

Chez nous

MCH EMPLOYEE NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2018

*Jean-Gilles,
12 years old*

SPECIAL EDITION: Awards of Excellence 2018 Winners

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Hôpital de Montréal
pour enfants
Centre universitaire
de santé McGill



Montreal Children's
Hospital
McGill University
Health Centre

The Montreal Children's Hospital Foundation is honoured again this year to introduce the recipients of the 2018 Awards of Excellence. This is an inspiring time of year for all of us, when we get to shine a light on the hidden gems of the Children's staff and community who provide highly-skilled, innovative and holistic care as well as support that is second to none.

Deciding the winners, who are nominated by their peers, is no easy task. Previous award winners serve as judges and deliberate over nominations that represent the best of the best that the Children's has to offer. The winners set themselves apart by going above and beyond their job descriptions as well as their strong sense of collaboration across the various hospital departments. The notion of teamwork is often at the heart of their success—an imperative feature of the Children's that patients and families benefit from every single day.

We sincerely thank the entire staff of the Children's for their dedication and commitment, as well as our volunteers, who brighten us up and make us shine at the same time. And a very special thank you to our cherished sponsors, without whom these awards would not be possible: CN, the Gustav Levinschi Foundation, National Bank, Pfizer, Provigo, TD and TFI International. Your faithful partnerships help us transform care so that every child has the opportunity to reach their full potential.

Enjoy reading every last word on your inspiring colleagues, who you so thoughtfully nominated.

Congratulations to everyone!



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Renée Vézina".

Renée Vézina

*President of the Montreal Children's
Hospital Foundation*



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jonathan Amiel".

Jonathan Amiel

*Chairman of the Montreal Children's Hospital
Foundation Board of Directors*



Katrin Nakashima

Recipient of the CN Community Leadership and Volunteer Award of Excellence



People heavily involved with charities aiding children usually come from one of three different groups: 1) those with an overriding sense of wanting to give back; 2) those who are grateful to be blessed with a healthy child and want to help the less fortunate; and 3) those who have sick children who understand how vital a thriving hospital is to patients and their families. Then there are truly rare people like Katrin Nakashima, who is all three.

Kathy presently serves on the Montreal Children's Hospital Foundation's (MCHF) Board of Directors as Vice-Chair and Secretary. She co-Chairs the Investment Committee and sits on the Executive and Governance Committees and Young Leaders' Circle Advisory Board. She is also a member of the Hospital's Council for Services to Children and Adolescents (that evaluates priorities, policies and budgets regarding pediatric and adolescent healthcare services) and its Executive Committee. In addition, she acted as Interim President of the MCHF for six months in 2017.

When she joined the MCHF Board in 2001, she was a grateful adoptive mother who wanted to give back. In 2003, Kathy wrote

these fateful words. "You never know who will need the help of the Children's next." Tragically, just a few years later, her younger son Justin lost his battle against a severely degenerative neurological disease at the age of six.

Kathy's commitment to the hospital runs deep on several levels. "I have extensive personal experience with practically every hospital department. And I know the expertise they all bring to the table," says Kathy. This, combined with her background as a lawyer and past work in governance and with investment committees, has enabled Kathy to help guide the Foundation towards making the right decisions and financing the right projects for excellence and research.

Kathy is also a living organ donor, having donated one of her kidneys to her sister. But for as much as she gives to the Foundation, she receives so much in return. Kathy recalls the wise words of an intensive care doctor who deals with loss of life in his job. "I remember asking him 'How do you handle it?' And he said it was only possible because more children walk out alive, rather than not. So that became my mission—to make sure as many children as possible do walk out of dire situations and into their family's arms."

Those are words to live by, but as Kathy Nakashima has always demonstrated, actions speak louder than words.

At CN, we take pride in being regarded as one of the best-performing transportation and logistics companies in the world—just as the Montreal Children's Hospital is the best pediatric hospital in the hearts and minds of its patients, families and donors. As a grateful parent and member of the Montreal Children's Hospital Foundation's (MCHF) Board and various committees for over 17 years, Kathy's sense of responsibility toward the Children's is clearly very profound.

Kathy's engagement and commitment towards her community is striking. At CN, our commitment is to create value for our customers and to deliver on excellence. For her work supporting the MCHF in its quest for excellence in care, we are very proud to present Kathy Nakashima with the CN Community Leadership and Volunteer Award of Excellence.

Anne Choquette

Recipient of the Gustav Levinschi Nursing Award of Excellence



Anne Choquette is a clinical nurse specialist in the Hematology-Oncology Division. She is a woman who wears many, many hats. In her 28 years of service, she has covered an extremely large range of responsibilities; caring for patients and their families, while also working in partnership with other healthcare workers.

