



# THE CUPOLA

The Bulletin of The Medical Alumni Association of Bassett Medical Center  
Cooperstown, New York

Summer 2021  
Vol. XXV No. 2

## ResWell Initiative Has a Firm Footing at Bassett

By Dr. Caroline Gomez-DiCesare



Dr. Caroline Gomez-DiCesare

In the spring of 2017, several independent events happened within a couple of days. Dr. James Dalton, perennially concerned about resident well-being, returned from the annual

meeting of the Alliance for Independent Academic Medical Centers (AIAMC) where National Initiative VI was announced: "Stimulating a Culture of Well-Being in the Clinical Learning Environment." While at the meeting, he received an email invitation from Dr. Caroline Gomez-DiCesare, recently appointed as Bassett's first well-being champion, looking to learn about residents' needs regarding wellness. Simultaneously, Dr. Natalia Golub, transitional year resident, surveyed residents for suggestions to increase well-being. This confluence of events was the birth of ResWell, the Bassett Resident Well-Being initiative.

By June, 2017, the ResWell committee started meeting regularly. Early on, committee members defined their vision of



Group of residents pictured after completing an art class (L-R): Lintha Shah, M.B., B.S. (current Medicine resident), Sarina Sharma, M.D. (current Medicine resident), Vinaya Jaikumar, M.B., B.S. (current Medicine resident), Riddhima Naik, M.B., B.S. (current Medicine resident), Henry Greyner-Almeida, M.D. (Transitional year resident 2020-21). Back row: Vijaykumar Sekar, M.B., B.S. (Medicine resident 2018-21)

Fernleigh. Residents arranged for pet-assisted therapy and, in collaboration with the nursing staff, arts in healthcare activities. Professionalism dinner meetings allowed residents to reflect upon their work with Narrative Medicine (led by Dr. Brian Barlow,

a 'well resident' to be a person who is "heathy in professional, physical, social, marital, family, psychological, intellectual, and spiritual domains." ResWell was designed to engage residents in trainee-directed activities and interventions to elevate the resident community toward a higher level of well-being in these domains creating a culture of wellness. Residents identified areas for improvement, such as the foods served at medical and surgical conferences, and advocated for change. They organized social events to enhance community, including family movie nights and Eid celebrations. They planned hikes and yoga sessions. Several residents focused on mental health. Dr. Connor Davenport (transitional year intern) organized confidential mental health resources more visibly on the resident website. Dr. Ethan Talbot cleaned up and organized a resident garden near

**ResWell to page 3**

## Message from the President of the Medical Alumni Board of Directors

As we gradually recover from a pandemic that has changed many lives, challenged our workplaces, and altered many aspects of medicine, it is appropriate to consider physician wellness.

In this issue of my favorite alumni bulletin, Dr. Gomez-DiCesare updates us about the establishment and successful launch of a resident wellness effort at Bassett. From her piece, you will learn that the program ResWell is creative and commendable. Once again, it demonstrates how Bassett values Medical Education and its residents. This cover article bookends nicely with the profile of Dr. Merideth Davis, who trained here and maintained her Bassett



Dr. James A. Murray

connections, eventually serving on the board of the Medical Alumni Association.

Also in these pages, you will find the plans of the departing residents and graduates from the Columbia-Bassett Program. Although graduations and new phases of training or new jobs have bittersweet emotions attached, I enjoy watching our alumni family grow with each year that passes since my own residency days. My words to the graduating residents are the same I share with all alumni...remember Bassett, keep in touch, stay safe, and don't forget to send us updates on your families and careers. ■

*The Cupola* is the newsletter of the Medical Alumni Association of Bassett Medical Center. The Association was founded to provide support and recommendations to Bassett's Medical Education Department; to assist in recruiting medical students, house staff and attending staff; and to provide financial support to develop and enhance medical education at Bassett.

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## Residents Announce Future Plans

Members of the house staff have completed their training at Bassett and moved on to new endeavors. Departing residents, their programs at Bassett, and their plans:

**Daniel C. Bailey, M.D., Ph.D.** (Transitional Year), Internal Medicine Residency, University of Vermont, Burlington, Vt.

**Nancy W. Bethuel, M.D.** (Internal Medicine), Pulmonary Disease and Critical Care Fellowship, Indiana University, Indianapolis, Ind.

