

MARYLAND

**THE DAILY RECORD**

# HEALTH CARE HEROES 2020



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*• Nurse of the Year • Physician of the Year • Nurse Practitioner of the Year • COVID-19 Hero • Lifetime Achievement • Community Outreach/Education Hero • Advancements and Innovation in Health Care • Workplace Wellness Program of the Year •*



# Ascension Saint Agnes

Congratulates the  
Ascension Saint Agnes Health Institute  
and the SBIRT program  
for being named Healthcare Heroes!





## Letter from the Publisher



**M**ore than ever, this is a year we need to celebrate our Health Care Heroes. With Maryland, the nation and the world locked in a pandemic, those in the health care industry are truly doing heroic work.

That's why, as part of our 2020 Health Care Heroes awards, we added a special category for those COVID-19 Heroes who are on the front line caring for patients and fighting the coronavirus.

Maryland is home to several renowned medical and federal institutions and is a national leader in health care research and development. The Daily Record's Health Care Heroes Awards honor those organizations and individuals who have made an impact on the quality of health care in our state.

The 2020 Health Care Heroes go above and beyond to meet the needs of the community through innovative thinking and creative ideas. Their work to keep us healthy and well truly makes them heroes. Their high professional achievement, community involvement and dedication to excellence contribute to Maryland being a national leader in health care. The Daily Record is honored to recognize their accomplishments.

Nominations were received from across the state, and we are pleased to be recognizing 25 winners and 10 COVID-19 Heroes. This year we are honoring organizations and individuals in six categories. The Lifetime Achievement award honors individuals in health care whose body of work throughout their career makes them stand out from their peers.

The Advancements and Innovation in Health Care award recognizes organizations that have made significant strides within the health care community. The Community Outreach/Education Hero award honors individuals and organizations that have helped the community by providing support and education.

The Nurse of the Year and Physician of the Year awards honor those medical professionals who have performed in exemplary ways.

This year's Health Care Heroes dedicate their lives to making a positive impact on the quality of health care in Maryland and beyond. They face incredible challenges and provide exceptional care to those in need. Their work is exceptional, and we applaud their achievements.

You will learn about each of these individuals and organizations through this publication. Discover how each one of them, helps make Maryland a leader in health care.

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## Dr. John Herzenberg DIRECTOR OF PEDIATRIC ORTHOPEDICS SINAI HOSPITAL/LIFEBRIDGE HEALTH

**D**r. John E. Herzenberg is recognized as one of the world's leading practitioners of the Ponseti casting method of managing clubfoot, a common birth defect affecting about one in every 500 children.

Herzenberg, the director of pediatric orthopedics at Sinai Hospital and founder and director of the International Center for Limb Lengthening at the hospital's Rubin Institute for Advanced Orthopedics, has made numerous contributions in the research and treatment of orthopedic deformities in people of all ages. He trains doctors all over the world and has assisted in developing a limb-lengthening system that has helped more than 10,000 people lead more comfortable lives.

Herzenberg is also among a group of surgeons who travels to developing countries as part of Operation Rainbow to help treat people living in the most difficult conditions. His first international mission was in 1998 to Nicaragua.

"When I go to Nicaragua or Ecuador or Haiti or another country to operate, I know that if I don't go there, no one else would be operating on that child or that patient, so you really feel like you

are doing something that is changing the world," he said. "We typically do 30 to 40 operations a year."

Herzenberg's wife, Merrill Chaus Herzenberg, coordinates their international surgical missions. Merrill Chaus Herzenberg is a registered nurse with a master's degree in international public health from the University of Liverpool in the United Kingdom.

"Over the past 35 years in practice, I have had the privilege of working with thousands of children and adults struggling with orthopedic problems, birth defects and injuries," he said.



## Dr. W. Anthony Riley

CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER  
GILCHRIST

**T**he wisdom of older patients has always inspired Dr. Anthony Riley, who joined Gilchrist when it started in 1994 as the founding medical director of Gilchrist Hospice Care. He has also been a member of the medical staff at Greater Baltimore Medical Center since 1983 and is a division head in its geriatrics department.

Riley started his career in internal medicine and found in working with older patients that they had lessons to share about their illnesses and medical care.

“Older patients typically challenge their providers to think beyond the usual risks and benefits of treatments,” Riley said. “These patients wish to understand the benefits, risks and burdens for individuals in their particular state of health and how a treatment would affect other aspects of their lives. They see themselves as people, not just as patients.”

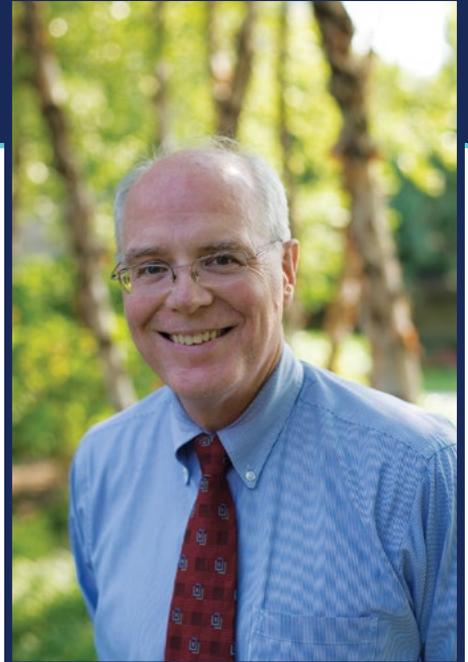
Treatment requiring weekly clinic visits might be acceptable for younger patients, but older patients may find it burdensome to spend precious time every week in a clinic in exchange for modest benefit, Riley said.

“In addition, we are learning every day about how the risks and benefits of treatments are different for older patients versus younger ones,” he said. “To this day, I find it gratifying to find treatment options and to help patients

make decisions about medical care that serve them best.”

Gilchrist’s elder medical care practice focuses on the frail elderly and those with serious illnesses, Riley said, and is integrated with the many other services Gilchrist and GBMC offer so it can remain a resource and source of continuity for patients as their needs change.

“Always keep the voice of the patient at the forefront of your work,” he said. “The potential distractions are numerous. Staying focused on the needs and perspectives of your patients will always serve you well as you navigate the increasingly complicated world of medicine.”



## Elizabeth Tanner

PROFESSOR

JOHNS HOPKINS SCHOOL OF NURSING

**E**lizabeth Tanner has helped prepare thousands of nurses for careers in gerontological care.

“During her 50-year career as a nurse, Dr. Tanner has demonstrated a lifetime commitment to improving the health of older adults and advancing approaches to interprofessional collaborative care through scholarship, practice, teaching and service,” said Mona Shattell, associate dean of faculty development at Johns Hopkins School of Nursing. “Her work has had a strong and sustained impact on the promotion of gerontological nursing practice, aimed at improving the health and well-being of older adults.”

Tanner, a graduate of the University of Maryland School of Nursing, is on the faculty of the Johns Hopkins School of Nursing and School of Medicine, and is the director of the School of Nursing Interprofessional Education and Interprofessional Collaborative Practice program, and is core faculty with the school’s Center for Innovative Care and Aging.

Tanner has also worked to improve the lives of older residents in Baltimore. She has been a commissioner on the Baltimore City Commission on Aging since 2004 and was its vice chair from 2013 to 2019.

