



# THE CUPOLA

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

Summer 2017  
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## Carolyn Wolf-Gould, M.D.: Robert Wood Johnson Clinical Scholar

**Recognized for establishing the first rural, community-based multidisciplinary transgender health center in the U.S.**

*By Jill Maney*



*Carolyn Wolf-Gould, M.D.*

Carolyn Wolf-Gould, M.D., went into medicine to care for families, to follow patients from their childhood through their old age. "I love cradle-to-grave care," she said. She went to medical school after she served in the Peace Corps, in Africa. She and her husband, Christopher Wolf-Gould, M.D., met while attending the Yale Medical School, after which they completed residencies in family medicine at the University of Rochester, and chose Oneonta as the place to start the Susquehanna Family

Practice together, because they wanted to raise a family in a friendly, rural community. They have three children.

Their practice, part of Bassett Healthcare Network's Fox Care, thrived and encompassed the variety of care that general practice entails, which Wolf-Gould loved: "Family doctors are always doing a lot of everything...you're always faced with things you've never seen before." More challenges soon arose. In 2007, a patient called and identified himself as a transgender man. He said he was moving to Oneonta because his partner had accepted a position at a college there, and he needed a physician to provide testosterone for him. Wolf-Gould responded that she was sorry, "but I had no training and knew nothing about how to care for transgender people."

She is now a national authority on transgender care, a Robert Wood Johnson Clinical Scholar, and a passionate advocate for LGBTQ rights as well as the medical director at the Gender Wellness Center—a swift journey and a long way to travel in 10 years.

When that first patient insisted he needed help, Carolyn Wolf-Gould agreed to learn the basics of hormone therapy. Soon, more transgender patients joined her practice, and she quickly perceived that they brought with them a set of complex needs involving mental health, social welfare, and medicine. She sought training at Choices Counseling and Consulting in Albany with Arlene Lev, L.C.S.W.-R., a national leader in transgender mental health. As she advanced, Wolf-Gould developed cultural competency and became the physician for the group and the instructor for their Training Institute for Gender, Relationships, Identity, and Sexuality (TIGRIS). In 2012, she attended the biennial symposium for the World Professional Association in Transgender Health (WPATH) to obtain advanced training in the medical, legal, and social needs of the transgender population.

By 2013, her work with transgender patients grew to the point that it needed a center to accommodate it, so Wolf-Gould and her partners at the Susquehanna Family Practice created the Gender Wellness Center (GWC). To date the center has served more than 500 transgender patients.

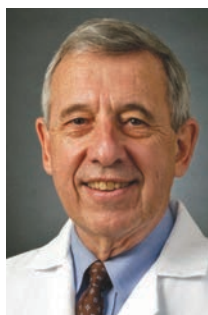
***Wolf-Gould to page 2***

## Message from the Editor

*By Alan J. Kozak, M.D.*

The recent merger between the Bassett Healthcare Network and the A.O. Fox Hospital has added to our family a group of practitioners with some unique skills and talents. Among these is Carolyn Wolf-Gould, M.D., who, with the help and support of her physician husband Chris and other team members, has been successful in setting up a long-needed system of care for the LGBTQ community in this region. The fact that the practice is large and accommodates patients from areas beyond our usual catchment underscores its need as well as its quality. Its value at not only the local but also the national level is demonstrated by the award of grant support from the prestigious Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

Lagging behind response to the need for such services is the



*Alan J. Kozak, M.D.*

education of medical students, residents, and other health care trainees in the care of the LGBTQ population. However, this Oneonta-based clinic has already distinguished itself among our students as a premier learning site, whose practitioners are extraordinary role models. Spending time with mentors in Primary Care, such as these, who have identified a health care need, and creatively and effectively responded to this need may inspire some of our students and other trainees to consider careers in Primary Care, given the potential for incredible contribution, fulfillment, and gratification.

