



**HUMANITARIAN AWARDS PROGRAM  
Student Humanitarian Award  
Nomination Form 2010**

**Name of Person/Team Being Nominated: Juan Pablo Appendino, MD**

Program/Department/Division: Division of Neurology

Mailing Address: 555 University Avenue, Toronto

Postal Code: M5G 1X8

Telephone No: 416 813-6295

Email: juan.appendino@sickkids.ca

**Nominated by:**

**1. Name: Elizabeth Donner, MD, FRCPC**

SickKids Staff Member X Patient Family Member

Program/Department/Division: Division of Neurology

Mailing Address: 555 University Avenue, Toronto

Postal Code: M5G 1X8

Telephone No: 416 813-7037

Email: elizabeth.donner@sickkids.ca

**2. Name: Cristina Go, MD**

SickKids Staff Member X Patient Family Member

Program/Department/Division: Division of Neurology

Mailing Address: 555 University Avenue, Toronto

Postal Code: M5G 1X8

Telephone No: 416 813-6297

Email: crisitna.go@sickkids.ca

**Name of Program Director or Department/Division Head that supports this nomination:**

Name: Dr. O. Carter Snead, III

Position at SickKids: Head, Division of Neurology

## STUDENT HUMANITARIAN AWARDS

Please answer the following questions using as many examples as possible. Candidates about whom the Selection Committee has little information will be disadvantaged. Students will have demonstrated some or all of the values listed in the questions below. The nomination must provide clear examples of how the individual has consistently demonstrated these qualities in an exceptional manner.

**1. How long and in what capacity have you known the Nominee?**

I have had the pleasure of working with Dr. Juan Pablo (JP) Appendino since 2005, when he joined the Division of Neurology as a Pediatric Neurology Fellow. During his 3 year Pediatric Neurology Fellowship, I worked closely with JP on many occasions, including supervising him for 12 months in his weekly outpatient clinic, in the long term care of children with complex neurological conditions. I now supervise JP as a Pediatric Epilepsy Fellow.

**2. How has the Nominee provided exceptional care and attention to families while working as a student at SickKids?**

The care JP provides sets him apart from his colleagues. In my years, JP is the most 'requested' resident or fellow I have ever worked with. Truthfully, he is the only fellow that if 'requested'.

*Kate* is a 5 year old girl with a severe seizure disorder treated with medications and diet. At their last visit to the outpatient clinic, her mother specifically requested JP to examine Kate, as he is the only one that puts the family at ease.

*Jacob* is a 2 year old boy with motor and cognitive disabilities and seizures. His parents routinely called JP for updates on their son's care, even when he has not been directly involved. They know that JP will take the time to explain the complicated test results and treatments and listen to their questions and concerns.

JP demonstrates a kindness to children and families that is unprecedented. He always takes time to explain things so families and children can understand them. He will often return to talk with families after other specialists have left the room, to ensure all their questions are answered. This selfless dedication is very special in a physician, and JP demonstrates it consistently.

**3. Show an example of how the Nominee understands the social, emotional, and developmental impact of illness and hospitalization on the child and family.**

Samantha is a 13 year old girl that underwent brain surgery for epilepsy last year. JP saw Samantha and her family through this enormously stressful time, with complications, admissions to the ICU, three brain surgeries and countless medical procedures. JP understands the need for a child and family to develop a trusting relationship with their caregiver. He was available for Samantha and her parents every day of her hospitalization. He explained things so that Samantha could understand. Whenever I joined him to see Samantha in hospital, he always knew more about her, her friends, family, interest and activities. He understood that supporting Samantha and her family meant getting to know her and developing a trusting relationship.

## STUDENT HUMANITARIAN AWARDS

**4. What differentiates this individual apart from other students in terms of acting above and beyond what is expected of them?**

Two personal characteristics set JP apart from his colleagues: dedication and warmth. JP frequently takes time away from his personal life to care for his patients. As I described in his care of Kate, Jacob and Samantha, he develops a relationship with his patients and their families that is based on trust, kindness and warmth. This allows him to deliver exceptional care.

**5. How does this individual work with other members of the team?**

JP shares himself with his team, encouraging collegiality, communication and collaboration. He is always available to support his fellow trainees. Whenever a shift needs to be covered, or someone can't complete their work, he is the first to volunteer. Once he completed his neurology residency he continued to support the residents by contributing to the residency education committee, providing teaching and mentoring sessions for residents. Whenever the outpatient clinic is backed up and running late, he will join in. The Neurology Clinic Nursing staff routinely comment that he is respectful and reliable. Our neurosurgical colleagues often call JP first with questions about their patients, confident that he will take the time to assess the child and communicate with them.

