Zoom On: Dr. Geneviève A. Derumeaux, Chairperson ESC Congress 2014-2016

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Dr Geneviève Derumeaux is a Professor and Head of the Department of Echocardiography, Louis Pradel University Hospital, Lyon, France, She pioneered Tissue Doppler Imaging and it is her goal to create a Subspeciality of Noninvasive Imaging

What are your key areas of interest and research?

I began as a cardiologist and have been pioneering the assessment of the myocardial function using new techniques that have become part of the cardiac evaluation. Premature ageing is now my area of interest in the context of cardiometabolic disorders. I moved to translational research from there, on to physiology and translational echocardiography. I am now in a translational field, using echocardiography in ageing to tackle problems related to the nature of the heart.

What are the major challenges in your field?

The major challenge is to integrate new concepts into the clinical area. When you are working on a topic that is new, you need to prove that it is useful. Through my research, the concept of bio-diagnostics has to be translated into clinical practice. It is a long journey.

What is your key management tip?

My tip is integrating people. Integration is the key word. Integrate people, while both trying to leave them specific space to develop their own career, and helping them cross-collaborate and cross-communicate. This is what I have done for the administration staff, the nurse staff and colleagues; this is what I am trying to do in my daily life. However I do recognise that it is not easy.

What would you single out as the career highlight?

A first big achievement for me was being the Head of the Echocardiography Department of my initial university. Contributing to translational research and the application of the innovation to experimental models was also a big achievement. My current highlight is running my department, which integrates cardiologists, biologists, people working on cardiac disease and metabolic disorders. We develop a translational programme, aiming to provide the groundwork for tackling major ageing cardiac disease. As this goes beyond echocardiography and ageing, it needs all the integration of all other departments and results in this innovative translational research programme at my current university, Université Paris-Est Créteil.

If you had not chosen this career path what would you have become?

I wanted to be a pilot. As a child I was living close to an area where military training was being held. I was fascinated by the shows held during the flying meetings, how they could do such fantastic things with a plane! When I visited them they said ‘ you can become an officer but you will be staying on the ground’. They didn’t want me to fly, so it was no longer fascinating to me.

What are your personal interests outside work?

I like reading and listening to opera music, I have the chance to share that with my husband. I also love horse riding, tennis and swimming. I like sports. I think when I retire one day I will absolutely know how to make my life interesting and recreational.

Do you have a favourite quote?

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“ Non, où que parviennent fatalement les hommes, et quoi qu’il leur advienne, une seule chose échappe à la fatalité : la foi et la sagesse” (Soeren Kirkegaard ; Traité du Désespoir)

I tried to translate it in English as follows:

Wherever man will inevitably reach, and whatever happens to him, one single thing escapes fate: faith and wisdom.

I also like this quote one form Albert Einstein:

"The most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious. It is the source of all true art and all science. He to whom this emotion is a stranger, who can no longer pause to wonder and stand rapt in awe, is as good as dead: his eyes are closed."

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