
BIOSKETCH



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After an undergraduate degree in Biochemistry, I obtained my Ph.D. in Neurobiology in 1999 from Laval University. Subsequently, I did two postdoctoral fellowships, one at University College London in England under the supervision of Martin Raff, and the other at Stanford University in the USA under the supervision of Ben Barres.

Since 2004, I lead a team that seeks to unlock the mysteries of neurogenesis in the developing retina. In recent years, we have identified new cellular and molecular mechanisms controlling the production of the right number of the different retinal cell types at the appropriate time during development. Our ultimate goal is to use this knowledge to develop new regenerative medicine approaches for the treatment of retinal dystrophies. Our work is currently funded by CIHR, FFB-Canada, the Brain Canada Foundation, the Alzheimer's Society, and FRQS.

From the beginning of my independent career, I have been fortunate to obtain continuous support through various awards. First as a CIHR New Investigator, then as a Junior 2 and Senior FRQS Scholar. More recently, in 2017, I received the prestigious FRQS Emeritus Research Scholar Award. I am actively involved in the scientific community as a member of the grant review panels at CIHR and I sit on the editorial board of prestigious scientific journals such as Stem Cells, Frontiers in Neurodegeneration, Journal of Experimental Neuroscience, and Neurogenesis. I have also organized various scientific sessions at international meetings on vision research such as the Gordon Conference on Visual Systems Development and the International Society for Eye Research.

From my Ph.D. thesis work on gene therapy in the retina and my postdoctoral training in developmental biology of the retina, to the projects currently underway in my lab, vision research has always been at the center of my career. Since 2009, I have been actively involved with the Foundation Fighting Blindness Canada, first as a member of the Scientific Advisory Board, and since 2013 as Chair of this committee and a member of the Board of Directors. I have been a member of the Vision Health Research Network (VHRN) since the beginning of my career. I was a member of the scientific committee and since 2017 I am director of the retina and posterior segment axis. I am therefore very familiar with the network and it is with enthusiasm that I wish to contribute to promoting vision research in Quebec, Canada, and abroad!

ELECTORAL PLATFORM

The VHRN has been instrumental in fostering vision research in Quebec, and I want to build on the strong foundation that has been put in place to bring the network to new heights, particularly at the national and international levels. To do this, I intend to put together a plan to achieve the following objectives:

- Facilitate consultation with members of the network, with the help of axis directors, to better understand the issues of major importance for the various members of our community and to get suggestions of projects to consider.
- Stimulate interactions between clinician and basic scientists and facilitate the translation of research projects to the clinic by appointing, among other things, a head of clinical research for the network.
- Increase student participation in the activities of the VHRN by directly involving them in the structure of the network and in the organization of training and networking activities.
- Establish a summer school (workshops) that would allow students and postdoctoral fellows to become acquainted with different techniques in vision research, while at the same time promoting exchanges and collaborations between members of the network.
- Increase the leverage effect of VHRN funds by establishing partnerships with organizations that fund vision research in Canada such as the FFB, the Brain Canada Foundation, the CNIB, the Glaucoma Research Society, etc.
- Promote representation with CIHR to ensure equitable access to research funds for vision researchers.
- Establish a support program for early-career investigators.
- Recruit an international advisory committee whose mission would be to help the network increase visibility of the common infrastructures and to identify new funding opportunities and collaborations with both the public and private sectors.
- Encourage the organization of more international satellite activities at the Research Day, such as the Symposium on angiogenesis that was held in 2017, to increase the visibility of our students and researchers.

I believe that my contacts at national and international level, combined with those of network members and the steering committee, as well as the expertise and resources of the VHRN, will help us achieve these goals together.