Her colleagues call her an “eager-beaver” as she is always looking for ways to improve her skills, and those of her trade. She is driven by a desire to stay ahead of the latest research and translate it into practice, for both the staff and patients. “Parents have more knowledge than 15 years ago and we have to acknowledge that by helping them navigate through it and direct them down the right path,” Anne explains.

While working in a constantly evolving field, Anne truly embodies the concept of improvement. She is continually looking at new trends in care and bringing expertise to the table to improve the Hospital’s clinical guidelines. With the help of the nursing leadership team, she has mentored dozens of nurses to become highly

The Gustav Levinschi Foundation

skilled at their craft; oncology nurses are now amongst the most highly regarded in the hospital thanks to the standards that she and the nursing team established.

Anne also works closely with physicians to improve practices used on patients every single day. She is instrumental in thinking through the myriad of issues a patient faces and succeeds at delivering care in the safest and simplest way for them.

Her involvement in the field extends beyond the Children’s as she represents the Hematology-Oncology Division at local and national levels. Anne has also published research on improving the back-to-school program for patients who have completed their treatments. She is involved in assessing manpower and resource standards with other pediatric oncology centres in Quebec and is on a national committee looking at data collection of patients who have completed their therapy.

Anne Choquette works tirelessly and always with a smile. When she found out about this award she was surprised and speechless. She loves her job and is very honoured but says: “I am what I am today because of the people around me.” Congratulations on elevating your field and being a shining star for your colleagues.

We at the Gustav Levinschi Foundation realize there is not enough room on this page to describe the invaluable profession of nursing. That is why we are very proud to celebrate the exceptional work of Anne Choquette. Anne’s drive to improve her skills and her trade convert directly to the excellent care provided to young patients at the Children’s, both within and outside its walls.

The Gustav Levinschi Foundation is a strong supporter of Anne’s quest for knowledge and contribution to cutting-edge research. She also embodies the spirit of nursing through her training and teaching skills. We are honoured once again to support the important work of such a remarkable and respected health professional. Congratulations on this esteemed award!



Dr. Christine Saint-Martin

Recipient of the National Bank Medical Award of Excellence



Dr. Saint-Martin is also known to go well beyond her job description, always putting the patient first. She tries to do MRIs without sedation and avoids the harmful radiation of CT scans when possible. She is known for staying up all night researching and she won't stop until a case is properly diagnosed. She has even entered the operating room to help perform ultrasounds during neurosurgical and ENT procedures. Moreover, she is an innovator and pioneer in the fields of intraoperative MRI, epilepsy, brain tumours and temporal bone imaging, where she uses cutting-edge technology to solve a case.

Dr. Saint-Martin is recognized beyond the Children's doors, as doctors and patients from Quebec City and Sherbrooke depend on her skills. The best neurosurgeons in the province swear by her expertise. Her fellow researchers describe her work as collegial, insightful and dedicated on an unparalleled level.

Dr. Saint-Martin does believe that radiologists are at the centre of acute care, "but they must shine their knowledge outward to colleagues and I am nothing without them," she explains. Congratulations Dr. Saint-Martin—your drive is infectious and you have inspired many to push the boundaries of modern medicine.

Dr. Christine Saint-Martin joined the Children's team from Europe 12 years ago and is a neuro-radiologist in the Department of Pediatric Medical Imaging. She is a radiologist who specializes in analyzing scans of the brain, spinal cord, head and neck to look for tumours, malformations and infections causing harm to the body. Her passion is diagnosing, and she likes to think of herself as somewhat of a Sherlock Holmes.

The Children's is renowned internationally for its neurology department and central to its success is Dr. Saint-Martin's expertise. Although radiologists are somewhat behind the scenes, her work does not go unnoticed, as acclaimed physicians rely on her excellent work. Her interpretations of scans are known for being informed, thorough, and most importantly accurate. She has trained many residents and her teaching style is highly appreciated. She is also extremely knowledgeable about neurological disease processes and imaging techniques. This knowledge has improved the clinical skills of the neurosurgical staff and is invaluable to residents.

The National Bank and its employees invest themselves in the communities they serve through an array of fund- and awareness-raising activities and organizations. Therefore, National Bank is proud to support the Montreal Children's Hospital Foundation and its Awards of Excellence. This year, National Bank is honouring Dr. Christine Saint-Martin, a neuro-radiologist in the department of Pediatric Medical Imaging at the Children's. A noted and respected authority on medical imaging through MRIs, CT scans and ultrasounds, Dr. Saint-Martin helps her physician colleagues see more clearly. For her dedication to and steady focus on the young patients at the Children's and for her outstanding work with Quebec's leading neurosurgeons, Dr. Saint-Martin is honoured with the National Bank Medical Award of Excellence.

