Northern Ontario School of Medicine
École de médecine du Nord de l'Ontario
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Leadership
2010 Public Sector Leadership Awards IPAC • Deloitte
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Global Best Award Winner 2010

To whom it may concern

March 10, 2014

Re: Kimberley Wahama

My name is Dr. Jacques Abourbih. I am associate professor of Surgery at the Northern Ontario School of Medicine. Among my responsibilities, I teach part of a module that addresses the pathology, pathophysiology and clinical presentation and management of breast cancer.

While we teach our learners the foundations of medicine and the professionalism to deal with difficult emotional clinical encounters, we realized that something was missing. Students may get a cross-sectional glimpse of the predicament of women with breast cancer. However, that was not enough.

What was lacking was the longitudinal experience of women who had travelled that difficult path, the personal touch of real patients with breast cancer who were willing to describe their poignant personal story along an often-difficult road.

We were fortunate to have Ms. Kim Wahama and three other women to come and present to our first and second year students very frankly their personal stories. The amphitheater was packed. Kim and the three other women spoke of their emotional pains, their fears, their hopes and they shared with the students some very personal and intimate experiences. These strong women showed their unwavering determination to face their battle with the help and support from partners, friends and family.

No classroom experience could have taught our future physicians this lesson.

Dr. Jacques Abourbih MDCM, FRCS(C)
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