

Hi Everyone

This week's Departmental Acknowledgements come from very different parts of the spectrum that is our community.

The first as suggested by Jacquetta Trasler, Bruce Mazer and many others goes to Nada Jabado who is the Senior Author on a seminal paper published this week in Nature. With its extraordinary impact factor, limited papers published, and tight media inter-connections, Nature publishes over the very best and most important work in the basic sciences. Nada's publication is such a paper. Together with an international team, she has identified a mutation in a high percentage of cases of childhood brain cancer, specifically pediatric glioblastoma and brainstem glioma. Not only does her team's finding provide insight into pathogenesis, it also may provide insight into why our standard therapeutic approaches of chemotherapy and radiotherapy have done little over the decades to improve survival in these cases (most children die within two years of a diagnosis of a glioblastoma or brainstem glioma) as the gene involved is implicated in the interaction of histone binding with DNA. The findings got a lot of well-deserved local media attention with articles to my knowledge in The Gazette and Le Devoir. While this is a product of bench research at the MCH-RI, it takes place within the context of an emerging local centre of excellence in pediatric neuro-oncology fostered by the indomitable Blair Whittemore on the medical side (with recent recruit Adam Flemming) and on the surgical side by JP Farmer.

The second Acknowledgement is my call and goes to Holly Agostino and Brett Burstein for a superb Skit Night last Friday. Holly (a fellow in Adolescent Medicine) and Brett (a pediatric resident) put an enormous amount of work, including blood, sweat and tears into the event. Based on the framework of the weekly show Saturday Night Live (SNL), it featured a large number of MCH peds residents and staff (Amanda Lord, Helena Evangeliou, Jeanette Comeau, Juan Iraheta, Connall Francoeur, Hugo Paquin, Kaitlin Penney, Maya Leitner, Shadi Tamur, Rob Sternszus, Phil Hedrei, Chris [aka Christine] Karatzios, Caroline Quach, Preetha Krishnamoorthy, Reza Alizadehfar, Sasha Dubrovsky, Lisa Anne Rasmussen, Maryam Oskoui, Harvey Guyda, Stephen Liben, Therese Perreault, Ricardo Faingold, with musical guests Olivia Tse, Mike Zappatelli, Adam Flemming [The Wannabes] and short appearances by Harold Rich, Gary Pekeles, Geoff Dougherty, Franziska Baltzer, Claudette Bardin, and Richard Gosselin). I was privileged to host the evening fulfilling a longstanding fantasy of mine to be an SNL host one week. I was impressed by the high level of professionalism, creativity, energy, and humor-not a single skit fell flat or dragged on. Laughing together and laughing at ourselves is an essential part of any healthy community of persons. Events like Skit Night builds an 'esprit de corps'. We work hard and it helps the work-life balance to have events like Skit Night to lighten the load along the way. Not only did Holly and Brett create a fun evening, the after party was a blast (or "awesome" as the kids say) and they even managed to raise (after costs for an open bar and food) \$500 for the MCH Foundation.

Have a great weekend everyone

Michael

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Hi Everyone

In addition to the weekly Departmental Acknowledgement, at the suggestion of Dubrovka Diksic and Patti Fontaine, I would like to thank all members of the department who participated in the recent year end (2011) merit exercise. It's no fun to fill out or process forms but individual participation and Divisional review is essential for the process to occur and your ongoing participation is greatly appreciated.

Regards

Michael

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