Tanner has received more than 25 awards, including the American Geriatrics Society’s Dennis W. Jahnigen Memorial Award for her leadership in training students in geriatrics, and has also received the National Gerontological Nursing Association’s National Distinguished Nurse Educator Award.

“Dr. Tanner has made valuable contributions to nursing education, gerontological research, practice, community service and collaboration for improving care across disciplines,” Shattell said. “She is a role model for students and colleagues alike.”



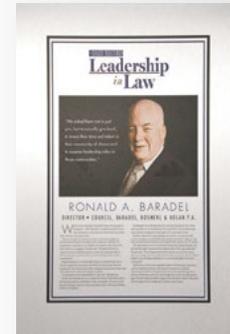
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## Ascension Saint Agnes SBIRT PROGRAM



### Ascension Saint Agnes

Three years ago, 150-year-old Ascension Saint Agnes in Baltimore, part of a national Catholic health system, created the Saint Agnes Health Institute to address health care disparities and the social determinants of health that have a negative impact on patients.

The institute has since grown from fewer than 30 associates to more than 110, all dedicated to serving patients – especially the poor and the vulnerable.

Since it opened, the institute has provided cardiovascular disease prevention and diabetes prevention programs at churches and community centers and opened a weekly, year-round produce market on the Saint Agnes campus.

In March of 2018, in response to Baltimore's opioid crisis, Ascension Saint Agnes launched the Screening, Brief Intervention, Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) program.

The program focused first on visitors to Saint

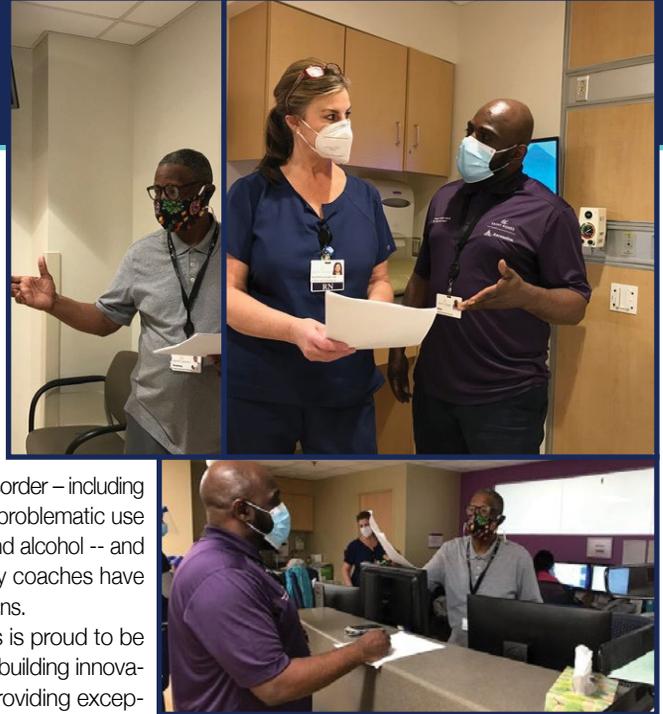
Agnes Hospital's emergency department but eventually expanded to outpatient OB-GYN practices and the inpatient Labor and Delivery and Mother-Baby units.

Since SBIRT started, some 3,500 patients have been screened positively for substance use disorder – including not just opioids but other problematic use and abuse of illicit drugs and alcohol -- and Ascension's peer recovery coaches have completed 1,600 interventions.

"Ascension Saint Agnes is proud to be recognized as a leader in building innovative health models and providing exceptional care for our patients," said Christopher A. Chekouras, president and CEO of Ascension Saint Agnes.

"The SBIRT program's success in helping

patients with substance use disorders get the help they need is core to our goal of reducing health disparities in our community."



## LifeBridge Health – Virtual Hospital

### LIFEBRIDGE HEALTH CARE BRAVELY

Located at Sinai Hospital in Baltimore and launched in the summer of 2019, LifeBridge Health's Virtual Hospital employs digital technology to improve medical care coordination and efficiency.

The hospital combines a clinical command center, telemedicine services and international clinical call centers. Together, they allow LifeBridge Health, the fourth-largest health system in Maryland, to coordinate visits remotely to patients in their homes, arrange transportation to the hospital if necessary and find the right location in the hospital for their care.

A primary goal of the virtual hospital was to decrease wait times, and so far, it's succeeded. In a pilot project of the service at Northwest Hospital's emergency department last year, the average door-to-door provider time plummeted from one hour and 26

minutes to 26 minutes, a decrease of 69%.

"The ultimate goal of LifeBridge Health's virtual facility is to make it easier for patients to receive quality care, which allows health care experts to see more people in less time and thereby care for more individuals overall," said Dr. Jonathan Thierman, chief medical information officer for LifeBridge Health and medical director for the LifeBridge Health Virtual Hospital.

"These advantages, driven by technology, also bring down costs due to the increased efficiency of the health care process."

The virtual hospital has been a boon in the coronavirus pandemic. It has allowed

doctors to determine remotely who needed to come to the hospital for care and who could recover at home.



## Johns Hopkins Medicine TOBACCO TREATMENT CLINIC

**E**stablished in 2018, the Johns Hopkins Tobacco Treatment Center is the first such clinic in the state based on the premise that tobacco dependence is a chronic disease.

“We see patients exclusively for their tobacco dependence, understanding why they smoke and when they smoke and create individualized plans to help them quit at a timeline that is appropriate for them,” said Dr. Panagis Galitsatos, the center director.

“We aim to provide a smoking cessation plan that meets the patient’s individualized needs with reasonable goals and expectations,” he added. “In short, we are pro-smoker, anti-smoking.”

At their initial visit, patients evaluated. Variables such as the age they started to smoke, how much they smoke and why they chose to smoke are collected to identify their “smoking topography” and

help patients see what conditioning around tobacco use will be easiest to break.

The clinic uses three general strategies to help the client quit: constant touchpoints, which means weekly communication with clients; controller medications if appropriate, such as the nicotine replacement therapy patch or bupropion; and, relief medications, such as nicotine gum, lozenges and nasal spray.

To help patients avoid relapsing, the center extends its services for up to two years to make sure patients remain smoke-free.



Recently, the clinic began seeing patients addicted to electronic cigarettes – some as young as 16.

Since opening in July 2018, the treatment center has had more than 200 referrals, and 90% of its patients have stopped smoking.

## Keswick WISE & WELL CENTER

**F**or more than 130 years Keswick has provided long-term care and other services to seniors.

Two years ago, the organization opened a new center on its Hampden campus that dramatically expanded those services.

The Wise & Well Center for Healthy Living was created to help older people living in the community age in their homes while staying physically healthy and socially engaged.

The center includes fitness classes, personal trainers, medication, art and cooking classes and more.

Developed in a partnership with Aperio Health, a Baltimore software company, the center also has a strong high-tech component. A health-care data platform collects and analyzes information on the people using Keswick’s services, including the traditional nursing home

and the new center.

The system can generate reports on clinical outcomes, measuring health changes such as blood pressure and weight, and non-clinical outcomes, such as mental health and happiness.

Keswick also is using other high-tech tools, including telehealth, monitoring, a web-based portal for center members and apps to keep older adults engaged in health and wellness.

“When we opened the Wise & Well Center for Healthy Living in 2018, a big investment in technology went along with the community health expansion,” said Keswick CEO Carmel Roques.



