

UofG cardiology researchers Ride for Heart

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Researchers and friends of the University of Guelph's Centre for Cardiovascular Investigations ([CCVI](#)) hit the road recently as part of the annual [Heart and Stroke - Ride for Heart](#).



(John Dawson, Haidun Liu, Bernice Lau, Kevin Martino, Tami Martino, Peter Lui (Chief Scientific Officer and Vice President of Research at the University of Ottawa Heart Institute), Matiyo Ojehomon, Navneet Sidhu, Love Sandhu, David Martynowicz.)

The Toronto event regularly attracts close to 20,000 cyclists, runners and walkers who take over the Don Valley Parkway and Gardiner Expressway to raise funds for heart and stroke research.

The UofG team raised close to \$4,000 to donate to the fight against heart disease.

“Research is at the centre of the Heart and Stroke Foundation, and fundamental to its mission for *Healthy lives free of heart disease and stroke* says Dr. Tami Martino, director of the CCVI and a cardiovascular researcher in the Ontario Veterinary College's Department of Biomedical Sciences.. “There are significant pressures in health research funding, and Ride for Heart is a crucial initiative that increases funding for cardiovascular research to benefit the health of Canadians. Moreover, it has provided fundamental support to many of Canada's current Scientists and Clinicians working towards better treatments and cures for heart disease. We were thrilled to participate in this event.”

“It's important that we as researchers and scientists get out there and tell the public about what we are doing and the benefits they are getting from our work” says Dr. John Dawson, a researcher in the College of Biological Sciences. “I'm not a cyclist, but somehow the thrill of riding along the Gardner in the shadow of the CN Tower made the ride all worth it.”



Martino and Dawson also had the unique opportunity to represent Guelph at a networking event with David Sculthorpe, CEO of the [Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada](#) (HSFC), the HSFC event team, key donors and scientists who are dedicated to basic and clinical cardiovascular research in Canada.

“The event is superbly organized by the Heart and Stroke Foundation,” says Dawson. “They make an effort to treat researchers as VIPS because they want to showcase the research they support that saves lives and the people that carry out that research.”

CCVI is a collaborative venture between laboratories in OVC, CBS and Human Health & Nutritional Sciences, with broad interests that span the spectrum of cardiovascular medicine and science.

The Centre, launched in 2015, involves 12 lead cardiovascular scientists and clinicians, as well as dozens of collaborators, and hundreds of graduate and undergraduate students from across the UofG and beyond. It's one of a few centres worldwide looking at cardiovascular disease all the way from single molecules to clinical applications.

About 1.3 million Canadians are diagnosed with cardiovascular disease annually. About 70,000 heart attacks occur in Canada every year, 16,000 of them fatal.

“Our goal is to understand the mechanisms behind heart disease and to develop new therapies for the treatment of cardiovascular disease,” adds Martino.

(On the ride: Kevin Martino, Tami Martino, Annie Dupuis, John Dawson, Haidun Liu)