**Aneeqa Butt, M.B., B.S.** (Internal Medicine), plans not finalized at press time

**Arun Chockalingam, M.D.** (General Surgery), Radiology Residency, Mt. Auburn Hospital, Cambridge, Mass.

**Michael J. DeRogatis, M.D.** (General Surgery), Orthopedic Surgery Residency, St. Luke's University Hospital, Bethlehem, Pa.

**Farah Deshmukh, M.B., B.S.** (Internal Medicine), Nutrition/Obesity Fellowship, Donald and Barbara Zucker School of Medicine at Hofstra/Northwell, Great Neck, N.Y.

**Suzanne E. Evans, M.D.** (General Surgery), Abdominal Transplant Surgery Fellowship, University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, Ohio

**Henry Greyner-Almeida, M.D.** (Transitional Year), Ophthalmology Residency, Boston University, Boston, Mass.

**Alisen Huang, M.D.** (Transitional Year), Dermatology Residency, SUNY - Downstate, Brooklyn, N.Y.

**Samir Jha, M.B., B.S.** (Internal Medicine), Hospital Medicine, Beth Israel Deaconess Hospital - Plymouth, Plymouth, Mass.

**Hunaiz Patel, M.D.** (General Surgery), Vascular Surgery Fellowship, Albany Medical College, Albany, N.Y.

**Justin Sardi, M.D.** (Transitional Year), Radiology Residency, Mt. Auburn Hospital, Cambridge, Mass.

**Vijaykumar Sekar, M.B., B.S.** (Internal Medicine), Endocrinology Fellowship, Lehigh Valley Hospital, Allentown, Pa.

**Omid Shah, M.B., Ch.B.** (Internal Medicine), Hospital Medicine, University of California, San Francisco, Calif.

**Purvi Shah, M.D.** (Transitional Year), Ophthalmology Residency, Brown University, Providence, R.I.



*Outgoing residents celebrating the conclusion of their training at Bassett with a special gathering at The Otesage Hotel. Shown here: (L-R) Samir Jha, M.B., B.S.; Bishesh Shrestha, M.B., B.S.; Omid Shah, M.B., Ch.B.; Anukrati Shukla, M.B., B.S.; Vijaykumar Sekar, M.B., B.S.; Nadir Siddiqui, M.B., B.S.; Harshith Thyagaturu, M.B., B.S. Medicine graduates absent from picture: Nancy Bethuel, M.D.; Aneeqa Butt, M.B., B.S.; Farah Deshmukh, M.B., B.S.).*

*Photo taken by Vijaykumar Sekar, M.B., B.S.*

**Anukrati Shukla, M.B., B.S.** (Internal Medicine), plans not finalized at press time

**Nadir Siddiqui, M.B., B.S.** (Internal Medicine), Hospitalist Medicine, Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, Boston, Mass.

**Andrew Sinensky, M.D.** (Transitional Year), Radiology Residency, University of Maryland, Baltimore, Md.

**Ethan Talbot, M.D.** (General Surgery), Attending Surgeon, Bassett Healthcare Network, Cooperstown, N.Y.

**Mark D. Tavor, M.D.** (Transitional Year), Ophthalmology Residency, Dartmouth - Hitchcock Medical Center, Lebanon, N.H.

**Anke Wang, M.D.** (Transitional Year), Anesthesiology Residency, New York University Grossman School of Medicine, New York, N.Y.

**Christopher Xin, M.D.** (Transitional Year), Radiology Residency, Mt. Auburn Hospital, Cambridge, Mass. ■



*Surgical residents who completed their training programs at Bassett (L-R): Suzanne Evans, M.D.; Hunaiz Patel, M.D.; and Ethan Talbot, M.D.*



See our latest news and updates at Bassett Medical Alumni Association

## Erik Riesenfeld, M.D. Awarded Walter A. Franck Physician Excellence Award

Erik Riesenfeld, M.D., medical director of respiratory therapy at Bassett Medical Center (BMC), has been awarded the Walter A. Franck Physician Excellence Award. Physicians are nominated for this prestigious recognition by demonstrating extraordinary service to patients, students, colleagues and the community — traits that emulate the career of retired Bassett rheumatologist Walter A. Franck. Network physicians vote to choose the final recipient.

