



THE CUPOLA

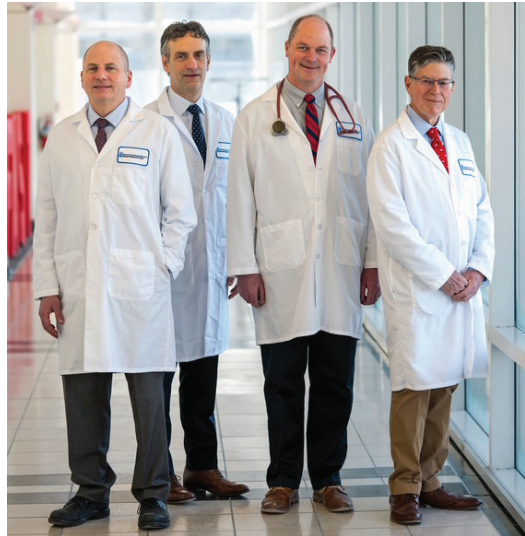
The Bulletin of The Medical Alumni Association of Bassett Medical Center
Cooperstown, New York

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Cardiology Program Benefits Medical Education

On July 1 of this year, Bassett's Cardiovascular Disease Fellowship Program welcomed its newest class of fellows. The program, which began in 2021 with two fellows, is a three-year accredited program that accommodates a total of six fellows across all years of training. Since the fellowship program was first launched, there has been a concerted and successful effort to recruit additional cardiology specialists to the Bassett Healthcare Network. While the intent is to broaden the scope of cardiology services, reduce patient wait times, and introduce new modalities, the intent is also to enhance the education of Bassett's fellows, residents, and Columbia-Bassett medical students.

"As we bring on additional specialists, we are growing our teaching faculty. We've gone from one to two electrophysiologists, and two to three interventionalists, and we're increasing the number of non-invasive cardiologists, all of whom are role models and teachers for the individuals coming through here," says Michael Holmes, M.D., who joined Bassett in 2022 as Chief of Cardiology.



Bassett's Cardiology Team Leaders: Drs. Evan Adelstein, Anthony Nappi, Michael Holmes, and John Kelley

Each new physician recruited to Bassett has an advanced skill set that expands the program's capabilities in important ways. For instance, one of Bassett's new electrophysiologists is skilled in transvenous lead extraction, a niche procedure that allows for the safe removal of pacemakers leads. This will become a key service for patients who develop complications requiring the removal of the wires connecting the pacemaker to the heart.

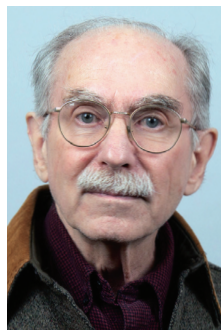
Bassett also hired two physicians with expertise in coronary CAT scans. Coronary CTs offer a non-invasive way to look for blockages in the coronary arteries and are becoming a preferred method of chest pain evaluation as an alternative to the traditional stress test. Today's cardiac CT scanner is also equipped with software that can analyze plaques and determine if they are calcified, so more stable, or fatty and unstable.

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Message from the President of the Medical Alumni Board of Directors

The modern age of cardiology began in a small hospital near Berlin in 1929, when 24-year-old Werner Forssman—one year out of medical school and undeterred by the prevailing fear of tampering with the heart—threaded a ureteral catheter into his left antecubital vein, climbed a staircase, walked down a hallway to the X-ray department, and documented its location in his right ventricle. That X-ray still exists. He closed his published account of the adventure by concluding that "this method...has opened the prospect of many possible metabolic researches and studies of the function of the heart, some of which I have already begun." He later shared the 1956 Nobel Prize in Medicine for his pioneering research. Vision—and sometimes hubris—has been critical to biomedical progress.

Bassett had state-of-the-art diagnostics in the 1980s, including coronary angiography. But it was the bedside teaching that left indelible memories. Learning the fine points of the cardiovascular exam from a true master—gentle, quiet Herb Marx,



Dr. David E. Newman

and David Vaules helping us understand how the hieroglyphics of m-mode echocardiography corresponded to the physical events of the cardiac cycle. One-on-one ECG mentorship from Emery Herman, when he would say "let me get out my big eyes" in his unforgettable Georgia drawl as he pulled out his pocket magnifying glass.