“We are proud to be at the forefront in this space, creating software that benefits community health in Baltimore.”

## CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield



In its 80-plus years, CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield has consistently made helping people without access to affordable health care part of its mission.

In 2019, the region's largest not-for-profit health care company took that commitment to a new level.

During the company's first Day of Equity and Action, CareFirst shut down its normal business operations to allow more than 5,000 employees to participate in team-building activities and training designed to cultivate their empathy for and understanding of the needy clients they serve.

At five different locations – Baltimore, Charleston, West Virginia, Cumberland, the District of Columbia and Easton – the employees provided help for the needy.

The employees wrapped some 350,000 diapers and assembled 14,000 care pack-

ages for babies. They put together 6,300 hygiene kits for homeless men and women and packed hundreds of boxes of food for the hungry. They also cleaned and helped organize dozens of community centers and worked on neighborhood improvement projects.

When the day was done, a survey found that 92% of the participants felt more empowered to practice empathy and to try to better understand their community.

"It's part of our mission as a not-for-profit health care company to support organizations and programs that help individuals who lack adequate access to health care or can't meet basic

living needs," said Brian D. Pieninck, president and CEO of CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield.



## LifeBridge Health POPULATION HEALTH TEAM

A regional health care organization that serves Baltimore City and Baltimore and Carroll counties, LifeBridge Health's efforts in the field of community outreach have been numerous and far-reaching. The Population Health Team, led by Dr. Susan Mani, has worked to transform how care is delivered throughout the LifeBridge system.

Those efforts include programs that help new mothers avoid depression and bond with their infants and support for individuals with diabetes.

They include programs to help the elderly maintain a safe environment that will allow them to age in place, such as working with private housing groups to make sure the seniors can receive health education and services in their homes.

Among other initiatives, LifeBridge also has worked with community groups to create education and food preparation programs

to highlight the value of healthy eating and created farmers' markets at its hospitals to provide healthy food.

"Our entire Population Health team of providers, nurses, social workers, community health workers, educators, and support staff have always sought to understand the needs and concerns of the communities we serve and figure out ways to address them," said Mani, LifeBridge's chief population health officer.

Her team has adapted to the new challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic in several ways, she said, such as making sure food and prescriptions are delivered directly to the homes of those who need them.

Observers said LifeBridge's outreach efforts have made a difference throughout the region and beyond.



## MedStar Harbor Hospital



**MedStar Harbor Hospital**

**W**hat makes MedStar Harbor's community outreach unique is that it addresses the holistic needs of communities, according to Ryan Moran, the hospital's director of community health.

"MedStar Harbor lives out its mission as an anchor institution and is a model for community health for all hospitals in our state," Moran said.

The private, nonprofit hospital in Baltimore elevated its community health department following a community health needs assessment in 2018, Moran said, and focuses outreach efforts in three areas: behavioral health services, chronic disease management and prevention and social determinants of health.

In the area of behavioral health services, MedStar Harbor has screened more than 150,000 patients for substance use and referred some 2,500 patients to alcohol or substance abuse treatment programs. The hospital also was one of the first in the state to launch an Opioid Survivor Outreach Program and works with organizations such as Catholic Charities and Behavioral Health Systems of Baltimore to educate people on mental health and substance abuse.

The hospital is about to launch a mobile health unit to serve the most vulnerable residents of south Baltimore.

The hospital works with organizations such as Hungry Harvest, a produce delivery service, to deliver fresh produce to patients in their homes, and the Greater Baybrook Alliance to design a bike and pedestrian path connecting the Gwynns Falls Trail with the BWI Trail.

MedStar Harbor also works with Baltimore's



Safe Streets Program and has helped the neighboring community of Cherry Hill celebrate a homicide-free year.

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## MileOne Autogroup

For two decades, MileOne Autogroup, a Towson-based car dealership with about 40 locations in Maryland, North Carolina, Pennsylvania and Virginia, has been helping the American Cancer Society in Maryland in a variety of ways.

The automotive retail group has raised more than \$3.8 million for the cause. Over the years, MileOne has:

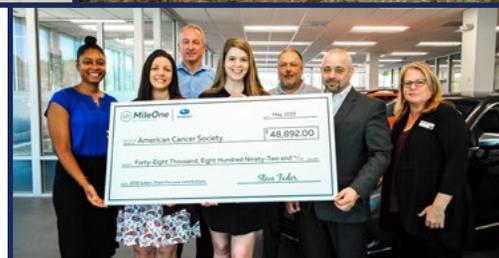
- Started a Travel to Treatment program that uses volunteers to drive cancer patients to treatment – nearly 1,000 patients last year alone;
- Hosted monthly dinners at Hope Lodge in Baltimore, a free home away from home for cancer patients and their caregivers;
- Donated two transportation vans to Hope Lodge to get patients to and from hospitals;
- Funded several “Day of Hope” days at Hope Lodge, which cover operational costs for the day;

- Donated a brand new car to Hope Lodge annually for the past 21 years; the cars are raffled off by the American Cancer Society, the money earmarked mainly for transportation and cancer research.

“At MileOne, our connection to the community is paramount, and we are proud to support the many organizations and agencies that are focused on improving the lives of those who live and work in the Baltimore metropolitan area,” said Steve Fader, MileOne Autogroup CEO.

“MileOne Automotive Group’s support of the American Cancer Society and our Baltimore Hope Lodge has helped make a posi-

tive impact on the lives of so many cancer patients,” wrote Karen Seaberry, manager of Hope Lodge.



## Maryland Citizens' Health Initiative Education Fund Inc.



MARYLAND CITIZENS' HEALTH INITIATIVE

During its 20-plus years of existence, the Maryland Citizens' Health Initiative Education Fund (MCHIEF), a nonprofit advocacy organization, has worked to make quality, affordable health care available to Marylanders. During those two decades, the nonprofit advocacy organization's efforts have helped cut the state's uninsured residents rate from 15% to 6%.

Last year, the organization's education fund claimed two major successes.

First, it championed the creation of a state Prescription Drug Affordability Board, which reviews the pricing for expensive drugs and sets an upper payment limit for the price of the drugs.

Since rising drug prices are the single greatest contributor to rising insurance premiums, making drugs more affordable is the health initiative's primary focus. The new board is expected to save the state money and have an impact on public health and what Marylanders pay for the medications.

Second, MCHIEF lobbied successfully for the creation of the Maryland Easy Enrollment Health Insurance Program, which allows Marylanders without insurance to start the enrollment process by simply checking a box on their state income tax returns.

More than 18,000 Marylanders have already taken advantage of this option, which is expected to increase the amount of coverage and stabilize insurance premiums.



“We are honored to receive this award on behalf of the hundreds of organizations across the state that are working with us to expand access to quality, affordable health care, particularly at this moment in history,” said Vincent DeMarco, president of the Maryland Citizens' Health Initiative.

# WE'RE SO PROUD OF OUR SIX HEALTH CARE HEROES

ADVANCEMENTS AND INNOVATION  
IN HEALTH CARE:

**LifeBridge Health, Virtual Hospital**



*NURSE OF THE YEAR:*

**Ashley Keating, RN**

Carroll Hospital

COMMUNITY OUTREACH/  
EDUCATION HERO:

**LifeBridge Health, Population Health**



*PHYSICIAN OF THE YEAR:*

**Marc Gertner, M.D.**

General Surgery Specialist



*PHYSICIAN OF THE YEAR:*

**Aziza T. Shad, M.D.**

Ellen W.P. Wasserman Chair of Pediatrics,  
Chief of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology,  
The Herman & Walter Samuelson  
Children's Hospital at Sinai



*LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT:*

**John E. Herzenberg, M.D.,  
FRCSC, FAAOS**

Director, International Center for Limb Lengthening,  
Rubin Institute for Advanced Orthopedics

You inspire us with your innovation, excellence and  
unwavering commitment to the community.