The Franck Award is a recognition of Riesenfeld's extraordinary leadership during the COVID-19 crisis. "On behalf of the entire BMC critical care team, Dr. Riesenfeld deserves the Walter A. Franck Award for his unwavering commitment to outstanding patient care," colleagues explained in their written nomination. "He and his critical care colleagues performed in a heroic manner by putting their own lives at risk to save their patients. He is an excellent communicator, team player, educator and role model to residents and colleagues."

"This recognition is very humbling," says Riesenfeld. "I feel like I am receiving it on behalf of others: leaders who rebuilt the



*Erik Riesenfeld, M.D.*

hospital to accommodate as many patients as possible; nurses who risked their lives to stay at their patients' bedsides; respiratory therapists who made rounds day and night to save lives; and the environmental services staff who cleaned and sterilized. Everybody made a remarkable effort for our patients."

In addition to working with respiratory therapists in critical care, Riesenfeld was a co-investigator in Bassett's clinical trials of possible COVID-19 therapies. This work was what he found personally rewarding.

"The pandemic suddenly accelerated the pace of the medical field," says Riesenfeld. "We have to quickly adapt to follow the scientific evidence. Our understanding and our strategies evolved week-to-week. That was exciting."

Like many frontline caregivers and practitioners, Riesenfeld can't help but acknowledge this complex mix of emotions about his pandemic work. "This was a hard time — you can't come out of it feeling great. A lot of people suffered and died. It was truly horrible. But on the other hand, I'm very proud of what we did. We rose to the occasion and served our community." ■

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## Columbia-Bassett Medical School Marks Another Graduation

On May 16, preceding the formal graduation ceremony, there was a virtual celebration honoring the Columbia-Bassett Class of 2021. This event was attended by the graduates, their families, and a small number of faculty members, and included an address by Alisha Moreland-Capua M.D., founder and director at McLean Hospital's Institute for Trauma Informed Systems Changed within the Center of Excellence in Depression and Anxiety Disorders.

Each year the graduating class recognizes one faculty member who exemplifies the traits that students hope to embody in the future. These traits might include dedication to teaching, patient care, scholarship and probity. The 2021 recipient of the Cupola Award to the Columbia-Bassett Teacher of the Year was Daryl Gildenblatt, M.D., attending Obstetrics and Gynecologist and OBGYN Clerkship Director.

Congratulations to the graduating members of the Columbia-Bassett Class of 2021:

**Patrick Ho, M.D.** Urology; ISMMS Mount Sinai Hospital

**Ellen Myers, M.D.** Obstetrics & Gynecology; Christiana Care

**Allison Saunders, M.D.** Child Neurology; Children's National Medical Center

**Mikko Sayre, M.D.** Emergency Medicine; University of Wisconsin Hospital and Clinics

**Mary Shimkus, M.D.** Internal Medicine; ISMMS Mount Sinai Hospital

**Eric Sun, M.D.** Medicine-Pediatrics; University of Chicago Medical Center

**Laurel Whitney, M.D.** Pediatrics; Vanderbilt University Medical Center ■

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## Golden Awards Announced

The 2021 Golden Awards were presented at the year-end celebrations of the Departments of Medicine and Surgery. As this year's recipients of the Golden Apples, the internal medicine residents selected Komron Ostovar, M.D., hospitalist. Surgical residents chose Andrew Griffiths, M.D., Clara Tan-Tam, M.D., general surgeons, and Subashini Daniel, M.D., cardiac surgeon.

Golden stethoscope awards, given by medical students and residents to a senior resident for excellence in teaching, were presented to Ethan Talbot, M.D., Surgery, and Bishesh Shrestha, M.B., B.S., Medicine.

### Columbia-Bassett Students Present Awards to Residents of the Year

Students of the Columbia-Bassett (C-B) Medical School presented the Cupola Award for the C-B Resident of the Year in recognition of the residents who best exemplify dedication to teaching, mentorship, and patient care. The Class of 2021 selected Levi Smucker, M.D., Surgery resident, and Harshith Thyagaturu, M.B., B.S., Medicine resident. ■

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### ResWell from page 1

Emergency Medicine attending), Death over Dinner, literature discussions and now Balint Rounds. Melissa Hochbrueckner, Medical Education specialist, provides invaluable administrative assistance in making these activities a reality for the residents.