In this role, Wolf-Gould and her team members continue a Bassett tradition of paving the way for young practitioners to explore patient needs and provide essential care. ■

*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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## Bassett & Fox Pursue Integration

Medical education alumni and former physician staff members may be surprised to learn that seven years ago, A.O. Fox Hospital joined Bassett Healthcare Network. Since then, Bassett and Fox have worked together to enhance the delivery of health care through the improvement of facilities, integration of services and expansion of specialty programs. Specialty programs previously added or expanded as the result of the affiliation include general surgery and orthopedic, heart and cancer care with Bassett providers traveling to Fox facilities to provide services to patients.

In June of 2015, Fox Hospital was awarded \$4.2 million under the state's Vital Access Provider Assurance Program (VAPAP) with the recommendation that Bassett Medical Center and Fox Hospital establish closer corporate ties. In addition, in 2016, Fox Hospital received approval for \$21.4 million in Essential Health Care Provider Support Funding. The bulk of this state grant was used for debt restructuring and to pave the way for Bassett and Fox to pursue the transformation plan proposed in accordance with the VAPAP requirements.

Transition teams comprised of staff from both hospitals have been working to determine the best ways to accomplish the proposed changes in programs and formulate timelines for implementation. At this point, the clinical

and medical staff integration of Fox Hospital and Bassett Medical Center have made significant progress. Fox has completed its migration to the Bassett Healthcare Network electronic health record (EHR), adopted the network's registration, scheduling and billing processes, and previously Fox-employed providers have joined the Bassett Medical Group (BMG) as Bassett-employed clinicians.

Bassett Healthcare Network President and CEO Vance M. Brown, M.D., noted, "When considered in aggregate, what the staff and leadership of the two hospitals have achieved over the past seven years is impressive" ■



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and updates at  
**Bassett Medical  
Alumni Association**



*The Gender Wellness Team from left: Christopher Wolf-Gould, M.D.; Carolyn Wolf-Gould, M.D.; Tania Villa, P.A.; Diane Georgeson, M.D.; Justine Woolner-Wise, L.C.S.W.*

Network. The Scholar Program helps clinicians from a variety of fields expand their influence beyond the walls of their local hospital or clinic with funding for projects addressing health disparities.

The award offered not only funding but also recognition for the work being done by the Gender Wellness Center team. It also affirmed the seriousness of the problems experienced by members of the transgender community, who often face discrimination, even when they seek treatment at health care facilities.

At the GWC, Wolf-Gould directs a team of five clinicians, including herself, Christopher Wolf-Gould, M.D.; Diane Georgeson, M.D.; physician assistant Tania Villa; and Justine Woolner-Wise, L.C.S.W. In addition to other services, they provide gender-affirming surgical services, mental health services, training for regional health care providers, medical students, and residents, and conduct community-based research. ■

### **Wolf-Gould from page 1**

It offers comprehensive, affirming medical, surgical, and mental health care services to transgender and gender-nonconforming people and their families.

The Gender Wellness Center at Susquehanna Family Practice has been offering trans-specific health care as part of routine primary care since 2007. Over the last 10 years, the center has experienced exponential growth. It is the first rural, community-based multidisciplinary transgender health center in the United States.

In 2016, Wolf-Gould recognized patient demand had outgrown the center's ability to accommodate it, and she began looking for funding in order to expand. Last fall, she was awarded a Robert Wood Johnson Clinical Scholar grant to create a center of excellence in Transgender Health within the Bassett Healthcare

## Updates from the Columbia-Bassett Program



*Megan Brennan, M.D., Assistant Dean for Education, Daniel Hoesterey, Kathryn Nagel, Nicholas Feinberg, Wilson Sui, Joanna Tu, Peter Young, Kirby Pruis, Henna Shaikh, Jonah Zuflacht, Marcos Lopez, Henry Weil, M.D., Senior Associate Dean.*

On May 13, preceding the graduation ceremony in New York City, there was a graduation celebration in Cooperstown. Held at The Farmers' Museum, this event was attended by over 100 faculty members and family, and included an address by Elizabeth Gauffberg, M.D., Director of Professional Development at Cambridge Health Alliance, and a brief talk by Henry Weil, M.D., Assistant Dean for Education. Columbia-Bassett certificates were presented to each student by a Bassett faculty member.

