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For Immediate Release

Brock Produces Its First PhD Graduate Focussing on Wine Research

Gary Pigeau attained his PhD in Biotechnology (Dr. Debra Inglis laboratory), passing with distinction. He is the first PhD graduate specializing in oenological research at CCOVI and the third Ph.D. from Brock's Biotechnology program.

A native of Webbwood, Ontario, Pigeau worked to understand the fundamental reasons why Icewine production is often problematic and what the implications would be for the Canadian wine industry. Pigeau determined, at the genomic and proteomic levels, wine yeast metabolic pathways responsible for acetic acid production during Icewine fermentation. This project ensures Canadian Icewines meet the stringent standards of the Vintner Quality Alliance. Pigeau explained that Icewine juice and its fermentation present wine yeast with a stressful environment, and wine yeasts adapt to these stresses in ways that affect the ultimate quality of Icewines.

Dr. Debra Inglis warmly stated, "I am so proud of everything Gary has accomplished during his PhD studies. During his time here at CCOVI, his research began unraveling the mystery behind elevated volatile acidity production in Icewine fermentation at the yeast molecular level, thus providing targets to select yeast best suited for these fermentations. He has been an integral part of my research team for the past six years, an important ambassador for research at CCOVI and an excellent example of the type of training graduate students receive through the Centre for Biotechnology. Although he will be deeply missed, I am thrilled he is choosing to continue his research career with an academic post-doctoral fellowship. I look forward to reading about his future accomplishments."

Pigeau plans to continue in academic research. He is currently seeking a post-doctoral position to further his career. Pigeau noted, "I am being recruited by an expert in diabetes research, as well as one of the world's preeminent yeast geneticists."

Appropriately, at the congratulation ceremony, everyone raised a glass of fine sparkling wine to Gary's success and bright future!

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