



# THE CUPOLA

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

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## House Staff Pays Tribute to Retiring Director

This summer, the internal medicine residents offered the following testimonial recognizing their mentor and friend, Dr. James Dalton, upon the announcement of his retirement effective in September 2021. The editors of *The Cupola* are pleased to publish this tribute believing that the sentiments expressed are shared by many alumni who trained and worked alongside of Dalton over the past three decades.



As members of the Bassett Healthcare Medical Education Alumni Association, we are pleased to share our thoughts and feelings regarding Dr. James Dalton's leadership and contributions in his role as former director of Bassett's Medical Education program and former director of the Internal Medicine residency.

Dr. Dalton's contributions to medical education at Bassett have been invaluable. The strength of his legacy is only surpassed by that of his character. The Bassett community knows him as "Jim Dalton," the physician, friend, and colleague. However, those who have had the privilege of training under his guidance know him as something else. For us, he is the confidant whom we entrusted with our worries. For us, he is the teacher who fostered our growth. For us, he is the humanist who led by example. For us, he is the leader who rooted for us.

Since beginning his role as the Internal Medicine program director two years ago, Dr. Dalton promoted a culture where every voice within the residency was heard, and where

vulnerability and authenticity are honored. We were encouraged to be the best version of ourselves, knowing that we would not be judged by our mistakes. The values that he brought to this program elevated Bassett's Internal Medicine residency program to a home away from home. Like any home, we had joys and sadness, but ultimately this home became a place of belonging and safety. To have done this even during a pandemic and a year fraught with racial, social, and political turmoil was a testament to why he is so beloved by the residents both past and present.

It is difficult to lead with modesty and openness, and even more so in a discipline that is rife with emotional stress. Dr. Dalton greeted every concern we had with curiosity and open-mindedness. When it was easy to retreat into defensiveness, he stepped forward to listen. When it was easy to build barriers, he built bridges. For example, there have been several instances where residents experienced incivility. Rectifying

**Dalton to page 2**

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

Every issue of *The Cupola* is a tribute of some kind because these pages celebrate some aspects of what makes Bassett special.

On occasion we extol features of Bassett's history or elements of Bassett's culture, and at all points there is a through line that highlights the organization's dedication to the teaching mission.

This issue of *The Cupola* gives praise to all of these aspects of Bassett, as we honor Dr. James Dalton on his retirement. Dr. Dalton's training, career and life in Cooperstown encompass the elements of Bassett's history, culture, and dedication to Medical Education that have been foundational in keeping



Dr. James A. Murray

the place excellent. In his way, he continued the legacies of his predecessors Drs. John Davis and Walt Franck. Notably, one of these three physicians have been leading Medical Education at Bassett for over 40 years.

If you are reading these pages and still practicing medicine, you very likely trained under or became acquainted with one or more of these excellent physicians, and you would agree that their leadership is part of what has set the Bassett Medical Education experience apart. To the alumni who sent a memory of Jim Dalton, I add my thanks and congratulations. ■

*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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*The Cupola* is published three times a year. Please send comments and news, including change of address information to: Editor, *The Cupola*, Office of Medical Education, Bassett Medical Center, One Atwell Road, Cooperstown, NY 13326 or e-mail cupola@bassett.org.

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## Alumni Board Adds Two New Members



*Dr. Samir Jha*

Dr. Samir Jha, who recently completed his residency in Internal Medicine at Bassett Healthcare Network, agreed to serve as the newest member of the Medical Alumni Association Board of Directors. He received his medical degree at the College of Medical

Sciences, Bharatpur (Nepal). Recently, he accepted a position as a hospitalist at Beth Israel Deaconess Hospital, Plymouth, Mass.

In addition, the board welcomes Dr. Beth Olearczyk, associate medical director at Helios Hospice and Palliative Care. She was a preliminary Internal Medicine resident here in 2005-06 and that experience convinced her to forego a



*Dr. Beth Olearczyk*

radiology residence in favor of pursuing Internal Medicine. After a working with the Bassett Research Institute on the Diabetes Prevention Program, she completed an Internal Medicine residency at the University of Rochester. Olearczyk returned to Bassett as a hospitalist in 2010 and continues as a

per diem hospitalist at Bassett Medical Center now. She completed her medical degree and residency in Internal Medicine at University of Rochester, Rochester, N.Y., followed by a fellowship at the Columbia University School of Public Health. She is board-certified in Internal Medicine. ■

## Board Members Attend Davis Lecture



*Alumni board members gathered to hear the annual John S. Davis lecture; this year offered by Dr. John S. Davis. Pictured L-R: Drs. Alan Kozak, James Murray, James Dalton, Ken Wilkins, John Davis, Michael Foltzer, David Newman, Douglas DeLong, and Anush Patel.*

### **Dalton from page 1**

these experiences was actively undertaken by Dr. Dalton.

