

# Bringing Research to LIFE

## In brief

### Protecting Children

Family social sciences professor Joan Durrant is being recognized for her contributions in the field of child maltreatment prevention.

Durrant, who is the acting director of prairie-based research network RESOLVE, recently received the 2010 Ian Logan Memorial Award for Leadership.

The award was established in 1987 by the Provincial Advisory Committee on Child Abuse to honour the efforts of Sgt. Logan, who was a dedicated advocate for children and for many years the coordinator of the Child Abuse Unit for the Winnipeg Police Service.

Durrant's research has focused on the psychological and cultural factors that contribute to parents' use of corporal punishment. She has published many academic papers on the issue. Durrant has lived in Sweden for extended periods to study the context, history and implementation of the world's first corporal punishment ban, a law that reflects the child-rights focus of Sweden's social policy framework.

She was the principal researcher and co-author of the Joint Statement on Physical Punishment of Children and Youth, an initiative of six national Canadian organizations. The Joint Statement has been endorsed by more than 160 professional organizations across Canada to date.

She is also the author of several public education materials, including *What's Wrong with Spanking?* (published by the Canadian departments of Justice and Health) and *Spanking: Should I or Shouldn't I?* (a brochure that has reached a circulation of more than 300,000 in Canada).

## Upcoming event

### Café Scientifique

#### Keeping Your Skeleton Healthy

Monday, Nov. 29, 2010, at 7 pm  
McNally Robinson Grant Park

One in four women and many men over the age of 50 have osteoporosis, a painful and debilitating disease caused by the gradual loss of bone density. Some of the factors that may lead to its development are: the use of common medications like proton pump inhibitors (PPIs) and anti-depressants, having a family history, and ethnicity.

Our panelists will share strategies for reducing your risk and ways to prevent fractures.

**Come and join the discussion!**

RSVP recommended to  
(204) 474-9020 or [research\\_communications@umanitoba.ca](mailto:research_communications@umanitoba.ca)

## Twinkle, Twinkle Research Stars

Poster competition gives undergraduate students an opportunity to shine



Photos by Katie Chalmers-Brooks

Students Jennifer Swan from the Faculty of Arts (left) and Melissa Senez from the Faculty of Human Ecology are among the entrants for the Undergraduate Student Research Poster Competition.

BY KATIE CHALMERS-BROOKS

Undergraduate students will get a chance to show off their research endeavors to the public during an upcoming competition of posters outlining their projects and findings.

Fifty-eight budding researchers will go head-to-head in a handful of categories at the Fifth Annual Undergraduate Student Poster Competition scheduled for Nov. 5 at University Centre. These categories include: applied sciences, health sciences, natural sciences, social sciences/humanities, and—new this year—creative works.

Fourth-year human ecology student Melissa Senez created a poster that depicts her investigations into the benefits of yoga on cancer patients and survivors. She explored mounds of research done locally, across Canada and internationally and learned the positive benefits can be far-reaching. For example, findings showed that yoga-practising patients experienced less fatigue, anxiety, depression, and insomnia; improved stamina; heightened senses; and a better quality of life. They also felt an increased sense of community, one that freed them from the stigma of being sick.

This analysis has planted the seed for Senez to do her own studies

on the topic, one that is close to her heart. "I feel like everyone I talk to knows someone who is affected by cancer," says the 23-year-old. "It was actually mind-blowing the amount of research that is out there on this topic. I'd love to re-do one of the studies."

She also hopes to apply what she's learned in her future career as an occupational therapist.

The aim of the poster competition is not just to reward students based on the scholarly, scientific or creative success of their content, but moreso on the visual display, the clarity of their conclusions and objectives, and how well they can provide jargon-free explanations to their audience.

The posters are judged by university faculty members, staff, and individuals from topic-related government departments. First and second-place cash prizes (\$500 and \$250) are awarded to the top two entrants in each category.

"This is my first time doing this competition. I am incredibly passionate about my poster," says Senez.

Psychology student Jennifer Swan says the contest will give her valuable experience talking about her research and forces her to be concise since entrants are allowed only minimal space to get their point across.

"It also gives students a chance

to see what other students are doing, what else is out there," she says.

Swan's poster depicts her findings from a project that had her evaluating a pilot program the Addictions Foundation of Manitoba (AFM) launched to combat problems with gambling among university students. AFM workers set up a booth on campus and engaged students as they passed by, showing them an interactive video game that included a "cost of play calculator" that would reveal how much money they were really losing to gambling over an extended period of time.

During the last year, Swan surveyed a random sample of students before and after the AFM workers were on campus and found that 25 per cent of respondents were aware of the programming.

"People were actually stopping and recalling information from this prevention program, which is good," Swan says, noting historically research has shown that gambling is prevalent in undergraduate populations.

She is now in the process of writing up her results for publication consideration.

The poster competition, organized by the Office of the Vice-President (Research), takes place from 1 to 4:30 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 5, in the Manitoba Rooms 210-224 in University Centre. Awards will be presented at 4 p.m.