Academy” is used to encompass universities, research institutes and learned societies. These organizations are best equipped in dealing with complex and advanced technologies that affect individuals and communities. Roundtables also gather diverse authoritative opinion leaders to share ideas and to propose novel solutions. Contributors here include: Prof. Bartha Knoppers, Dr. Alan Bernstein, Dr. Kym Boycott, Dr. Ronald Cohn, Dr. David Naylor, Dr. Bruce McManus, Dr. Henry Friesen, Dr. Eric Meslin and Dr. Colleen Flood.

**CALL FOR NOMINATIONS  
2021 FRIESEN PRIZE**

**POSTPONED** due to intermittent lockdowns and travel limitations

Nominations for the 2021 Friesen International Prize will reopen on June 1, 2021 as pandemic constraints are lifted. Forms and terms: <http://www.fcibr.ca/prize/about/nomination>