Each year the graduating class recognizes one faculty member who most exemplifies the traits that students hope to embody in the future. These traits might include dedication to teaching, patient care, scholarship, and probity. The 2017 recipient of the Cupola Award to the Columbia-Bassett Teacher of the Year was Gregory Cummings, M.D., Attending Physician in Neurology.

### **Daniel Hoesterey**

Internal Medicine, UCLA Medical Center

### **Marcos Lopez, Jr.**

Plastic Surgery, University of North Carolina

### **Kathryn Nagel**

Medicine-Pediatrics, Yale-New Haven

### **Henna Shaikh**

Pediatrics, Yale-New Haven

### **Wilson Sui**

Urology, Vanderbilt University Medical Center

### **Joanna Tu**

Transitional, Bassett Medical Center  
Dermatology, Stanford University Programs

### **Kirby Woodall**

OB/GYN, University of Missouri Health

### **Peter Young**

Internal Medicine, Columbia University Medical Center

### **Jonah Zuflacht**

Neurology, Harvard/Beth Israel  
Deaconess Medical Center ■

On May 17, the Columbia-Bassett Class of 2017 medical students attended their graduation in New York City. To no one's surprise, they were remarkably successful in the residency match.

### **Nicholas Feinberg**

Medicine  
Preliminary/  
Radiology,  
University of  
Chicago Medical  
Center

## Resident Receives E. Donnell Thomas Outstanding Research Presentation Award

This year's recipient of the E. Donnell Thomas Outstanding Research Presentation Award is Umair Iqbal, M.B., B.S., for his research exploring patients who suffer from fainting after a sudden drop in blood pressure and a potential diagnosis of acute pulmonary embolism.

Iqbal is an internal medicine resident in his second year of training at Bassett Medical Center. Iqbal's research project and poster were among nine recently presented as part of the E. Donnell Thomas Research Day.

"More than 40 percent of patients who are evaluated in the emergency room with fainting are discharged with an unknown cause," explains Iqbal. "Syncope is sometimes the first symptom of acute pulmonary embolism, and this diagnosis should be immediately considered in all of these patients. My research highlights that syncope is associated with poor outcomes in acute pulmonary embolism and the importance of this close monitoring. It could save lives."

Iqbal worked on the study project with mentors Edward Bischof, M.D., program director, internal medicine, and Ahmad Chaudhary, M.D., attending physician, at Bassett Medical Center.

Iqbal earned his medical degree from Dow Medical College in Pakistan. After completing his residency at Bassett, he plans to pursue a gastroenterology fellowship.

"I'd like to thank Bassett Research Institute for their excellence and support during the course of my research, with special accolades to Melissa Scribani, business manager, and Jennifer Victory, clinical research nurse supervisor," says Iqbal.

The E. Donnell Thomas Award is given annually to a Bassett trainee who has conducted exceptional research while at Bassett Medical Center during residency. The award is named in honor of E. Donnell Thomas, M.D., who served as Bassett's physician-in-chief from 1955 to 1963. He was awarded the 1990 Nobel Prize in Medicine for his pioneering work in bone marrow transplantation, which he began at Bassett. Thomas performed the world's first human bone marrow transplant at Bassett in 1956. ■

## Awards Announced

The 2017 Golden Apple awards, given by the residents to the faculty members they felt were their most outstanding teachers. The internal medicine residents selected Charles Hyman, M.D., Attending Physician in Infectious Disease. The surgical residents chose William Richtsmeier, M.D., Attending Otolaryngologist and Division Chief of Otolaryngology and Andrew Reis, M.D., Attending Surgeon and Director of Hand Surgery Program.

Golden Stethoscope awards, given by medical students and residents to a senior resident for excellence in teaching, were presented to Natanong "Ten"

Thamcharoen, M.D. (Internal Medicine) and Rachel Zehr, M.D. (Surgery).

