

Departmental Acknowledgement

"A nickel aint worth a dime anymore"
Yogi Berra

Hi Everyone,

Some weeks, the selection of the Departmental Acknowledgement is the proverbial 'no brainer'. This is the case this week as it goes to **Virginie Clavel** and **Fiona Muttalib** on the occasion of their completion of their Chief Resident year.

The "Chiefs" are selected by the resident staff in Pediatrics, indicating a high degree of peer recognition for a comprehensive skill set that is put to the test during the year as Chief. Essentially, the Chiefs function as a necessary interface between a variety of interested parties that includes: the Pediatrics Program Directors, the attending staff, and their fellow residents. The Chiefs have the bane of organizing schedules, including call. This requires a balancing and juggling act of epic proportions between essential in-house service needs, training requirements, work-hours rules and individual requests for conference leave, vacations and personal/study time. Needless to say this almost never goes smoothly or as intended as scheduled individuals get sick or personal emergencies crop up leaving the Chiefs to scramble to arrange appropriate coverage. Frequently, to maintain this needed coverage, it often occurs that the Chiefs themselves will put aside their own work-rules and personal plans and insert themselves into the schedule to be sure a shortfall does not occur.

In addition to this task, the Chiefs function as the 'voice' of the house staff in varied settings including the Residency Training Committee and amongst the Division Directors. They are expected to be able to present the house staff viewpoint and communicate to their peers emerging challenges and changes. Their 'in the trenches' perspective make them uniquely qualified to offer practical solutions to operational issues involving in-patient care. They also play a key role in organizing weekly Resident teaching sessions that are an essential element of post-graduate medical education. They also play a key role in promoting house staff wellness and mentoring their peers through the physical and emotional peaks and valleys of residency. For the Chiefs, these experiences provide a first taste of medical leadership and administration and it is not surprising that many Chiefs progress to leadership positions throughout their career.

Virginie is a UdeM graduate who has travelled widely to many low resource settings (ie Peru, Senegal) to pursue varied opportunities in supporting communities in need. She was the first member of our resident staff to spend an extended time with our Global Health partner CHUK in Kigali, Rwanda. She is socially aware having worked with homeless children in sub-Saharan Africa and locally in projects promoting awareness of mental health issues and the need for a healthy diet. Not surprisingly, her career path includes an orientation to work in global child health.

Fiona is a McGill graduate who has also spent time overseas in Nepal. She has also been involved locally with vulnerable populations of children at the Batshaw Centre and La Maison des Enfants and with adults afflicted by one of the most dreadful neurologic conditions, Huntington's Disease. She has a streak of social activism having been involved as a member and President of an Amnesty International Chapter. Indeed, during her residency, she has been active as an advocate for refugee access to health care. For Fiona her future career path features undertaking a fellowship in Pediatric Critical Care Medicine.

Baby boomers (ie 50 plus now) often think that the young people of today are self-absorbed, locked into an endless loop of selfies on Facebook and the minutiae of their lives. Funny, I have never met any such young people amongst our house staff. Certainly, Virginie and Fiona give the 'lie' to the inter-generational stereotype of self-absorption.

Please join me in thanking Virginie and Fiona for their hard work and dedication over the past year and wish them the best on the next steps in their professional journey.

Have a great weekend !

Michael

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