**6. Has the Nominee used his or her professional experience in the Hospital to help the community?**

JP frequently volunteers to translate for Spanish speaking families in the hospital. He is also a supporter of our epilepsy awareness campaign and is a member of our Purple Day for Epilepsy committee.

Thank you for considering Dr. Juan Pablo Appendino for the SickKids Student Humanitarian Award. JP has inspired many of us with his dedication, kindness and compassion.

Elizabeth J. Donner, MD, FRCPC

**From:** [Carter Snead](#)  
**To:** [Elizabeth Donner](#);  
**Subject:** Re: Juan Pablo Appendino Nomination for the Student Humanitarian Award  
**Date:** Thursday, January 28, 2010 9:00:25

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Elizabeth, I endorse your nomination of JP for the Student Humanitarian award without reservation. He richly deserves this honor. Carter

On 27/01/10 6:19 PM, "Elizabeth Donner" <[elizabeth.donner@sickkids.ca](mailto:elizabeth.donner@sickkids.ca)> wrote:

Dear Dr. Snead,

As we have discussed, JP had demonstrated exceptional humanitarian qualities during his training with us. I am nominating him for the Student Humanitarian award. Please endorse the nomination in an email to me and I will include it with the nomination materials.

Thanks,

Elizabeth

Elizabeth J. Donner, MD, FRCPC  
Division of Neurology  
SickKids  
phone: (416) 813-7037  
fax: (416) 813-6334

Gloria Chan  
National Grants  
SickKids Foundation

January 26, 2010

Dear Ms. Chan,

I am writing this letter of support for Dr. Juan Pablo Appendino, an excellent epilepsy fellow in the Division of Neurology here at the Hospital for Sick Children.

I have worked with Dr. Appendino over the past 2 years, as his colleague, when I was still an epilepsy fellow myself and the past year, as his supervisor and program director.

Dr. Appendino consistently provided exceptional care to our epilepsy patients, both outpatient clinic patients and especially patients that are admitted for invasive EEG monitoring and epilepsy surgery. For the latter group of patients, the procedure in itself is anxiety-provoking, both for the patient and the families. Dr. Appendino consistently goes out of his way to ensure that the patient is given proper medical management but also, that the anxiety/fears of the patient and family members are allayed by ensuring that proper personnel (social worker, neurology and neurosurgery staff) are kept abreast and involved in ongoing issues.

Dr. Appendino also interact with colleagues and team members (in epilepsy, neurology and other subspecialties) consistently in a respectful manner and often will go out of his way to ensure that people he interacted with feel uplifted. He consistently shows interest in adding to the knowledge of his colleagues by researching contentious topics being discussed and sharing the information in a timely manner.

I am honored to have the opportunity to work with Dr. Appendino, as a colleague, as his training supervisor.

I am respectfully nominating Dr. Appendino for the Student Humanitarian Award for 2010. He certainly embodies the qualities of a superb student-clinician and will be an excellent student for other students to emulate.

Sincerely,  
Cristina Go, M.D.  
VNS Clinic  
Neurology and Clinical Neurophysiology  
Paediatric Epilepsy Fellowship Associate Program Director  
The Hospital for Sick Children  
Toronto, Ontario  
cristina.go@sickkids.ca

**From:** [Roy Sharma](#)  
**To:** [Elizabeth Donner](#); [Shelly Weiss](#);  
**Subject:** JP  
**Date:** Wednesday, January 27, 2010 16:46:53

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I have known Dr. Juan Pablo Appendino (JP) since 2005 when he began his training at Sick Kids. When I first met JP I knew I was meeting someone very special; a friend I will have for life. What struck me the most about JP was not only his enthusiasm about working at Sick Kids, but how he carried himself. It was clearly evident that he was not shy to express his passion and emotion.

During his training in Neurology and over the past 2 years in the Epilepsy Fellowship program, JP has demonstrated a passion for his work but also for how he treats and interacts with his patients and co-workers. The care and sensitivity he directs towards his patients is unquestionable and goes beyond the duties of a doctor. He is a wonderful doctor who advocates for his patients' care, treats his patients with respect, kindness and love....laced with a bit of his Spanish humour. He will visit them in the morning and say goodbye in the evening. He will call parents and give them support and guidance whenever it is required. He is always in a happy state of mind even when under stress and thus always makes his patients feel relaxed and ready to cheer them up.

JP often sacrifices his family time with his wife and two young children to make sure his patients' care is not compromised. JP has embraced the Sick Kids philosophy of family centered care. He is also always available to teach junior residents, provide reports even when it was not his duty. He has even been a Spanish translator for me when translation services have not been available.