Dutch anatomist Karel Wenckebach recognized and described the type of second-degree AV block that still carries his name by carefully observing a patient's internal jugular vein and arterial pulsations, four years before Einthoven's clinically useful electrocardiography was available. I am confident that Dr. Marx could have taught us Wenckebach's bedside technique, had that been necessary.

But back then, Peter Arquin had to transfer his coronary angiography patients needing intervention elsewhere, as we had no cardiac surgery program. Progress can be a very good thing. ■

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.

The Medical Alumni Association of Bassett Medical Center

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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. Here is a list of departing residents and fellows, their programs at Bassett, and their plans:

Abolfazl Ahmady, M.D. (Internal Medicine) – Practice of Hospital Medicine, Bassett Medical Center, Cooperstown, N.Y.

Pavel Bleik, M.D. (Internal Medicine) – Practice of Hospital Medicine (Nocturnist), San Joaquin General Hospital, Stockton, Calif.

Dominick DeLorenzo, M.D. (General Surgery) – Anesthesiology Residency, NYU-Grossman School of Medicine, New York, N.Y.

Hashim Ejaz, M.B., B.S. (Internal Medicine) – Practice of Hospital Medicine, Memorial Hermann Hospital, Houston, Texas

Panisara Fangsaard, M.D. (Internal Medicine) – Gastroenterology Fellowship, Medical College of Georgia, Augusta, Ga.

Aamir Gilani, M.B., B.S. (Cardiovascular Disease) – Practice of Non-Invasive Adult Cardiology, Georgia Heart Institute, Braselton, Ga.

Jena C. Jacobs, D.O. (Transitional Year) – Dermatology Residency, Frontier Dermatology, Salem, Ore.

Kyle Kidd, M.D. (Transitional Year) – Diagnostic Radiology Residency, Geisinger Health, Danville, Pa.

Jasvinder Kumar, M.B., B.S. (Internal Medicine) – Practice of Hospital Medicine, Bassett Medical Center, Cooperstown, N.Y.

Alex C. Kurtz, M.D. (General Surgery) – Complex Gastrointestinal Surgery Fellowship, Carolinas Medical Center, Charlotte, N.C.

Alex Lander, M.D. (Transitional Year) – Radiology Residency, University of Rochester Medical Center, Rochester, N.Y.

Jaedt Lim, M.D. (Transitional Year) – Internal Medicine Residency, Bassett Medical Center, Cooperstown, N.Y.

Michael J. Lotito, M.D. (Transitional Year) – Preventive Medicine Residency, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, Baltimore, Md.

Stella Nyamikeh, M.B., Ch.B. (Transitional Year) – Internal Medicine Residency, Bassett Medical Center, Cooperstown, N.Y.

Hardikkumar Patel, M.B., B.S. (Cardiovascular Disease) – Practice of Cardiology, Advent Health, Ocala, Fla.

Suman Paudel, M.B., B.S. (Internal Medicine) – Cardiovascular Disease Fellowship, Bassett Medical Center, Cooperstown, N.Y.

Ethan J. Pitney, M.D. (Transitional Year) – Diagnostic Radiology Residency, Allegheny General Hospital, Pittsburgh, Pa.

Rupa Pudasaini, M.D. (Internal Medicine) – Practice of Hospital Medicine, UNC Health Care, Kinston, N.C.

Lydia Rafferty, M.D. (General Surgery) – Colon and Rectal Surgery Fellowship, Geisinger Medical Center, Danville, Pa.

Wajeeh Rehman, M.B., B.S. (Internal Medicine) – Practice of Hospital Medicine, Champlain Valley Physicians Hospital-University of Vermont Health Network, Plattsburgh, N.Y.

Arzu Shahid, M.B., B.S. (Internal Medicine) – Endocrinology Fellowship, University of Vermont Medical Center, Burlington, Vt.

Suprita Shrestha, M.B., B.S. (Internal Medicine) – Endocrinology, Diabetes, and Metabolism Fellowship, SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University, Brooklyn, N.Y.