He had the insight to recognize problems, the equanimity to engage in dialogue and the creativity to look for solutions. For example, when the ICU residents were feeling overwhelmed during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic, he was the first person to recognize it and streamline resources to the ICU.

His leadership created positive ripples across the entire Internal Medicine residency program. He called for more balanced schedules in response to the ACGME survey, he fostered a culture of civility, he proactively sought our

opinions and validated our concerns. He went above and beyond what most would expect from a program director. All these actions have collectively enhanced residents' well-being and morale. However, the true impact of his tenure cannot be sufficiently quantified in numbers, metrics or indeed even a survey. It can only be visualized by the strength of his legacy and the void he will leave behind. His deeply humanistic vision was part and parcel of what makes the Bassett Internal Medicine residency program so unique.

This testament reflects the genuine respect and affection the residents have for Dr. Dalton. We offer it with great sadness at his departure. ■



# Alumni Board Meeting Recap 2021

By Dr. Alan Kozak



*In person L-R: Sitting – Drs. Elsie Jacob, Michael Foltzer, Alan Kozak, Ken Wilkins, Jim Murray, and staff member Mary Wiswell. Standing – Drs. Douglas DeLong, John Dier, and Anush Patel. On Zoom L-R: Top row – Drs. Bruce McClennan, the in-person group, Merideth Davis, and Erin Gillaspie. Middle row - Drs. Sally Ricketts, Rachel Zehr, Jim Dalton, John Davis. Bottom row: Dr. Jing Luan and Stephanie Ocegueda*

This year's Alumni Board meeting on October 1, was preceded by the John S. Davis lecture, entitled "The Mary Imogene Bassett Hospital: Reflections Covering 65 Years," given by Dr. John Davis himself. As anticipated, it was a special treat, which served to energize the formal Board meeting that followed.

Adding to the energy was the face-to-face presence of eight Board members with eight others attending remotely via Zoom. The in-person participation was testament to progress made over the past year in dealing with the COVID epidemic. The meeting was called to order by Dr. Jim Murray, president of the Bassett Medical Alumni Association.

With the retirement of Dr. Jim Dalton, who had served a dual role as Medicine Program director and director of Medical Education, Dr. Edward Bischof, acting director, provided an update on the status of the Internal Medicine Training Program. Applicants to the program, largely international medical graduates, continue to number approximately 5,000 per year. From this pool an impressive group of trainees has been selected. Resident research projects, mainly supported by the Dr. E. Donnell Thomas Scholarship fund, have contributed to a 50-percent success rate in post-graduate fellowship placements. In 2021, residents are now experiencing training in geriatrics at the Valley Health Center in Herkimer, N.Y., and there has been increased focus on medical humanities.

Dr. Dan Katz, director for the newly developed cardiovascular disease fellowship, described the highly competitive process for the two positions. Fellows will spend two of their 24 months at Columbia for more in-depth experiences in heart failure management and transplantation. The fellowship has enhanced the academic focus of Bassett's Department of Cardiovascular Disease and has had positive impact on the training of our residents.

The transitional year residency program update was provided by its director, Dr. Erik Riesenfeld. This year there are nine residents whose long-term specialty goals are diverse. There is continued effort to tailor each resident's year to special train-

ing needs and interests within the framework of the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) requirements for the transitional year. After a pandemic related hiatus, the combined program with Johns Hopkins in preventive medicine will be resumed.

Dr. Nick Hellenthal, chief of Surgery, described a year of successful provider recruitment, which included a recent Bassett surgery residency graduate, Dr. Ethan Talbot, a new Surgery Program director Dr. Joon Shim, and a former Columbia-Bassett medical student, returning as a Mohs surgeon, Dr. Maggie Dowd. Another outstanding group of Surgery residents has entered the training program.