Dr. Nancy Braverman

Recipient of the Pfizer Research Award of Excellence



Dr. Nancy Braverman is a medical geneticist and attending physician at the Children's, as well as an associate professor in the Human Genetics and Pediatrics departments of McGill University. She was recruited in 2008 and is an outright pioneer in her field, bringing accolades and much pride to the research community.

Dr. Braverman's focus is on a group of inherited disorders caused by defects in the genes responsible for the proper function of peroxisomes, important components of cells that help to metabolize lipids, or fatty acids. These disorders can affect the nervous system, the eyes, hearing, bone density, the liver, kidney and adrenal glands. She uses mouse models to study gene mutations and develop treatments that can help to prevent the degenerative progression of these diseases. She has also developed a patient registry that documents variation in disease outcomes to identify drugs and treatments that achieve the best outcome and quality of life for the patient. In short, she is striving to improve diagnostics, prognostics and treatment for patients across the globe.

In December 2017, Dr. Braverman won the KNOCK OUT competition thereby securing important funds to promote her research project on correcting retinal degeneration and preventing blindness in peroxisome disorders. The KNOCK OUT competition is



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open to all life science researchers in Quebec and rewards innovative science with strong commercial potential. Concretely, this prestigious win will advance development of treatments to prevent blindness in young children.

As she brings her research from bench to bedside, her advances are having a meaningful impact on the children she treats. She provides medical services to a broad population of children with genetic diseases all over the world. "Our goal is to treat children with this disorder early, and improve the outcome," Dr. Braverman explains.

In addition to her clinical responsibilities and directing her research team, Dr. Braverman is actively involved with the Research Institute of the MUHC and serves on several internal committees. She also works with researchers across Canada, the United States, and Europe. In fact, her expertise is actively sought after on international review panels.

Dr. Braverman's colleagues are very proud of her and her work, but she herself likes to "focus on creating a bigger community for both the research and the clinical parts of my work." She is always pushing for collaboration and is very excited that the community spirit is proving fruitful across the globe. Congratulations Dr. Braverman and cheers to your continued success!

Dr. Nancy Braverman, an attending physician at the Montreal Children's Hospital, is internationally respected for her work as a medical geneticist. Her leading-edge research focuses on a class of degenerative genetic disorders and recently received accolades for a research project that could help prevent blindness in many young children. Dr. Braverman is committed to providing impactful research to improve the quality of life of patients. Which is why Pfizer Canada, a leading biopharmaceutical company, striving to profoundly impact the health of Canadians through the discovery, development and delivery of medicines, is proud to support Dr. Braverman's Award of Excellence. The company aims to ensure that all Canadians have timely access to best-in-class treatment and quality health care and is committed to giving back to the communities where colleagues live and work. In this spirit, we proudly present the Pfizer Research Award of Excellence to Dr. Nancy Braverman and thank her for her successes to date and for those to come.



Lynda Blanchette

Recipient of the Provigo Professional Staff Award of Excellence



Lynda Blanchette has been part of the MCH team since 1986 and for the past 10 years, she has been a social worker for the Pediatric Hematology-Oncology Division. According to her colleagues, “miracle worker” would be a more accurate title. The myriad of social issues that arise when children are diagnosed with a devastating illness is where Lynda really shines. Imagine, for example, the child of a single mother receiving a life-threatening diagnosis, requiring multiple visits and hospitalizations, while the mother must care for other children and finances are a struggle. This is only one example of a typical case for Lynda; she has the ability to get the impossible done. How does she push through these challenges? To quote Lynda: “With the courage and determination of the patient, supported by their parents’ love. Despite their fears, their suffering and the secondary effects of treatment, the patient has a deep desire to get better. And also, the smile of a child that simply says...let’s do this.”

Lynda meets every new patient diagnosed with cancer and their families. She follows them through every step of their treatment



from diagnosis, remission, relapse and sometimes, end of life. She deals with extremely sensitive issues for the whole family. She chairs weekly psycho-social rounds for all the patients with the goal of providing a holistic approach to care. Included are physicians, nurses and all members of the Hematology-Oncology psycho-social team.

