We caught up with Dr. Paul Armstrong after he delivered a presentation on the importance of work-life balance to a group of young cardiology trainees at the Duke Clinical Research Institute in Durham, North Carolina.

Receiving the University Cup is a tremendous honor for Paul Armstrong. “I’ve had a great career and a privileged life filled with tremendous opportunities.” This achievement would not have been possible without his life partner and wife, Beverley, who was instrumental in helping Paul maintain a healthy work-life balance and keeping him grounded over the years—everything from taking out the garbage to mowing the lawn. A true life partner understands the personal costs involved with investing in a career. Exercise is important to work-life balance too. Paul recounted that in his younger years he enjoyed playing squash, “a war-like game” that helped him release a fair amount of tension and energy while the endorphins produced during the rigorous exercise helped him to solve problems.

In the early days of his career Dr. Armstrong witnessed an enormous amount of suffering and mortality which affected him deeply. Paul often paraphrases George Bernard Shaw to sum up his approach to life, “Some people see things and say why? But I see things that never were and I ask why not?” Medicine has been Paul’s “calling” and being a physician has been a great opportunity and privilege. His strong work ethic and insatiable curiosity continually drove him to do better. “It was important to listen and look at patients and believe there had to be a better way, and then try to find solutions to their situations.”

Over his 35+ year career in medicine Paul has been fortunate to both teach and do research related to his clinical work. He offers the following advice to the new faculty members and postdoctoral fellows who are just beginning their academic careers: Find the passion, the fire in your belly that drives your engine, and follow it! Give it the time and attention it deserves. Be prepared for failure and know that you will fail more often than you will succeed. Work-life balance is awfully important and it is much easier achieved with a good partner and an approach that works for you. Find more than one mentor and build relationships with people on the path ahead of you. Establish networks and meaningful collaborations across the country and the world.

Paul Armstrong is a firm believer that it is a privilege being Canadian and being educated and trained in the public environment, and with that privilege comes the responsibility to teach and inspire the next generation. “The passion we have for what we do is infectious.” A good teacher has to be inspiring, to have a command of their subject and be ready and willing to be challenged and stimulated. Mysteries will engage young people. We can see the brightness in their eyes, pique their curiosity, and engage them in dialogue. We must let people learn on their own.

There is a saying, ‘You’re never an apostle in your own land’ so to be recognized as a physician, clinician, and scientist by the academy at the University of Alberta is extraordinary and I am deeply moved and touched.”

Dr. Paul W. Armstrong, 2014 University Cup Recipient
Dr. Armstrong also believes that role modelling is important. As founding Director of TORCH (Tomorrow’s Research Cardiovascular Health Professionals), a strategic training program initiative, he committed early in his career to the training of cardiovascular researchers. Today he works with an outstanding group of people at the Canadian VIGOUR Centre and he continues to mentor and train young professionals. “It is very rewarding to see the next generation catch fire and succeed; these former trainees are part of a great legacy.”

Teaching and approaches to teaching have changed greatly since Paul Armstrong first started out. He marvels at what’s accessible on the internet today (that wasn’t there ten or twenty years ago) as well as the variety of devices and new “apps” available to students. “Today we must work in a different way. ‘Continuous quality improvement’ processes are commonplace in health care services but not as much in teaching.” Academics need to always be reinventing themselves and Paul is no exception. There are many outstanding classroom teachers at the University of Alberta but Paul admits “we need to be regularly exposed to new ways that will help us improve ourselves and our teaching.” Despite what some people think, “You can teach an old dog new tricks!”

**Awards for Faculty Excellence**

The recipients of the 2014 Awards for Faculty Excellence were announced at the *Celebrate! Teaching.Learning.Research* event held on September 25th. Congratulations to these outstanding faculty members:

- **DISTINGUISHED UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR**
  - Brian Jones (Earth & Atmospheric Sciences)
  - Don Page (Physics)

- **UNIVERSITY CUP**
  - Paul Armstrong (Canadian VIGOUR Centre)

- **VARGO TEACHING CHAIR**
  - Al Meldrum (Physics)

**McCalla Professorships**

McCalla Professors are those who value excellence in teaching, acknowledge the importance of students, conduct themselves in an ethical manner, are collaborative, open to change, take pride in history and traditions and are committed to integrating their research and teaching.

An information session for Small Faculties will be held on November 4, 2014 at 2-4 pm in Room 2-31 South Academic Building (SAB).

Submissions from Small Faculties should be sent to the Office of the Provost and Vice-President (Academic) by December 1, 2014.

Large Faculties determine individual submission deadlines so please check faculty websites for more information. Recommendations from large faculties are to be submitted to the Office of the Provost and Vice-President (Academic) no later than January 30, 2015.

**Teaching and Learning Enhancement Fund (TLEF) Project / Research Awards**

Applications for 2014-2015 TLEF Project/ Research awards are invited from all University of Alberta instructors who seek innovative ways of creating exceptional learning experiences and environments. TLEF supports a diverse range of initiatives specifically focused on creating exceptional and life changing university experiences for students.

For complete information on TLEF Awards visit: www.ctl.ualberta.ca/TLEF.

**TLEF Project/Research Information Session**

Wednesday, November 12, 2014
1:30 – 3:00 p.m. in Room 3-07 SAB

**TLEF Project/Research Application Deadline**

Monday, January 19, 2015

**Alan Blizzard Award**

The Alan Blizzard Award was developed by the Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (STLHE) to highlight excellence in collaborative university teaching and learning. The Alan Blizzard award seeks to foster recognition, visibility, and appreciation for effective collaboration in university teaching and learning. Further information about this award is available at: www.stlhe.ca/awards/alan-blizzard-award/

**Desire2Learn Innovation Award**

The Desire2Learn Innovation Award in Teaching and Learning recognizes innovative approaches that promote learning in new ways at post-secondary institutions. This award is open to all instructors currently teaching at a post-secondary institution, regardless of discipline, level, or term of appointment. The deadline for this award is TBA (usually mid Jan to mid Feb). Please refer to www.stlhe.ca/awards/desire2learn-innovation-award for further details.