

"Never answer an anonymous letter"

Yogi Berra

Hi Everyone

I often use these announcements as pivots attached to important transitions within our Departmental community. This week's Departmental Acknowledgement is one such example and highlights the good work of **Marlene Davis** who has been an indispensable member of our academic community for quite awhile, and who is transitioning to a new role that will leave her less visible to us, but thankfully still quite present.

Marlene, as all of you know, has been the key McGill administrator directly and uniquely attached to the Department of Pediatrics. Located within the Office of the Chair, she has basically been responsible for all tasks that interface with the Faculty of Medicine. This covers just about everything an academic physician will, or can, encounter in their career from recruitment, appointment, privileges, promotion, review, salary, stipend, benefits, merit evaluation, budget, personnel support, etc, etc, etc. The list is indeed quite long and the details myriad. There are innumerable rules and processes that must be adhered to and needless to say, it's a landscape that changes constantly. An attention to detail is paramount. Marlene has done all these tasks well beyond the 'call of duty' acting at all times diligently and in the best interests of the members of the Department. I can personally attest to her long hours that includes much work done 'after-hours' or on weekends. She is a master of managing multiple tasks simultaneously and thinking creatively to get the job done. She is focused and goal oriented. Her goal is really to provide the best service to the Department and its members. Her long service has provided her with a network of McGill sources and contacts that she can speed-dial and cut through the fog of bureaucracy to the benefit of us all. She also is a layer of institutional memory that can often fill in the blanks to what has been put down on paper and assigned to the filing cabinet or share drive.

On a personal level, I should make the admission that there is no 'playbook' given to you when you become a Chair nor any actual training provided. You are shown an office and wished 'good luck'. Everyone in the chain expects you to 'know' what to do and indeed the only thing that keeps you from making a fool of yourself is the wise counsel of people like Marlene. Such counsel is a necessity and Marlene gave it graciously, privately and in a way that made me feel, on most days, that I knew what I was doing. For this, I am eternally grateful.

Marlene has already vacated her office near mine. The Faculty, in its wisdom, has replaced the previous administrative structure with the AEC model (Administrative Excellence Centres) which groups academic Departments (we are together with Obstetrics-Gynecology and Pediatric Surgery - a logical grouping) who will be collectively supported by a group of assigned personnel with specialty expertise rather than one 'jack of all trades'. Marlene will continue her connection with our Department as the HR Advisor for our AEC so she will continue to interact with all of us. I look forward to continuing our interaction and together with the entire Department wish her all the best in this next phase of her career at McGill.

Have a great weekend!

Michael

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