

## Preface from the Editors

Dear Reader,

**Y**ou are covered in microbes. Trillions of them, in fact – on you, and within you – collectively referred to as your microbiome. Our understanding of their role in health and disease has only scratched the surface. Historically speaking, we have waged war against certain microbes, from those responsible for polio and smallpox to modern afflictions such as HIV/AIDS. However, we now know that microbes also play a paramount role in maintaining our health and wellness. In this final issue of our 92nd edition of the *UTMJ*, we focus on the role of the human microbiome in health and disease.

Our issue begins with three overarching Perspectives by *Reid, Burton* and *Bocking* on probiotics and the microbiome, microbiome therapeutics need for better tools, and the vaginal microbiome as it relates to pregnancy. Authors then examine the human microbiome through various lenses including the role of our microbiome in allergic disease, liver disease, metabolic disease, atherosclerosis and cardiovascular disease, as well as the influence of probiotics on our microbiome, microbiome circadian rhythmicity, and the intriguing role of fecal transplantation in the treatment of *C. difficile* infection. Drs. Morris, Philpott, and Croitoru – key clinicians and scientists in Toronto – also took the time to chat with us on the timely topics of antimicrobial stewardship, and the role of the microbiome in inflammatory bowel disease.

This edition also includes a diverse range of non-thematic articles and reviews of interest to medical students and physicians alike. Curry reflects on the recent Supreme Court of Canada ruling on physician-assisted suicide, while *Chin-Yee* and *Chin-Yee* shed light on the stark failures of the Nutrition North Canada program.

As outgoing Editors-in-Chief, we would like to express our utmost gratitude to our readership, patrons, and staff for their dedication and support in continuing the tradition of the *UTMJ*. As we depart, we also wish our incoming Editors-in-Chief, Johnny Wei-Bai and Teja Voruganti, an exciting and successful year. We look forward to watching the *UTMJ* flourish under their stewardship.

The *UTMJ* has been a fixture in the Faculty of Medicine for 92 years. We continuously strive to cover topics that are both timely and of importance to the medical community at large. We hope that you will enjoy this latest issue of our long-standing production.

Sincerely,

*Ilyse Darwish* and *Varuna Prakash*  
Editors-in-Chief