Following, Dr. Kai Mebust, chief of Medicine, reported successful recruitment of 20 new providers. Special acknowledgement was made of the roles of alumni board members Drs. Jim Murray and Mike Foltzer in supporting trainees from their respective institutions.

As newly appointed Surgery Program director, Shim described her plans to address any deficiencies identified by prior program reviews. She has a broad range of interests, including physician burnout and its prevention;

racism, sexism, and diversity; leadership; integration of medicine and the arts.

Senior vice president and chief physician executive Dr. Reggie Knight described several new initiatives at Bassett. These include compensation redesign, network-wide consistency in bylaws, focus on structure of staffing with fewer redundancies, and reviews of distributions of market shares. He addressed the possibility of growth of new medical education programs.

As director of the Bassett Research Institute, Dr. Anne Gadomski described ongoing studies, research grants, and publications this year to date. Areas of recent attention include studies on the cellular immune response induced by the coronavirus, thriving and surviving with cancer, and several aspects of mental health, its resources and aspects of management in the rural setting. The impressive work by the New York Center of Agricultural Medicine (NYCAM) with the farming, logging, and fishing industries in New York and New England was also reviewed.

Chief academic officer and senior associate dean for the Columbia University Affiliation with Bassett Medical Center, Dr. Henry Weil, provided an update on the Columbia-Bassett medical school program. The current class is doing well. The quests for new Medicine Program director and director of Medical Education were discussed. Weil reported that internal and nationwide searches would be conducted. The members of the Alumni Board asked how they might contribute to this critical process.

After the meeting was adjourned, Board members present enjoyed a dinner arranged for and generously funded by Dr. Anush Patel at a popular dining venue in Cooperstown. Next year's Board meeting will occur October 7, 2022. ■



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at Bassett Medical Alumni Association

# Alumni Memories of Training and Working with Dr. Jim Dalton

In recognition of the retirement of a long-time friend who trained, worked, and taught at Bassett over the past 40 years, the editors asked alumni to send memories for use in lieu of the usual Family Album updates. These excerpts have been greatly abbreviated and edited for publication. Every complete message in its original form has been compiled and shared with Jim as a gift from the alumni.



**Emery Herman, Jr., M.D. (Internal Medicine attending 1961-94)** I learned early that those persons working alongside Jim Dalton had found a man of cheerfulness, a man to be depended upon, a coworker to cherish. I felt Jim was, as was his friend Doug DeLong from Wisconsin, a most fitting candidate to recruit to the department (of Internal Medicine).

**David Svahn, M.D. (Rotating/Internal Medicine resident 1965-67, Internal Medicine attending 1972-99)**

Jim modeled the classic Bassett physician educator/physician, and he was a wonderful mentor to young physicians. He was a doctor's doctor; he was my doctor.

I am old enough to have worked with him from residency to colleague and I enjoyed a wonderful relationship with a wonderful man throughout.

**Bruce McClennan, M.D. (Rotating resident 1967-68)**

I didn't know Jim Dalton until I joined the Board but quickly came to realize that he was medical education—spelled forwards and backwards! So much of medical training is mentorship and what an exemplary person to model yourself upon and adopt as a mentor.



James T. Dalton  
Washington  
Medicine

**Gary Hoffman, M.D. (Rheumatology attending 1974-84)**

Jim and Doug DeLong were both among our best residents. They were well informed, pleasant, appropriately confident, and always reliable. They were also regulars at the gym for basketball games. Both were excellent athletes and VERY tough, especially Jim. It was always fun and times I will never forget.

**Anne Traynor, M.D. (Internal Medicine resident 1990-94)** Dr. Dalton, one of the first people I met at Bassett, welcomed me with kindness

and support. I recall his great sense of humor, his high level of medical knowledge and its applications, his encouragement to us learners, and his kindness to all.

**Alan James, M.D. (Internal Medicine resident 1994-97)**

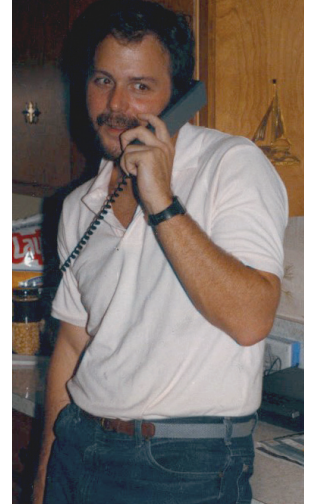
As my mentor, Dr. Dalton taught me a lot in the outpatient setting, and more than clinical material. He led by example. I never saw him angry or impatient in his patient care. I learned that every patient gets the time he or she needs.

