

## **Baton Rouge General Medical Center Family Medicine Residency Program**

Residency Director: Vincent Shaw, MD, FAAFP

The 2019-2020 academic year has definitely been one for the record books. Our program, just as many others around the state have had to battle COVID – 19 infections and put in long hours, all while trying to maintain a semblance of a functioning residency program. Our residents stepped up to the plate and jumped in and took care of patients of all races, genders, and ages. During this pandemic, we saw the rise of the Mid-City Emergency Department up from the ashes, like a phoenix. After several years of being shuttered, the Baton Rouge General Medical Center re-opened the Mid-City campus' emergency department to provide emergency services for the medically underserved area of the City of Baton Rouge. The hospital has also developed a COVID only unit with patients ranging from Intensive Care to acute inpatient care. This unit was staffed by the Family Medicine Residents in conjunction with our Sports Medicine Fellows.

Despite such harrowing and hectic times, we are proud to announce another well versed graduating class. Three of our graduates are remaining with our parent hospital systems as Family Medicine Staff Physicians, one accepting a Sports Medicine Fellowship year, and the remainder returning to their home states to begin their careers in private practice. On June 27 we graduated 8 residents at Juban's Restaurant here in Baton Rouge. The name of the residents and their future plans are as follows:

- Cassandra Barnes, MD – Private Practice, Atlanta, GA
- Rachel Brady, DO – Baton Rouge General Physicians, Livingston, LA
- Patrick Cudahy, MD – Private Practice, Los Angeles, CA
- Jeremy Knott, MD – Private Practice, Lafayette, LA
- Vineeth Kumar, MD – Private Practice, Dallas, TX
- Ben Levron, MD – Baton Rouge General Physicians, Baton Rouge, LA
- Lui Mancera, MD – Sports Medicine Fellowship, Houston, Tx
- Robert Sudduth, DO – Baton Rouge General Physicians, Denham Springs, LA

With the chapter closing on one academic year we transition to the start of a new year and new group of interns. The residents have just begun their journey into the world of Family Medicine and are taking on this challenge with lots of enthusiasm. We have a very diverse group of individuals beginning their post graduate adventures with us. These new residents bring a variety of experiences and fresh perspectives to our program. Our new class includes:

- Jeremy Adel, MD from American University of the Caribbean
- Patrick Bergin, MD from American University of the Caribbean
- Mervina George, MD from American University of the Caribbean
- Alakananda Mukherjee, MD from American University of the Caribbean
- Ifeoma "Iffy" Okponia, MD from American University of Antigua
- Sitara Satish, MD from the American University of the Caribbean
- Valeria Soegaard Garcia, MD from the American University of the Caribbean
- Jeffrey Thibaud, MD from American University of the Caribbean

Over the past year, we have worked to diversify ourselves, and more closely resemble the cultural dynamic of our community. In the process of trying to achieve this goal, we have forged new partnerships with Meharry Medical School and Howard University School of Medicine. We will serve as one of their clinical sites for their Family Medicine Rotations. Leading the effort for this movement, was Dr. Byron Jasper.

## Family Medicine Residency Program Director Reports, continued

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General Assembly – July 31, 2020 – Destin, FL

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Our program is also preparing for the beginning of recruiting. This recruiting and interview season will be filled with more uncertainty and angst than any previous years. Due to the pandemic and guidance given by the various governing bodies, we will be switching to a completely virtual interview process. This means we will not have any face to face interviews. They will all be conducted over the internet. We are currently in the process of establishing protocols as well as matrices for evaluation of the candidates. I would like to wish all the other programs good luck and welcome any feedback or guidance they may have to offer.

We would also like to recognize our Sports Medicine Fellowship which continues to do well and will be graduating our two current fellows on July 25, 2020. This year's graduates are Nicholas Feo, MD and Christopher Martin, MD. They both plan to return to their respective home states and practice with various Sports Medicine groups.

**Respectfully,**  
**Vincent Shaw, MD, FAAFP**  
**Program Director**