

**"If people don't want to come out to the ball park, nobody's gonna stop them"**  
**Yogi Berra (who was a closet Zen Master)**

Hi Everyone,

This week's Departmental Acknowledgment goes to **Stephen Liben** who yesterday was inducted into the Faculty Honour List for Educational Excellence that recognizes exceptional contributions to the educational mission throughout the Faculty of Medicine. I have pasted below my nomination letter in support of Stephen that shows why he so richly deserves this Award.

Stephen's chosen area of excellence is one that is probably the most personally challenging to consider: pediatric palliative care. In this field, Stephen has been, and will no doubt continue to be, a pioneer and consistent innovator. When Stephen chose pediatric palliative care, there were no trailblazers to follow. Quite simply, Stephen is the Canadian trailblazer. Through his dedicated efforts, standards of care for critically ill children and for children at the end of their short lives were fostered. Stephen forged a model of inter-disciplinary holistic care that exemplifies the highest levels of medical professionalism in the noblest of pursuits; the alleviation of suffering at the end of life combined with achieving the best quality of that life for the child and family.

Stephen's international leadership in his chosen field is best exemplified by his Co-Editorship of THE textbook of pediatric palliative care. The excellence of this work is captured in two medical book awards for each of its editions from the British Medical Association and the Royal Society of Medicine. He has also authored on three occasions the chapter on pediatric palliative care for the authoritative Nelson's Textbook of Pediatrics.

Stephen's teaching dossier bears ample evidence of his robust and consistent teaching excellence. He has been truly innovative in his efforts to promote enhanced professionalism with respect to holistic whole person care and mindful practice. The relevance and importance of these efforts is recognized by his being the course creator, director and main instructor for a now mandatory third year course in the new medical curriculum entitled: Mindful Medical Practice.

Stephen certainly merits inclusion in the Faculty Honour List. He has demonstrated outstanding teaching on a sustained basis. He has demonstrated leadership and innovation in medical education both within his chosen field of practice and in the broader medical community. Indeed, his efforts have had an international reach in palliative care and a local impact on each MDCM graduate that goes forth from McGill. He has been significantly involved at all phases of his career in educational activities. He has additionally done so with all levels of potential learners: UGME, PGME, CME and faculty development.

I am fortunate to head a clinical Department particularly renowned for its educational culture. It is my opinion that Stephen is amongst the very best examples of this cultural educational excellence and I do hope you look with favor on his nomination.

Stephen has received a Departmental Acknowledgement twice and the links to these can be found here: [https://www.mcgill.ca/peds/files/peds/september\\_7\\_-\\_dr.\\_stephen\\_liben.pdf](https://www.mcgill.ca/peds/files/peds/september_7_-_dr._stephen_liben.pdf) and [https://www.mcgill.ca/peds/files/peds/20160324\\_-\\_denis\\_leduc\\_dorothy\\_moore\\_stephen\\_liben.pdf](https://www.mcgill.ca/peds/files/peds/20160324_-_denis_leduc_dorothy_moore_stephen_liben.pdf)

I am particularly proud to note that in the six years covered by these Awards in my Chairmanship (2011-2017), six members (Laurie Plotnick, Preetha Krishnamoorthy, Evelyn Constantine, Richard Gosselin, Farhan Bhanji & now Stephen Liben) of the Department have received this Award; the most for any unit in the Faculty. Family pride compels me to note that the School of Physical and Occupational Therapy is a close second at 5.

Please join me in congratulating Stephen on this well-deserved recognition.

This will be the last Acknowledgment for this academic year. We will restart in September after Labour Day once I return from my visiting Professorship in Singapore.

Have a great summer everyone!

Michael

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