**Cheryl Baker, M.D. (Internal Medicine/Primary Care resident 1995-98)** Dr. Dalton was always warm and friendly and CALM. He eschewed the traditional clinical hierarchy and

treated us as colleagues rather than trainees. Modeling that humility was a great humanity teaching point.

Dr. Dalton invited us to his home for potluck dinners which gave us a welcome opportunity to be social beings outside the hospital, at a time in training when everything was very hospital centered.

**Silvia Picciafuoco, M.D. (Internal Medicine resident 1995-96)** I remember Dr. James Dalton for his caring and kind manner toward patients and residents. When I was asked to select and present at Grand Rounds a medical issue frequently encountered in a primary care setting, I was apprehensive about what topic would be relevant. Dr. Dalton was very encouraging in my choice and development of a women's health topic that was very well received and found informative by the audience. I appreciate and I am grateful for his teaching advice during that time.



**Jeffrey LaCourse, M.D. (Internal Medicine resident 1998-2001)** What an amazing man. The one anecdote/story that I always think of when I hear of Dr. Dalton, happened within the first week of my arriving at Bassett. We all needed to get a physical before officially starting as interns. Dr. Dalton did my physical. Towards the end, he said "alright, let's check your prostate." I was 28 at the time and looked at him a little confused. He said, you're here for a physical and I wanna make sure you are healthy. The take home was, always be thorough when examining a patient. He made sure to impress that upon me from day one.

**Cynthia B. Fisher, M.D. (Otolaryngologist attending 2000-11)** It was an honor to share patients with Jim for 11 years. He was a clinician whose insights were helpful day in and day out. His depth of understanding of medicine profoundly enriched his teaching and administrative duties. Dr. Dalton's consistently excellent clinical acumen, moral compass and work/life balance made him a great role model for Bassett residents and medical students. Young Bassett physicians who are lucky enough to stand on the shoulders of giants like Dr. Dalton will appreciate these shared experiences for years to come.

**Susan Huffman, M.D. (Internal Medicine resident 2003-05, Internal Medicine attending 2005-present)** Dr. D is the ideal "every person's physician and physician mentor". He listened, led by modeling and fostered relationships in his career. This has allowed the growth of many, many fine physicians who have graduated from Bassett's training halls. What I really remember is that we mostly shared respect, good will and encouragement for one another's goals. I will miss our daily out loud "from the belly" laughs even on stressful days! Relationships he fostered in respect, empathy and joy will resonate always in our hallways while I still work, and I carry that spirit he taught me each day.

**Dave Prakash, M.D. (Transitional Year resident 2003-04)** As my advisor, I remember Dr. Dalton sharing his life and interests beyond clinical medicine. He provided a refreshing human element to being a doctor.





Seated: Mrs. Deb Dalton and Dr. Jim Dalton. Standing L-R: Dr. Andrew Griffiths (associate program director, General Surgery residency), Dr. Joon Shim (program director, General Surgery residency), Melissa Hochbrueckner (Medical Education specialist — peeking around Dr. Shim), Dr. Russell Moore (associate program director, Internal Medicine residency), Teri Musser (program coordinator, Internal Medicine residency), Mary Wiswell (program coordinator, Transitional Year residency), Christine Costa (Medical Education specialist, Undergraduate Education), Jill Stoecklin (administrative director of Medical Education), Dr. Edward Bischof (interim program director, Internal Medicine residency), Dr. Erik Riesenfeld (program director, Transitional Year residency) and Kelly Stone (program coordinator, General Surgery residency)

**Beth Olearczyk, M.D. (Internal Medicine resident 2005-06, hospitalist 2010-present)** One day, as I was standing at the nurses' station in the Prime Care Clinic, I happened to glance toward an exam room where the door was slightly ajar, and I witnessed a frail elderly man reaching out to embrace Dr. Dalton. In the intervening years, I have been fortunate to receive a few hugs from my patients and their caregivers. When I do, I think back to those years ago when I witnessed the bond between a great physician and his grateful patient. Thank you, Dr. Dalton, for exemplifying the ideals of doctoring and for being such a wonderful teacher and such an active participant in our community.

