

Departmental Acknowledgement

“You should always go to other people's funerals, otherwise, they won't come to yours.”

Yogi Berra

Hi Everyone,

Yogi gets two quotes in a row as this remarkable character passed away earlier this week at the age of 90. While we celebrate his witticisms (aka Yogisms), he was probably the best catcher to ever play the game of baseball. He backstopped the powerful Yankee teams of 1946-1963 winning ten World Series with career stats and personal accomplishments that led to entry into Baseball's Hall of Fame. If that wasn't enough, he even inspired an animated cartoon character (Yogi Bear - ask your parents, kids). I could write a lengthy DA honouring Yogi, however alas I can find no record of his ever being a part of our Department. If so motivated, have a look at his NY Times obituary:

http://www.nytimes.com/2015/09/24/sports/baseball/yogi-berra-dies-at-90-yankees-baseball-catcher.html?_r=0

In absence of Yogi, this week's acknowledgement goes to our Director of Professional Services (DPS), **Robert Barnes**. Rob, like myself, took over from a long serving incumbent (Micheline Ste-Marie) who, for many, personified this job. As DPS, Rob has probably the most challenging job in the building. Just about everything lands on his desk and needs his input. Whether it be credentialing, quality control, disciplining, recruitment, 'bris de service' (not a Jewish religious ritual but an interruption of program service for which coverage must be arranged), and operational details. The latter has been especially a big part of his job with the move. Rob has been compelled to dive into (not literally thankfully) backed up sewage drains, doors that won't open, doors that won't close etc, etc. The analogy that runs through my mind as I observe him is the ever on-duty fireman who must respond to each and every alarm and call, returning to the firehouse only when the situation is under control.

A pediatric endocrinologist by training, Rob is a McGill/MCH lifer having done his entire medical school, residency and fellowship training here. He also served for 15 years as an attending in biochemical genetics astutely managing rare challenging disorders. Rob remains very clinically involved despite the enormous demands of the DPS office. This no doubt keeps him on top of the clinical challenges that the professional staff faces. He is a well-recognized teacher, indeed he is currently an Osler Fellow for the MDCM class of 2016. He has a history of a longstanding commitment to Camp Carowanis, a summer camp for diabetic children, serving as medical director and he is currently President of this organization. He is also a dedicated and steadfast coach of girl soccer and ringette teams in NDG and Montreal West.

There was nothing in Rob's training that prepared him for the DPS mandate. At a time when the institution had a need, Rob in his quiet way stepped up to the plate and took his turn at bat, hanging in there at the plate. He has demonstrated a remarkable on-the-job learning curve. The nature of the DPS mandate is such that he will never win a popularity contest. What we can appreciate is that he does the job with fairness, dedication and devotion to the institution at considerable personal sacrifice. From a personal perspective as Chair and Pediatrician-in-Chief, I appreciate his open-mindedness, his honesty and his willingness to be creative in solving the problems we face. He has retained a suspicion of bureaucracy and central planning, that adds to his capabilities and understanding. Yet remarkably, he has developed a *modus vivendi* that enables him to work with bureaucrats. I have realized that this seeming paradox, like a Yogism, actually represents an astute observation and adaptation that is an ingredient for his success.

Have a great weekend everyone!

Michael

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