While designing ResWell, the ResWell Committee also sought to measure the impact of these interventions on residents' levels of well-being and resistance and welcomed feedback about the interventions. Dr. Kristin Hoover (Internal Medicine resident 2017-2020) presented the results of this work at the March 2019 AIAMC National Meeting in Tucson, Ariz. ResWell initiatives are supported by the Medical Education Endowment Fund.

The success of the ResWell program is evidenced by its sustainability. ResWell remains robust with excellent resident engagement, further expanding the activities and adapting, even through the COVID-19 pandemic. The collaborative nature of its ongoing development, built-in peer network and participant feedback ensure this program remains vital and effective at helping our residents cope and thrive during their training at Bassett. ■

# THE BASSETT FAMILY ALBUM — ALUMNI NEWS

*Please keep your notes and photos coming!*

## 1970s

**John May, M.D.** (Medicine resident 1973-76, attending physician 1981-2021) shared his latest news: "I am 99.5% retired. Still doing a little with NYCAMH (New York Center for Agricultural Medicine and Health). I have just moved to Burlington, Vermont, where two of my daughters are living. I think I will be unpacking boxes for the next 12 years."

**Richard Yarger, M.D.** (Surgery resident 1976-79) is pictured below with his wife Barbara. This photo with three grandsons was taken when visiting their son Fred and his wife Katie. Yarger urges alumni to "Google SurgiMark.com to learn more about Via-Guard, his contribution to the surgical arts. It is in use at many major university medical centers as well as hundreds of communities and affiliated medical centers."



*The Yargers with their grandchildren*

## 1980s

**Donald Raddatz, M.D.** (Attending rheumatologist 1981-2021) has joined the ranks of the "mostly retired" who are still doing some per diem work occasionally. He's still teaching spin cycling classes, volunteering for two local non-profit organizations and playing golf. He wrote, "I thank all the residents and students I had the honor of training. I learned a great deal from

them, more in some instances than they did from me. I will miss my current colleagues and fondly remember having the privilege of coming to Bassett and beginning my rheumatology career here working with Walt Franck and Gary Hoffman." Raddatz and his wife Cathy will continue to reside in Cooperstown, but he plans to spend the winter in a warmer and sunnier locale.

**Karen McShane, M.D.** (Flexible intern 1982-83, attending Ob/Gyn 1989-2012) is still working at Hudson Headwaters Women's Health in Glens Falls practicing general gynecology and urogynecology. On the side, she runs two Airbnbs that are near downtown Glens Falls. She volunteers as house manager and usher at the Wood Theater which has reopened after the pandemic. She states, "There are many musical and

arts events in the area, which I enjoy. I have a Flying Scot sailboat at the Saratoga Lake Sailing Club and crew on other boats for the races."



*Dr. Karen McShane with her significant other Rodney Bentley*

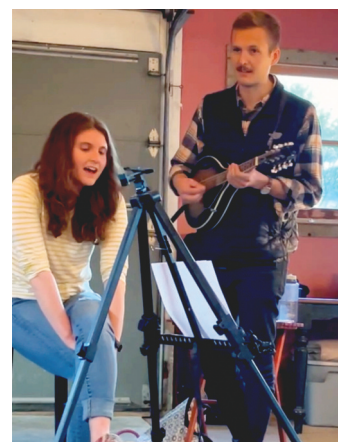
## 1990s

**Eric Knight, M.D.** (Medicine resident 1990-95, attending nephrologist 2004-present), **Paul Tirrell, M.D.** (Attending physician 1990-2017) and **Victor Sacchi, M.D.** (Attending physician/nephrologist 2005-17) had a mini-reunion on a river in the Catskills. Paul and Vic are now retired, and Eric is working in nephrology after a long stint as Transitional Year program director.



*Three doctors enjoying a day fishing in the Catskills*

**Alan James, M.D.** (Medicine Resident 1994-97) continues as an allergist, and his wife is now the medical director of the local hospice. He shared that their children are headed towards related careers. "My daughter is off to Viterbo in LaCrosse and wants to be a bioethicist. My son is looking at Rochester and a few more schools and wants to go to medical school and then into public health. Coronavirus presented challenges to us as it did to all. We have been healthy and have been vaccinated as well."