# WORKPLACE WELLNESS PROGRAM OF THE YEAR

## Kaiser Permanente



# KAISER PERMANENTE®

**A**t Kaiser Permanente Mid-Atlantic States, the 8,000-plus employees are trained and urged not only to take good care of others but to care for themselves as well.

“At Kaiser Permanente, we make every effort to provide our employees with the resources they need to thrive,” said DeLinda Washington, interim senior vice president of Human Resources at Kaiser Permanente for the Mid-Atlantic region.

“Our employees have access to a variety of programs and tools that supports their total

health — mind, body and spirit. Helping our employees reach their personal health goals allows us to build an authentic culture of health both within our organization and in the communities we serve.”

Those programs and tools include:

The Live Well Be Well Program, which mandates that at least 12 activities per year are worked in at each Kaiser facility.

The program has six components that represent a holistic view of well-being, including healthy community, healthy relationships, financial wellness, mental

health and wellness, career wellness and physical health and safety. It includes online and mobile wellness portals that employees can use to measure and keep track of their health.

The National Healthy Workplace Activities Policy, in which five minutes of “thrive break” time is encouraged for every hour of meeting time. Managers have been taught how to integrate these breaks into meetings, including sample “instant recess” activities and tips for making meetings more mindful.

Kaiser also offers mental health online training for employees and managers, aimed at helping workers identify the signs and symptoms of mental health conditions.

The innovations have helped Kaiser Permanente win national recognition as a best place to work and top employer for work-life balance.

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## Susan Carroll

VICE PRESIDENT OF CLINICAL SERVICES  
LORIEN HEALTH SERVICES

**S**usan Carroll started her career as a nursing assistant and now, as vice president of clinical services with Lorien Health Services, she serves as the clinical liaison and consultant for Lorien's eight skilled nursing and five assisted living facilities.

Carroll considers training Lorien's directors of nursing among her most rewarding experiences. "I am able to help them develop their own personal techniques and facilitate their growth into leadership positions. My mentorship helps them build strong relationships with our residents."

Carroll has been the driving force behind some significant advances at Lorien, said Wayne Brannock, Lorien's chief operating officer, including the successful clinical implementation of Lorien's telemedicine program, which has been highly rated by the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services; the creation of

a training program for certified nursing assistants and geriatric nursing assistants designed to attract and retain top talent; and transitioning Lorien to all electronic medical records.

"Susan has a proven track record of increasing staff retention to ensure consistency of care and minimize organizational costs," Brannock said. "She consistently maintains high ratings on family satisfaction surveys and maintains a hospital readmission rate that is significantly lower than the national average."

Nursing careers are rewarding because nurses have the opportunity to help people in every stage of life and health, Carroll said.

"Having the opportunity to care for them, learn about their lives and develop relationships has supported my personal growth and passion for nursing," she said. "Every day, I leave work feeling like I have



made a difference in someone's life and have brought them some comfort."

## Ashley Keating

ASSISTANT MANAGER  
CARDIOVASCULAR DEPARTMENT,  
CARROLL HOSPITAL

**A**shley Keating became interested in a nursing career when she was 13 years old. Her sister Heather was a certified nursing assistant at an assisted living center near their home.

"I remember listening to her stories about taking care of her residents and absolutely loving it," said Keating, assistant manager of the cardiovascular department at Carroll Hospital in Westminster. "After high school, I followed in her footsteps and worked at the same facility as a CNA. It was a wonderful experience that pushed me to enroll in nursing school."

Keating has experience in many different medical offices and departments. While earning her associate's degree in nursing at Frederick Community College, she said she learned from doctors and patients while working in a primary care office.

After receiving her degree and becoming a registered nurse, she worked for several

years in the emergency department and recovering catheterization laboratory at St. Agnes Hospital before starting as a staff nurse at Carroll Hospital in 2014.

She went on to earn a bachelor's degree in nursing from the University of Phoenix and became team leader in her department three years later, then assistant manager in 2019, when she was named the hospital's Nurse of the Year.

"Ashley's compassion, hard work and expert knowledge make her a nurse that all patients trust and a co-worker that all colleagues admire," said Stephanie Reid, chief nursing officer at the hospital.

"Ashley is truly the best of the best," said Jim Ridge, executive director of the hospi-



tal's cardiovascular and diagnostic imaging services. "She excels in patient care and continuously seeks opportunities to grow and help others in her field."

Keating acknowledges that it is a difficult time to be a nurse but still loves her work. "I have a deep passion and a drive for nursing. I feel like I'll never leave this job because I would miss helping people so much. Being the one who's there for someone in their most vulnerable moment, it's what gets me up in the morning."

## Kevin Mempin

NURSE

KAISER PERMANENTE GAITHERSBURG MEDICAL CENTER

**K**evin Mempin has been a registered nurse with the Kaiser Permanente Gaithersburg Medical Center for five years, including the past three years as lead nurse in the Orthopedic Surgery Department, and the 30-year-old said his late father, who was also a nurse, would be proud.

“My father was working all the time when I was growing up and I didn’t see the value in his strong work ethic until I got older,” said Mempin, who has an associate’s degree in nursing from Montgomery College and is pursuing his bachelor’s and master’s degrees from Chamberlain University. “He had a profound impact on me. His generosity and positive attitude were unmatched and my goal is to continue his legacy.”

Francisco Mempin trained as a nurse in the Navy and after serving in Operation Desert Storm, he worked mostly night shifts at hospitals, including more than 10 years at Suburban Hospital in Bethesda. The divorced

father worked nights so he could take care of his two children, Kevin and his sister, Christy Mempin, now a registered nurse at Children’s National Hospital in Washington.

Kevin Mempin pursued nursing because of his father’s influence and a health careers program in high school. “The program helped me understand the caring nature you have to have to be successful. I knew then that I wanted to help people.”

Today, he ensures that surgical and pre- and post-operative care are coordinated in his department, working with the doctors, nurses and other departments. Before Kaiser Permanente, he worked in a nursing home and primary care office for about one year each. “I never forget that we are patient advocates first and foremost.”

Mempin is quick to deflect the spotlight as the pandemic grips the nation. “There are nurses all over the world doing incredible work. I believe all health care workers and



first responders are heroes because they find the courage to go to work every day saving lives.”

## Nia Williams

REGIONAL CLINICAL OPERATIONS MANAGER

KAISER PERMANENTE MID-ATLANTIC STATES

NEWBORN CARE CENTER/LACTATION DEPARTMENT

**W**hen Nia Williams reflects on her nursing career, one of her fondest memories is working with nursing students. She used to ask them why they selected the career, and they could not say it’s because they wanted to help people.

“Helping people is a given,” Williams said. “I selected nursing because it offered an opportunity for a diverse professional journey. If you are driven and inspired to want more and do more, nursing is the best path to take.”

