



Maryland  
Chapter



## MARYLAND ACP - COVID WARRIORS - 2021

### GBMC - Dr. David Vitberg

Dr. David Vitberg, Director of the Division of Medical and Surgical ICU, is a superhero without a cape. When the COVID-19 pandemic emerged in December 2019, Dr. Vitberg swiftly prepared the hospital for the surge. He converted all the MICU rooms into negative-pressure rooms and equipped them with In-Line Bacterial and Viral Filters. Despite the increased volume and acuity of patient care, he continued to invest in the residents and make teaching a high priority. He imparted a depth of knowledge beyond clinical skills and entrusted GBMC residents with great responsibility, particularly during times of ICU overflow. Staff will forever remember his guidance during this pivotal time. Even though at times it seemed like he never left, whether day or night, he would always still smile and greet everyone while passing in the wards. His endless drive for excellent and efficient patient care always persevered despite harboring the sadness of so many lost this year. The residents feel Dr. Vitberg is their role model; he is their COVID-19 warrior. Thank you for all you do, Dr. Vitberg.

### HOPKINS/BAYVIEW - Drs. Emily Peng and Koushik Kasanagottu

In response to the start of the COVID-19 pandemic locally in March 2020, Dr. Emily Peng led a group of Bayview residents, including Dr. Koushik Kasanagottu, to create the Bayview Residency Program COVID-19 Think Tank, which collected information from internal medicine residents directly caring for patients with COVID-19 and then shared those insights with residency and departmental leadership to effect change on the clinical services. The Think Tank's efforts led to several high impact enterprise-wide changes in delivery of care, including universal masking on the Hopkins Medicine campuses, and more COVID-19 informational resources translated into languages such as Spanish and Greek, to better meet the needs of the patient population. Additionally, Dr. Kasanagottu worked with Maryland State Senator Clarence Lam on

legislation to improve reimbursement rates for use of telemedicine during the pandemic. He developed a study of the impact of increased utilization of telemedicine during the pandemic in the resident and faculty internal medicine clinic at Johns Hopkins Bayview. He also published editorials in *USA Today* and on CNN.com to educate the public on health issues related to COVID-19.

#### MERCY HOSPITAL/UMMC/VA - Dr. Joseph Costa

Dr. Costa was a graduate of the University of Maryland Medical School and their residency and fellowship programs and for many years and was the medical director of the intensive care unit at Mercy Medical Center. As the pandemic raged, Dr. Costa continued to take care of Mercy's sickest patients and fill additional shifts in the ICU - all the while continuing to be part of the leadership at Mercy as they planned for the growing and unknown stresses on the institution. With little regard for his personal safety or his increased risk for infection, he provided exemplary care. Tragically, Dr. Costa contracted COVID and ultimately lost his battle with the disease while a patient in the ICU where he was beloved.

#### MHIM - Dr. Calvin Williams

Dr. Calvin Williams is a member of the inpatient Internal Medicine Faculty. In addition, he provides inpatient infectious disease consults. He is involved in antibiotic utilization as well as infection control at MedStar Union Memorial Hospital. He completed medical school at the University of Maryland Infectious Diseases.

MHIM did a survey among their residents and faculty, and Dr. Williams was selected overwhelmingly among his peers. We give our congratulations to Dr. Williams, a true COVID warrior.

#### ST. AGNES ASCENSION HOSPITAL - Dr. Dante Suffredini

Dr. Suffredini is a great teacher and mentor. He gives his patients hope, encouragement and assurance. Dr. Suffredini has strong work ethics. As an ICU attending he is very humble, compassionate and kind. He is honest and explains the current situation of patients to their family members in an easy and non-technical way so that they can understand, and also helps with making the tough decisions for their loved ones. If you hear his name, the first thing you will think is the awesome ICU doc.

He is loved by of the hospital's residents from the heart. He always encourages and helps residents to pursue their dreams in their interested field.

### SINAI - Dr. Sahib Singh

Dr Singh is a current PGY3 resident at Sinai. Following his residency training, he will serve as a Chief Resident at GBMC. He was selected as this year's COVID warrior due to his efforts to support patient care and advance our scientific knowledge of COVID. During the spring of 2020 Covid was at its initial peak in the Baltimore area. The neighborhoods surrounding Sinai hospital were hard hit and the ICUs were overwhelmed. In particular, an affiliate institution, Northwest hospital in Randallstown, Maryland saw a surge of COVID cases. In response, the Chair of Medicine requested additional physician support in the COVID Unit, and Dr. Singh was among the first to volunteer. He worked alongside their Pulmonologists and Critical Care staff to assist in the care of seriously ill COVID patients. As the surge subsided, he worked with a COVID research team led by their Cardiologists and Pulmonologists. Specifically, the projects he was engaged with examined the prevalence of hypercoaguable states among patients infected with COVID-19 as well a cohort study on the effectiveness of various treatments for COVID-19. At Sinai, both the medical professionals and patients are grateful to Dr. Singh. His contributions to patient care and medical science during the COVID pandemic are unmatched.

### WALTER REED - Dr. Erica Walker

Dr. Walker is our chief hospitalist. She demonstrated extraordinary leadership and resilience during the start of the pandemic and continues to provide stewardship as we continue through these challenging times. Dr. Walker helped stand up a covid19 isolation unit at the start of the pandemic, personally training nursing staff and medical residents on proper precautions and care of covid19 patients. She personally took to the front lines and volunteered to lead the covid19 response, despite unknown risks to her person and families. In addition, on the internal medicine wards, she modeled bedside manner and compassionate care during challenging and terrifying times when patients are separated from their families and loved ones. As the pandemic evolved to

be a part of daily life, she continued to lead the evolution of Walter Reed to find a durable solution to inpatient management by setting up an Enhanced Precautions Unit. She continues to be a crucial liaison between hospital leadership, our covid19 research team and internal medicine program. She has displayed selflessness throughout and modelled physician leadership in crisis. She has had a undeniable, tremendous personal impact on each of the internal medicine trainees and anyone who has been a part of the covid19 response at WR.