### **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. Selected by the Class of 2017, the residents recognized recipients are Ethan Talbot, M.D. (General Surgery resident) and Anawin Sanguankeo, M.D. (Internal Medicine resident). ■



# THE BASSETT FAMILY ALBUM — ALUMNI NEWS

*Please keep your notes and photos coming!*

## 1940s

**John W. Severinghaus, M.D.** (Rotating Intern 1949-51) writes, he's 95 and active with professional commitments including two lectures in London recently. He still drives, bikes, and lectures at UCSF (as Professor Emeritus) and elsewhere. One story he remembers of his time at Bassett: he accompanied a local minister who got bulbar polio in 1951 by ambulance from Cooperstown to Albany where he died in an iron lung.

## 1950s

**Chuck Greenblatt, M.D.** (Rotating Intern 1956-57). As professor emeritus (in Jerusalem, Israel) he has turned his attention to what one might call "wireless pollution". Pediatricians, at the psychological level, are speaking of "screen-time" addiction, now often adding up to more time than kids spend sleeping. The NIH has recently published a report of the National Toxicological Program clearly indicating that cell phone level radiation causes cancer in rats, and the same type (gliomas) which have been cited in humans. Greenblatt would like to hear from others in the Bassett community with interest in this area. (charlesg@ekmd.huji.ac.il)

## 1960s

**David Svahn, M.D.** (Rotating/Internal Medicine Resident 1965-67 and Attending Physician 1972-

2007) recently published the book, *Conflict & Genius*, the tale of a 19th-century Episcopal priest, poet and scholar named William Wilberforce Lord who lived a fascinating life during the Civil War. Lord eventually ended up at Christ Episcopal Church in Cooperstown. During his life, he befriended the likes of Jefferson Davis-President of the Confederacy and Edward Clark, scion of the important Cooperstown philanthropic family, and served as Chaplain in the Confederate Army. Lord published three books of poetry, praised by William Wordsworth and soundly trashed by Edgar Allan Poe. Though brilliant he managed to antagonize a lot of people during his life, hence the title, *Conflict & Genius*. Svahn welcomes questions at dsvahn65@gmail.com

**Roger MacMillan, M.D.** (Surgery Resident 1966-70; Attending Surgeon 1977-2004) reports that after retirement, he volunteered to work at the Baseball Hall of Fame, which helped him "get out of the house (and my wife's hair), fulfill my passion for baseball, and keep me occupied on rainy days." In January, he marked his 10th consecutive year there, becoming their longest serving volunteer ever. He writes, "I also enjoy teaching ATLS courses still, causing me to believe that I am still a doctor."

## Jeffrey Crandall, M.D.

(Internal Medicine Resident 1967-69) writes, "Holly and I have recently moved from our Iowa acreage to a home in town. She retired from the University of Northern Iowa where she was administrator. I am still professionally involved with medicine on a part-time basis. I am coaching physician leaders throughout Unity Point Health in Iowa, Illinois, and Wisconsin. In this role, I travel some, but the part-time involvement allows very adequate time to pursue our interests and tend to those of our family and our 11 grandchildren."

## 1970s

### William Samuels, M.D.

(Psychiatry Resident 1971-73) After his residency, he worked at Brown University Medical School, was in private practice, and retired in 2012. Both of their kids are physicians: a daughter, Eve, is a psychiatrist and works at the University of South Carolina Medical School in Greenville. A son, Aaron, is an internist and an epidemiologist, and is head of malaria research for the CDC, living in Kenya with his family. He adds, "Beth and I have retired to Beaufort, S.C., and spend summers in Fitzwilliam, N.H. We consider ourselves very fortunate. I treasure my years at Bassett and the friends that I made."

