Your Editorial Board: Dr. Judith Hall

Canadians usually think that the brain drain involves a one-way road south, but Dr. Judith Hall disproves that rule. She headed north in 1981 after graduating from the University of Washington, completing residencies and fellowships at Johns Hopkins Hospital, and then working at the University of Washington for 9 years. She currently serves as head of pediatrics and professor of medical genetics at UBC.

Who was your most influential teacher?
My mother. Her infectious curiosity and hard work proved a wonderful model.

What aspect of your work gives you the most pleasure?
Finding creative solutions to challenging problems and pushing young people to stretch to the limit.

What research paper has had the most influence on your career?
Bruce Cattanach's study of uniparental disomy in mice, which transformed my thinking about nontraditional types of inheritance.

What are your favourite pastimes?
Hiking, watching movies and browsing through journals.

What book did you last read?
Larry's Party, by Carol Shields.

What alternative profession would you have liked to pursue?
Another type of art with as much creativity as the art side of medicine.

What illness do you fear most?
Mental incapacity caused by Alzheimer's disease, a stroke or mental illness.

What complementary therapies have you tried?
Folic acid supplementation, which I would recommend for everyone.

What advice do you have for a young physician?
Plan to be a continuous learner and continuously learn from your patients.

What was your biggest mistake?
Being driven by curiosity, so that I tend to work all the time.

What was your biggest achievement?
Translating advances in genetics in order to provide better care and more options for families.

What make and year of car do you drive?
A 1996 Mazda MX3.

Sharon Doorbar9

Virtual helping hand

A pioneering virtual-reality project in the UK is designed to improve physicians' hand-surgery techniques. The Sheffield Instrumental Glove for Manual Assessment (SIGMA) is used to assess rheumatoid arthritis and postsurgical hand-grip strength. When patients wear the glove, sensors transmit their movements to a screen that shows the stress distribution. It allows doctors to detect swollen joints and fingers easily.