

Departmental Acknowledgement

"If you want to keep your memories, first you have to live them"

Bob Dylan

Hi Everyone,

Last week the FRO-S Awards for 2015-2016 were announced and once again the Department of Pediatrics did great. Myriam Srour, Michael Zappitelli, Marc Beltempo, Wissam Shalish and Nada Jabado were all successful in demonstrating once again our "above our weight" strength in child health research. All will have their own Departmental Acknowledgement in due course and I would like to start by singling out **Myriam Srour** for this week's acknowledgement.

Myriam is a colleague and friend. We share a 'home' here in the Division of Pediatric Neurology. I first came to know Myriam when, as a medical student, she did an elective in pediatric neurology while I was attending on service. Not only did she find her passion in medicine that month figuring what she wanted to pursue upon graduation, she also met an adult neurology trainee (Ron Postuma) rotating on the service who would become her husband. A most impactful month ! (Exceeds Expectations?)

Following graduation from McGill, Myriam pursued her residency in pediatric neurology here at the MCH and McGill. She was most productive as a trainee in her clinical research pursuits (I know as I was her supervisor) and followed this with a fellowship in neurogenetics at Université de Montreal and Hôpital Ste-Justine under the tutelage of world-leaders Jacques Michaud and Guy Rouleau. There, she got bitten by the bug of basic bench research in molecular genetics. She was successful in receiving competitively several sources of external financial support including a CIHR Clinician Scientist Training Award that enabled her to undertake a PhD which she will be receiving shortly. During her training, she scored multiple research successes 'finding' and delineating a variety of genes that have implications in basic neurologic processes. She even 'scored' a first author paper in **Science** along the way (if only the Habs were more proficient).

Concurrent with this remarkable run of research success, Myriam has for several years (while still doing her research training) been a full member of the Division of Pediatric Neurology carrying her share of the Division's clinical responsibilities (she is an astute natural clinician). She also somehow found the time to become a devoted mother of three. Myriam is the offspring of an oil company executive, so though born in Lebanon, she grew up in multiple locations around the globe (Cairo, Abu Dhabi, London, Calgary) before settling in Montreal for her university studies. She is very much an international woman, at ease with languages, cultures and differences and the ability to pick up and travel quickly. She is also blessed with a charming personality (stress just rolls off her – it's amazing to watch), an easy smile, a vibrant sense of humour and a wide-ranging intelligence. She is also an excellent role model for women in medicine seeking the academic research intensive pathway. She walks the walk of balancing your boat.

Myriam has received her Chercheur-Boursier Clinician Junior 1 Award. She did so even before she commenced the formal portion of her salary and operational start-up funding from our Department and the MUHC-RI. She is now well on her way to a successful career as an independent investigator focusing on delineating the genetic causes of cortical malformations and intellectual disability that is responsible for significant neurologic morbidity. Please join me in congratulating Myriam on this important milestone on her academic journey.

Have a great weekend everyone!

Michael

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