Emily Sippel, M.D. (General Surgery) – Practice of General Surgery, North Bend Medical Center, Coos Bay, Ore.

Zachary Sortore, M.D. (Transitional Year) – Radiology Residency, University at Buffalo, Buffalo, N.Y.

Sabin Tripathi, M.B., B.S. (Internal Medicine) – Practice of Hospital Medicine, Mercy Southeast Hospital, Cape Girardeau, Mo.

Artur Wysoczanski, M.D. (Transitional Year) – Radiology Residency, NYP-Columbia, New York, N.Y.

Egor Zakharchenko, M.D. (Internal Medicine) – Practice of Hospital Medicine, Oregon Health and Science University, Portland, Ore. ■

Columbia-Bassett Class of 2026 Match

Nithyashri Baskaran, M.D., Neurology residency at NYP Hospital-Weill Cornell Medical Center, New York, N.Y.

Claire Howlett, M.D., Medicine-Primary residency at the University of California-San Francisco, San Francisco, Calif.

Madhav Nekkar, M.D., Medicine-Primary residency at the University of California-Los Angeles Medical Center, Los Angeles, Calif.

Georgia Payne, M.D., Pediatrics residency at NYP Hospital-Columbia University Medical Center, New York, N.Y.

Tanner Powley, M.D., General Surgery residency at Brooke Army Medical Center, Fort Sam Houston, Texas.

William Rork, M.D., Internal Medicine residency at University of California-Los Angeles Medical Center, Los Angeles, Calif.

Tiana Saak, M.D., Otolaryngology residency at Yale-New Haven Hospital, New Haven, Conn.

Sidney Saint-Hilaire, M.D., Psychiatry residency at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pa.

Deferred graduation – **Simon Blanchard, Katherine Dunkelberger, and Melissa Wang.** ■

Coming Home



Bishesh and his dog Pluto, who was with him through most of his fellowship.

Last year, 670 applicants vied for a spot in Bassett's Cardiovascular Disease Fellowship Program. Twenty-five interviews later, three fellows were accepted to get to the current class. We recently spoke with one of the two fellows who made up the inaugural class in 2021.

Dr. Bishesh Shrestha is now an interventional cardiologist at University of Maryland Shore Medical Group in Easton, Md. Prior to his fellowship, he also completed his internship and residency at Bassett. For the purposes of this article, he asked to be referred to by his first name.

"Over my six years there, I came to love the program and the people," recalled Bishesh. "I liked the small-town vibe of Cooperstown, Bassett offered

resident and fellow housing right next to the hospital, and the faculty and program directors worked extremely hard to ensure we had the highest level of training."

Bishesh found the smaller size of Bassett's program to be an asset because it allowed for frequent hands-on learning and one-on-one interaction with attendings as they rounded on patients.

"While rounding with the attending in the ICU, I had the chance to perform many bedside procedures, such as central line placement and intubations," he said. "The attendings held our hands, literally, and taught us the steps of the procedures."

It was through those experiences that Bishesh discovered he liked the procedural field, which led to the decision to specialize in interventional cardiology.

"I had the opportunity in the cath lab to see what a difference you can make, immediately, in the life of a patient suffering from heart disease and that was very gratifying.

"It is world-class training. You can come out of Bassett and go anywhere. I went on to the University of Nebraska Medical Center for an interventional cardiology fellowship," said Bishesh. "I would get compliments like, 'Oh, you are very well trained,' and that speaks highly of Bassett."

He also found that the rural nature of Bassett's program well-prepared him for the position he is in now as a physician affiliated with a big university, but working at the community level. "It is challenging, but because of my training at Bassett, helping patients in advanced stages of disease and with minimal health literacy, I am able to handle it."

Bishesh said he has already marked his calendar for Bassett's next alumni reunion weekend to reconnect with the people who became like family to him over the six years he trained in Cooperstown. ■

"Bassett feels like home to me because it was there that I was born as a physician."

Bishesh Shrestha, M.D.

Cardiology from page 1

They can also measure flow resistance across a lesion non-invasively, which may help reduce cardiac catheterization in patients who have non-flow limiting lesions. This helps the cardiologist understand the risks as they develop a treatment plan for the patient. "Our cardiovascular fellows have wanted this and, until now, had to go outside of Bassett. Now, we've internalized this training and have it here," says Holmes.

