



# CANADIAN FOUNDATION FOR DIETETIC RESEARCH

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## Canadian dietetic students break new ground in nutrition research

Charlottetown, PEI - June 4, 2009 – Four exceptional dietetic students have made a significant mark in nutrition research that may impact health across Canada and around the world. Recognized by the Canadian Foundation for Dietetic Research (CFDR), these diverse research projects addressed a wide scope of scientific inquiry - the use of probiotics to improve the quality of life for HIV patients, identifying important disease prevention effects of cranberries, analyzing nutrition messaging in Canadian magazines and studying the relationship of genetics to childhood obesity.

CFDR recognized the award winners on June 4 during the Dietitians of Canada national conference in Charlottetown, PEI through CFDR's Morgan Medal Awards program. The Morgan awards acknowledge dietetic students and interns for their passion and commitment to dietetic research.

The national Morgan Medal was presented to Roxanne Laughlin from Charlottetown, PEI. Working at the University of Prince Edward Island, Roxanne's research focused on the effect of cranberry consumption on prevention of certain diseases. Cranberries contain antioxidants which protect body cells from the damaging effects of oxidation.

Roxanne learned a lot about research during the course of her project. She says, "This project has helped me to understand that no one researcher works in isolation and that all our nutrition knowledge is inter-related and continually growing so long as we are contributing. Although not all my results were significant, many were, and this research helped me to understand just how clearly diet affects the body and ultimately health."

Mary Sue Waisman, President of CFDR, says, "Roxanne and the other Morgan Medal recipients clearly understand that only through research can we unravel some of the mysteries of diet and its relation to health. These four enthusiastic dietetic students each conveyed a passion for research. It's our hope that they will continue in their research efforts and contribute to the body of nutrition knowledge, ultimately helping to build a healthier Canada."

The three other Morgan Medal recipients are:

- Lindsay Zalot, Ottawa Hospital Dietetic Internship Program. Lindsay worked on a project to develop and test a coding method for assessing messages about calcium, vitamin D, iron and folate in Canadian magazines. Her results will be used in a larger Health Canada study.
- Jaimie Hemsworth, Brescia University College. Jaimie worked on a research team to develop and test a micronutrient supplemented probiotic yogurt for use in HIV clients. Clinical studies of HIV clients in London, Ontario and Mwanza, Tanzania, were conducted. This research has led to a deeper understanding of the role of micronutrients and probiotics in strengthening the immune system and overall quality of life in people living with HIV.

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- Colleen Rogers, Manitoba Partnership Dietetic Education Program carried out important research on the relationship between genetics and childhood obesity. Her findings fill a key knowledge gap in this field.

The Morgan Medal program is an annual program of the Canadian Foundation for Dietetic Research. The program demonstrates CFDR's commitment to encouraging the profession's researchers of the future – dietitians who will contribute, through their research efforts, to the body of knowledge about food and nutrition, ultimately enhancing the health of Canadians.

The Canadian Foundation for Dietetic Research was created in 1991 by Dietitians of Canada to support applied nutrition and dietetic research. Thanks to the generous support of corporate donors and individual members of Dietitians of Canada, CFDR has awarded research grants annually since 1993. To date, CFDR has funded 93 research teams across the country, awarding more than \$1,090,000 in grants.

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