Williams landed what she calls her dream employer, Kaiser Permanente, in January 2017, starting as a newborn care nurse and lactation consultant. In February 2019, she was promoted to regional clinical operations manager with the Newborn Care Center for the Washington, Virginia and Maryland region.

Williams manages the daily clinical operations of her department including staffing schedules and patient flow, collaborating with doctors and other clinical managers,

and leading staff and patient safety initiatives.

“Nia works with her colleagues to ensure excellent care,” said Sharon Wright, who was clinical operations manager before Williams. “Other lactation consultants look to her as a resource and leader in the Baltimore region. She collaborates with many professionals, including pediatricians and hospitalists, who trust her clinical skills and judgment.”

Williams, a native of Bermuda, has a bachelor’s degree in nursing from Andrews University in Michigan, a master of public health degree from Loma Linda University in California and a master’s degree in nursing education from Walden University.

Williams says nursing shapes your integrity,



builds confidence, sharpens your moral compass, and makes you more organized and a better communicator.

“Nursing encourages you to think outside the box at all times because the people we serve do not come to us for a one-size-fits-all plan of care,” she said. “By tapping into emotional intelligence and an empathetic spirit, nurses are able to connect with people they serve, understand their needs, and provide the quality care they deserve and respect.”

## Marianne Fingerhood

**NURSE PRACTITIONER**

**ADULT PRIMARY CARE**

**JOHNS HOPKINS COMMUNITY PHYSICIANS**

**M**arianne Fingerhood, a primary care nurse practitioner since 1999, started her career in 1985 as a registered nurse in the cardiac intensive care unit at Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center and has been a longtime advocate for patient-centered care.

“Building relationships and being a part of the health care journey of my patients brings me joy,” Fingerhood said.

Fingerhood is also the course coordinator for the doctor of nursing practice and master of science in nursing programs at the Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing and an adjunct faculty preceptor who supervises clinical practice for students.

“As an educator of the next generation of nurse practitioners, I strive to instill in them that passion for primary care.”

Fingerhood has established a collaborative relationship between Johns Hopkins Community Physicians and the School of Nursing to

train nurse practitioner students. Many have been hired as new clinicians, she said.

“Without adequate training and support, the next generation of nurse practitioners will not be able to meet the current complex health care needs of individual patients and communities, so I am proud to make this happen.”

Dr. Steven J. Kravet, president of Johns Hopkins Community Physicians, said Fingerhood was the practice’s first nurse practitioner. “Marianne is a hero to many, including patients and their families, her nursing students and her colleagues. In her more than 20 years as a nurse practitioner, she has defined excellence across all elements of care.”



Fingerhood is a third-generation nurse, and her grandmother cared for her community well into her 80s.

## Congratulations to Maryland’s hospitals, health systems, and dedicated caregivers—you are true health care heroes.

Thank you for keeping Marylanders hopeful and healthy while serving on the front lines of the fight against COVID-19.



Daily Record Health Care Heroes Event Partner

The Maryland Hospital Association is proud to be your advocate, working with you to advance health care and the health of all Marylanders.



# NURSE PRACTITIONER OF THE YEAR

## Beverly Ruiz

**NURSE PRACTITIONER AND TEAM LEAD  
GILCHRIST**

**B**everly Ruiz has helped to transform medical care for hundreds of elderly homebound patients and their families in the past 5 1/2 years.

Ruiz, nurse practitioner and team lead with the Gilchrist Elder Medical Care at Home program, helped develop and implement the program that has grown to cover more than 350 patients with six nurse practitioners, a medical doctor, a medical director, two medical social workers, and a registered nurse care manager and care coordinator.

"Patients with chronic conditions or serious illnesses can face frequent health crises," Ruiz said. "These crises can lead to a cycle of hospital, rehabilitation, home that repeats over and over. Our goal is to break that cycle and intervene before the patient ends up back in the hospital. To do that, our team brings primary care services to people who are home restricted."

Ruiz has been a nurse practitioner for 20

years and has worked in primary care, cardiology and geriatrics. "What makes home care different is the ability to see the whole person and the environment in which they live," she said. "The right pharmaceutical intervention means less if basic needs aren't met.

"Everyone needs a caregiver, whether they can get out to the doctor's office or not. Rather than ending up in the emergency room frequently, we bring the care and support to our patients."

Lori D. Mulligan, senior director of strategic initiatives with Gilchrist, said Ruiz never slows down. "She tirelessly works to improve the program, figuring out ways to enhance the delivery of care to our patients while making sure the needs of providers and



staff members are met. She has impressed her peers, patients and superiors with her devotion, dedication and excellence in care."

## Brigit VanGraafeiland

**ASSISTANT PROFESSOR  
JOHNS HOPKINS SCHOOL OF NURSING**

**B**rigit VanGraafeiland started her nursing career as a registered nurse in 1987 at Strong Memorial Hospital in Rochester, New York, and became a pediatric nurse practitioner in 1990. She is proud that her 30-year career has made a difference in the lives of children.

"I consider being a pediatric nurse practitioner a calling rather than a career," said VanGraafeiland, whose scholarship includes work on screening for human trafficking and improving outcomes for children in foster care. "My love and focus has always been vulnerable children and their families."

Among her proudest achievements: improving provider documentation to ensure communication and continuity of care for children in foster care and leading an initiative to immunize more than 8,000 elementary school children with flu mist in two days in Harford County, a program that continues and is now self-sustaining. She continues as a practitioner at the Center for Addiction and Pregnancy at The

Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center and with Righttime Medical Care.

"Nursing is an extremely rewarding and versatile profession," she said. "There is nothing more important than providing care to those who need it most. I think of it as a passion, not a job."

Her colleagues at Johns Hopkins School of Nursing see that passion every day.

"Brigit is dedicated to improving the health and quality of life for pediatric patients and their families through her leadership in scholarship, nursing education, practice and community/organizational service," said Mona Shattell, associate dean for faculty development.

"Brigit's patient-centered approach is augmented by her careful attention to scientific evidence of



best practice, giving her patients and families the optimum care that they deserve," said Elizabeth Sloand, associate professor.

**Dr. Robert O. Atlas**  
**CHAIRMAN, DEPARTMENT OF OBSTETRICS**  
**& GYNECOLOGY, MATERNAL FETAL MEDICINE**  
**MERCY MEDICAL CENTER**

**T**he minute Dr. Robert O. Atlas began his rotation as a medical resident in obstetrics and gynecology more than 30 years ago, he knew it was his calling. He always felt most comfortable being in a specialty that allowed him to give women advice and let them choose their medical path. Now, as Chairman of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology and Maternal Fetal Medicine at Mercy Medical Center, Atlas is sought out for his expertise on high-risk pregnancies and improved maternal fetal outcomes.

Atlas is a household name among circles of women who seek his medical advice – from women who are considered “advanced maternal age,” to those who have underlying medical conditions that could impact their pregnancies. Such medical conditions include what is known as cervical insufficiency, where a woman’s cervix is weakened or compromised, which can lead to pregnancy loss or premature births. Many patients travel from out

of state to seek Atlas’s medical advice.

“The ability to help moms achieve their goals of having a family – I can’t think of a more satisfying way to spend my career,” Atlas said.

Atlas is involved in many organizations, including the Governor’s Children’s Cabinet, the Board of the Family League of Baltimore City, the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and the Baltimore City Health Department’s “Baltimore Babies Born Healthy Leadership in Action Program.” Atlas is dedicated to improving maternal fetal outcomes in Baltimore and Maryland.

