

This week, it is my pleasure to write the departmental acknowledgement.

On June 5th, our Dean will present the Maude Abbott prize to a deserving female faculty member for excellence in education, research, or administration. Last year, it was my pleasure to be present when this award was presented to Dr. Nada Jabado for her basic sciences research work, which was a proud moment for Pediatrics and the Children's.

In recent past weeks, there has been a lively e-mail discussion taking place about the role basic sciences ought to have in the new curriculum. It has been a great discussion and has allowed me, as an educator, to focus on the philosophy of medical education. What is the ideal balance between science and humanism in the training of the next generation of physicians? How can we valorize both science and humanism in medical education?

What does this have to do with a prize dedicated to feminine excellence in Medicine at McGill? I looked at the cc list for this discussion and was a little dismayed that of the 40 or so e-mail recipients (mostly established basic scientists), there were only 4 women colleagues on the discussion. It got me thinking about how enriched my pediatric training has been by the women (colleagues!) in my life.

You see, in pediatrics, it's natural for us to interact on a daily basis with scary-smart-highly-competent women colleagues who are excellent teachers, scientists, and exemplar role models of compassionate physicianing. The abundance of female brain power has been so pronounced throughout my 23 years in pediatrics, that I even have an internal acronym for female colleagues whom I respect -- "LWKWTTA's" -- "Ladies who know what they're talking about". I'm sure you know what I mean by this term-- these are the colleagues who might advise on antifungals, pamidronate, study design, what to do for students experiencing difficulty, or maybe ECMO. While today I have chosen one LWKWTTA to honour with this departmental acknowledgement, in a sense and in the spirit of the soon to be awarded Maude Abbott prize, I hope that you will see this as a tribute all of our pediatric sisters and foremothers who have contributed so greatly to the field of child health, both here in the department and more broadly.

For me, Dr. Celia Rodd epitomizes the archetype of the "LWKWTTA", and is richly deserving of this week's departmental acknowledgement. I would like to offer my profound appreciation for the many years I have spent learning from her over the years in her role as an endocrinology consultant, and collaborating with her as a medical educator during my years as a program director. Celia is universally recognized as an excellent teacher and a compassionate and caring physician. She has presided over a highly successful fellowship program in pediatric endocrinology and has shown leadership in her past role of associate physician-in-chief in the department. Personally, in the ICU, I always get a little trepidacious quickening of my heart rate when we talk about her favourite cations -- Calcium and Phosphorus, their endocrine regulation, and the exciting details of their metabolism. These conversations challenge me and are highly appreciated.

Please join me in wishing her well and appreciating her many years of contribution in our department of pediatrics here at McGill, as LWKWTTA Emerita of the Department of Pediatrics at McGill University!

Saleem

Saleem Razack MD FRCP(C)
Associate Professor of Pediatrics,
Core Member of the Centre for Medical Education,
Assistant Dean of Admissions, Equity, and Diversity
Faculty of Medicine, McGill University

Attending Physician,
Pediatric Critical Care Unit,
Montreal Children's Hospital of the McGill University Health Sciences Centre,