

Chez nous

MCH EMPLOYEE NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2016

Special edition: **Awards of Excellence 2016 Winners**

Published by Public Relations and Communication
www.thechildren.com
Photos: Jennifer Pontarelli

Hôpital de Montréal
pour enfants
Centre universitaire
de santé McGill



Montreal Children's
Hospital
McGill University
Health Centre

PRIX D'EXCELLENCE
AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE

2016

Fondation de l'Hôpital de Montréal pour enfants
Montreal Children's Hospital Foundation



La Fondation de l'Hôpital
de Montréal pour enfants



The Montreal Children's
Hospital Foundation



The Montreal Children's Hospital Foundation is proud to present to you the 2016 recipients of the Awards of Excellence.

In this special edition of *Chez nous*, we feature the outstanding individuals selected by their peers or the Foundation for their dedication and their relentless efforts to help sick children. We are truly blessed that we can count on them.



Marie-Josée Gariépy



Jonathan Amiel

The five talented employees honoured this year are exceptional ambassadors for the Children's. They also reflect what the Children's reputation is built on. We often hear from parents who are grateful for the services their children receive, in all departments and from employees in all positions, from administrative to medical. We'd like to thank the entire staff of the Children's for their dedication to their work.

To our cherished volunteers working for the cause, words can't express the gratitude we feel for your selfless actions. Finally, to our sponsors who continue to support us: the Gustav Levinschi Foundation, the National Bank, Provigo, Shire, Sub-Zero and Wolf, TD and TransForce, thank you for being faithful partners to the Children's and helping our hospital maintain its status as a leading institution.

Congratulations to all, and happy reading!

Marie-Josée Gariépy

President of the Montreal Children's Hospital Foundation

Jonathan Amiel

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

Linda Masse

The Gustav Levinschi Foundation



Linda Masse is the recipient of the Gustav Levinschi Nursing Award of Excellence.

Beyond reassurance, parents may also need to learn new things. Linda helps teach families techniques they may need to ensure the best care possible for their child once they “graduate” from the PICU. “The greatest gift we can receive is to see our patients leave the hospital, to see a parent take his child in his arms and go home. That’s what touches us. That’s why we do this.”

As an advanced practice nurse, Linda must also support new nurses joining the profession, sharing her valuable store of knowledge and experience through workshops and through one-on-one contact.

Linda can find her work difficult at times: though most of the children coming through the PICU will survive and thrive, some may not. But knowing that there is much more joy than sorrow in life helps make it possible for Linda to accomplish her mission: “I’m there in a very particular moment in a family’s life, and it’s very intense. There can be no half-measures.”

For her exemplary care of the children and families in the PICU, for her leadership and mentorship and in recognition of her dedication to the pediatric mission, Linda Masse is awarded the Gustav Levinschi Foundation Nursing Award of Excellence.

At the Gustav Levinschi Foundation, we believe that nurses provide the cornerstone of care for sick children and their families. That is why we are very proud to celebrate the outstanding work of Linda Masse by presenting her with the Gustav Levinschi Nursing Award of Excellence.

Linda has spent 28 years of her 31-year career in the pediatric intensive care unit of the Montreal Children’s Hospital. She has cared for thousands of children and their families, often during a very critical and traumatic period in their lives. Linda is an outstanding nurse and teacher. Before they leave the PICU, she will teach parents the skills they require to care for a critically ill child at home, and she serves as a guide and a mentor for new nurses. Linda is always there for her patients and their families, and encourages them to call her whenever they need her, day or night.

The Gustav Levinschi Foundation shares Linda’s deeply-held commitment to giving back to the community and we are proud to support the important work of such a remarkable and respected health professional.

Linda Masse has a mission. Nothing very complicated, or so it might seem: “It’s my mission in life to help people. I’m quite committed. This is what I do.” Being singled out for an award of excellence, therefore, was a shock. “I was stunned and very emotional. I never expected it!”

