

## Move Forward, Keep The Faith

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By Maja Frigelj, Staff Writer

“My father always told me, ‘keep the faith’”, explains Dr. Victor Macdonald, Ph.D. of his steadfast dedication to the research of blood and the development of safer blood supplies and products. Trained as a physiologist at Duke University, Durham, NC, Dr. Macdonald has always found a fascination with the complexity of blood. “Blood is not simple; in fact, it is extremely complicated, both from a scientific and clinical perspective. Maybe that’s what makes it so interesting.”

His interest in the scientific field has proven life-saving, especially in the field of blood banking and the role it plays for the Armed Services Blood Program (ASBP). “The mission to do something for soldiers in the field is a real added bonus and as time goes on, it has become an even greater motivator,” says Dr. Macdonald and conveys that his participation in the launch of the *Golden Hour* container was one of his proudest contributions to the blood banking field. The Golden Hour container, a carrying device for blood that can maintain a proper temperature in the field, was developed in response to the need for longer, consistently cooled units of blood during transport and shipping.

Over the course of his impactful career, Dr. Macdonald has also been involved with the development of blood substitutes, frozen platelets, freeze dried plasma, and extended shelf life red blood cells. Undoubtedly, Dr. Macdonald deserves mounds of recognition for his zeal, diligence, and faith in science, yet his humility keeps him modest, “I see all of this as a team effort. There are a lot of people involved and I’m just lucky to have good partners and good colleagues.”

Looking toward the future, Dr. Macdonald hopes to keep all research and development moving forward in support of their mission, which includes carrying out research that will result in safer products for the war fighter. Through communication and cooperation, Dr. Macdonald and his team of 24 will be able to introduce new products into already established logistics chains to improve current operations. “It would be extremely satisfying to usher the new blood products currently in advanced development to conclusion,” states Dr. Macdonald.

While scientists all around the world and right here at home in the United States are continuously searching for safer blood collection, distribution, and storage procedures, the need for blood remains. Dr. Macdonald has given a lot of his own blood for research and explains, “I am not going to ask someone else to give blood if I’m not willing to bleed, myself.” He adds that although he grew up with a needle phobia, it has not deterred him from doing his part in supporting that continuous research. Dr. Macdonald knows firsthand the importance of readily

available blood and urges all who are eligible, to donate. If you would like to donate blood to the Armed Services Blood Program in support of our men and women in uniform and their family members worldwide, please visit [www.militaryblood.dod.mil](http://www.militaryblood.dod.mil) to schedule your donation appointment at a blood donor center near you.