

I am very honoured to receive this mentorship medal from the Canadian Federation of Earth Sciences and am delighted to accept it on behalf of the many outstanding undergraduate and graduate students and post-doctoral fellows that I have been privileged to supervise. They have certainly contributed as much and probably more to my success than I have to their success. When, after four years in industry, I arrived at McGill University as a newly minted assistant professor, I had been exposed to a lot of exciting geology and been a member of a large, closely knit team with excellent synergy. Enthusiastically, and not surprisingly given this background, I took on a relatively large group of students, probably too large, to help me address what I perceived to be some of the exciting questions of the time. We had a lot of fun together, but inevitably, I made many mistakes as I tried to find that fine balance between guidance and freedom (I erred on the side of freedom), and some of my students definitely suffered. Happily, however, they soon showed me the error of my ways and with time I learned many of the lessons that they taught me. I continue to supervise a large team, and I and my students, post-doctoral fellows and research associates continue to have a lot of fun tackling many of the fundamental unresolved questions of our science. We all learn from each other and, by operating as a team with different responsibilities, we are able to take advantage of the maxim that “the team is better than the sum of its parts”. The freedom of students to pursue scientific interests, wherever they may take them is still the cornerstone of my philosophy of student supervision. However, I now temper it by reminding students that with freedom comes responsibility both to themselves and the team to get the research done in timely fashion, and my other maxim that “science is only science the day it is published”. I am extraordinarily proud of my research group and with them will work hard in the years to come to continue to be worthy of the great honour that you have bestowed upon us by awarding me the 2017 mentorship medal.