Linda began nursing 31 years ago and has spent 28 of those years at the Pediatric ICU of the Montreal Children’s Hospital, working first as a bedside nurse and, later, as an advanced practice nurse who follows a group of patients, working closely with their medical teams. Linda also works with patients’ families, explaining the critical care their child needs to survive and flourish, helping reassure a mother and father whose baby may suddenly be engaged in a struggle for health or for life itself. “It’s shattering for a parent.”



Gail Auerbach



Gail Auerbach is the recipient of the National Bank Community and Volunteer Award of Excellence.

When Gail Auerbach enters a room, the energy level goes up exponentially. The mother of six and grandmother of nine is a dynamo. So when she first approached her friend, and former Foundation president, Louise Dery-Goldberg to see how she could help sick children, it didn't take Louise long to suggest she work on the Foundation's annual fundraising ball.

"I told Louise that I didn't want to work directly with children because I'm really too sensitive. I'd be crying all the time," says Gail, explaining why the ball was a good fit. "I really am passionate about children and I wanted to give back."

Now in her seventh year as a volunteer, Gail works hard to secure sponsorships, sell tables and has served on all the event's subcommittees, including the silent auction committee. She estimates she has helped raise half a million dollars so far. "Every year when I'm done with my solicitations and my silent auction items, I add up

what I brought in to try to beat the amount I did in the past year. And the next year, I want to do even better."

One of the achievements of which Gail is particularly proud is introducing P.K. Subban to the Foundation. Last year, when she called P.K.'s manager to ask for a signed jersey for the silent auction, he informed her that he no longer handled these kinds of requests and directed her to P.K.'s sister Natasha. "I sent her a letter and she responded very quickly, offering the jersey and asking what else they could do." The "what else" turned out to be an offer from P.K. and his former minor hockey coach Martin Ross to hold a live auction, with a surprise appearance by the star defenseman "When P.K. walked in, the room went wild. It was exciting and everyone was so surprised. I think the evening just blew him away because he later became so attached to the Children's."

Gail says receiving an Award of Excellence was unexpected but really special. "I am truly blessed to have six healthy children and nine healthy grandchildren. I really do this for all the families and the children who face unimaginably difficult challenges each day. It feels good to do whatever I can to help."

The National Bank has been a socioeconomic ally of the Montreal community for almost 145 years. Thanks to our One for Youth program and our volunteer program, we place young people at the heart of our involvement with the communities we serve. The Bank and its employees are proud of our association with the Montreal Children's Hospital and are honoured to be able to recognize an outstanding individual whose volunteer work has helped to change the lives of the Children's young patients.

Gail Auerbach is one of those individuals. For seven years, she has volunteered countless hours to support the Ball for the Children's, including serving on its silent auction committee. Each and every year, she strives to surpass her fundraising goals from the previous year and so far, has raised half a million dollars for the Hospital. Gail initiated the first contact between P.K. Subban and the Montreal Children's Hospital Foundation, which helped lead to the star Montreal Canadiens defenseman's \$10 million, seven-year commitment to the Hospital.

Gail Auerbach is an exceptional volunteer who constantly seeks to outdo herself, and her passion for the cause of sick children is second to none. We are very proud to award this amazing woman, and mother of six children, the National Bank Community and Volunteer Award of Excellence.

Ann Hébert



Ann Hébert is the recipient of the Provigo Professional Staff Award of Excellence.

and their families, playing with or reading to patients and their siblings and assisting with clerical duties in clinical and administrative departments. In each case, Ann must make sure that each child, family and staff member gets “the perfect volunteer”.

Ann also involves herself in other aspects of hospital life, serving on different committees, including the Quality of life at Work committee of the Children’s, which she chairs.

An outgoing, energetic and friendly person who loves to chat, Ann says she’s rarely at a loss for words, though she admits she was left speechless when she learned she would receive this year’s Professional Staff Award of Excellence. “When volunteers thank me for the work that I do, I tell them that I’m not the one doing the great work. They are!” One of her greatest rewards, she says, is hearing from a volunteer who feels they made a difference for a child. “That’s what it’s all about. That’s what keeps me going.”

