



Surgical Exploration and Discovery

ANNUAL REPORT



2025

Surgical Exploration and Discovery (SEAD)

www.seadmcgill.ca
@mcgillsead

Supported by



Report written by Viviane Beaupré, Elissa Colucci, Kevork Atamian, and Gabriel Berberi

Message from the Chair

Dear SEAD students,

Welcome to this exciting and innovative program! I want to start off by congratulating you for taking the initiative to explore potential specialty choices this early in your career. The choice is not easy but SEAD will be instrumental in guiding you in the right direction through a combination of hands-on workshops, operating room shadowing, and candid discussions with practicing surgeons.

I want to thank the Department of Surgery for its ongoing support of this student-led endeavour, as well as all of the staff who volunteer to share their passion for surgery. A tremendous amount of work is required to coordinate this program, and I also want to highlight the tireless contributions of all the student coordinators.

Get hands-on, ask questions and most importantly, have fun. This is a unique opportunity to gain exposure to an exciting and gratifying career in surgery.



Dr. Evan Wong

MD, MPH, FRCSC, FACS
SEAD Chair

Program Objectives

The *Surgical Exploration and Discovery (SEAD)* program is a two-week summer immersion program for first year medical students. The purpose of SEAD is to provide medical students exposure to various surgical disciplines and surgical mentors early on in their education. We hope to positively influence medical students' perceptions of careers in surgery through affirmative interactions with surgeons.

Exposure through Operating Room Shadowing

Students are exposed to half-day shadowing sessions in various surgical specialties (general surgery, neurosurgery, orthopaedics, plastic surgery, otorhinolaryngology, vascular, urology, pediatric, thoracic, cardiac, gynecology), as well as clinics. They are often given the opportunity to scrub in and interact with patients – if allowed by the staff surgeon and appropriate in the circumstances – to ensure maximum exposure. For many students, it represented their very first time scrubbing, or even entering an operating room.

Education through Discussions and Q&A

Everyday during lunchtime, students engaged with staff and residents from every specialty through a discussion and question & answer session. This allowed students to further their understanding of a surgeon's lifestyle, responsibilities, practice and career path, on top of offering mentorship, shadowing and research opportunities.



Engagement through Hands-on Workshops

Our program emphasizes active learning through immersive, hands-on workshops. Students participated in daily simulation sessions designed to replicate real-world surgical scenarios, providing a safe and controlled environment to practice essential procedures and skills. The program kicked off with a foundational suturing workshop, where students learned and practiced basic suturing techniques. Each afternoon, they progressively built on these skills and gained comfort with surgical tools. The workshops covered a wide range of procedures, including casting, foundations of laparoscopic surgery and ultrasound, ensuring that students gained confidence and competence in each area.

The 2025 Team

Junior Coordinators

Délya Valcourt-Gendron (Class of 2028)
Aissam Souidi (Class of 2028)
Nassib Jr Hassouna (Class of 2028)
Jessica Muha (Class of 2028)



Senior Coordinators

Kevork Atamian (Class of 2027)
Elissa Colucci (Class of 2027)
Gabriel Berberi (Class of 2027)
Viviane Beaupré (Class of 2027)



Senior Consultants

Camille Gervais (Class of 2026)
Taylor Morganstein (Class of 2026)
Ammar Saed Aldien (Class of 2026)



Staff Partners

Cardiac Surgery: Dr. David Drullinsky & Dr. Emmanuel Moss

General Surgery: Dr. Evan Wong

Gynecology: Dr. Andrew Zakhari & Dr. Cleve Ziegler

Neurosurgery: Dr. Carlo Santaguida & Dr. Roberto Diaz

Ophthalmology: Dr. Sheila Huang

Orthopedic Surgery: Dr. Reggie C. Hamdy, Dr. David Zukor & Dr. Gregory Berry

Otorhinolaryngology: Dr. Marc Tewfik, Dr. Joshua Gurberg & Dr. Alex Mlynarek

Pediatric Surgery: Dr. Sherif Emil & Dr. Etienne St-Louis

Plastic Surgery: Dr. Joshua Vorstenbosch & Dr. Viezel-Mathieu

Thoracic Surgery: Dr. Lorenzo Ferri

Urology: Dr. Alexis Rompré-Brodeur

Vascular Surgery: Dr. Oren Steinmetz & Dr. Elie Girsowicz



Collaborating Sites

Royal Victoria Hospital (RVH)