**Jesse Cone, M.D. (Internal Medicine resident 2002-05, chief resident 2005-06)** My time in residency was some of the best of my life. Dr. Dalton was my mentor and he repeatedly told me to slow down. He felt it was important that I make time for hobbies and family and myself. He told me that I would be a better doctor for it. He was right. It has taken me almost 20 years to realize that his wisdom would allow me to develop rapport with patients and continue working without burning out. For all my haste, in this I was a little slow.

**Kelly Currie, M.D. (Surgery resident 2008-13)** I remember him having the kindest heart and such a caring approach to all that he did.

**Beth Hutton Lykling, M.D. (Internal Medicine attending 2008-09)** I remember his rapport with the staff, willingness to teach, and patience. His smile when he was talking to patients and families lit up the clinic. It was an inspiration to see those relationships and part of what I hope to bring to my practice.

**Dilan Jogendra, M.B., Ch.B., B.A.O. (Internal Medicine Resident 2009-12)** The impact that Dr. Dalton has had on me as a physician, and especially as a person, is indescribable. An expert and thoughtful clinician, he taught me medicine that I could never have learned from reading a book. However, what I truly treasure was observing him with patients, being kind and

respectful, and listening intently. The patient was always the focus. This is also how he treated the residents. No matter how busy he was, he made time for you and put you at ease. I could express my ideas or thoughts freely. He was firm with his advice and direction but understood the challenges that residency posed on the trainees. What I miss dearly are our conversations spanning various topics and his great sense of humor.

**Afeefa Shahnawaz, M.B., B.S. (Internal Medicine resident 2014-17)** Dr. Dalton is synonymous with the word magnanimous. He was forever present and his unwavering support to the residents was heartfelt. I will forever be indebted to his teaching of treating the person rather than the patient. His kind, easygoing bedside manner and his wholesome approach to medicine are exemplary to all of us, his students. If I can be half the clinician and person he is, I will count myself fortunate. Whenever faced with a challenge in my work as a hospitalist, I often find myself asking, what would Dr. Dalton do?

**Natanong "Ten" Thamcharoen, M.D. (Internal Medicine resident 2014-17)** I've seen how much patients love him because of his kindness. He was one of the best teachers I've ever had. On my fellowship match day, I asked Dr. Dalton if we could try to finish my clinic before 12 p.m. so I could check my email about my match result. He said yes and said he would like to be there while I opened the email.

At 11:59 a.m., we sat down in his office, and I opened my email. "CONGRATULATIONS, you've matched! Nephrology. BI Deaconess, Boston, Mass." Dr. Dalton said he was certain that I will be matched where I wanted to be. It was the best feeling in the world to have someone share this precious moment when you were half a world away from home (literally, since I'm from Thailand).

**Joanna Tu, M.D. (Columbia-Bassett Class of 2017, Transitional Year resident 2017-18)** Dr. Dalton was my attending for my first experience in Internal Medicine during my clinical year as a medical student at Bassett. We went to see a very sick patient and their family members in the Emergency Room together. I remember the emotional charge in the room—the family was overwhelmed with difficult decisions to make for their loved one, and Dr. Dalton exhibited his warm, kind, and gentle demeanor with everybody involved. He checked in with me afterwards and I expressed how I struggled with keeping my composure during the conversation, and he poignantly asked me why I thought that was necessary, emphasizing that demonstrating empathy and emotion is not a weakness. His lesson to me in compassion, both modeled and in discussion, has remained with me throughout my training and career. He has had such an impact on medical education at Bassett, and it was a true privilege to learn the science and art of medicine from such an excellent clinician, teacher, and human!

**Reginald Q. Knight, M.D. (Orthopedic and Spine surgeon 2009-present, senior vice president and chief physician executive 2020-present)** Jim was one of the first physician colleagues I met upon arrival at Bassett. He ultimately became my physician and friend. Over the years, we shared professionally and socially experiences that solidified our friendship. Always the showman, Jim shared his sense of humor and vocal talents with the community. The thought of Jim brings a smile to my face and cherished memories to mind. ■



# Columbia-Bassett Medical School Program Welcomes the Class of 2025



*Front row L-R:  
Lindsey Gorsch,  
Emma Weatherford,  
Carina Sirochinsky,  
Kishan Bhatt.*

*Back row L-R:  
Dr. Henry Weil,  
Matthew Johnson,  
Dean Strup,  
Benjamin Lynch,  
Thomas Benz,  
Sidney Saint-Hilaire,  
Tiana Saak,  
Dr. Megan Brennan*

## Alumni Join Bassett Staff



*Dr. Margaret Dowd*

Dr. Margaret Dowd joined Bassett Healthcare Network as an attending physician in Mohs Micrographic Surgery and Dermatology. She is working at three locations: Bassett Hartwick Seminary Specialty Services, Bassett Oneonta Specialty Services, and Cobleskill Regional Hospital Specialty Services.