Watch our volunteer services website for our next recruitment dates! (www.thechildren.com/volunteering-montreal-childrens-hospital)

Provigo, a member of the Loblaw Group, firmly believes in helping the communities it serves, most notably through the President’s Choice Children’s Charity. These are the values that have brought us to sponsor the Provigo Professional Staff Award of Excellence.

As Volunteer Services Coordinator, Ann is responsible for recruiting and coordinating an army of volunteers, who give up their free time to read a story, play a game or just lend a compassionate ear to the Hospital’s patients and families at what is often one of the worst times of their lives. Open to trying new approaches, Ann carries out this huge undertaking always with the patients and families in mind. Ann also works hard to ensure that her colleagues have a pleasant work environment. As chair of the Hospital’s Quality of Life at Work committee, Ann can be counted on to go above and beyond, sacrificing her lunch hours to put up decorations or to set up staff party events.

Without Ann, the hospital would be a very different place. We salute her outstanding work and congratulate her on receiving the Provigo Professional Staff Award of Excellence.

A hospital is all about people: those who go there to get better and those whose mission it is to make that happen. Among those in that second group who make the Montreal Children’s Hospital what it is are the many caring people who make up our small army of volunteers — as many as 500 throughout the hospital. Each one of those volunteers gets to meet our Provigo Professional Staff Award of Excellence winner, Ann Hébert.

Ann, formerly with Child Life Services at the Children’s, took on the responsibilities of Volunteer Services Coordinator in 2004, where she works with administrative technician Rose Giunti — “my right arm and left arm”, says Ann — to deploy the Children’s formidable volunteer corps. She manages all aspects of the service: volunteer interviews, selection and training, identifying patient and family needs and new areas of volunteer involvement and, finally, matching each volunteer with a particular need. The wide range of needs Ann regularly attends to includes meeting and greeting new patients



Dr. Robert Platt



Dr. Robert Platt is the recipient of the Shire Research Award of Excellence.

Dr. Robert Platt loves numbers. They talk to him, and he understands them. But how do you put numbers to work for a better, healthier world? The answer came to him as he was wrapping up his undergraduate degree in mathematics: he hit upon the realization that “there are ways to use math and logic and numbers to actually benefit public health.” Mathematical models could be used to improve the design and statistical analysis of all manner of epidemiological research. It all added up to a career in biostatistics that twenty years ago brought Dr. Platt to McGill and its pediatric teaching hospital, the Children’s. He has been looking ever since for ways to give numbers a real health impact — with much success.

Dr. Platt recently helped develop a model for determining optimal size and weight of babies at birth. It pointed the way toward

a postnatal growth chart that is now widely used across Canada. It’s just one way in which numbers can be crunched into research success. There are potentially many others: as a biostatistician, Dr. Platt gets to work with other scientists on a range of research projects involving the effects of breastfeeding, fetal and postnatal growth curves, kidney transplant outcomes and more. “What I like most about my job and doing biostatistics is that you get to learn a lot about everybody else’s work.” Such collaboration is essential to good science and good medicine.

Another essential ingredient of medical research is, as always, a reliable source of funding. “There’s a lot of important research that goes on at the Children’s,” says Dr. Platt. Unfortunately, though, “it sometimes doesn’t get as much attention from the funding agencies as we would like. Here’s where donors and philanthropists can have a big impact, both on clinical care directly and on research.”

For Dr. Platt, there can be no doubt that medical research and the funding that helps drive it are paramount to our collective well-being. “It’s an investment in the future of society, because kids are the future.”

At Shire, our purpose is to enable people with life-altering conditions to lead better lives. As a firsthand witness to the vital role researchers play in our lives, and as a loyal partner of the Montreal Children’s Hospital Foundation, we are proud to grant this award to a researcher whose work has been highly influential in Canada, Dr. Robert Platt.

For over 20 years, the Children’s biostatistician has used numbers for the benefit of public health. He developed a calculation method that is now widely used throughout the country: the postnatal growth chart. Over the course of his career, he has published 245 articles, mostly in prestigious scientific journals; 20 of his papers have been cited over 100 times each, attesting to the high regard the scientific community has for his work.

Our team is proud to pay tribute to the remarkable work of Dr. Robert Platt, winner of the Shire Research Award of Excellence. Congratulations!

