Drs. Sylvia and Richard Cruess have been synonymous with the McGill University Health Centre (MUHC) for over 60 years. Both graduates of Columbia University’s medical school, they came to the Royal Victoria Hospital (RVH) in 1955 to each complete two years of postgraduate training.

An orthopaedic surgeon and endocrinologist respectively, Sylvia and Richard have both made significant contributions to the advancement of medicine at the MUHC. In 1967, Sylvia headed the RVH’s Metabolic Day Centre, which was the first facility of its kind in Canada at the time. She was then recruited to be the first female Director of Professional Services at the hospital, and held the position for 18 years.

In addition to being a surgeon, Richard took on the role of Dean of Medicine at McGill University for an unprecedented 14 years. During his tenure, which was the longest in McGill’s modern history, he established 26 new medical chairs – sustainable sources of funding to help attract the best international talent.

Together, following their clinical careers, Drs. Cruess have dedicated the past 22 years to medical education as core members of McGill University's Centre for Medical Education.

Sylvia and Richard Cruess have also played leadership roles in inspiring the community to support McGill and the MUHC. They were involved in fundraising for the construction of the hospital and research institute at the Glen site and co-chaired the MUHC’s Legacy Year. To celebrate the outstanding contributions made by these two medical pioneers, the MUHC Foundation is very proud to be launching a $10 million fundraising campaign in their honour. All of the funds raised will support continued excellence in research at the MUHC including: professorships, fellowships, and studentships, as well as a Research Ignition Fund. We plan to name the amphitheatre of the Research Institute in honour of Drs. Cruess as it is a most fitting way in which to show our gratitude and appreciation for the indelible mark that they continue to leave on the MUHC and McGill University.

Julie Quenneville
President
McGill University Health Centre Foundation
Royal Victoria Hospital Foundation
Susannah Tam always thought of herself as a healthy person but all that changed on one sunny day in September in 2012. What started out as a typical day at work took a turn for the worse, and the next time Susannah woke up, she was at the Royal Victoria Hospital at the McGill University Health Centre (MUHC).

MUHC cardiothoracic surgeon Dr. Dominique Shum-Tim came out of the operating room and was informed that there was an emergency case in the Intensive Care Unit. “I remember Susannah’s case very well,” he says. “I had finished a long day in the operating room, and one of the residents told me of a patient suffering from a mitral valve endocarditis (an inflammation of the heart’s valves) who was also in septic shock and experiencing multiple organ failure.” Susannah had significant internal bleeding, and she was critically ill. With little time to spare, Dr. Shum-Tim performed an emergency surgery to save her life.

Hours after the first operation, Susannah experienced very serious complications, bringing her likelihood of survival from 80% down to only 10%. Dr. Shum-Tim performed a second emergency surgery and he made the decision to keep Susannah’s chest open for two days in order to prevent any significant bleeding like she had the first time. “At the time, what went through my mind is that she was in very serious condition, and this was the safest way to control any potential life-threatening complications,” Dr. Shum-Tim explains.

It was only in the weeks following her operations that Susannah started to piece together what had happened. She was filled in by her family, friends, and the medical team at the MUHC. “To this day, I still do not remember what happened,” Susannah explains. “Dr. Shum-Tim explained to me that I was very sick, but it was during one of the rounds that the doctors made that I began to fully understand the severity of my illness.”

Dr. Shum-Tim saved Susannah’s life not once, but twice, and after a four month recovery at the MUHC, she returned home to her family. “I cannot express how grateful I am to Dr. Shum-Tim and the entire staff at the MUHC. I would not be here today had it not been for their dedication, compassion, and expertise,” Susannah says.

Susannah continues to be followed by Dr. Shum-Tim and she looks forward to coming back to the MUHC to visit with the staff that took such great care of her. “Every time I come back for my check-ups, it’s like coming back to old friends and family,” she explains. “The MUHC has become a second home to me, and whenever the staff sees me, they call me ‘Mrs. Miracle.’”

“I cannot express how grateful I am to Dr. Shum-Tim and the entire staff at the MUHC.” - Susannah Tam
On April 21, 2017, more than 350 guests were treated to an exceptional evening at The Windsor Ballrooms as part of the McGill University Health Centre (MUHC) Foundation’s first Gala of the Three Stars. This fundraising gala, which raised $200,000, was held in conjunction with Montreal’s Chinese Community. It was attended by many dignitaries, including the Consul General of China in Quebec, Peng Jingtao, MNA and Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Health and Social Services, Marie Montpetit, and Côte-des-Neiges-Notre-Dame-de-Grâce borough mayor Russell Copeman.

The proceeds from the Gala of the Three Stars will support the purchase of specialized ophthalmology equipment, the creation of an international cardiology fellowship, and the translation of patient education materials into Chinese. The event also honoured the achievements of two prominent MUHC-Chinese physicians: Dr. John Chen, retina specialist, and Dr. Dominique Shum-Tim, cardiothoracic surgeon, who also served as Co-Chairs of the event. During the evening, the MUHC Foundation also presented these two exceptional physicians with its MUHC Foundation Award of Excellence. This award is given to an individual or team that has pushed the boundaries of innovation and had a positive impact on the MUHC locally and internationally.

“Drs. Chen and Shum-Tim are truly remarkable physicians, and they played an integral role in making the Gala of the Three Stars an outstanding success,” explains Pierrette Wong, Executive Chair of the event. “Montreal’s Chinese community is privileged to benefit from such wonderful care in our own city,” she says. Drs. Chen and Shum-Tim’s dedication to sharing their expertise internationally continues to put the MUHC on the map as a global healthcare leader.

A heartfelt thank you to our committee members: Pierrette Wong - Dr. John Chen - Dr. Dominique Shum-Tim - Véronique Chu - Andrew Fang - Bin Han - Liza Hum - Yin Ling - Selena Lu - Irene Peng - Sean Wang - Michel Wong Kee Song - Ren Yu Xu.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Enchantée
You are cordially invited to a cocktail dinatoire hosted by Co-Chairs Cynthia Price Verreault, JoAnne Kelly Rudy, and Anna Capobianco-Skipworth in support of the MUHC Breast Clinic.

When: Thursday, October 12, 2017
Where: Le Mount Stephen, 1430 Drummond Street, Montreal, QC H3B 1K1

Pink in the City Masquerade Ball
Join us for an exciting evening with Pink in the City. This masquerade's proceeds will go towards the purchase of an ultrasound machine for the MUHC Breast Clinic.

When: Friday, October 27, 2017
Where: Embassy Plaza, 1003 Curé-Labelle Boulevard, Laval, QC H7V 2V6

Le Bal Rouge
Save the date for the Second Annual Le Bal Rouge, honouring Surgeon-in-Chief Dr. Gerald Fried of the MUHC

When: Thursday, November 16, 2017
Where: Ritz-Carlton Montreal, 1228 Sherbrooke St W, Montreal, QC H3G 1H6

To buy tickets for these events or to obtain more information:
www.muhcfoundation.com   events@muhcfoundation.com   514-843-1543

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