

April 29, 2025

Dear Deiren,

Congratulations on your nomination for the 2025 Learning Institute Award of Excellence!

As you know, the Learning Institute Award of Excellence recognizes an individual staff member or team in the Learning Institute who contributes to the achievement of the Learning Institute's priorities; demonstrates the SickKids values of compassion, integrity, collaboration, inclusion, innovation and excellence; and demonstrates strong Learning Institute citizenship including creating a positive and collaborative environment.

Annie Jiwan nominated you for this award, with a letter of support from Kelly Warmington. In their nomination, they noted the following:

Since joining SickKids, Deiren has demonstrated a talent for storytelling through video. He has a genuine passion for finding humanity in every story and conveying it through creative techniques and technology. He has captured the realities of being a palliative care physician, the energy of a child life specialist/ECHO champion, and the story of a little boy who needed a new heart. His ability to capture the heart and soul of our collective work is inspiring.

Deiren seeks out stories that will touch the viewer and change their perspective. His work humanizes individuals and shares their unique experiences. These videos are valuable learning tools about what we do, how we do it, and, most importantly, why - the patients.

In creating video content, he very thoughtfully thinks about the story the person wants to tell, and ensures he captures it in the way they want it to be told – which involves multiple check-ins, revisions, and re-filming that take an enormous amount of time and care (which he somehow manages on top of ~200 ECHO sessions he helps supports yearly). He is always exploring new technologies and modalities – whether it be a new AI tool or adding an element of fun to our sessions through gamification/Jeopardy (he has a wonderful announcer voice). He demonstrates excellence by going above and beyond in creating meaningful content – and will reach out to new partners or drive long distances on his own time to film, in order to get the message right.

He created videos of medical words used in the management of epilepsy, expressed in Ojibwe translation and medical context. To do so, he partnered with numerous SickKids teams and Indigenous educators in the content creation. These videos provided valuable educational content and organically reached over 55K views on YouTube.

I would describe him as a behind-the-scenes documentarian, who listens and looks for the little, yet important details that go into someone's story. He is never one to take the spotlight, but is always looking to elevate others, and is always the first to thank his team for any accolades he receives.



THE HOSPITAL FOR
SICK CHILDREN

Deiren is a model LI citizen and has contributed significantly to creating a positive and collaborative work environments on our team, across the LI, SickKids and with external partners through his storytelling. His videos are gifts that spark joy – when watching them, you get the opportunity to pause and reflect on past accomplishments, and how far you’ve come. Many of these videos are also beneficial in providing valuable qualitative feedback and help us describe the value of the work our collective team is doing, which helps create awareness, engagement and advocacy. Deiren’s stories touch clinicians, learners, and members of the ECHO community, including underserved groups. His work reflects his commitment to excellence and empathy and demonstrates his ability to uplift others through his lens. He has an ability to highlight people’s strengths in a way that is authentic and has a lasting impact that is memorable, heartfelt, and inspiring.

Deiren, congratulations on your nomination and thank you for your incredible contributions to the Learning Institute team!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lennox Huang".

Lennox Huang

Chief Medical Officer and Vice President, Education, Medical & Academic Affairs

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "K. McMillen".

Kelly McMillen

Executive Director, Learning Institute