Atlas also serves as Assistant Professor of Obstetrics/Gynecology and Reproductive Sciences in the Division of Maternal and Fetal

Medicine at the University of Maryland School of Medicine, where he teaches and mentors residents and medical students.



**Dr. Marc Gertner**  
**GENERAL SURGEON**  
**LIFEBRIDGE HEALTH/SINAI HOSPITAL**

**W**hile groundbreaking treatments can save the life of a patient, oftentimes what truly matters about the care of a patient is bedside manner. Not all doctors have it. For those that do, nothing compares to the bedside manner and care of Dr. Marc H. Gertner, general surgeon at LifeBridge Health and Sinai Hospital. With more than 40 years working as a general surgeon, Gertner has touched and helped save the lives of many patients – many of whom still speak fondly of him today.

“I am not making it up when I tell you that I still meet people who mention the warmth and compassion of my father at the bedside, including a man I happened to meet on a recent plane flight, who added that my father saved his mother’s life,” Reni Gertner said.

Gertner sees patients at all hours of the day, accommodating their needs as much as possible. He is also one of the rare medical professionals that makes house calls, in the event a patient needs it.

Gertner is also a gifted diagnostician, making life-saving diagnoses on the fly. While Gertner is one of the few general surgeons existing today – as it is more common to specialize – he regularly expands his education to deliver the most advanced care to his patients.

“Marc is without a doubt the most skilled and experienced surgeon in our area. But what truly sets Marc apart is his extraordinary dedication to his patients and his craft. Marc is personally available 24 hours each day to his patients and to other physicians,” Dr. Harry W. Kaplan said.

Gertner also mentors countless young physicians and surgeons, serving as an instructor in surgery at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. Each year, he

hosts a special graduation event for residents at his own expense as a show of gratitude to their commitment to the medical program.



# PHYSICIAN OF THE YEAR

## Dr. Ashley Kinder PRIMARY CARE PHYSICIAN ASCENSION SAINT AGNES HEALTHCARE

As both a clinician and administrator for Ascension Saint Agnes Healthcare, Dr. Ashley Kinder has a unique perspective on health care, where process, policy and care delivery intersect. Kinder believes that delivery of care can be transformed when committed to this triple aim, and this is what guides her in her work at Saint Agnes.

Ascension, a nonprofit and Catholic health system, is committed to delivering compassionate, personalized care to all. The organization largely serves persons living in poverty and those most vulnerable. As a primary care physician, Kinder regularly treats the vulnerable, underinsured and uninsured, including many refugee families living in Baltimore.

Using data to drive quality and improve care, Kinder is credited with improving readmission rates for heart failure patients, COPD patients and patients living with other chronic diseases. Her approach has also positively reduced

health disparities and brought down health care costs for the health of the community.

Her work to treat the whole person, including uncovering social determinants such as housing, nutrition and education, has helped the organization redesign their approach to care.

"There are many examples of efforts that she has led in our practices, but one that stands out is her leadership in using assessment of social determinants of health to take better care of our patients," said Dr. J. William Cook IV, an internal medicine physician the Ascension Medical Group. "Many of our patients that had home security, safety, substance abuse, and food insecurity problems were identified, and resources provided."



Kinder's multidisciplinary approach has been adopted across Ascension's national network. Patients are supported by nurses, social workers and community health workers to complement the care of the physician team.

"I am humbled to receive this award and want to thank my Ascension Saint Agnes team. Ascension's mission calls us to serve, especially our most vulnerable, and I believe that care transformation through innovation and a team-based approach can truly help us to reshape care together," said Kinder.

## Dr. Elizabeth Nichols ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR AND CLINICAL DIRECTOR UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND MEDICAL CENTER MARYLAND PROTON TREATMENT CENTER

Nothing about the treatment of cancer is pleasant. Dr. Elizabeth Nichols, Clinical Director of the University of Maryland Department of Radiation Oncology and treating physician at the Maryland Proton Treatment Center, however, has earned a reputation for treating her patients with such compassion that they are put at ease.

Nichols believes that as a radiation oncologist, it is important to form relationships with patients, especially since they are at their most vulnerable. She utilizes advanced technologies and evidence-based applications in her treatments. Nichols was part of the team that brought proton therapy, a highly advanced and precise form of radiation, to Maryland.

"Dr. Nichols' high level of dedication to patients and the genuine care and empathy she brings to the treatment of those with cancer has a positive impact on patient outcomes and satisfaction. She makes a very difficult journey easier for my patients," said Dr.

Roopta Gupta, a hematologist and oncologist at Atlantic General Hospital.

While she treats patients with all types of cancer, her clinical research focuses on breast and gynecologic cancer. Nichols has been involved in the development of the GammaPod, a first-ever radiation therapy system specifically designed to treat early-stage breast cancer. The first patient was treated in 2018.

"For the last 20 years, we treated all breast cancer the same. Now with this new technology, we can customize treatment and shorten it – from four weeks to five sessions total. Patients have fewer side effects and we can minimize the toxicity, allowing patients to lead normal lives during and after treatment," Nichols said.



In addition to being part of the development of groundbreaking cancer treatments and technologies, Nichols is the first female to become an associate professor at the University of Maryland Department of Radiation Oncology. She earned this promotion within six years of joining the department, all while also growing her family. As a mother of four young children, it may take longer for her to achieve things in her career, but she continues to break barriers and succeed.

**Dr. Aziza Shad**

**CHAIR, SAMUELSON CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL  
DIRECTOR, DIVISION OF PEDIATRIC HEMATOLOGY-ONCOLOGY  
LIFEBRIDGE HEALTH - SAMUELSON CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL**

Since arriving in Baltimore in 2015, Dr. Aziza Shad has positioned Samuelson Children's Hospital as the leading resource for children with cancer and their families in the Mid-Atlantic region and around the world. In addition to enhancing available medical treatment for patients, she has introduced programs such as cooking lessons, art therapy and superhero parties that enable children not to be defined by their illness and allow them to just be kids.

With more than three decades of clinical experience, she is well-known around the world for her research efforts, but is most well-known for her deep commitment to her patients and their families in finding innovative ways in ensuring they receive well-rounded care.

Tapping into her vast network, she helped launch Happily Hungry, a recipe book and cooking plan that uses nutritious food as a

treatment for cancer and other diseases. In addition, Shad introduced "Mattie's Miracle Cart," an initiative developed by a family who lost their young son to cancer, sharing small gifts and snacks to families coming to the pediatric cancer units at Sinai.

Lastly, Shad helped to spearhead Tracy's Kids, a year-round art therapy initiative that helps young cancer patients and their families cope with the stress and trauma through art expression.

Shad devotes her spare time to creating comprehensive and locally sustainable pediatric cancer programs in low-income countries throughout the world. This effort also helped launch The



ASLAN Project in 2010, a nonprofit dedicated to developing a comprehensive pediatric cancer health system in Ethiopia.

CONGRATULATIONS  
TO OUR 2020

HEALTH CARE

HEROES

COVID-19 HONOREES RECOGNIZED  
BY *THE DAILY RECORD*



Stay informed: [umms.org/covid](https://umms.org/covid)

Thank you for your dedication, strength, and ensuring our communities are safe and healthy during these difficult times.