## 2020s

Recent graduates **Ellen Myers, M.D.** and **Mikko Sayre, M.D.** (Columbia-Bassett Program 2021 graduates) have been known to return to Cooperstown for the Eagle Street Garage Jam. **Rachel MacLean, M.D.** (Columbia-Bassett Program graduate 2020) has also been known to bring her fiddle back to town for a session. Richard Brown, M.D. (Attending Psychiatry 2004-present) is involved with the Medical Humanities program for the Medical School. Part of that effort is to have the students



*Drs. Ellen Myers and Mikko Sayre (top photo L-R) and Dr. Rachel MacLean (below) join in on Eagle Street.*

feel connected to the Cooperstown community. As a result, many musically inclined Bassett residents have come together in recent years to join Rich and his Cooperstown friends and neighbors to pick and sing favorites ranging from Stephen Foster to the Rolling Stones. ■

## Three “Rockers” Mark a New Chapter



Pictured L-R: Drs. Douglas DeLong, Donald Raddatz, and Louis Priem

At the 2021 annual Resident Graduation dinner, held at The Otesaga under limited capacity restrictions due to COVID-19, three attendings were honored with the traditional gift of a rocking chair each for retiring after long and distinguished careers at Bassett.

Dr. Douglas DeLong is retiring after being back at Bassett since 2000. (See the spring issue of *The Cupola* for his personal reflections on a Bassett career.) DeLong was a resident and chief resident at Bassett (co-chief with Dr. James Dalton in 1983). His long career included many titles and responsibilities such as chief of division of General Internal Medicine (Prime Care) from which he stepped down December 2020, and former chair of the Board of Regents of the American College of Physicians. In this photo, he is holding a physician's bag in recognition of being awarded the inaugural Outpatient Teaching Award by the residents.

After more than 40 years at Bassett, most of them as chief of Rheumatology, Dr. Donald Raddatz is retiring. He is a former winner of the Golden Apple Teaching Award. (See more updates from Dr. Raddatz on page 4.)

Dr. Louis Priem is another retiree who was a former resident and chief resident, who returned to work at Bassett after pursuing a career elsewhere. In 2000 he joined the Critical Care division as a hospitalist. Priem is a former winner of the Golden Apple Teaching Award. ■

## Update from Israeli Researcher

**Charles Greenblatt, M.D.** (rotating intern 1956-57) provided this update to his research “shout out” to Bassett alumni that appeared in the previous issue: “Harvard and Montefiore have independently confirmed our results (about reducing Alzheimer’s Disease patients with superficial bladder cancers receiving BCG.) Several other vaccines, given by jab, also reduce dementia significantly, including DPT, flu, and pneumonia. I am anxious to check with others in the Bassett community involved in Alzheimer’s research to find partnerships.” ■

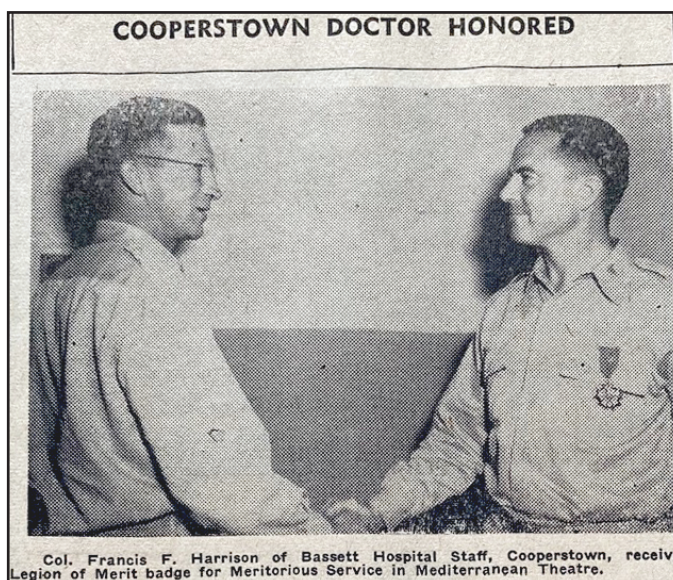
## Bassett Looks Back

by John S. Davis, M.D.