While Bassett's Cardiovascular Fellowship Program is only five years old, it is already attracting and producing highly talented clinicians who are also benefiting from the more personalized experience Bassett offers.

"There is a tight relationship between the doctors and the fellows, in particular, here because the program is smaller. The fellows also get broader exposure and hands-on experience sooner. For instance, they can learn to do transesophageal echoes in their first year instead of having to wait until their third year," explains Holmes.

The growth in the capabilities of the Cardiology Program also broadens the learning opportunities for Bassett's medical students and residents. Holmes conducts a 12-session seminar with the medical students each summer where they learn about EKGs, heart sounds, and clinical cardiology through case studies. They also join cardiologists in clinic for several half-day sessions.

Bassett residents interact closely with cardiology fellows throughout their residency and, through cardiology electives, participate in inpatient service and cardiac consultations. Recently, the residents helped develop a pulmonary

embolism rapid response team to quickly assess and treat life-threatening blood clots in the lungs.

In addition, Bassett's structural heart disease program offers physicians-in-training hands on experience in transcatheter aortic valve replacement (TAVR), left atrial appendage ligation for stroke prevention in atrial

"The teaching mission is crucial because it raises the bar for the doctors here. It is as important as Bassett's other missions of patient care and research because it makes us better."

Michael Holmes, M.D.
Chief of Cardiology

fibrillation patients, and PFO (patent foramen ovale) closure. In the noninvasive arena, they are exposed to 3 Tesla MRI with Dr. Daniel Katz, and nuclear cardiology, including pyrophosphate scans (PYP), which help non-invasively diagnose cardiac amyloidosis, which causes heart failure if left untreated. Other advanced capabilities are continually being added. However, Holmes is quick to point out that technology is only one piece of the training for this next generation of physicians. They also need to learn how to be someone's physician.

"Technology is a tool to help us take care of people, but it's the taking care of people that's most important."

This is why Bassett emphasizes a longitudinal care model. Most medical training is hospital-based and episodic. Bassett's cardiovascular disease fellows, on the other hand, develop responsibility for a group of patients that they follow for three years, building relationships, clinical judgement, communication skills, and empathy. ■

THE BASSETT FAMILY ALBUM — ALUMNI NEWS

Please keep your notes and photos coming!



The Sharp family on recent trip to Kauai (l. to r.) Will, Hadley, Ashley, Doug Sharp



Griger-Mebust families' annual reunion in Cooperstown (Griger is 3rd from left and Mebust is 7th from right).

1990s

Douglas Sharp, M.D.

(Medicine Resident 1994-95) I am about to change jobs to Sibley Hospital in Washington, D.C., although not planning to start until October. My career so far has been mostly in academic anesthesiology at GW University Hospital subspecializing in cardiac procedures. During my brief sabbatical, I am attempting a cross-country bike trip. I look fondly back upon my formative intern year at Cooperstown and the supportive Bassett faculty and house staff."

2000s

Kai Mebust, M.D. (Medicine resident 2000-03; Chief resident 2003-04; Hospitalist 2004-present; Medicine service line chief 2020-present) and **David Griger, D.O.** (Medicine resident 2000-03; Attending rheumatologist 2005-present) wrote to say they recently enjoyed their 11th annual summer gathering of the Mebust and Griger families. "Kai and Dave enjoyed their time training in Cooperstown so much, they still reside here and remain gainfully employed at Bassett. Our out-of-town children and significant others are always happy to gather here for some summer fun."

2010s

Mathhar Aldaoud, M.D.

(Internal Medicine chief resident 2017-18) After many years living and working in the U.S., I have returned home to Jordan to be closer to my family. Professionally, I have taken on a dual role at the University of Jordan as a full-time lecturer and clinical cardiologist. Looking back on my journey, I feel immense gratitude for my mentors in the United States, whose guidance and mentorship shaped the physician I am today. I am truly enjoying the opportunity to practice medicine and teach in my home country.

2020s

Luis Guinand, M.D.