**Dr. Jason Birnbaum**  
University of Maryland  
Upper Chesapeake Health

**Karen Doyle**  
University of Maryland Medical Center

**Dr. Jason Heavner**  
University of Maryland Baltimore  
Washington Medical Center

**Michele Mullen**  
University of Maryland Baltimore  
Washington Medical Center

**Dr. Elizabeth Nichols**  
(Physician of the Year)  
Maryland Proton Treatment Center

**Kim Peterson**  
University of Maryland Greenebaum  
Comprehensive Cancer Center

**Heather Thomas**  
University of Maryland Greenebaum  
Comprehensive Cancer Center

# COVID-19 HEROES

## **Dr. Jason Birnbaum** CHAIR OF MEDICINE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND UPPER CHESAPEAKE HEALTH



Dr. Jason Birnbaum is the Chair of Medicine at University of Maryland Upper Chesapeake Health a two-hospital system. He leads the intensive care units at both UM UCMC and University of Maryland Harford Memorial Hospital.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, the ICU at UM UCMC has been nationally recognized for outstanding care. Under his leadership, the team has won the gold standard Beacon Award for Excellence, a three-year designation through the American Association of Critical-Care Nurses, twice. The Beacon Award signifies exceptional care for patients and signals a positive and supportive work environment.

With the pandemic, Dr. Birnbaum and team are on the front line treating the most critical patients. He's worked countless hours explaining what is happening to patients' families as well as making sure his team has what it needs to deliver quality and safe care. He is often juggling emergent situations, trying new approaches for treatment and planning for a surge of patients. He is also helping the larger incident command team think of safe, effective solutions for the weeks ahead.

## **Karen E. Doyle** SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND MEDICAL CENTER



Karen Doyle has served as the co-incident commander for the COVID-19 pandemic at the University of Maryland Medical Center since the first cases started appearing at the hospital.

She said key to the role is helping lead operational, planning, logistic and financial pathways for the institution to respond to the crisis in an organized and methodical approach. With 35 years of experience as a nurse and health care administrator in trauma and emergency services, as well as surgery, she is able to leverage those skills for the organization during this crisis.

"My life's work as a nurse and health care administrator is truly my vocation, it is what I love, and who I am," Doyle said.

"I am filled with humility receiving this award. I accept on behalf of my co-incident commanders, Dr. Gregory Schrank and Gonzalo Solis and on behalf of every front line health care worker fighting the good cause. All of our frontline employees are the true heroes in this fight and it is my privilege to work on behalf of them. My role is taking care of the people that care for the people."

## **Dr. Meenakshi Brewster** ST. MARY'S COUNTY HEALTH OFFICER ST. MARY'S COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT



As the County Health Officer for the St. Mary's County Health Department, Meenakshi Brewster has been at the front in leading the response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

She credits three groups in the county for the strong response. The public health team is smart and serves with creativity and compassion. The community partners are brilliant and dedicated to their missions. The residents of the county have done whatever necessary to protect their families and neighbors.

These partnerships allowed St. Mary's to develop a strong community approach to the pandemic. Including the first appointment-free testing site in the state that used standing orders for testing; a scientific advisory group of local experts to help guide decision making; a local workforce reserve to support the pandemic response; and with community partners the county was able to care for the homeless.

"Nothing in public health is done in isolation," she said. "This is most evident during times of crisis, including the current COVID-19 pandemic. I'm so grateful for our tenacious public health team, partners and community that have pulled together to fight this battle and forge bonds stronger than what lies ahead."

## **Dr. Jason Heavner** CHAIR, PULMONARY & CRITICAL CARE MEDICINE UM BWMC



In the past two years, the University of Maryland Baltimore Washington Medical Center (UM BWMC) created a Critical Care Outreach Program.

Heavner said that while critical care teams often have the expertise to diagnosis, prognosis and treat conditions with a high risk of organ failure or even death, in the current paradigm across the country the expertise is not able to be fully leveraged. The primary goal of the program was to expand the traditional role of the team to care for critical illness from prevention through survivorship.

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, Heavner said at times BWMC has had to increase its intensive care unit capacity by nearly 200%. But having established the infrastructure with the outreach program, the team was able to handle the rapid increase in needs.

"By building a strong, patient-centered, interdisciplinary critical care program that treats the entire spectrum of critical illness from prevention and early recognition through post-ICU survivorship, we have been able to tackle COVID-19 with vigor and resiliency to provide the highest level of evidence-based care to our patients despite the unprecedented and ever-developing landscape of the pandemic," Heavner said.

**Dr. Lisa Maragakis**  
**SENIOR DIRECTOR OF INFECTION**  
**PREVENTION**  
**JOHNS HOPKINS MEDICINE**



Dr. Lisa Maragakis has been the leader of the Johns Hopkins Medicine coronavirus Incident Command Center since it opened about two months ago. She oversees response for Johns Hopkins Hospital and all of the health system's member hospitals in Maryland, Washington, D.C. and Florida. She also oversees every department in the health system from supply chain, finance and marketing and communications.

She has become the face of the response to the pandemic to the staff signing off on internal emails covering treatment protocol and staff safety. She's also part of Gov. Larry Hogan's Maryland Coronavirus Response Team.

As the Senior Director of Infection prevention, she's been a resource for media outlets across the United States and around the world and has become one of the leading authorities on the coronavirus. Despite all those responsibilities, she enters the command center with a smile and projects a calm that helps set the tone for the entire team.

Maragakis is also an associate professor of medicine and epidemiology at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine and the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.

**Dr. Carole Miller**  
**DIRECTOR, CANCER INSTITUTE**  
**ASCENSION SAINT AGNES**



Dr. Carole Miller is putting her years of experience in cancer treatments to help lead trials to study treatments for COVID-19 patients. During the past 20 years, Miller has worked on trials that resulted in changes for cancer treatments.

She is working with researchers at Ascension Saint Agnes in Baltimore as well as other Ascension researchers across the country on clinical trials to bring more options for those COVID-19 patients in care throughout their health system. She is leading a trial using a class of drugs she's studied for years in blood cancer patients to see if it helps with the "cytokine storm" that complicates recovery for COVID-19 patients. She is also leading the program to bring convalescent plasma to patients with severe infections.

"Now more than ever, it is important to not forget that social determinants of health, such as access to housing, food, medical care and mental health services determine patient outcome when dealing with life threatening diseases such as COVID-19 and cancer," Miller said. "At Ascension Saint Agnes we believe we must treat the whole community to provide the best care to our patients."

**Michele Mullen**  
**RESPIRATORY THERAPIST**  
**UM BWMC**



Michele Mullen said she became a respiratory therapist because she wanted to make a difference in the lives of others. She said the COVID-19 pandemic has been a challenging, but rewarding time in her career.

She's been involved in intubations, assisted with tracheostomies and various other therapies to support fragile patients across different areas of the University of Maryland Baltimore Washington Medical Center. She said the emotional toll can be the toughest part as many patients want to call or video chat their family, potentially for the last time.

"It is a privilege to care for others at their darkest moments and most magical times, may we always remember the passion that led us to our chosen careers and find joy even during the toughest of times," Mullen said.

Last year, after Mullen's grandson died, she started a nonprofit foundation Tucker's Teddies. On Good Friday, she delivered a Tucker Teddy bear to every patient at the hospital. She said it was an inspiring day full of tears, smiles and joy for both the staff and patients.

