

March 3, 2017

**"Wherever a man turns he can find someone who needs him"**

**Albert Schweitzer**

Hi Everyone,

It is not often that the Governor General, the Queen's Canadian representative and titular Head of State, comes to you but he did so this week and on Wednesday in the PK Subban Atrium of the MCH awarded the Sovereign's Medal for Volunteers to our very own **Nicolas Steinmetz**.

Nicolas has had a remarkable life and professional trajectory. Originally from South America, he migrated to Canada as a teen adding both of Canada's official languages to his native Spanish and German. An MDCM graduate of McGill, after a brief stint as a GP in Newfoundland, he returned to Montreal for a residency in both pediatrics and community (public) health. He then became instrumental in our first forays into both social pediatrics and global health, being instrumental in establishing outreach clinics in Pointe-St-Charles, Little Burgundy, Kahnawake and the McGill-Baffin Island Program (a forerunner of our Northern Program) as well as the Department of Pediatrics at the University of Nairobi School of Medicine in Kenya. He then shifted over to administration where he served two terms as Director General of the MCH. It was Nick who can claim credit for the seed of an idea that became the MUHC where he oversaw as Planning Director (he started with a bridge table and a rotary dial phone) the extended and challenging planning process from conceptualization to functional design. Probably more than anyone Nick is responsible for the Glen site that brought no less than three hospitals ultimately into the 21st century. For his enormous professional contributions Nick's name is attached, along with Gilles Julien, to our endowed Chair in Social Pediatrics.

However it is for Nick's extensive volunteer work that he received the Sovereign's Medal. Nick has been a generous giver of his time, wisdom and connections to both our hospital Foundation (MCHF) and the Council for Services for Children and Adolescents (CSCA) that functions as our 'Board' and voice of the MCH within the MUHC organization. Nick has served as President of the MCHF and his attendance can be counted on at virtually all meetings of both the MCHF and the CSCA where he provides continuity, institutional memory and frequently sage advice of how to get things done both within and beyond our walls. Yes these are challenging times and sometimes we feel as if we are under siege, but I shudder to think where we would be without Nick's input.

Please join me in thanking Nick for all that he has done over the years for the MCH. Also please join me in congratulating him on being awarded the Sovereign's Medal.

Wear it proudly Nick!

Have a great weekend everyone and for all partaking, have a great Spring Break with your families.

Michael

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