

May 1, 2020

Hi Everyone,

Up till this week all the Departmental Acknowledgements of 2020 were written prior to my post-surgical LOA in January and celebrated individual accomplishments that are part of an academic institutional life. Of course, there was not a mention of a pandemic.

This lack of mention will be rectified over the next three DAs including this one. We will be highlighting “Heroes of the Pandemic” though in truth the entire Department has demonstrated its mettle. All of you have adapted, dug deep, and responded to the gravest challenge we have witnessed to our health system. Many of you have done it in the context of significant familial challenges with regards to children and vulnerable parents. And to add to the stress, societal economic shock waves have left virtually no one unscathed. A crisis is a stress test in real time. You have all passed and indeed the cream that is our Department has risen.



If you didn't know the name **Marie-Astrid Lefebvre** before the pandemic you certainly know it now. As our Infection Control lead, Marie-Astrid has been a ubiquitous lead in managing our response to the pandemic in adapting our hospital and its operations to minimize the possibility of nosocomial spread amongst patients and protecting HCPs from acquiring infection through the evidence-based use of PPEs constrained by limited availability. She has done so in the context of a continually changing matrix of what is known about COVID-19 and public health decrees. Marie-Astrid is a McGill MDCM grad who did her pediatric training at Tufts and the Floating Hospital in Boston (it actually started on a boat moored in Boston Harbor). She came back to McGill and the MCH for her ID subspecialty training followed by an Infection Control and Prevention Fellowship at Mount Sinai in Toronto (coincidentally, and for us fortuitously, Ground Zero for the SARS epidemic). During this time, she also acquired a MSc

in Quality Improvement and Patient Safety. She was recruited to our Department specifically to take the baton on infection control that had long been the purview of the legendary Dorothy Moore. Marie-Astrid is another recruit I will be proud of long after my mandate ends.

A second hero I want to feature is one that really needs no introduction. **Robert Barnes**, as Associate Director of Professional Services responsible for the Montreal Children's Hospital (MCH), has been our point person at the MUHC CCMU having the enormous responsibility to pivot the entire hospital (of which Pediatrics is but one Department) to adapt at multiple levels to the contingency planning that was necessitated by the COVID pandemic. This involved not only translating strategic ministerial directives into operational exigencies but also overseeing the adroit deployment of personnel. To Rob's credit he did so with effective timely and regular communication that kept sight on our core mission of providing tertiary specialty care to children. One can only imagine the number of emails in his inbox, yet he was on top of things and when it was rarely something that he didn't know about, he would let you know and get back to you quickly. When we get the chance to look back at the narrative that is the MCH during the pandemic, Rob's role will be writ large.



Collectively we owe considerable thanks to Marie-Astrid and Rob.

Have a great weekend everyone!

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