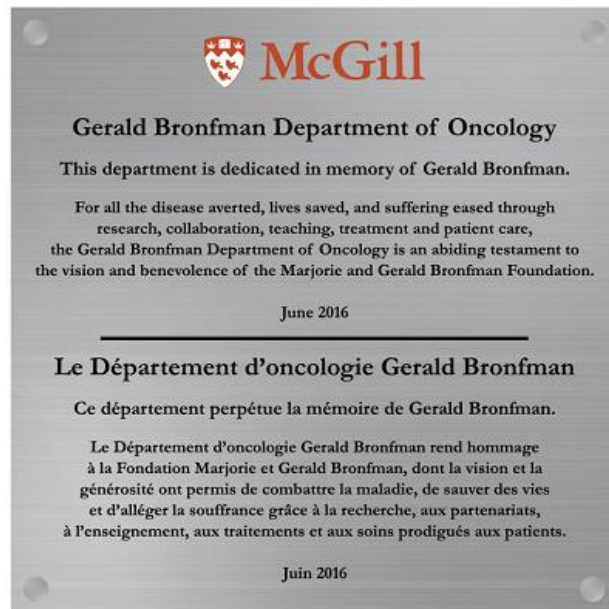


Fourth Gerald Bronfman Department of Oncology Distinguished Lecture and Awards Ceremony

**Celebrating 30 Years of Excellence in
Education, Research and Patient Care**



Portrait of Gerald Bronfman



Plaque dedicated to the memory of Gerald Bronfman

The Fourth Gerald Bronfman Distinguished Lecture and Awards Ceremony was held on December 1, 2020. This annual event is in recognition of the Department's leading patron, Gerald Bronfman, and his family. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the event was held virtually via Zoom with livestreaming on YouTube. The webcast is available for viewing at <https://youtu.be/eKEcvloif48>. The event began with a welcome message from the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, Dr. David Eidelman, followed by opening remarks by the Department Chair, Dr. Eduardo Franco. Both acknowledged the generous support of the Bronfman family and highlighted the milestone year as the Department celebrated its 30th anniversary. Dr. Franco gave an overview of the mission of the Department and introduced this year's Distinguished Lecturer, Dr. Bernard Lapointe.

Distinguished Lecture – The History of Palliative Care at McGill and in Québec

Dr. Lapointe is an Associate Professor in the Departments of Oncology and Family Medicine at McGill. He joined McGill and the Royal Victoria Hospital in 1991 and in 2000 joined the Jewish General Hospital as the founding Chief of the Division of Palliative Care. In 2009, he was

appointed as the Eric M. Flanders Chair in Palliative Medicine, serving as the Director of Palliative Care McGill. Dr. Lapointe is a Past President of the Palliative Care Association of Quebec as well as the Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Association. He has received several accolades for his devoted service as an ambassador and leader in palliative care, including the Award of Recognition from the Quebec Association of Palliative Care (2016), the Lifetime Achievement Award by the Canadian Society of Palliative Care Physicians (2017) and a 150th Anniversary Medal by the Senate of Canada (2017).

Dr. Lapointe began his presentation by highlighting the fact that 2020 marks the 45th anniversary of Palliative Care at McGill. He then showcased the pioneers of hospice/palliative care including Madame Jeanne Garnier from Lyons, France, who in the 19th century, founded a hospice charged with caring for the dying. Other hospices opened up in the 19th century including in Ireland, New York and London. In the 1960's Elisabeth Kübler-Ross wrote a book where she highlighted the suffering and isolation felt by those who were dying. Her ideas and writings inspired others to re-think delivery of care to the terminally ill. Dr. Cicely Saunders was the first to inspire what became known as the hospice care movement, establishing the St. Christopher's Hospice in London. In the 1970's Dr. Balfour Mount trained at St. Christopher's Hospice and developed the framework of an innovative approach to bring what he termed palliative care, to the Royal Victoria Hospital. In 1976 Dr. Mount and his colleagues hosted the first International Congress on Palliative Care which continues to this day. This biennial conference has been a driving force in the development of palliative care internationally.

The success of the palliative care service at the Royal Victoria Hospital had a profound influence on the development of palliative care in Quebec, with a palliative care service opening up at Hôpital Notre-Dame de Montréal in 1979 and the opening of Maison Michel-Sarrazin in Quebec City in 1985, followed by the opening of other palliative care services across Quebec. Mrs. Kappy Flanders played an instrumental role in furthering the cause of palliative care at McGill and in Canada with the 1994 establishment of the Eric M. Flanders Chair in Palliative Medicine as well as the creation of the McGill Council on Palliative Care. Palliative care is now integrated into the majority of the McGill teaching hospitals and allied institutions. Postgraduate training in palliative medicine has evolved over the years and the Canadian College of Family Physicians offers a Year of Added Competency (YAC) in Palliative Medicine. Since 2013 palliative medicine has been recognized as a subspecialty by the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada.