### Ross E. Zumwalt, M.D.

(Rotating Intern 1971-72; Pathology Resident 1972-73) recalls that during his residency, he worked with David Blumenstock, M.D. on the analysis of tissues from the transplant research. When Blumenstock included him as a co-author of one of the early articles in the journal *Transplantation* in 1974, it was Zumwalt's first scientific publication in an academic

career that would include many publications. Most recently, Zumwalt authored a textbook in forensic pathology that will be out later in 2017. He continues to work as a forensic pathologist in New Mexico.



*Anthony Cabot, M.D. enjoying retirement.*

### Anthony Cabot, M.D.

(Surgical Resident 1973-74) shares the secret of retiring gently after 40 years in a busy private practice in orthopaedic surgery in the Atlanta suburbs. "Reading about the personal stress of suddenly being 'unemployed and unappreciated,' I developed a new, healthy practice model. In the last three months of practice, I furnished my patients with my cell phone number and told them I would be available for house calls or telephone consultation, as needed. By charging a very nominal fee for a visit, the patients were delighted to see me when faced with the alternative of large office bureaucracy, high deductibles, and less than optimal communication. The rewards of pain relief from a cortisone injection or peace of mind from an unhurried discussion of their likely diagnosis and effective treatments seemed very satisfying. The several visits per week have proved to be a wonderful transition into retirement, psychologically and staying medically current.

**Family to page 5**

## SAVE THE DATE

Join in celebrating the  
30th Anniversary of the Bassett Medical  
Alumni Association

October 5 - 8, 2018 • Cooperstown, NY

### Family from page 4

I highly recommend it for those physicians who want to 'feel the water' before jumping into the pool."

### 1980s

**Linda Collins, M.D.** (Internal Medicine Resident 1986-90) and **John Dunn, M.D.** (Internal Medicine Resident 1984-87, 1989-90) are still enjoying life in northern Vermont, both practicing primary care internal medicine, still skiing and rock climbing. Dunn writes, "I recently opened my own solo practice with myself and a medical assistant, called Irish Springs Internal Medicine. I see patients from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. four days a week and the shortest visit is half an hour. It is very civilized, but of course not very lucrative." He and his wife also bought an old tennis camp in town and have turned it into a community fitness and recreation center. They hope to get back to Cooperstown for a visit, and welcome alumni to stop for a visit if in northern Vermont.

**Chris Sidford, M.D.** (Transitional Year Resident 1987-88) created a unique medical practice nine years ago. Called Emergency Black Bag, it is a private emergency medical consultancy that provides individuals and families with highly qualified emergency medicine physicians 24/7 wherever they may be the world. It also supplies a personalized medical kit with critical supplies based on a patient's medical information and destination. Learn more about this practice at: [www.emergencyblackbag.com](http://www.emergencyblackbag.com)

### 1990s

**Francis Nolan, M.D.** (Transitional Year Resident 1990-91) After six years practicing Emergency Medicine in Brisbane, Australia, Francis and Stephanie Nolan are

returning to their home in Cooperstown with their five kids. Francis has been working EM locums around Australia, most recently in Tasmania, where he was able to climb the iconic Cradle Mountain. The Nolans are looking forward to reuniting with their many friends and neighbors in the community.



Francis Nolan, M.D. while down under.

### 2000s

**John Mastrangelo, M.D.** (Transitional Year Resident 2006-06) is now Chief of Staff as well as Chairman of the Department of Radiology at Nathan Littauer Hospital in Gloversville, N.Y. He and his wife Shannon are about to celebrate their 10th wedding anniversary.

Their two preschoolers, John and Nicolina, "both claim they want to be doctors but Nicolina also wants a unicorn from Santa so who knows!"



Future physicians in the Mastrangelo family

**Erin Gillaspie, M.D.** (Surgical Resident 2009-13) has settled in at Vanderbilt and loves her practice. She's had an active year, presenting research all over the country and internationally at the meetings of: The American College of Surgeons, the American Association of Thoracic Surgery-Focus on Thoracic, the Southern Thoracic Surgery Association and most recently at the European Society of Thoracic Surgeons.