(Medicine resident 2022-23) I am happy to share that I will be graduating from the PM&R residency program at Temple University Hospital this June. I'm looking forward to staying in Philadelphia to continue my training as an Interventional Pain fellow at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital. Outside of the hospital, I've been staying active on the road and recently achieved a personal



milestone by upgrading to Category 3 in bike racing. It has been a busy but rewarding year—life is good!

Mark Travor, M.D.

(Columbia-Bassett student Class of 2020, Transitional Year resident 2020-21; attending ophthalmologist 2024-present) writes "Jessie, Luke (now over 8 months old) and I are enjoying the warmer weather and all that Cooperstown and its surrounds have to offer! ■



Jessie, Luke and Mark Travor on a hike along the Sleeping Lion trail at Glimmerglass State Park

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.

Anesthesiologist

Cardiologist – Non-Invasive

Dentist

Endocrinologist

Family Medicine

Gastroenterologist – Division Chief

General Surgeon-Thoracic Surgery

Hematology Oncology

Nephrology – Division Chief

Neurologist

OB/GYN

Orthopedic Surgeon – Service Line Chief

Orthopedic Surgeon – Total Joint

Susquehanna Family Practice & Gender Wellness

For more information visit:

<https://www.bassett.org/careers/physicians-and-advanced-practice-clinicians> or call Medical Staff Recruitment at 607-547-6982.

Bassett Cardiovascular Fellow Awarded Top Cardiology Scholarship

Congratulations to Dr. Hardikkumar Patel, a recent graduate of the cardiovascular disease fellowship. Dr. Patel won the 2026 Dr. Stephen S. Scheidt Memorial Scholarship prize from the New York Cardiological Society. Only one fellow in New York State receives this prestigious award each year.

"This recognition is incredibly meaningful to me and reflects the guidance and support I have been fortunate to receive throughout my training," said Dr. Patel. "I would especially like to express my sincere gratitude to Dr. Katz for his mentorship, encouragement, and commitment to my growth as a cardiologist. His influence has played a pivotal role in shaping both my clinical approach and academic development. I remain grateful for the opportunity to learn from such outstanding mentors and colleagues at Bassett Medical Center, and I look forward to continuing to contribute to the field of Cardiology."

Bassett's Cardiovascular Fellowship Program Director, Dr. Daniel Katz, who nominated Patel for the award, said, "I am delighted that Dr. Patel has been awarded the 2026 Scheidt Memorial Scholarship. "Hardy", as he is known to his colleagues, has a genuine passion for cardiology and a steadfast commitment to improving the cardiovascular health of our patients. He has demonstrated exceptional medical



Dr. Katz (left) and Dr. Patel in New Orleans for the ACC meeting

knowledge and academic achievement, having already passed the echocardiography, nuclear cardiology, and cardiac CT board examinations, in addition to winning the 2025 New York State Cardiology Jeopardy Tournament alongside his co-fellows.

"Beyond his academic accomplishments, Hardy's optimism, humanistic qualities, and dedication have enriched our fellowship program in countless ways. Throughout his cardiology fellowship, Dr. Patel has consistently excelled in patient care, medical knowledge, interpersonal skills, and systems-based practice. His selection for this prestigious award reflects not only his individual excellence, but also the outstanding training environment fostered by the Bassett Cardiovascular Fellowship and the collective efforts of faculty, fellows and staff."

Now in its ninth year, the Dr. Stephen S. Scheidt Memorial Scholarship was created to honor and support fellows in training who share Dr. Scheidt's admirable qualities, especially his keen intellect and warm-hearted nature. The award goes towards registration, travel, and lodging expenses for the American College of Cardiology's national conference. This year's conference was held in New Orleans, La., on March 28-30. ■

Surgeon Dr. Joon Shim Takes on New Leadership Roles



Dr. Joon Shim

Bassett Healthcare Network's Director of the General Surgery Residency Program, Joon K. Shim, M.D., MPH, FACS, has been appointed or elected to new roles in four national organizations. Dr. Shim is a surgeon who is fellowship-trained in advanced minimally invasive surgery with expertise in foregut surgery, general surgery, and metabolic surgery.