In closing, Dr. Lapointe shared an aphorism from the 16th century which encapsulates to him the real goal of medicine: "To cure sometimes, to relieve often, to comfort always." *Anonymous author, XVI century.*



Screenshot of Distinguished Lecturer, Dr. Bernard Lapointe and his slide presentation

Awards Ceremony

The Awards Ceremony was divided into three parts: (i) presentation of the Female Champions of Cancer Education, Research, and Care (sponsored by the Canada Pakistan Affiliated Chamber of Trade (CPACT) and the South Asian Women Association of Canada (SAWAC)); (ii) presentation of the three Merit Awards: Academic, Clinical or Research Support; Teaching and Mentorship; and Research or Clinical Service; and (iii) presentation of the Lifetime Achievement Award. Due to the virtual nature of this year's event, modifications were made to the awards ceremony. From his McGill office, Dr. Franco introduced each of the award winners and held up the corresponding award to the camera. Dean Eidelman read the citations for the recipients of the Female Champions of Cancer Education, Research, and Care awards and the Department's Lifetime Achievement Award. The citations for each of the three merit award winners were read by their respective nominators. Each award recipient was invited to say a few words following the virtual presentation of their award.

(i) Female Champions of Cancer Education, Research, and Care

Dr. Nicole Beauchemin

For her enduring legacy as scientist, mentor and teacher of the fundamentals of cancer research

Dr. Nicole Beauchemin is a basic research scientist whose work focuses on understanding tumour formation and progression at the molecular level. For over thirty years she has imparted her wealth of knowledge and experience in cancer research to countless medical students and cancer research trainees. In her laboratory she has trained 17 M.Sc. students, 7 Ph.D. students and 10 post-doctoral fellows, of which 24 have been women. She also has trained 35 undergraduate students and has mentored at least 15 junior faculty members joining various McGill departments as well as the Goodman Cancer Research Centre. For 25 years (1986-2012) Dr. Beauchemin spent three weeks per year teaching 225 first-year medical students topics starting with "What is DNA" all the way to "New Cancer Treatments". From 2006 to 2017 she taught over 25 graduate students per year as the lecturer and course coordinator of the course, Experimental and Clinical Oncology. From 2006 to 2018 she served as Co-director of the McGill Integrated Cancer Research Training Program. She played an instrumental role in obtaining federal and provincial funding and running the program as she was involved in writing the grant applications, developing the complete training program and coordinating with many departments to offer high end training to over 150 graduate students and post-doctoral fellows each year. Since 2017 she has been the Director of the Goodman Cancer Research Centre training program and is in the process of developing a new program for the newly created McGill Cancer Institute.

Dr. Carolyn Freeman

For her decades-long, vigorous leadership in improving the quality of cancer care in Quebec

In addition to Dr. Freeman's clinical role as a radiation oncologist at the McGill University Health Centre (MUHC), she has been at the forefront of efforts to improve quality of cancer care in Quebec. She is the Physician Quality Champion for the MUHC Department of Quality, a member of the Rossy Cancer Network Quality Council and has been a member of the organizing committee for the Canadian Winter School on Quality and Patient Safety in Radiation Oncology. Since 2011 she has been the Medical Director of the Office of Quality, Patient Safety and Performance for the MUHC's Cancer Care mission. With her colleagues, she created an inter-professional improvement team to ensure excellence in cancer care, which has now extended throughout the hospital. Dr. Freeman is Chair of the Quebec Ministry of

Health and Social Services’, Comité national de performance en oncologie, where she has been a driving force in getting several departments equipped with state of the art technology and improving wait times for delivery of radiation therapy. Dr. Freeman’s research interests include quality assurance and safety in radiation oncology, quality and performance in cancer care, and MD engagement in quality and performance improvement. She has worked with her colleagues to create an educational quality improvement program for radiation oncology residents, and due to its success, it is now open to both medical and surgical oncology residents. Dr. Freeman will be serving as a key contributor to our new Graduate Diploma in Oncology, in particular the Cancer Care Services and Quality stream and the new course, Quality Improvement Principles and Methods.

Dr. Anna Towers

For her international leadership developing lymphedema treatment services for cancer patients

Dr. Anna Towers is a palliative care physician and past Director of Palliative Care McGill. She has a longstanding subspecialty interest in lymphedema care, to which she has dedicated a large part of her 42-year career. In 1995 she trained in lymphedema management in Australia and for the past 25 years she has been Director of the Lymphedema Program at the McGill University Health Centre (and previously the Royal Victoria Hospital and the Montreal General Hospital) where she has been working with a dedicated and academically-oriented team of lymphedema therapists. She is actively involved in lymphedema research as well as teaching nationally and internationally. Dr. Towers has been championing the cause of improving patient access to lymphedema care and having government reimburse patients for lymphedema compression garments. To this end she has worked with the International Lymphedema Framework to establish international standards of care and is the Founding Co-Chair of the Canadian Lymphedema Framework, a charity that aims to improve standards of lymphedema care in Canada as well as improve access to care. In addition she has been Scientific Advisor to the Lymphedema Association of Quebec for the past 20 years, and has helped that group achieve a reimbursement programme for lymphedema compression garments from the Quebec government (RAMQ). Dr. Towers has received Awards of Excellence from both the Canadian Lymphedema Framework and the Lymphedema Association of Quebec.