Erin Gillaspie (center) with Vika Maslova (right) and Joan Delto, M.D. (left, Surgical Resident 2009-10) who finished her training in urology at Mt. Sinai in Miami. Maslova a former I.C.U. nurse at Bassett, is now a C.R.N.A. practicing in Maine.

### 2010s

**Julia Manzerova, M.D., Ph.D.** (Transitional Year Resident 2012-13) accepted a position of Assistant Professor of Radiation Oncology in the Weill Cornell

Department of Radiation Oncology. She will be working at New York Presbyterian - Brooklyn Methodist Hospital in Park Slope. She misses everyone at Bassett, "Cooperstown is a magical place full of magical people."

**Nitipong Permpalung, M.D., M.P.H.** (Internal Medicine Resident 2012-15) recently received his Master of Public Health from Harvard School of Public Health and begins his fellowship in transplant infectious disease at Duke University in July.

Permpalung was honored as the recipient of this year's Massachusetts Infectious Disease Society Finland Research Award for Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, where he completed his fellowship in Infectious Disease in June.



Nitipong Permpalung at his graduation, flanked by his father Vit and his mother Pakakrong Permpalung. ■

### 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.



## Departing Residents Announce Plans

Members of the house staff are completing their training at Bassett and moving on to new endeavors. Departing residents, their programs at Bassett, and their plans upon leaving are:

**Rebecca Barnes, M.D.** (General Surgery), General Surgery Practice, Alaska Native Medical Center, Anchorage, AK.

**Devang Bhoiwala, M.D.** (Transitional Year), Ophthalmology Residency, Albany Medical Center, Albany, N.Y.

**Sowmya (Chidurala) Boddhula, M.B., B.S.** (Internal Medicine), Primary Care, Bassett Medical Center, Cooperstown, N.Y.

**Praveena Coimbatore, M.B., B.S., M.P.H.** (Internal Medicine), undetermined at press time

**Oliver Fischer, M.D.** (Transitional Year), Ophthalmology Residency, Bronx-Lebanon Hospital/Mount Sinai, New York, N.Y.

**Natalia Golub, M.D., Ph.D.** (Transitional Year), Preventive Medicine Residency, Johns Hopkins/Bloomberg School of Public Health, Baltimore, Md.

**Lola Grillo, M.D.** (Transitional Year), Ophthalmology Residency, Nassau University Medical Center, East Meadow, N.Y.

**Thomas Harvey, M.D.** (Transitional Year), Radiology Residency, Winthrop University Hospital, Mineola, N.Y.

**Joseph Hedrick, M.D.** (General Surgery), Trauma and General Surgery, St. Elizabeth Medical Center, Utica, N.Y.

**Fatima Ilyas, M.B., B.S.** (Internal Medicine), undetermined at press time

**Keonna Johnson, M.D.** (General Surgery), Special Fellow, Queens Hospital Center, Queens, N.Y.

**Jacob Katsnelson, M.D.** (General Surgery), General Surgery Residency, Abington Memorial Hospital, Abington, Pa.

**Samuel Levine, M.D.** (Transitional Year), Anesthesiology Residency, St. Elizabeth's Medical Center, Boston, Mass.

**Andrew Liu, M.D.** (Transitional Year), Radiology Residency, New York-Presbyterian Hospital, New York, N.Y.

**Srujana Madderla, M.B., B.S.** (Internal Medicine), Hospitalist, Hunterdon Medical Center, Flemington, N.J.

**Narmadha Panneerselvam, M.B., B.S.** (Internal Medicine), Hospitalist, Monmouth Medical Center, Long Branch, N.J.

**Anawin Sanguankeo, M.D., M.P.H.** (Internal Medicine), Nephrology Fellowship, Johns Hopkins Hospital, Baltimore, Md.

**Afeefa Shahnawaz, M.B., B.S.** (Internal Medicine), Hospitalist, Crouse Hospital, Syracuse, N.Y.

**Frederick Shrimp II, M.D.** (Internal Medicine), Internal Medicine Residency, York Hospital, York, Pa.

**Suthanya Sornprom, M.D.** (Internal Medicine), Infectious Disease Fellowship, Dartmouth-Hitchcock Hospital, Lebanon, N.H.