As an appointee to the American College of Surgeons' Committee on Medical Student Education, Dr. Shim will work with other committee members to improve surgical education across all four years of medical school and better facilitate the transition from medical school into residency training.

As a director-at-large on the Board of Directors for the Association for Academic Surgery Foundation (AASF), Dr. Shim will support AASF's mission to champion new surgeons at the outset of their careers.

As a member-at-large for the Association for Surgical Education, Dr. Shim will provide her insights to the Board of Directors of one of the leading national organizations dedicated to advancing surgical education, curriculum development, and innovation in training.

Dr. Shim was also appointed to serve on the Board of

Directors of the Association of Program Directors in Surgery, the only national organization dedicated to surgical residency leadership, program development, and resident education.

"These four national opportunities are especially meaningful to me because they align closely with my passion for surgical education, mentorship, leadership development, and building thoughtful training environments for future surgeons," said Dr. Shim. "I am committed to the work of preparing these surgeons to be compassionate, technically excellent, resilient, and ready to serve diverse communities."

Under Dr. Shim's leadership, Bassett Healthcare Network's General Surgery Residency Program has continued to expand its national reputation as a high-quality rural surgery training program.

"This year marks the first time in the history of the residency program that there are more female residents than male residents in training, something I view as an important reflection of intentional recruitment, mentorship, and culture-building within surgical education," said Dr. Shim.

Dr. Shim performed the first robotic Roux-en-Y gastric bypass surgery in Bassett Healthcare Network's history in 2022. She is a United States Army veteran who served two deployments to Afghanistan in 2011-2012 and again in 2013, where she led surgical teams caring for combat casualties.

"My military experience profoundly shaped my leadership philosophy, teamwork approach, resilience, and commitment to service," said Dr. Shim. ■



See our latest news and updates at Bassett Medical Alumni Association

Dr. Benjamin Friedell Honored with Walter A. Franck Award for Physician Excellence

Benjamin Friedell, M.D., has been honored with the 2026 Walter A. Franck Physician Excellence Award. This award recognizes a physician, nominated by their peers, who exemplifies excellence in the areas of clinical care, scholarship, and citizenship. It is among the most prestigious recognitions awarded by Bassett Healthcare Network to its caregivers.

This award comes at a time of transition in Dr. Friedell's 40-plus year career in medicine, mentorship, and management. He retired this summer from his clinical practice at Oneonta Family Practice where he has seen patients for primary care appointments since 1997. He will continue to serve as Medical Director of A.O. Fox Nursing Home until a new leader is ready to assume that role and remain in an advisory role in Primary Care leadership in Otsego County for a transition period after his retirement from clinical practice.

"There are people that I have cared for over many years, and seen through a lot of ups and downs, and it's really hard to say goodbye," said Dr. Friedell. "But that to me is the foundation of primary care, if not all of medicine. It's the relationship with the patient and the trust they have in me that I'm going to take good care of them."

A Medical Career Centered on Community

In addition to his many responsibilities at Bassett, Dr. Friedell founded and currently serves as Medical Director of the Oneonta Community Health Center, a free clinic that provides preventative health care, management of some chronic medical conditions, referrals to specialists, dietary counseling, mental health support, and other select medical services free of charge to community members facing financial hardship.

"I feel it's important that I have a commitment to the community beyond what I do in my office. It is very moving to see patients at the free clinic who are so thankful that someone is caring for them and not charging them anything," said Dr. Friedell. "I'm interested in people. I am fortunate enough to have chosen a medical specialty that I have enjoyed for all the years I've been here."



Dr. Benjamin Friedell

A Leader During Times of Transition

As his career developed, Dr. Friedell established himself as a leader, someone willing to step up and take on responsibilities, but also ready to assist others as they grew into leaders. Included among the many roles he temporarily filled over the years are Interim Vice President of Medical Affairs at A.O. Fox Hospital and Interim Chief of Primary Care across Bassett Healthcare Network.

One of Friedell's proudest accomplishments was the role he played in Fox Hospital's purchase and renovation of the former Pyramid Mall in Oneonta, transforming the then-shuttered shopping center

into what is now FoxCare Center, a true community health care hub that includes primary, specialty, and family dentistry services along with housing a pharmacy, specialty pharmacy, Cyber Café, YMCA Fitness Center, laboratory and medical imaging services, and a Veterans Affairs Community-Based Outpatient Clinic. FoxCare Center is where Oneonta Family Practice is located.