It seems worthwhile occasionally to look at events from Bassett’s early days as a fledgling academic medical center which began in 1927. Francis F. Harrison received his M.D. from Columbia University in 1925. In 1928, he was appointed as associate physician by Bassett’s Director, George Miner Mackenzie, M.D. After time served as a Colonel in the U.S. Army during WW II, from July 1942 to May 1945, mostly in the Mediterranean theater, Harrison returned to Bassett as an outstanding clinician and teacher, retiring in 1965.

The following note was extracted from a chance reading of a lengthy and laudatory 1945 article in *The Freeman’s Journal* after the European phase of World War II had ended.



### “Col. Harrison Wins Legion of Merit Award, Former Bassett Hospital Doctor Honored in Italy”

“Col. Francis F. Harrison, physician at the Mary Imogene Bassett Hospital, Cooperstown, before entering the service May 1942, has been awarded the Legion of Merit badge for exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding service in the United States and Mediterranean theater from July 15, 1942 to May 8, 1945. ...As chief of the medical service since activation of the 33 General Hospital in July 1942, Colonel Harrison manifested exceptional professional knowledge and ability in the organization and direction of his department. ...At the hospital’s various locations overseas, through the medium of weekly meetings and clinical discussions, he encouraged and stimulated the professional growth of his colleagues. His promotion of research resulted in the production of numerous timely papers by members of the hospital staff.”

Harrison continues to have a presence since he donated to Bassett the home in which he and his family lived. Conveniently located adjacent to the hospital, Harrison House is currently utilized by the department of Marketing & Public Relations which shares office space with the Friends of Bassett. ■

## Three Bassett Physicians Awarded Streck Fellowships

More than six years after the program was first established, the William F. Streck Fellowship in Health Policy and Management continues to promote leadership development among Bassett faculty. Three physicians who were awarded Streck fellowships recently have completed or are completing programs that will enhance their leadership skills and enable them to contribute to health care improvement and policy development within and outside of the Bassett network.

Kanica Yashi, M.D., M.P.H., an internist at Norwich Health Center, Juan Jose Delgado Hertado, M.D., M.P.H., an endocrinologist at Bassett Medical Center, and Brian White, D.O., an interventional physiatrist in the Division of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, are the 2020 William F. Streck Fellowship recipients.

Dr. James Dalton, the network's director of Medical Education, said this is the first time that three physicians were selected; typically, the fellowship is awarded to one or two individuals.

"The committee was impressed by the clear desire of these three practitioners to further their professional growth and take on leadership roles that will allow them to positively influence patient care, the work environment and health care policy. We were particularly delighted to give two new, young faculty members the award as well as one of our seasoned physicians.

"The Bassett system has significant opportunity in the areas of diversity and inclusion and health equity as it relates to population health improvement," observed Dalton. "Having young leaders like Drs. Delgado and Yashi interested in taking us in that direction is exciting.

"In addition, Brian White, who interned with me over 15 years ago, has demonstrated significant leadership in our institution and on behalf of the Medical Society of the State of New York. That commitment is deserving of his continued leadership development."

### Kanica Yashi, M.D., M.P.H.



*Kanica Yashi, M.D., M.P.H.*

In January and February of this year, Dr. Yashi took advantage of Cornell University's eight-week online certification program to earn the University's Diversity and Inclusion Certificate. The program is designed to help attendees understand the perceptual, institutional, and psychological processes that impact the ways people interact with each other in order to make an organization a more supportive and engaging place to work.

"As a health care professional and team member, I strive to model values of workplace sensitivity and regularly reflect on unconscious bias," wrote Yashi in her fellowship application. "As a physician leader, I wish to actively create spaces that enable inclusion."

Recently, while discussing the value of the Cornell program she completed, Yashi said she would like to be part of a diversity, equity and inclusion group at Bassett.

"Everyone should have a voice," she remarked. "Going forward, I am hoping to assist with taking some assessments within the organization and coming up with solutions. "I am the only one person of color in our Norwich health center out of approximately 40 employees. In time, I hope to see more diversity, especially in rural America. I think we have on our

shoulders the responsibility to reach out to the community and educate them."