Dr. Chantal Poulin



Dr. Chantal Poulin is the recipient of the Sub-Zero and Wolf Medical Award of Excellence.

We all start laying the foundation for later life when we are still quite young — small children or adolescents — and are struck by the seemingly innocuous: perhaps an after-school job, or a t.v. show.

For Doctor Chantal Poulin, growing up in a small village in the Gaspé, it was babysitting. And *Quincy M.E.*, the episodic television drama about a crime-fighting pathologist.

She loved the frequent contact with children when, as a teenager, she sat with children in her neighborhood and her family. Later, when she started studying medicine, she thought she might become a pathologist. Then, while still a medical student, Doctor Poulin became acquainted with child neurology, “and really liked it”. The foundation was set: she would do a residency in general

pediatrics in Quebec City. From there, it was on to Montreal and the Children’s, where Doctor Poulin started work in 1998 and where she has been since.

Doctor Poulin now serves as interim director of the Division of Pediatric Neurology at the Children’s and is Residency Program Director, which puts her in regular close contact with medical students and residents. She thrives on the mix of clinical work and teaching — about a fifty/fifty split. “I like the university setting with the Children’s and the MUHC because of the opportunity to work with residents.” But, most of all, the former babysitter loves being around kids. “I like caring for them. And children teach me a lot of things: they’re very generous, they’re genuine, they’re spontaneous.”

Doctor Poulin has an impact as a medical physician, certainly, but also as an engaged member of society. She, like others of her colleagues and a great many caring individuals from all walks of life, participates regularly in the annual Pedal for Kids event of the Montreal Children’s Hospital Foundation. “One year, we told the Foundation ‘help us and we will pedal for you’. They funded our department for new equipment for the electrophysiology lab.” Doctor Poulin hopes to pedal again this year.

Sub-Zero and Wolf firmly believe in the importance of bringing people together, both in the kitchen and in the community. Over the years, Sub-Zero and Wolf have proven to be active supporters of the Montreal Children’s Hospital Foundation and are proud to sponsor the Sub-Zero and Wolf Medical Award of Excellence.

This year’s recipient, Dr. Chantal Poulin, is an outstanding doctor who truly loves children. She currently holds two director positions. During her ten years as director of pediatric neurology, Dr. Poulin’s leadership has brought the division to be regarded as among the most reputable in the country. Her colleagues will tell you she takes on colossal responsibilities by treating a large number of patients with complex neurological issues, all while displaying an incredible sense of empathy. She also distinguishes herself through her teaching skills, for which she has received numerous awards.

It is a real honour for us to highlight Dr. Chantal Poulin’s remarkable career by awarding her the Sub-Zero and Wolf Medical Award of Excellence.



Stefano Ruvo



His dad, Vito, says Stefano, “a joyful, playful, very sociable little boy,” is a fighter. He had to be. Stefano underwent months of therapy to learn to sit, walk and climb, while his parents learned how to operate the equipment and the other skills they would need if they were ever going to bring their son home from the hospital.

Stefano still is seen regularly in Complex Care at the Children’s and, sometimes, the road is hard. But he and his family are determined to keep moving forward and, in a very tangible way, are bringing the rest of us along: in 2012, Stefano’s cousin, Jennifer Ruvo, launched a fund-raising initiative for the Complex Care service at the Children’s — the Stefano Vito Ruvo Foundation, which has already raised more than \$65,000. Jennifer says her mission “is to help children with complex medical needs, like Stefano, and their families benefit from equipment, treatments and services that are otherwise not covered by public or private organizations.”

The TD Nicolas W. Matossian Junior Award of Excellence goes to Stefano Ruvo, who will happily share the distinction with his entire family.

As a proud partner of the Children’s, TD is honoured to once again sponsor the TD Nicolas W. Matossian Junior Community Award of Excellence, which recognizes the efforts of exceptional children. We could not be prouder this year to learn that the award will be presented to the child of a member of the TD family, Rosa Bologna’s son Stefano.