An Educator Who Passes the Torch

Dr. Friedell has dedicated much of his time also to the education of students pursuing their medical degree, preparing them for what it is like to care for patients in the real world, after graduation. During his career, he has held academic appointments at Upstate Medical University, based in Syracuse, Albany Medical College, and the University of Rochester. He currently teaches students through Bassett Healthcare Network's partnership with Columbia University's Vagelos College of Physicians and Surgeons.

As part of the Walter Franck award, each recipient is awarded \$10,000 to be donated to a Bassett Healthcare Network-affiliated charitable cause of their choice. Dr. Friedell has elected to support the Bob Simon & Loretta Anagnost Patient Assistance Fund, which provides non-medical financial assistance to cancer patients facing financial hardship during their treatments, and the David S. Svahn Humanities in Medicine Memorial Lecture. ■

Dr. Ethan Talbot Appointed Division Chief of General Surgery



Dr. Ethan Talbot

Ethan Talbot, M.D., was recently appointed Division Chief of General Surgery. In his new leadership capacity, Dr. Talbot will play a key role working with surgical leadership across Bassett Healthcare Network to serve patients.

"I am happy to welcome Dr. Talbot to this role. I have every confidence he will lead our team with skill, compassion, and a patient-focused approach," said Luis Ocegueda, M.D., Chief of Surgery and Operating Rooms Medical Director for the Bassett network. "I would also like to thank Dr. Raul Monzon for his leadership and hard work in this role as he transitions back fully into clinical practice."

Dr. Talbot completed his residency in General Surgery at Bassett Medical Center after finishing medical school at the University of Connecticut, Farmington. After his residency, Dr. Talbot made Bassett his permanent home.

"I came to Bassett as a resident in 2016 and immediately

knew this was a special place," said Dr. Talbot. "After five years as a surgical resident, and five more as an attending physician, I am so humbled to be taking the helm of the Division of General Surgery. We have such a tight-knit group of surgeons, and a strong residency program—it is truly an honor to be leading this team. I especially want to thank Dr. Monzon for his more than decade of service and tutelage as the prior Division Chief." ■



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.

Columbia-Bassett Class of 2028



L-R: Sonja Lazovic, Kylie Pecord, Nobel Zhou, Stephan Blaskovics, Nadeem Jones, Rishav Raj Dasgupta, Hawley Brown, Emma Ladd (deferred), Micah Jordan, Hannah Huang, and Dr. Henry Weil

2026 Golden Awards



Drs. Aamir Gilani and Hardikkumar Patel presenting the Golden Heart Award to Dr. Michael Holmes.

The 2026 Golden Awards were presented at the year-end celebrations of the Departments of Medicine, Cardiology, and Surgery on Friday, June 12. As this year's recipients of the Golden Apple Awards, the Internal Medicine residents selected Dr. Christina DiCorato and the Surgery residents chose Dr. Charles Drucker and Dr. Casey Lamb. The Outpatient Medicine Teaching Award went to Dr. Kiersten Gaunt.

The Cardiovascular Disease fellows selected Dr. Michael Holmes for the Golden Heart Award. The fellows selected Dr. Nidhish Tiwari as the Research Mentor of the Year and Dr. Daniel Katz as the Clinical Mentor of the Year.

Medicine and Transitional Year residents selected Dr. Wajeeh Rehman for the Golden Stethoscope Award for excellence in teaching. The Surgery and Transitional Year residents selected Dr. Alex Kurtz for the Best Resident Educator Award. Fellow Educator of the Year Award, selected by medicine and transitional year residents, went to Dr. Aamir Gilani.

Intern of the Year Awards were also bestowed. The Medicine Intern of the Year, selected by the Medicine residents, was Dr. Raghini Ranganathan. Transitional Year Intern of the Year Awards, the Medicine residents selected Dr. Jaedt Lim and the Surgery residents selected Dr. Ethan Pitney.