**Matthew Tangel, M.D.** (Transitional Year), Radiology Residency, Mount-Sinai/Beth Israel Hospital, New York, N.Y.

**Natanong Thamcharoen, M.D.** (Internal Medicine), Nephrology Fellowship, Beth Israel/Deaconess Medical Center, Boston, Mass.

**Sikarin Upala, M.D.** (Internal Medicine), Endocrinology Fellowship, University of Chicago, Chicago, Ill.

**Josh Wallsh, M.D.** (Internal Medicine), Ophthalmology Residency, Albany Medical Center, Albany, N.Y.

**Wai Chung Yong, M.D.** (Internal Medicine), Primary Care, Baystate Medical Practices, Greenfield, Mass.

**Rachel Zehr, M.D.** (General Surgery), General Surgery Practice, AO Fox Hospital and Oneonta Surgical Associates, Oneonta, N.Y. ■

## BASSETT LOOKS BACK: Bassett's First International Resident

*By John S. Davis, M.D.*



Walter Luft obtained his M.D. from the University of Berlin, but then fled Hitler's Germany and eventually came to the U.S. He was invited in 1938 by Bassett's Director, George Mackenzie, M.D., to join the Bassett intern staff for six months when another intern had to leave for treatment of tuberculosis at Homer Folks Hospital in Oneonta. Thus Luft was Bassett's first international house officer. The next would be Poonputt (Eddie) Chotiprasidhi, M.D., from Thailand (Transitional Year 1993-94, Internal Medicine Resident 1994-96).

Luft signed on at the going rate of \$50 per month plus room and board and began work on the surgical team of John Powers, M.D., recalled by Luft as "a strict disciplinarian who reminded me of the

Prussians." But out of the hospital he found Powers to be very warm, and the two men became best of friends. Luft was also very impressed by the skill and teaching of Surgeon-in-Chief, Monroe McIver, M.D. Luft also described internist Francis Harrison, M.D., as one who really practiced the art of medicine in addition to its science.

Luft died in 2008 at the age of 100, after many years in general practice in nearby Milford, where he was highly respected and continued a strong relationship with Bassett until retiring in 1985. He had made hundreds of house calls, including one at midnight where "a woman was sitting in a chair with a little boy half-born, in the breech position. I had alcohol in my bag, so I put it on my hands and delivered the little boy. He lived, and they were so happy they named him after me."

For many years, Luft faithfully attended Bassett's weekly Grand Rounds. The author could find only one photo of him (red arrow) at Grand Rounds in the mid-1970s. Perhaps some readers will recognize and remember others in the photo! ■

## 25 MISSIONS, 25 COUNTRIES: Tom Huntsman, M.D., on Life-Changing Mission Work



Since 1993 and nearly every year since, Tom Huntsman, M.D., Division Chief of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery at Bassett Medical Center, has traveled around the globe performing life-changing surgeries and procedures on impoverished children who wouldn't otherwise be able to have access to care. Through the Resurge (formerly known

as Interplast) and Medical Missions for Children organizations, he has undertaken 25 mission trips to as many countries, from Vietnam to Russia to Mozambique, often in very remote areas, to serve others who are less fortunate. Huntsman is very passionate about this work and he is also humbled by it.

Huntsman took a few minutes for a Q&A:

**Q** What inspires you to do mission work?

**A** The same reason I went into medicine—a desire to help people. There is the element of obligation to help those who can't help themselves. This work allows me to experience cases that I've only seen in medical textbooks and to work alongside fabulous, impressive people all over the world who are also motivated to help others. Mission work allows me to teach and show surgeons and others how to do procedures that they've only read about. There is also the novelty of the experience and being able to travel to parts of the world rarely seen.