Montreal Children's Hospital (MCH)

Shriners Hospitals for Children

Jewish General Hospital (JGH)

Montreal General Hospital (MGH)

Montreal Neurological Institute (MNI)

Institut de Chirurgie Ville Marie

Interprofessional Simulation Centre (MUHC-i-SIM)



2025 Updates



OPHTHALMOLOGY

Ophthalmology was introduced to SEAD for the first time this summer. We are sincerely grateful to Dr. Sheila Huang for making this possible.



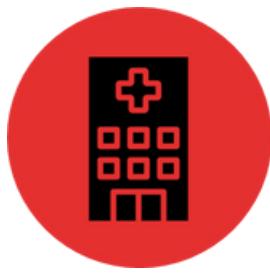
OTORHINOLARYNGOLOGY

This year also featured the return of an exceptional workshop: ENT! We extend our sincere gratitude to Dr. Marc Tewfik for organizing this valuable session.



TRAUMA SURGERY

Trauma night shifts at the MGH were introduced. Students tagged along the trauma team and gained firsthand exposure to the dynamic world of trauma surgery.



OPERATING ROOM AVAILABILITIES

We established collaborations with new sites and hospitals across various specialties, expanding access to operating rooms.



NEW LITERATURE

SEAD Senior Consultants Camille, Taylor, and Amar published their work alongside Dr. Wong. Check out "Navigating the Path to Surgery: A Systematic Review of Early Surgical Exposure Programs for Preclerkship Medical Students in North America."



PARTICIPANTS

This summer, SEAD welcomed more students than ever before, giving even more participants the chance to explore the world of surgery and shape their career paths.

SEAD 2025 in Numbers

22

Participants

13

Surgical Specialties

10

Surgical Simulation
Workshops

169

Operating Rooms

814

Clinical Hours

7

Hospitals

2025 Schedule

Week 1

	Monday June 31	Tuesday July 1	Wednesday July 2	Thursday July 3	Friday July 4
AM	OR	Introduction to SEAD	OR	OR	OR
LUNCH	General & Trauma Surgery Talk Dr. Wong	Plastic Surgery Talk Dr. Nepon	Vascular Surgery Talk Dr. Girsowicz	ENT Talk Dr. Tewfik	OBGYN Talk Dr. Zakhari
PM	Back to the OR	Plastics Workshop	Vascular Workshop	ENT Workshop	OBGYN Workshop
		Scrubbing Workshop			

Week 2

	Monday July 7	Tuesday July 8	Wednesday July 9	Thursday July 10	Friday July 11
AM	OR	OR	OR	OR	OR
LUNCH	Pediatric Surgery Talk Dr. St-Louis	Cardiac Surgery Talk Dr. Drullinsky	Orthopedic Surgery Talk Dr. Hamdy	Ophthalmology Talk Dr. Huang	MIS Talk Dr. Ahmadzadeh
PM	Pediatric Surgery Workshop	Cardiac & Trauma Workshop	Orthopedics Workshop	Ophthalmology Workshop	MIS Workshop

Week 1

Monday

First day of SEAD 2025 kicked off with a first morning in the OR. Then, Dr. Evan Wong, our SEAD Chair, gave the SEAD students an inspiring talk about his path to general surgery and trauma at the JGH.



Tuesday

The second day of SEAD started with a full day of Intro to SEAD! Students reviewed the program before their first suturing and hand-tie workshop led by Dr. Hillary Nepon (Plastics R3) and the senior coordinators. After lunch, SEAD students learned how to scrub in followed by a hospital tour.



Wednesday

After the morning OR, the team regrouped at the JGH for our Vascular Surgery afternoon. Dr. Elie Girsowicz shared about his academic path and his experience as a vascular surgeon. Then, residents Dr. Morgan Gold and Dr. Xheni Konci taught the group how to perform a blood vessel anastomosis and how to do a carotid endarterectomy.



Thursday

Participants went to the RVH for an Otolaryngology Workshop led by Dr. Marc Tewfik and Rhinology fellow Dr. Rawan Arif. They taught the SEAD students the basics of nose anatomy and how to use nasolaryngoscopes with nasal simulators.