"I received the biggest reward that day being able to see the shining smiles on faces in these dark times," Mullen said.

**Kim Peterson**  
**and Heather Thomas**  
**UM GREENBAUM COMPREHENSIVE**  
**CANCER CENTER**



Heather Thomas is the Manager of Oncology Operations and Kim Peterson is Nurse Manager for the University of Maryland Greenbaum Comprehensive Cancer Center. As the COVID-19 pandemic spread, they were able to make various changes to be able to continue care for patients safely.

Some of the changes include the initiation of staff and patient temperature and symptom screening on arrival. They developed a way for immunocompromised patients to be able to bypass the hospital visitor desk decreasing exposure to the general public. The center has also been able to expand telemedicine and remote capabilities.

"I want to thank the entire team at the University of Maryland Greenebaum Comprehensive Cancer Center for all the additional hours, flexibility, and commitment to our patients during a difficult time," Peterson said. "The dedication to excellence in patient care is inspiring and I am proud to be a part of this amazing group of professionals."

# COVID-19 HEROES

## **Dr. Farzaneh Sabi** ASSOCIATE MEDICAL DIRECTOR MID-ATLANTIC PERMANENTE MEDICAL GROUP



Late in 2019, Kaiser Permanente and the Mid-Atlantic Permanente Medical Group launched the Home First Strategy to provide safe and reliable care for members in their homes. The program provides direct access to physicians whenever needed during the acute phase of an illness and started with four doctors and one nurse.

In March, with the COVID-19 pandemic expanding, the Virtual Home Care Program was expanded to include all members who had been exposed to, suspected of having or had been diagnosed with the virus. Dr. Sabi worked with a team to onboard more than 160 new doctors, nearly 70 nurses, 17 nurse practitioners and four physician assistants within eight weeks. The program was scaled from being able to handle 100 patients a month to 3,000 patients.

“For many physicians who take the leap of faith from frontline physician to an administrative physician, there is a sense of loss of having the immediate gratification of improving and directly impacting the lives of our patients on a day to day basis,” Sabi said. “Through the process of developing this new program and actively participating in the patient outreach and rounding as part of the program, my life was enriched by the courage of our Kaiser Permanente members, MAPMG physicians and Kaiser Foundation Health Plan nurses, nurse practitioners and physician assistants.”

## **Nikki Highsmith Vernick** PRESIDENT AND CEO HORIZON FOUNDATION



The Horizon Foundation is the largest independent health philanthropy in Maryland and as President and CEO, Nikki Highsmith Vernick has led many campaigns and efforts to improve health and wellness in Howard County.

With the COVID-19 pandemic, she spearheaded a response committing the foundation to more than \$1 million in grants to meet emergency health needs. She launched a collaborative philanthropic effort to raise more than \$400,000 for basic needs such as food and child care assistance.

Since 2012, Vernick has helped launch several transformative programs that demonstrably improved community health outcomes including advancing health equity, expanding access to mental health services, school nutrition and physical activity and reducing the consumption of sugary drinks.

“In these challenging times, all of us are deeply concerned for the health and wellbeing of our loved ones and our community,” she said. “This makes the Horizon Foundation’s mission to improve health and wellness in Howard County that much more important. It is my honor to lead this organization and be part of this community of support alongside tireless partners.”

# CONGRATULATIONS

## TO THE MARYLAND DAILY RECORD HEALTH CARE HEROES

# 2020



THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE TO OUR COMMUNITY **IN THIS CHALLENGING TIME.**



# KAISER PERMANENTE®

**K**aaiser Permanente is the region's leading health system, providing high-quality, affordable health services in the mid-Atlantic market for 40 years. Today, our 1,600 physicians and 8,000 employees serve 770,000 members through virtual care and at 33 medical centers in Maryland, Virginia and Washington, D.C.

## HIGH-QUALITY HEALTH CARE

Kaiser Permanente offers the highest quality care to our members. In the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) 2019–2020 Health Insurance Plan Ratings, Kaiser Permanente of the Mid-Atlantic States' private health plan is rated 5 out of 5, among the top 1% in the nation, and our Medicare health plan is rated 4.5 out of 5, the highest rating in DC, MD, and VA. The 2019 Commission on Cancer, a program of the American College of Surgeons, granted Three-Year Accreditation with Commendation to the Kaiser Permanente cancer care program.

According to NCQA's Quality Compass® 2019, we lead DC, MD, and VA in the following categories: colorectal screening, breast cancer screening, cervical cancer screening, childhood immunizations combo 9, and timeliness of prenatal and post-

partum care for women.

Our outstanding physicians are recognized as Top Doctors in Washingtonian magazine (2019), Northern Virginia Magazine (2019), Baltimore magazine (2019), and Washington Consumers' CHECKBOOK magazine (2018).

## A LEADER IN TELEHEALTH

Kaiser Permanente leads as the first health care organization in the region to deliver most health care virtually. We offer 24/7 virtual care through phone, video or secure messaging. Our members get the same high-quality care they'd get in person — care that's covered by their plan and captured in their electronic health record. When members register online at kp.org, they can see test results, refill most prescriptions, get text reminders about upcoming appointments, and more.

## COMMITTED TO OUR PEOPLE

We are dedicated to building the healthiest workforce in health care. And we are doing this through our award-winning wellness programs.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the people of Kaiser Permanente have demonstrated tremendous dedication to providing essential health care. Never has their role been more vital to the health and

safety of our community. In April, we expanded temporary benefits to front-line staff and their families throughout Kaiser Permanente. Our expanded benefits program includes childcare grants to secure care for school-age children and qualified disabled adult dependent children, additional paid time off for employees and physicians who have tested positive for COVID-19, short-term housing to support those with needs for alternate housing, and a free call center resource to connect employees with additional services. We also provide ongoing support to ensure the emotional health and wellbeing of our team and sufficient resources and PPE to keep them safe.

*1The source for data contained in this publication is 2019 HEDIS 'Effectiveness of Care' Top Performance Commercial data and is used with the permission of the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA). Any data display, analysis, interpretation, or conclusion based on these data is solely that of the authors, and NCQA specifically disclaims responsibility for any such display, analysis, interpretation, or conclusion.*



# Ascension Saint Agnes

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**F**or more than 150 years, Ascension Saint Agnes Hospital has been dedicated to the art of healing by providing a wide range of services for greater Baltimore., Saint Agnes Hospital is dedicated to providing health care services to our communities. Built on a foundation of excellent medical care and compas-

sion, Saint Agnes is committed to helping you be as healthy as you can be. It is our privilege to serve the people of the greater Baltimore area and to care for all patients who enter our doors.

Part of Ascension Maryland, Saint Agnes Hospital is dedicated to providing health care services to our communities.

Built on a foundation of excellent medical care and compassion, Saint Agnes is committed to helping you be as healthy as you can be. It is our privilege to serve the people of the greater Baltimore area and to care for all patients who enter our doors. are for all patients who enter our doors.

MARYLAND

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# We're inspired by your **selflessness**

Health care professionals are among the true heroes of the COVID-19 crisis. Kaiser Permanente is honored to be the presenting sponsor of the Maryland Daily Record Health Care Heroes awards, which recognizes those individuals who dedicate themselves to helping others.

To all our health care professionals— we're grateful for your leadership, and we stand by you in our commitment to total health for all.

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