Screenshots of Dr. Eduardo Franco and Dean Eidelman with the Female Champions of Cancer Education, Research and Care award recipients, Dr. Nicole Beauchemin (top left), Dr. Carolyn Freeman (top right) and Dr. Anna Towers (bottom)

(ii) Departmental Merit Awards

The *Academic, Clinical or Research Support Award* was given to **Mr. Majid Ghahremani** (nominator, Dr. Nicole Beauchemin). Mr. Ghahremani has a BSc in Biochemistry from McGill. He is a laboratory manager for Dr. Vincent Giguère and also provides research support to the Goodman Cancer Research Centre (GCRC). He has been instrumental in ensuring shared equipment is functioning, liaises with companies for contracts and repairs, manages the GCRC's Biobank and has gone above and beyond the call of duty to ensure things have been running smoothly during the pandemic.

The *Teaching and Mentorship Award* was given to **Dr. Koren Mann** (nominator, Dr. Wilson Miller). Dr. Mann is an Associate Professor in the Gerald Bronfman Department of Oncology and a researcher at the Lady Davis Institute, Jewish General Hospital. She serves as the Graduate Program Director for the Department's recently launched Graduate Diploma in Oncology. Dr. Mann has supervised many students who have gone on to their own successful careers and has organized, led and lectured in a number of courses offered by different departments at McGill.

The *Research or Clinical Service Award* was given to **Dr. Peter Siegel** (nominator, Dr. Morag Park). Dr. Siegel is an Associate Member of the Department and a member of the Goodman Cancer Research Centre. His research program focuses on metastasis for which he is fast becoming a Canadian and international leader. His approach is multidisciplinary and includes collaborations with engineers, biophysicists and clinicians. Dr. Siegel's research has had a major impact in the field and is leading to translational strategies that can have direct benefit to patients. He has published 114 peer-reviewed papers and has been recognized by the Canadian Cancer Society with the Harold E. Johns Award for emerging researchers.



Screenshots of Dr. Eduardo Franco and Dean Eidelman with the merit award winners and their nominators: Majid Ghahremani and Nicole Beauchemin (top left), Koren Mann and Wilson Miller (top right), Peter Siegel and Morag Park (bottom)

(iii) Lifetime Achievement Award

The Department’s *Lifetime Achievement Award* was presented to **Dr. Vera Hirsh**. Dr. Hirsh studied medicine at the Universitas Carolina Pragensis, Charles University, Prague, from 1965-71 and went to University of Southern California, in Los Angeles, for her postgraduate training. She joined McGill in 1979 and ascended through the academic ranks as assistant professor, associate professor, and then full professor. In addition to her clinical and teaching role at the MUHC, Dr Hirsh is the Chief of the Hematology-Oncology Clinical Service, at Santa Cabrini Hospital, in Montreal. Dr. Hirsh is an international leader on the treatment of lung cancer, with over 120 scientific papers. For the past 10 years, her papers have been cited more than 1,700 times annually and her leading 5 papers on chemotherapy of lung cancer have been cited more than 12,000 times. Dr. Hirsh brought to McGill many of the cutting-edge modalities for treating lung cancer, allowing McGill’s teaching hospitals to be regular partners in prestigious lung cancer cooperative groups. When last counted 5 years ago she had participated in nearly 400 clinical trials, of which 80 were mainly for lung cancer therapy. A chemotherapy regimen for advanced lung cancer that became mainstream a few years ago in North America was called the “Hirsh” regimen. She is an international authority on management of adverse events from targeted therapies, quality of life in clinical trials, and patient-reported outcomes. Dr. Hirsh has lectured nationally and internationally and has been a regular keynote speaker at prestigious conferences, such as the European Society of Medical Oncology, American Society of Clinical Oncology, and the World Lung Cancer Conference. She was a prominent guideline development contributor for the International Association for the Study of Lung Cancer. Dr. Hirsh has been a most effective teacher and mentor to countless physicians, many of whom became oncology or respiratory medicine leaders in their own merit.



Screenshots of Dr. Eduardo Franco and Dean Eidelman with Lifetime Achievement Award recipient, Dr. Vera Hirsh



Screenshot of Dr. Eduardo Franco and Dean Eidelman with the Distinguished Lecturer, award recipients and nominators