

Departmental Acknowledgement

"Gotta head full of ideas that are driving me insane"
Bob Dylan

Hi Everyone,

I traditionally reserve the last Departmental Acknowledgement for a personal Chair's pick and this will be the case this week. Indeed, from my perspective, this individual deserves my gratitude every week of the year. This person is my Administrative Assistant (AA), **Sylvie Lafleur**. Yes I know I gave her a DA in March but she really does deserve a second one this year.

Sylvie joined the Chair's office one year ago, replacing the long serving Sylvie Sahyoun who was an institutional legend. Initially known as the "other Sylvie" or the "new Sylvie", Sylvie demonstrated a remarkably fast learning curve in what is a multi-faceted, multi-tasking, never-a-dull-moment, never-the-same-day-twice position. She has clearly come into her own on the job. She is now just "Sylvie". She never needed to be told or demonstrated anything twice and indeed very rapidly began to carry out tasks independently without prompting. She is a master of managing (juggling ?) a complex schedule that often involves coordinating multiple participants to a meeting that needs to be flexible and is subject to frequent modifications. An enormous amount of information, documents and tasks flow through this office and she is able to separate the wheat from the chaff and process what needs to get done without delays.

I have just enough insight to know that I am demanding and impatient with a mind that races ahead with little tolerance for dawdling. Doing my job well, and indeed beyond expectations, is important to me and my job essentially is servicing the needs of the Department of Pediatrics and advancing its collective interests amidst a myriad array of bureaucracies and competing interests. I can only do so if the folks in my office share that commitment and are able to keep pace. They all do, but as my AA, Sylvie bears the brunt. I am especially grateful that she does so with humor, grace and tact with an unwavering commitment to getting the job done. She puts up with me. Perhaps her prior experience in the Department of Psychiatry was just the right training ground.

This will be the last DA of 2015. We will take a break for the holidays and resume on January 15th.

I want to wish you all a Happy Holidays and Happy New Year. All the best to each of you and your families.

Michael

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