

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 took me a while to find 4 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.

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,