

I chose to nominate Caroline Lavoie for the NBASLPA Clinical Excellence Award. Until recently, Caroline was working in the francophone school district, specifically at École Champlain (Moncton) and École Abbey-Landry (Memramcook).

Given her assignment and workplace, Caroline has had to manage a very high number of children on her caseload. She has always shown incredible knowledge and skill with children of all ages and all presentations. When presented with a challenging, time consuming case, Caroline's response has always been "bring it on!". Her motto in life is *go big or go home*, she applies that with great gusto both in her personal and professional life.

I have had the privilege to be in Caroline's care as our son was on her caseload from kindergarten to grade 5. From day one, Caroline has truly astounded me with her ability to see beyond the immediate and put all factors together, whether language related or not. Her ability to focus on what is needed to be functional despite major challenges is impressive. The challenges changed over the years but her drive and clear competence never wavered. Liam's language difficulties have kept growing due to increased demands, Caroline didn't blink and continued to work with him. When profusely thanked, she matter of factly responded he had a language disorder and needed help, he required service and she would provide such.

Her knowledge at each milestone and grade level is impressive. She has worked with his speech, expressive language, fluency, thought organization, as well as supporting his reading and writing acquisition. But where she truly shines is in team meetings. Given the magnitude of his language deficits and subsequent effects on his learning, we have regular team meetings every school year. Caroline was present and raring to go at each and every meeting. The depth of her knowledge truly came to light during these meetings as with every challenge found in the classroom, Caroline has always been able to provide knowledgeable, clear and concise explanations to Liam's team so that each member around the table truly understood the language-based "complication" behind his learning needs. She has never failed to offer concrete and functional solutions that are appropriate to his level of function. Her solutions were presented in such a way that everyone around the table understood what was needed and why, thus helped moved mountains for my child. This fierce driving force was spearheaded by Caroline.

Caroline has always been able to provide the human touch that is required to progress with therapy. She formed a bond with our son from day 1 in such a way he has always wanted to see her and worked so hard with her. When he developed anxiety, she changed her office setup with softer lights and music to make it a calm and safe place for him to work. When my momma heart was breaking, she offered support to make things more bearable. When my SLP brain clicked in (school age is not my area of expertise!), she always had the perfect scientific article to pass along with the appropriate information to help me out.

As a speech-language pathologist, I understand the time and energy required to manage intense and complex cases. My child certainly fits the bill on that end. Caroline has provided nothing short of exceptional care no matter his needs. She is fearless in her pursuit for excellence and will move

mountains for the children on her caseload. When I see her in action and “live” the effects of service she offers, there is no doubt in my mind that she is deserving of the NBASLPA Clinical Excellence Award, as Clinical Excellence is what she offers, it is her standard.

Colette LeBlanc, M.Sc.S, SLP

Caroline’s colleague and mother of Liam