About 1 year ago I was able to witness what a special doctor JP is. He made one of our recent epilepsy surgery patients feel so special. Maryanne was 6 years old and had intractable epilepsy 1 year ago. She underwent subdural grid surgery and was very scared and nervous during her stay. JP made her feel relaxed and watched over with so much care and dedication that she named him her 'Guardian Angel'. He was able to make a stressful hospitalization a more peaceful and worry free experience for her and her family. To this day he gets updates and photos from her and she always remembers her Guardian Angel at Sick Kids. This further exemplifies what it means to be a good doctor, someone who not only treats medically but does so in a caring manner and usually goes out of their way to make a patient feel special.

I am very proud and honored to nominate Dr. Juan Pablo Appendino for the Sick Kids Humanitarian Award.

Rohit (Roy) Sharma, RET, REPT  
Manager: Neurophysiology Lab-6C  
Registrar, C.B.R.E.T. Inc  
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**From:** [Jane McCabe](#)  
**To:** [Elizabeth Donner;](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Humanitarian Award  
**Date:** Thursday, January 28, 2010 9:22:08

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Dr. Donner:

On behalf of the nurses and support staff in the Neurology clinic we wholeheartedly endorse the nomination of Dr. Juan Pablo Appendino for the Humanitarian Award this year. J.P. has been with us for the last five years and he has made a positive contribution to our Neurology team and Neurology families.

One of J.P.'s attributes is the compassion he showed towards the families he followed as one of our Neurology fellows and more recently as one of our Epilepsy fellows. Families and especially the patients come back for follow up visits in clinic and they will ask specifically for 'Dr. J.P.' ... "Do you think he is around...can we see him just to say "Hi". They truly appreciated his time, dedication and empathy towards them at a time when they were feeling most anxious and vulnerable. J.P.'s reassuring words and the time he took to listen to their concerns made him a very popular fellow. Many of our families who were Spanish speaking felt so reassured in his presence and J.P. went out of his way to accomodate (at many different times of the day) to connect, interpret and make them feel comfortable.

Also, many of our patients have special needs and these children are acutely aware of J.P.'s special qualities. He is a kind, generous, compassionate and humble person who relates on a genuine level to all who meet him. These children are able to recognize and respond to this. Patient S.J. and Mom were in just this week...and who is the first person they wanted to see...Dr. J.P.!

We all feel very fortunate to work with J.P. and believe he shows the true attributes of a great humanitarian and truly deserves to win this award.

Jane McCabe R.N., BA, CNN(C)  
Clinic Nurse  
Division of Neurology  
Phone (416) 813-6956  
Fax (416) 813-6709

## **Nomination of Dr. Juan Pablo Appendino for the Student Humanitarian Award**

February 9, 2010

It is with great pleasure and regard that I write this letter of recommendation for Dr. Juan Pablo Appendino.

We were first introduced to Dr. Appendino in March of 2006 in General Pediatrics on the 7th floor at the Hospital for Sick Children, when our son Johnathon was admitted for failure to thrive. The Dr's had done numerous test and figured out Johnathon was having seizures. One of test performed was an evoked potentials, when the Dr's came in to give us the results they found my wife with Johnathon. The team proceeded to give all the info they could in a professional and empathetic manner. My wife began to cry as this was probably one of the most stressful things she had to listen to. When they were finished and my wife was in a state of fear and unknowing Dr. Appendino walked over to her and placed his arm around her and comforted her for a minute. From that day on there was a feeling that he truly cared and felt for Johnathon and our family.

Another example of how Dr. Appendino has made a mark on our family is once our son was flown from Belleville to Sick Kids with pneumonia Johnathon was in ICU and Dr. Appendino was paged from that area to the emerge as he walk by Johnathon's room he saw his name on the door and just popped his head in to he was there if we needed him.

Dr. Appendino has worked with us and all the healthcare teams involved to give Johnathon a quality of life that for sometime we never thought was going to possible, and he has never hesitated to help in anyway that we needed.

I can only speak to our experience and Dr Appendino has made many of those experiences a lot better for us i am sure. We have been involved with many other facilities and other health care professionals most have been and continue to be great asset to Johnathon and our family but Dr. Appendino stands out in his caring attitude and need for understanding of his patient beyond the clinical aspects of there ailments. Please contact us anytime should you have any question or require further information.

Sincerely,

Mandie Henderson and John Keegan  
Johnathon's Mom and Dad  
(Email: <mailto:jkeegan01@hotmail.com>)