### **Garrity from page 8**

Otsego County in the 1960s, and he followed in the 1970s. By the time he started his residency at Bassett in 1986, he knew the area well.

After his initial work at Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons, he arrived at Bassett to begin his residency feeling somewhat discouraged about medicine, but "Bassett really saved me." His experience during his three-year residency was "pivotal."

He remembers his years at Bassett vividly. "We worked extremely hard. It was very difficult but also incredibly rewarding. We had a lot of responsibility but also a lot of support." It was just the right combination.

As he put it, health care comes down to the people deploying it: the doctors, the nurses, and the staff at the front desk. Those people make the difference. Michael Garrity supports Bassett because he remembers how "amazing" John Davis, M.D., was, how "inspiring a teacher" Alan Kozak, M.D., was, "what a great mentor Dick Reese, M.D., was" and how much he learned from Carol Beechy, M.D., when he worked at her primary care clinic in Richfield Springs.

Garrity gives to Bassett to return the support he received when he did his residency. "I had a great experience there," he says. To add your support to his, call the Friends of Bassett at (607) 547-3928. Thank you! ■

**Q** What types of surgeries do you most often perform?

**A** My work usually falls in one of three categories: trauma or congenital disorders, such as cleft lip/cleft palate; burn sequelae, such as contractures, from untreated burns; other trauma and tumors.

**Q** What has been your most memorable patient interaction?

**A** There was a young girl I met in the Philippines. She had a very complicated and severe facial cleft, which had left her with only one eye. But she was a study of all positive things. She was very outgoing and was first in her class in school. And rather than hiding, she exemplified how one can deal with the world, and when she smiled, she smiled from her soul, which showed her inner beauty. That's why we're doing what we're doing. ■

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## Alumni Donor Profile: Michael Garrity, M.D.

*By Jill Maney*



*Michael Garrity, M.D.*

I spoke with Michael Garrity, M.D., while he was at a primary care conference, learning about the latest techniques for treating opioid addiction and updating his credentials. Garrity has dedicated his medical practice to primary care, working in Massachusetts General Hospital's Charlestown Health Center, right across the street from the Boys and Girls Club.

Although there is a great need for primary care providers, few physicians choose that as a specialty. Garrity is one of those rare few who knew that

he wanted to do it. When asked why, he replied, "I always wanted to be in primary care, working on the front lines." Even more unusual: his practice today is very close to where he spent his childhood. Like his colleagues at the center, he is a teacher as well as a physician, serving on the faculty of Harvard Medical School and helping medical students learn to deal with everything from chronic co-morbidities to viral infections.

In Charlestown, Garrity treats a great variety of patients, from late teens to geriatric. His practice is a general one, as he says, including "young healthy people, older people dealing with issues of aging, such as dementia, cancer, heart disease, and many people arriving with problems that require urgent attention." Then there are patients with substance abuse problems and mental health issues. "The work is never boring,

often overwhelming. I tell my students: This is hard work, but it means a lot."

That's part of why he is so dedicated to doing it. One particular group has needed increasing attention in the past decade: those with substance abuse problems. Most people have a very negative image of people with substance abuse issues, Garrity observes. They don't understand that a person struggling with substance abuse might be your neighbor, your brother, or your sister. "One guy with this problem came into my office several times and kept failing treatment," Garrity explains, "even though he had a great support system: a wonderful girl friend, a good mom, a good job. Finally he got it. Now, he's married, bought a house, and is expecting his first kid. I still see him to this day. He's still has his struggles—as he is the first to admit—but he is way ahead of where he was 10 years ago. He's just one of many people we have helped."

The Charlestown Health Center, where Garrity offers care to adult patients, has become the largest treatment center of substance abuse cases for Massachusetts General Hospital. He is cautiously enthusiastic about a new treatment being offered, a once-a-month injection used as part of a program to treat substance abuse. He also notes that some patients are so disorganized and so sick with addiction that they are very difficult to treat.

Although he was born and raised in Boston, he investigated upstate New York early in his life. His wife began going to

***Alumni to page 7***