Friday

After a morning in the OR, the team met at the MUHC-i-SIM for a Gynecology talk and workshop led by Dr. Andrew Zakhari! Stations included a post-partum hemorrhage, pelvic exam, ultrasound, ovariohysterectomy, and IUD insertion simulations. Thank you to the students of the the MSS Obstetrical and Gynecology Interest Group (MOGIG) for leading some stations!



Week 2

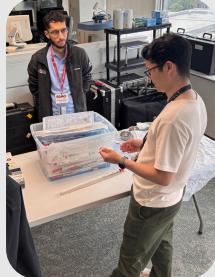
Monday

Week 2 began with a warm welcome by the Pediatric Surgery team. Dr. Etienne St-Louis graciously coordinated an immersive afternoon including lunch, a tour of the MCH, and one-on-one patient encounters which leaves a lasting impression on all SEAD students. Dr. Sheriff Emil joined the workshop virtually and each member of the pediatric surgery team shared about their path and why they are passionate about what they do!



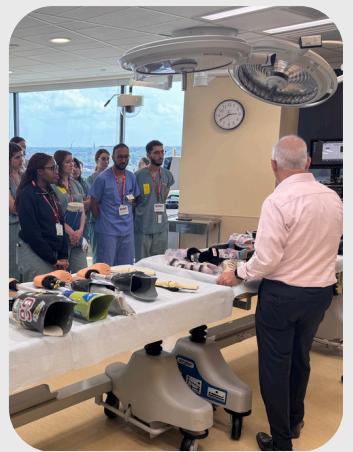
Tuesday

Dr. David Drullinsky taught our students about the field of Cardiac Surgery while going through different procedures. Dr. Andrew Meng (General Surgery R3) taught the group how to insert a chest tube, while M4 students, Fayeza Ahmed and Elie Fadel, taught the students how to insert a central line and use different ultrasound scans to assess the heart! Senior coordinators Gabriel and Viviane taught the basics of CPR, how to run a code, and the theory of surgical cardiac perfusion!



Wednesday

The Orthopedic Surgery workshop run by the Shriners team, is a participant-favorite every summer! After a wonderful talk by Dr. Reggie C. Hamdy, SEAD students tried their hand at upper and lower extremity casting and learned about prosthetics.



Thursday

Another highlight this year was the ophthalmology afternoon organized by Dr. Sheila Huang, with a lunch, an introduction to the field, and a workshop where students practiced microsurgery, ophthalmoscopy, and slit-lamp exams.



Friday

The final day of SEAD 2025 featured students' last OR morning and a minimally invasive surgery workshop led by MIS fellow Dr. Arezoo Ahmadzadeh, with stations for laparoscopic suturing, cutting, peg transfers, cholecystectomy simulation, and the Da Vinci robotic simulator.







Corporate Acknowledgements

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FAYS


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Partnerships

Our program was a resounding success this year, thanks to the outstanding support we received. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to Dr. Evan Wong, SEAD Chair, whose leadership and vision unite our program and inspire our team. We are deeply thankful to Dr. Melina Vassiliou, whose generous funding allows us to invest in enriching our learners' experience.

We would also like to sincerely thank the McGill Department of Surgery, along with the Royal Victoria Hospital, Montreal Children's Hospital, Shriners Hospital, Montreal General Hospital, Jewish General Hospital, Montreal Neurological Institute, and Institut de Chirurgie Ville Marie for graciously hosting our students. Special appreciation goes to the entire team at the MUHC Inter- professional Simulation Centre (MUHC-i-SIM) for their dedication, kindness, and professionalism, which were valued by every participant.

A big thank you to our staff and resident partners who led workshops and welcomed our students into their specialty's OR. We are also grateful to the many OR staff and administrative coordinators who supported our students during their first experiences in the hospital. SEAD could not have happened without the support and enthusiasm of every single person involved.

To our 2025 cohort, thank you for joining us on this journey! And finally, a huge thank you to our 2025 SEAD team for all your hard work!

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SEAD



Surgical Exploration and Discovery

OBSERVERSHIP

MENTORSHIP

WORKSHOPS

