

The EuroPCR 2019 Andreas Grüntzig Ethica Award

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On Thursday 23rd May, the final day of EuroPCR, the European community of interventional cardiology celebrated and paid respect to Prof Jean Marco as he received the Andreas Grüntzig Ethica award: an honour given to those who have made a considerable contribution to the needs of patients through sharing of their wisdom, skills, and practice to fellow members of the community. Prof Marco represents a professional of the highest calibre in this respect: as well as being a founding member of EuroPCR, he has demonstrated a lifelong commitment to the education of cardiovascular healthcare professionals and a persistent determination to improve the lives of patients.¹

At the beginning of the award ceremony, Dr Jean Fajadet, Vice Chairman of EuroPCR, addressed the audience. "This really is one of the most beautiful, emotional moments of the 30 year anniversary," Fajadet proclaimed as he invited Dr William Wijns, Chairman of EuroPCR, onto the stage to present the award alongside himself. Dr Wijns began to tell Prof Marco's story: how his commitment to excellence in education began at a young age and came from his ability to critically think and self-evaluate, and was always routed in respectful peer-to-peer interactions and non-judgemental sharing of experience. "Prof Marco's legacy is well alive and will continue to inspire generations of colleagues worldwide

who have inherited his fundamental principles of sharing impactful, relevant, life-long, and self-directed learning. His 360-degree vision demands constant curiosity, out-of-the-box thinking, and open-minded adaptation to local needs and culture, enabling a caring impact on the life of each and every individual patient and her or his family," announced Dr Wijns as he invited Prof Marco onto the stage to accept the award. Dr Wijns congratulated Prof Marco on behalf of himself and the thousands of colleagues who were "thankful to you for enticing each and every one of us to become a better doctor and a better person."

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A standing ovation spread throughout the main arena as Prof Marco walked on stage to receive his award. As he walked, Dr Fajadet, himself a colleague and life-long friend, delivered words that he declared were emotionally difficult for

him to share with everyone watching: "All of those, like me, who have had the privilege of working with you, were fascinated by several things. The first is your extraordinary capacity of working: you could not even imagine. Every morning at 7am in the catheterisation lab, and leaving at 8-9pm... and this for 30 years!" Dr Fajadet proceeded to highlight Prof Marco's professionalism in the workplace: his discipline, rigour, and precision; before also speaking of the award winner's high level of independence, honesty, and ethics.

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Dr Fajadet reflected: "And a personal note, which is very deep in my heart: please accept my immense respect and gratitude for what you did for me. It has been a privilege to work with you for 37 years and I will continue to see you as my master, my reference, and my guide to lead the way. Be sure of my deep and unfailing friendship and my immense respect." The pair hugged, and it was evident to the room that their connection and friendship existed through not only work, but also a deep, personal bond.

"My story starts in 1986, with Fajadet," began Prof Marco. "We decided to build an ambitious project. Our first important principle was that we were capable of building the best. Each of you is capable of building the best." He said, addressing the audience.

He listed three points to building a long-term vision, the first being that you need to know where you are going. "[Fajadet and myself] agreed we were going to build the best unit for interventional cardiology in France and the best annual European course in the field of interventional cardiology."

His second point was needing to know what you should be doing. "For our European course, we knew we needed to create a course, in a large forum, to allow participants to critically reflect on their knowledge. You always have to start with the end in mind."

And finally, his concluding point for building a long-term vision was that you need to know how you are going to do it: "Each of you should be able to apply what is possible, as soon as possible, in your institutions."

Prof Marco ended his speech with a string of words: "Commitment, determination, dream, energy, stamina, inspire, drive, learn, and share. Use a teamwork approach and have strong work ethics that include honestly and integrity." His final words resonated around the arena: "The most important thing that I have learned during this journey though, is what I have learned from each of you, from all of you. You all have my sincerest thanks. Thank you!"²

References

1. EuroPCR. Press Release. Professor Jean Marco to be presented the Ethica Award at EuroPCR 2019. 2019. Available at: <https://www.pcronline.com/Courses/EuroPCR/Press>. Last accessed: 5 June 2019.
2. EuroPCR. EuroPCR 2019 Andreas Grüntzig Ethica Award. 2019. Available at: <https://virtualevent.pcronline.com/euroPCR-2019/videos/euroPCR-2019-ethica-award>. Last accessed: 4 June 2019.