Shortly after he was born, Stefano was diagnosed with a rare medical condition affecting his nervous system which prevents him from breathing on his own. He required a tracheotomy to attach a ventilator and one third of his small intestine had to be removed. Thanks to his incredible tenacity and indomitable determination, coupled with the skill of the healthcare workers at the Children’s, Stefano is able to experience life like any other child his age: he wears a diaphragm stimulator that is grafted underneath his skin that allows him to be more mobile and to attend school.

A playful and charismatic six year old, Stefano never gives up in the face of adversity. His courage inspires his loved ones to fundraise for the Hospital’s complex care department. At TD, we are equally inspired by Stefano and it is with great humility that we present him with the TD Nicolas W. Matossian Award of Excellence.

Stefano Ruvo is the recipient of the TD Nicolas W. Matossian Award of Excellence.

“So, I’m going to wear a suit!” The prospect of getting dressed up for a special event where, he had just learned, he was going to receive a very special award, was a big moment for six-year old Stefano Ruvo. Stefano’s parents, Vito and Rosa, lived perhaps an even bigger moment one morning last September, when they watched their little boy and his two older sisters all take their first school bus ride together for the first day of school. It’s a long, long road to kindergarten when you start out in the Neonatal ICU, where every day brings a new fight for life.

Stefano was just a few days old when he was diagnosed with a rare condition of the central nervous system that prevented his brain from telling him to breathe. But two operations brought him out of immediate danger and set him on the path to a life full of wonder and joy.

Patrizia Ciocca



Patrizia Ciocca is the recipient of the TransForce Administrative and Clinical Support Staff Award of Excellence.

and efficiently as possible so patients and their families might spend less time anxiously awaiting the next test or treatment. "I know the parents appreciate my efforts."

But there's more to Patrizia than paperwork and patients' charts. There's also the support that can't be measured in hospital and government forms and files. Beyond her talent for staying ahead of the work, there is Patrizia's warmth, her smile and her genuine empathy. Because if Patrizia is quick to laugh, she also is sensitive to other emotions: a young patient's distress, a parent's anxiety, or the immeasurable sadness of a lost battle for life. "You sometimes want to cry, but the other patients and families need everyone in the clinic to be strong." Despite those feelings, "there are many moments of real joy in this place," she adds.

At the end of the workday, as she sets out across the grounds of the Glen campus and heads for home, Patrizia may look up and reflect on her work: "all that I did throughout the day to help those around me, my colleagues, our patients and our families, and I feel good." For all that and more, Patrizia Ciocca receives this year's TransForce Administrative and Clinical Support Staff Award of Excellence.

At TransForce, we foster professional growth and reward dedication because we know that our employees are the core of our success. This is why we are committed, through the TransForce Administrative and Clinical Support Staff Award of Excellence, to honour a Children's staff member who goes the extra mile for the well-being of sick children.

Patrizia Ciocca has spent 17 years working in the Hematology/Oncology Clinic and sees each day as a blessing. She takes her role as administrative assistant very seriously, ensuring that her work is carried out with the utmost efficiency for she knows her efforts will have a direct impact on the families of children with cancer. For example, Patrizia is aware that any delays can influence the speed with which anxious families of children with cancer will receive important information about medical test results. A caring professional, Patrizia is always ready to lend a sympathetic ear to families and to help improve their hospital stay to the best of her ability.

TransForce would like to congratulate Patrizia for her exceptional work. It is an honour to be able to present her with the TransForce Administrative and Clinical Support Staff Award of Excellence.

In seventeen years, Patrizia Ciocca can't remember a day when she didn't look forward to getting up and going to work. "I'm truly lucky." Lucky, she says, to be working with dedicated and talented individuals, all pulling together, focused on a single objective: to help sick children and their families. "The doctors and nurses in this department work so hard for the care of our kids, they make me want to do more and be better."

Her work as an administrative assistant at the Hematology/Oncology clinic is Patrizia's first and only fulltime job since joining the Children's right out of school, where she studied to be a medical secretary. Her responsibilities include managing patient records and ensuring the smooth administration of the day-to-day affairs of the clinic, moving the necessary paperwork along as smoothly