The key to Lynda’s success is establishing and maintaining a relationship of trust with the patients and families. She values communication, emphasizing the importance of the entire oncology team understanding the particular social situation of each family. Entirely through her own initiative, Lynda developed a program to help children with nausea related to chemotherapy. She also partnered with Child Life Services to run a support group for siblings of cancer patients. She is continuously looking for ways to improve her practice. She is the glue that holds everything together.

Lynda’s holistic approach, dedication, professionalism and integrity are striking. She exemplifies everything the Awards of Excellence stand for. Congratulations on this well-deserved honour, Lynda!

At Provigo, we’ve proudly served the Quebec community for nearly 50 years, striving to help build strong and healthy communities. Like the Montreal Children’s Hospital, we believe that every family, regardless of their financial situation, should benefit from the best conditions possible to ensure their children’s health.

That’s why we’re particularly honoured this year to recognize social worker Lynda Blanchette, who provides support to families struggling with cancer. When cancer strikes a family, their daily lives are turned upside down, and unforeseen expenses can cause major financial stress. By taking care of these families’ nutritional and financial needs, Lynda helps ensure that parents can put their energy where it’s most needed: into looking after their sick child. We thank you for your dedication, Lynda, by presenting you with the Provigo Professional Staff Award of Excellence.

Jean-Gilles Gadoury

Recipient of the TD Nicolas W. Matossian Junior Community Award of Excellence



"When you've had several brushes with death, you realize how important it is to live life to the fullest and to savour every moment of it." These wise words come from the mouth of a teenager. If you look up "inspirational" in the dictionary, you'll likely find a picture of Jean-Gilles.

At 9 years old, Jean-Gilles had a promising career as an actor ahead of him, until he hit a devastating roadblock: he was diagnosed with myelogenous leukemia. Within hours of his diagnosis, his weakened body was attacked by an infection. Staff at the Children's did everything they could to keep him alive.

In his first week in the Hematology-Oncology unit, the young boy stayed curled up in his bed, his hands clenched as he trembled. His smile had faded. Then he discovered music therapy, and it was a revelation.

Jean-Gilles refused to let his disease get him down: "I decided to sing songs that made me feel good, like 'Happy' or 'What Does the Fox Say?'" He joked around and danced on his bed. His mom,



Marie-Josée, started smiling again too: she bought him a disco ball and installed a sound system in his hospital room. They hadn't won the battle yet; Jean-Gilles needed a bone-marrow transplant to survive. But their optimism prevailed.

While talking with his physician, Dr. David Mitchell, Jean-Gilles decided to record an album and donate the proceeds to the Children's. Several Quebec musicians mobilized to help him. Jean-Gilles had a mission: "I don't want other children to go through what I did. We have to cure them now," he said. And so, the young patient began his second career as a philanthropist.

Jean-Gilles went through another difficult period when he relapsed. He would need a second stem-cell transplant. His reaction? "We have to go back to the Children's to get better, Mom." Two years later, the young fighter remains an ambassador for the Children's. He's even donating his \$1,000 Award of Excellence personal prize money to buy games for the hospital's Hematology-Oncology patients. "We're so happy we're able to give back," says his mother.

Jean-Gilles, you truly embody the spirit of the Nicolas W. Matossian Junior Community Award of Excellence. Congratulations, and most of all, thank you!

TD is delighted to support the Nicolas W. Matossian Junior Community Award of Excellence for the 17th year in a row. Like all the children we have supported in the past, Jean-Gilles is an inspiration to us. At 12 years old, he has already bravely fought cancer not once, but twice — and always with a fearless spirit of positivity. Not only has he recovered from this terrible disease twice, he also chose to donate the proceeds of his album, and his personal prize money for this award, to the Children's in the hope of helping find a cure. A truly selfless act!

At TD we are committed to making a positive impact in our communities, like Jean-Gilles is doing with his community. We are honoured to help him make a real difference in the lives of sick kids by giving him this award.



Ines Gregorovic

Recipient of the TFI International Administrative and Clinical Support Staff Award of Excellence



Ines Gregorovic is an administrative procedures specialist who has dedicated 26 years of service to the Children's. Positive energy explodes out of Ines; no task is ever too challenging and no timeline is ever too short. Being around her immediately makes you want to smile, as her colleagues will confirm.

On a daily basis, Ines—the “silent superhero” as her colleagues like to call her—facilitates the work of over 200 healthcare professionals in the Allied Health Services, covering the needs of 11 different departments. She manages their budgets with laser precision while coordinating multi-software systems at the same time. She is involved with ensuring special funds are used efficiently, which has a direct impact on patient care. She is also responsible for sending statistics to the government.