### Juan José Delgado, M.D.



*Juan José Delgado, M.D.*

Dr. Hurtado attended the Institute of Healthcare Improvement (IHI) Forum on Quality Improvement December 6 - 9, 2020. The shared aim of the clinicians who attended the IHI forum is to make health care work equitably for all.

"I am a new provider at Bassett Healthcare interested in leadership, quality improvement and population health. I am committed to providing great quality care and facilitating quality improvement at the system level," said Delgado in his fellowship application.

"Long term, I hope to have a leadership role within the Bassett network. As an effective leader, you have to be knowledgeable on topics such as those covered in the IHI Forum — good leadership skills, improvement science, addressing value, cost and quality, and patient-centered care."

### Brian White, D.O.



*Brian White, D.O.*

Dr. White is in the midst of completing Cornell University's 12-week online Critical Thinking certificate program. The program facilitates improved problem solving and critical thinking and will benefit Bassett through White's role on the network CEO practitioner advisory council, as well as his work as a member of three committees of the Medical Society for the State of New York, and two Spine Intervention Society committees.

The William F. Streck, M.D., fellowship was established in 2014 to honor former Bassett president and CEO Dr. William Streck. Fellows travel to conferences and/or engage in projects that allow them to return with insights and ideas that they can share with colleagues and use to advance health care in the rural populations they serve.

The committee members who selected the 2020 fellowship recipients include Bassett Medical Center former Chief Nursing Officer Donna Anderson, Chief of Oncology and Hematology Dr. Anush Patel, Director of the Bassett Research Institute Dr. Anne Gadowski, Director of Medical Education Dr. James Dalton, Bassett Healthcare Network Vice President of Patient Access Michael Ogden, and Friends of Bassett Director of Foundation Operations Joanne Tobey. ■



#### A reminder: Who are the members of the Bassett Medical Alumni Association?

You are past and current interns, residents and fellows. You are former and current members of the senior doctoral staff. And you are students of the Columbia-Bassett Medical School program or students who spent your final two years of medical school at Bassett.

## IN MEMORIAM: BASSETT REMEMBERS

### James Singleton Ward, M.D.

Dr. James S. Ward died March 18, 2021 in Albany at the Albany Medical Center. He was a 1965 graduate of Hamilton College, the valedictorian of his class. He completed his undergraduate medical education at the University of Rochester School of Medicine. After his first post graduate year at Vanderbilt University, he returned to Rochester to train in Family Medicine. He spent more than 20 years in the U.S. Navy, where he was honored with many meritorious service awards. Upon his retirement, he established residence in the Mohawk Valley where he worked at the Bassett Healthcare Network regional clinic in Herkimer and became the medical director at Valley Health Services. He will be remembered for his keen intellect, his appreciation and enjoyment of his geriatric patients and their stories, his humility, and a wonderful sense of humor.

He is survived by his wife of over 53 years, Linda Ann (Hoaglander) and daughters, Lynne M. Ward and Sarah E. Harvey and her husband Jeremy. Also surviving are his three beloved grandchildren and identical twin brother, George N. Ward.

### Roy Otto Resnikoff, M.D.

Dr. Roy O. Resnikoff, died March 13, 2021, at his home in La Jolla, California, after a long battle with dementia. He grew up, in Plainfield, New Jersey, and attended Rutgers University, where he graduated in 1965 near the top of his class. He received his undergraduate medical education at New York's Albert Einstein School of Medicine, joining the Bassett house staff as a flexible intern in 1969. He married wife, Philomene, a student at Vassar, during that busy year. From Cooperstown, he entered the Psychiatry residency at the University of Colorado. A two-year stint with the Navy in San Diego followed. After settling in La Jolla, where he remained for more than 40 years, he acquired an impressive reputation as both a psychiatrist and family therapist, producing a well reviewed book, *Bridges for Healing: Integrating Family Therapy and Psychopharmacology*.

He was a man of extraordinary talent and energy. He was an accomplished classical and contemporary pianist, earning money while in college and medical school by performing at venues in New York City and the Catskills. He was an

### Davis from page 8

took time, which is in scarce supply now. I think it's important to value and preserve that legacy as much as possible."

Davis is helping preserve that legacy not only in practice, but also in giving. The indelible impression Bassett had on her prompted Davis to designate the organization as a beneficiary in her will, helping to ensure that future residents can have a similar experience.

