



**Mount Sinai
Hospital**

Sinai Health System
Joseph & Wolf Lebovic
Health Complex

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Re: Nomination Dr. Brian Gilbert, Robert Hyland Award for Excellence in
Mentorship, Department of Medicine, University of Toronto

Dear Colleagues:

I am thrilled to submit this letter of nomination in support of Dr. Brian Gilbert for the Robert Hyland Mentorship Award. I write this letter from a broad perspective and with multiple inputs: 1. As the DDD for Cardiology, I am pleased to provide support for my colleague and faculty member, Dr. Shaheeda Ahmed the primary nominator, 2. Dr. Gilbert's nomination has the full support of the University Division's executive and 3. as a Division member at the Sinai Health System, I can attest to the lasting impact of Dr. Gilbert's personal mentorship to members of an entire Division.

Throughout his 40 plus year career, Dr. Gilbert understood the importance of directly engaging young faculty and trainees with a direct warmth, immediately asking who you were. He conveyed a great sense of respect for a person's potential and what a person could be. I remember meeting him as a medical resident and one of the secrets to the instant rapport was his insistence that if he could have an academic career that any trainee could. Faculty at Sinai Health reflected on this legacy all of these years later:

“Brian decided on my career path while I was in medical school (it wasn't open for discussion). Then at the end of my cardiology training, Brian literally tapped me on the shoulder and offered (sort of mandated) that I return to Toronto to do a fellowship with John Parker. I consider Brian most responsible for my academic path and success. He saw what I might become as a medical student and pushed me early and repeatedly to strive for more ambitious goals in my training and career” – Dr. Gary Newton, President and CEO Sinai Health

“Brian ... realized that I had an interest in complex clinical stuff, in physical findings, and in pregnancy. I did not see myself as any kind of academic. Brian saw something in me that I had not seen in myself, and encouraged me to develop the niche skills in Adult Congenital Heart Disease that served as the basis for any further academic success I have had, and the foundation of my last promotion. He steered me to a career in which I have been able to make a contribution.... and one I have thoroughly loved ever since and to this



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day.” – Dr. Jack Colman, Professor, Division of Cardiology UHN/SHS

“What I remember so vividly when I first started out, with 2 sons at home under age 3, is Dr. Gilbert's support and advice. He understood the importance of family to me as family is of utmost importance to him. His advice was simple – Jewel, you have a pager [we did not have cellphones in those days]. If you need to go home, go home... In reality, ... Dr. Gilbert would do the consult himself late Monday or early Tuesday morning, so that I wouldn't have to return to the hospital. Brian - thank you. You have been my teacher, my mentor, probably my strongest supporter/fan, my colleague and friend.” – Dr. Jewel Gold, Cardiologist, UHN/SHS

“In 1992 I came to Toronto as a new Faculty member. Brian was my first boss. In an era before formal recognition of mentorship, Brian did a superb job in guiding me through the perils of my first years. How did he do this? He helped. He helped enormously. He was guidant, but not obtrusive. When I did well, he smiled and when needed he pointed out my mistakes.” – Dr. John Parker, Professor, Division of Cardiology UHN/SHS

“Brian has referred to me as his brother and a brother he has been through all the years. ..through all his successes he continued to be like a brother, always supportive in an unassuming and unconditional way.” – Dr. Robert Wald, Cardiologist, UHN/SHS

Dr. Gilbert also embodied the notion of a leader as a mentor first and foremost. At Sinai, as Division Head he worked tirelessly to realize two specific opportunities for academic success of his faculty members that continue to resonate to this day.

In an historic effort, Dr. Gilbert was a leading proponent and architect of the practice plan.

“...in order to move from an excellent teaching hospital to an academic department we would need ...a plan to provide funding for researchers and change the environment. That required sharing clinical income. I approached Brian (a high earner) and he, perhaps surprisingly, readily agreed. So the MSH plan was created ... and it grew as more new faculty was recruited....I believe that if it was not for the willingness of Brian to join me, the MSH plan would not have been established so I have always been grateful to Brian for that. In a real sense, Brian is responsible for my career - I probably would have not been appointed TGH/TWH PIC and department chair (And then Dean) without having established the Sinai plan” – Dr. Arnie Aberman, former Dean of Medicine, University of Toronto.



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As Division Head at the Mount Sinai, Dr. Gilbert also worked tirelessly to build the cardiac catheterization clinical research laboratory. A cath lab dedicated entirely to the conduct of human research, this facility is unique in Canada and an incubator for cardiovascular science at Mount Sinai. Dr. Gilbert himself did not derive academic success from the laboratory directly in any way; the laboratory continues to thrive and enabled success of many clinical and non-clinical researchers including myself, Drs Gary Newton, John Parker, John Floras, Eduardo Azevedo, Lee Benson, Abdul Al-hesayen, Amar Uxa and several international investigators who trained at the laboratory.

Always modest, Dr. Gilbert consistently declines credit for these accomplishments. Dr. Gilbert used his leadership positions to empower several generations of faculty and trainees and helped them see what they could accomplish. He was the original leader as mentor, generous to his colleagues, devoting his energy to developing opportunities to help those around him thrive. Dr. Gilbert has left a lasting legacy of mentorship that has impacted Mount Sinai, Sunnybrook and the entire Department of Medicine at the University of Toronto. As Dr. Gilbert will be retiring in 2020, I cannot think of a more appropriate gesture of appreciation than to receive the Robert Hyland Award for Mentorship.

Yours Sincerely,

Susanna Mak