The cardiovascular disease faculty selected Dr. Hardikkumar Patel and Dr. Aamir Gilani as Co-Fellow Clinicians of the Year.

The Cupola Awards, selected by the Columbia-Bassett students, were given to Dr. Michael Holmes, Outstanding Teacher of the Year, and Dr. Nuttha Siriwatanakul (Surgery) and Dr. Abolfazl Ahmady (Medicine) as Outstanding Resident Teachers. ■

It's a Wrap!

On Friday, June 12, Bassett's Cardiology, Medicine, and Surgery Departments held graduation ceremonies for our Graduate Medical Education programs.

The class of 2026 consists of 9 Transitional Year Residents, 12 Internal Medicine Residents, one Chief Internal Medicine Resident, three Chief Surgery Residents, one Preliminary Surgical Intern, and two Cardiovascular Fellows.



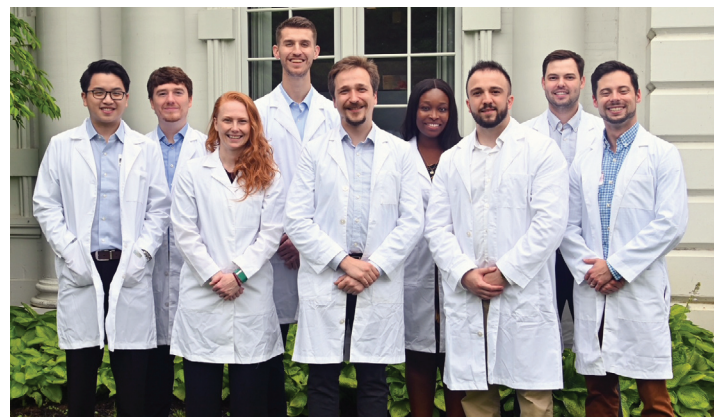
L-R Cardiovascular Disease: Dr. Hardikkumar Patel, and Dr. Aamir Gilani



L-R Surgery: Drs. Emily Sippel, Alex Kurtz, and Lydia Rafferty



L-R Internal Medicine: Front Row— Drs. Sabin Tripathi, (Chief Resident), Rupa Pudasaini, Arzu Shahid, Suman Paudel, Suprita Shrestha, and Panisara Fangsaard Back Row— Drs. Kannate Chotiphansiri, Abolfazl Ahmady, Wajeeh Rehman, Hashim Ejaz, Jasvinder Kumar, and Pavel Bleik. Not pictured: Dr. Egor Zakharchenko



L-R Transitional Year: Front Row— Drs. Jaedt Lim, Jena Jacobs, Artur Wysoczanski, Zachary Sortore, and Ethan Pitney Back Row— Drs. Kyle Kidd, Michael Lotito, Stella Nyamikeh, and Alex Lander



Bassett Healthcare Network
Bassett Medical Center

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The Gift of a Lasting Legacy

Many people spend their lives supporting the causes and communities that matter most to them. Through thoughtful legacy planning, that support can continue for generations to come.

A legacy gift—whether made through a will, retirement account, trust, or beneficiary designation—is one of the most meaningful ways to create a lasting impact. These gifts help organizations like Friends of Bassett Healthcare Network plan for the future with greater confidence, ensuring that quality health care remains accessible throughout rural central New York for years to come.

What makes legacy giving especially powerful is its flexibility. Some supporters choose to include a charitable bequest in their will. Others designate a nonprofit as a beneficiary



of an IRA or other retirement account, which can also provide important tax advantages for loved ones. Some establish charitable trusts or other planned gifts that support both family and philanthropy. No matter the approach, each gift reflects deeply held values and a desire to leave the world better than they found it.

Importantly, legacy giving is not reserved for the wealthy. Even modest gifts, when combined with others, can help fund patient care, medical technology, wellness initiatives, and critical community services far into the future.

For many donors, a legacy gift becomes more than a financial contribution—it becomes a statement about what mattered most in their lives: compassion, community, family, and hope for future generations. ■

Help Us Keep Your Information Up to Date

Did you know you can now update your information for the Alumni Association on Bassett's website? Just go to Alumni Affairs on Bassett.org and click on the alumni update form.