



INTERVIEW SPOTLIGHT

DR. MATTHEW MILLER

STAR IN VACCINE DEVELOPMENT

ARLINDA DENG¹, AVRILYNN DING¹, OWEN LUO²

¹Bachelor of Health Sciences (Honours), Class of 2017, McMaster University

²Bachelor of Health Sciences (Honours), Class of 2019, McMaster University

DR. MATTHEW MILLER IS AN ASSISTANT PROFESSOR IN THE DEPARTMENT OF BIOCHEMISTRY AND BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES AT MCMASTER UNIVERSITY, AND PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR IN THE INSTITUTE FOR INFECTIOUS DISEASES RESEARCH AND THE MCMASTER IMMUNOLOGY RESEARCH CENTRE. AS A SUCCESSFUL YOUNG SCIENTIST IN THE FIELD OF IMMUNOLOGY, HE IS PUSHING THE FRONTIERS OF BIOMEDICAL DISCOVERY AND HAS BEEN RECENTLY AWARDED WITH THE 2015-2016 CIHR NEW INVESTIGATOR AWARD. DR. MILLER'S CURRENT RESEARCH FOCUSES ON THE INTERACTION BETWEEN VIRUSES AND THE IMMUNE SYSTEM AS IMPLICATED IN NEURODEGENERATIVE DISEASE AND VACCINE DEVELOPMENT.

■ THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO SPEAK WITH US DR. MILLER. WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO PURSUE AN ACADEMIC CAREER IN THE FIELD OF IMMUNOLOGY AND WHAT MADE YOU JOIN MCMASTER'S IMMUNOLOGY RESEARCH CENTRE?

Good question. I became interested in immunology as a Bachelor of Medical Sciences student at Western University, which was a brand new program when I started there. During the later years of my studies, I quickly fell in love with microbiology while taking an introductory course on it in second year and saw that it was unlike anything I had done before. I ultimately began a concentrated specialization in microbiology and immunology. Like many students at that stage of their education, I hadn't decided on my future career path, having toyed with the idea of medical school, but never being sold by it. However, during my fourth year, I did an honours thesis project in immunology, which granted me significant access to a lab. This flipped the switch for me and I ultimately did not apply to medical school. I instead continued studying at Western, due to continued interest in my thesis project, until the completion of my PhD. The interest