"My experience at Bassett really changed how I felt about practicing medicine. In the end, it is about how you treat people. People remember that. I remembered that."

Learn about ways to support Bassett through a legacy gift by visiting [friendsofbassett.org](https://friendsofbassett.org) or contacting Joanne Tobey, Director of Foundation Operations, at [joanne.tobey@bassett.org](mailto:joanne.tobey@bassett.org). ■

impressive athlete, playing baseball in his youth and enjoying golf, squash, tennis, swimming, and cycling through his later adult years. He was an excellent and creative cook even during that busy intern year. Enthusiasm and energy were directed to all of his undertakings both at work and play. He was seldom seen without a winning smile, perhaps accounting for his enduring charisma.

He is survived by his former wife, Philomene, as well as his sons David and Alan and their families. Also surviving are his older brothers, Neal and Don Resnikoff.

### Balázs Seléndy, M.D. (1937-2021)

Balázs Seléndy, M.D., born in Budapest, Hungary, died at age 83 at home in Fly Creek, N.Y. on July 5, 2021, after an intense and devoted life of public service and study in three countries. His early life included involvement in the student-led revolution against the Soviet-backed Hungarian People's Republic. He received his medical degree in 1964 from the University Catholique de Louvain in Belgium and emigrated to the United States. After training in Obstetrics and Gynecology at New York City's Mt. Sinai Hospital, he joined Bassett in 1972 as attending obstetrician and gynecologist. Board-certified in Obstetrics and Gynecology, he spent over 30 years at Bassett, and was assistant clinical professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons. Seléndy retired in 2003 but kept up many Bassett-related activities, along with a continuing life of reflection, writing, reading, motorcycling, karate, and photography, while living with his beloved Patricia Gambitta in Fly Creek. An extended obituary recounting his engaging and multifaceted life may be found at <https://obituaries.thedailystar.com/obituary/dr-balazs-selendy-1082742221>. ■

### Physician Employment Opportunities in the Bassett Healthcare Network

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## Humanism in Medicine – Preserving Bassett’s Legacy

*“I always felt that Bassett was this little jewel with a very specific culture and unusual history and that it is important to help preserve that legacy.”*

Dr. Merideth Davis

It has been more than three decades since Merideth Davis, M.D., completed her transitional year and a six-month internal medicine residency at Bassett, and yet the experience was impactful enough that she still remembers specific interactions with patients and mentoring physicians that would mold her own approach to medicine.

“My time at Bassett was incredible,” recalls Davis, who received her Doctor of Medicine from the University of Rochester in 1989. “Cooperstown was a huge change from what I had been exposed to previously. Physicians would call you when one of their patients got admitted. They’d go see the patient at night; they knew everything about the patient and their families. They would have the medical students and residents over for dinner. It was such a wonderful place.”

Davis went on to complete her internal medicine residency at the University of Colorado, but she has remained connected to Bassett as a member of the Medical Alumni Association, serving as president for six years.

As an internist in primary care, Davis has found herself drawn to helping vulnerable populations. One of her first positions after leaving Bassett was as a practitioner for the Indian Health Service in Keams Canyon, Ariz.

“It was in the middle of nowhere. Talk about poverty — cinder block hovels, no running water — but I loved it. We were allowed to be really creative in how best to help our patients.”



Merideth Davis, M.D.

Davis also spent several years at a substance abuse clinic for the homeless in Miami, Fla.

“It was extremely challenging. We had very limited resources. It was like the Wild West in terms of figuring out how to help our patients. I told myself I had to stay at least one year. I stayed nine.”

That commitment to the person and a sometimes unconventional approach to problem solving has stayed with Davis, who now works with a largely immigrant population at a community clinic in Boston.

“Life is really hard. They often have limited education and limited financial means. You want people to be healthier and take better care of themselves in a way that will work for them.”

Davis’ weekends are often spent reviewing her patients’ medical history and past imaging and test results in preparation for the next week’s appointments. During clinic visits, the computer is set aside so that she can give her full attention to the patient and not chance missing something that may help inform a diagnosis. Visit notes are entered in the electronic medical record afterward.

“I know medicine has changed a lot. That is true everywhere, but it is also true that every individual is sacred. People who don’t really have a voice need to be treated well. When I did my rotations at Bassett, the attention each person received

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