She earned her medical degree at Columbia University as a participant of the Columbia-Bassett Medical School Program. She completed an internship in

pediatrics at Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai in New York, followed by a dermatology residency and a fellowship in Mohs Micrographic Surgery and Cutaneous Oncology at New York-Presbyterian Hospital, Columbia University Irving Medical Center. She is certified by the American Board of Dermatology and the American College of Mohs Surgeons.



*Dr. Ethan Talbot*

After recently completing his residency in Surgery at Bassett earlier this year, Dr. Ethan Talbot has accepted a position as an attending surgeon in General Surgery at Bassett Medical Center. Also, he will see patients at Bassett Little Falls Hospital, Bassett Little Falls Specialty Services, and Bassett Hartwick Seminary Wound Care Center. He is a graduate of University of Connecticut in Farmington, Conn. ■

## Dr. Samuel Badalian Receives Prestigious Fulbright Award



*Dr. Samuel Badalian*

The U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs and the Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board have selected Dr. Samuel Badalian, chief of Women's Health at Bassett Healthcare Network, to receive a Fulbright award for the 2021-22 academic year.

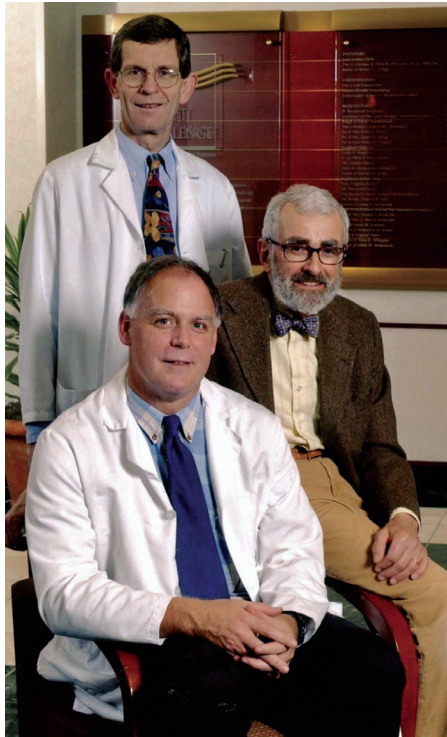
With this funding, Badalian will travel to Yerevan, Armenia in fall 2021 to establish urogynecology fellowship programs at two different universities. Badalian's selection for this prestigious grant is a reflection of his leadership

and contributions to society. As a Fulbright participant, he will have the opportunity to work collaboratively with international partners and engage with the local community.

Badalian has been practicing, teaching, and researching in this field for nearly 30 years. His plans include teaching a course at Yerevan State Medical University introducing residents and fellows to the basic principles of the discipline. This will be the first approved program of urogynecology as a subspecialty in women's health in Armenia.

"Yerevan State Medical University already has a variety of outstanding woman's health programs," says Badalian. "But I believe my experience will allow me to significantly contribute to these programs. I am also confident that this experience will benefit my own understanding of how to prevent and treat women's health problems." ■





## BASSETT LOOKS BACK

### Forty Years of Medical Education Leadership

Only three physicians have held the title director of the Medical Education Program at Bassett. The first appointed in 1980, Dr. John S. Davis, was a resident on the house staff in 1956 and returned to join the Bassett as

an attending in Gastroenterology in 1964. Upon his retirement in 1995, the helm was passed to a rheumatologist who had been on staff since 1973. Dr. Walter Franck brought two decades of experience at Bassett to his management of the Medical Education program. Franck handed the leadership off to Dr. James Dalton in 2002. Dalton, another alum of the residency program (1979-83) was an attending here as well as chief of the Division of Internal Medicine, before adding leadership of Medical Education to his responsibilities.