Ines is the definition of a trouble-shooter and a super-user. She dives into new information systems without hesitation, such as getting re-organized after the move to the Glen. The logistics of ensuring a smooth transition of data were daunting and yet done with great success.



Furthermore, she is a mentor and trainer. She has taught over 300 people during her career and is the queen of demystifying complex processes, ensuring that staff are providing top-quality care to patients and their families.

Upon learning she won this award, Ines was surprised and embarrassed as she believes everything she does is a team effort. She truly believes in the magic of the Children's and is proud to play a special role behind the scenes. As she mentions through a few tears, “I am always amazed and in awe that I work with such dedicated and creative professionals whose work is to improve children's health, and if I can play a small role to help them out, then I can take great pride in doing my job well.”

Congratulations Ines, your work in the shadows has helped make the Children's an international cutting-edge health care provider.

Shipping and transportation logistics are TFI International's stock and trade. But beyond TFI's core business—past the rolling stock, the packages and the technology—there are people: employees, customers, partners, and community members. TFI, ever sensitive to the needs, concerns and aspirations of the communities where it is present, continues to be inspired by the work of the Montreal Children's Hospital and the dedication of those who carry out its mission of providing life-changing and life-saving health care. Again this year, TFI is a key partner in the Montreal Children's Hospital Foundation Awards of Excellence and is happy to stand with one of the Children's finest: Ines Gregorovic, administrative procedures specialist in the hospital's Allied Health Services. Ines is herself a source of inspiration, praised by her colleagues as “a silent superhero” of logistics who orchestrates data flow, tracks budgetary resources and, generally, helps hospital staff “deliver the goods.”

TFI International proudly presents the 2018 Administrative and Clinical Support Staff award to Ines Gregorovic. Congratulations!

The Operating Room Booking (ORB) team

Recipients of the MCHF Teamwork Award of Excellence



Front row, l. to r. Riccardo De Ioris, Cynthia Boursiquot, Philippe Montesano.
Back row from l. to r. Gabrielle Laderoute, Diane Corbeil, Anna Gravino, Michelina Iorio.

A hospital is a fast-paced environment that requires structured as well as agile planning to run efficiently. Sometimes, it even feels as if you need to be living in the future in order to optimize the present. Meet the ORB team; a group of seven individuals who do just that.

The ORB team was born as a result of the Children's move to the Glen site. In the planning of that monumental transition, an opportunity to improve was detected and seized upon by these enthusiastic employees. The ORB team groups together seven professionals who now work in a shared space to book surgeries for urology, plastic surgery, general surgery, gastroenterology, otolaryngology (ENT) and ophthalmology. They also manage all of the data provided to the government.

This coordinated and harmonious group have significantly improved the booking process and hence the general well-being of patients and their families. Their greatest source of pride is reducing the surgical waiting lists of the various departments—some of them have even been cut in half. This is a tremendous feat benefitting both the hospital and most importantly, the patients and families. The team is constantly looking weeks and months into the future, and now they can help moms and dads plan three to four months ahead.

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There is now a better patient flow, better cross-coverage as they work different hours, and a more streamlined approach to booking beds, equipment and even surgeons. By being in the same room, they have also vastly improved their communication abilities and everyone is always aware of who is doing what. The ORB team even participates in the weekly bed-huddle—a critical step in managing where patients go upon admission.

Of their countless abilities, flexibility is of the upmost importance. The team is constantly reacting to unforeseen circumstances like cancellations and availability of post-op beds. There is no routine for the ORB team—every day is a surprise waiting to happen. Not everyone works well under these high stress situations, but Gabrielle Laderoute, Cynthia Boursiquot, Diane Corbeil, Michelina Iorio, Anna Gravino, Philippe Montesano and Riccardo De Ioris certainly do!

Despite their amazing work, these seven humble employees would never take all the credit. "We could not do what we do without the support of the surgeons, the OR and the pre-op department who work with us," explains Gabrielle, the team leader. As always at the Children's, everything is about teamwork.

Congratulations to all of you.

Change is not always easy. But sometimes to get better, you have to challenge the status quo. And to successfully achieve change, everyone on the team must a) have the right attitude and b) all row in the same direction—which is exactly how the ORB team significantly improved the OR booking process and reduced waiting list times. Booking is not simple, and particularly not for surgical procedures. There are many constraints to consider and the ORB team works hard every day to find the perfect balance and keep everyone happy. Thanks to their collective efforts, great things happened; doctors, staff and families could better plan for the future. The Montreal Children's Hospital Foundation is very proud to sponsor this dedicated group of professionals who have improved the Children's experience for families and staff alike. Congratulations on this important achievement!