These three individuals shaped and sustained Bassett's Medical Education Program over four decades. Their shared values and embrace of Bassett's rich tradition of excellence helped establish a program that sets Bassett apart from many other teaching hospitals. ■

### Physician Employment Opportunities in the Bassett Healthcare Network

Thinking of a career move? Do you know another physician seeking a position in an award-winning network of six hospitals and 30 regional sites? Consider these openings in Central New York and Cooperstown.

<b>Rheumatology</b>	<b>Neurology</b>
<b>OB GYN Generalist &amp; OB PM Hospitalist</b>	<b>Anesthesiology—General</b>
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<b>Pulmonology/Critical Care</b>	<b>General Surgery—Breast</b>
	<b>Pediatrics—Herkimer</b>
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For more information visit:  
<https://www.bassett.org/careers/physicians-and-advanced-practice-clinicians>  
 or call Medical Staff Recruitment at 607-547-6982.

## Efforts to Combat Clinician Burnout Recognized



*Dr. Caroline Gomez-Di Cesare, M.D., Ph.D., Network Director of Well-Being, attended the AMA conference where Bassett Healthcare Network received its recognition.*

The American Medical Association (AMA) recognized Bassett Healthcare Network as a recipient of the 2021 Joy in Medicine Health System Recognition Program. The AMA awards this distinction to health systems that actively demonstrate a commitment to the well-being of health care team members by combating work-related stress and burnout. Dr. Caroline Gomez-Di Cesare, M.D., Ph.D., Network director of Well-Being, accepted the recognition on behalf of Bassett Healthcare Network.

"The chronic crises throughout the COVID-19 pandemic have taken a toll everyone, with particularly high stressors on all of us in health care," says Gomez-Di Cesare. "It is especially meaningful to receive this recognition of Bassett's leadership at a time when working toward well-being in the healthcare workplace is even more important than ever before."

One such investment—and an important consideration in the AMA's evaluation—has been the Clinician Peer Support Program of Central New York (CPSP-CNY). Launched in May 2020 by Bassett with four other regional health institutions and now the American Nurses Association (ANA-NY), the CPSP-CNY offers emotional and empathetic support to clinicians under stress. The program's referral system allows clinicians to confidentially reach out individually or on behalf of colleagues who might themselves be reluctant to seek help. The multi-institutional framework matches clinicians with peer supporters from outside of the home organization, allowing for more anonymity when receiving support.

"Burnout is stigmatized as a personal weakness, making it hard for clinicians to speak up for themselves," explains Gomez-Di Cesare. "Burnout is an occupational hazard in the high-stakes, high-standards medical profession, and burnout affects the quality of patient care. Most of the factors contributing to burnout are organizational and systemic. Our goal is to minimize the risk of burnout just as we minimize the dangers of other occupational hazards."

In its pursuit of the best possible patient care, Bassett plans to continue to expand efforts to care for caregivers. ■



Bassett Healthcare Network  
Bassett Medical Center

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## New CDO Joins Friends of Bassett

The Friends of Bassett welcome Ben Everidge, who has been appointed the new senior vice president (SVP), chief development officer (CDO) for Bassett Healthcare Network. In this role, Ben will oversee philanthropic operations and strategic planning for Friends of Bassett, the non-profit foundation that raises support for all entities in Bassett Healthcare Network.

Everidge was selected after a competitive national search and joined the Bassett family on October 1. He is an experienced healthcare fundraiser who has worked in every discipline of fundraising, from principal and major gifts to special events and projects. Ben brings expertise in program-related investments as well as capital campaign development and execution.

Before joining Bassett, Everidge acted as a consultant and was employed by such organizations as the Astronauts Memorial at NASA's John F. Kennedy Space Center, World Cup USA, AdventHealth, Boca Raton Regional Hospital, Give Kids the World Village, and more. He is also a ten-year veteran of the United States Senate and U.S. House professional committee, personal office, and campaign staffs. Pioneering medicine in rural community environments is a longtime passion Ben has held since first being introduced to the field during his Capitol Hill days.

He and his wife, Nan Everidge, are parents to four children (Emily, Greyson, Nia, and Zack), all attending college this year at the University of Central Florida, Florida State University,



*Benjamin  
Everidge*

and the United States Military Academy at West Point. They will reside in Cooperstown and are excited to join the community and Bassett family. Ben looks forward to connecting with Bassett alumni and in finding new ways to support the medical education program.

Everidge earned his master's degree in American Government from Georgetown University in Washington, DC, where he was also named a University Fellow. His undergraduate degree is in international studies from American University. ■



### 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.