

2021 Dr. A. Jane Fitzpatrick Award:

Dr. Kavita Babu Kavita, Professor of Emergency Medicine, serves as Chief, Division of Medical Toxicology for the Department of Emergency Medicine at the University of Massachusetts Chan Medical School, and the Chief Opioid Officer for the UMass Memorial Health System. She earned her M.D. from Brown Medical School where she also completed her residency, and then came back to complete her Toxicology fellowship, at UMass.

Dr. Kavita Babu has made incredible contributions to the community, her efforts are extensive, action-oriented, and hugely impactful. Over the last year and a half through the COVID-19 pandemic, where she worked with colleagues on a project to deploy and manage COVID testing sites across Worcester. The sites also provided education in multiple languages and masks. These sites were a safe place for people afraid or unable to go to institutional sites.

Kavita is a superb female physician leader who in addition to her regular duties as an Emergency Medicine/Toxicologist, is passionate about the prevention of drug overdoses and the provision of care to patients with opioid use disorder in Worcester and our surrounding communities. She works to advance health care and social service delivery to the homeless and those with substance use disorder. Other examples of this work include initiatives at the University campus focused on limiting unused prescription opioids in the community for primary prevention of opioid exposure and increasing access to lifesaving treatment. Dr. Babu also established the Overdose Prevention Fund, a philanthropic fund which has been used to support collection of unused medication and for community education. She addressed the root cause of limited numbers of physicians trained to treat SUD and subsequently obtained a grant, in a time where grants are scarce, to offer numerous trainings for the buprenorphine certification across central Massachusetts.

Dr. Babu is well known nationally and internationally for her work combatting the opioid epidemic. On the local front, Kavita secured a grant from the DPH and the Kraft Foundation, which established the "Road to Care" Mobile Addiction Service that provides free primary care and addiction services for homeless patients and those needing management for addiction. Kavita has taken her team to the streets providing care in over 350 visits, to shelters, food pantries, and in encampments throughout the City of Worcester. This accomplishment alone required the engagement of UMass IT, the pharmacy division, the Department of Public Health and involved bringing together 3 community service providers -AIDS Project Worcester, the Elliott group and Family Health Centers Homeless Outreach and Advocacy Project. Kavita is truly the "master of collaboration".

Finally, Dr. Babu serves as a mentor and a positive role model with impressive medical knowledge, open minded and unbiased medical care, and an unbelievable level of both scholarly and ground-level action-oriented projects. She is a natural leader with a deep dedication to our community and has contributed greatly to the safety and health of Central Massachusetts. She is truly a gift for the Worcester community.

Congratulations, Dr. Babu!

2021 WDMS Career Achievement Award:

Dr. Thomas Halpin, a WDMS Member since 1970, graduated from Harvard Medical School in 1963. He then completed an internship in the Department of Surgery at Columbia-Presbyterian Medical Center in 1964. Then in 1965, he honorably completed a military commitment in the United States Army Medical Corps as a Major and Ob/Gyn in the Martin Army Hospital, in Fort Benning Georgia, followed by the 3rd Field Hospital in Saigon, Vietnam in 1966). Upon returning from Vietnam, he completed his residency in Obstetrics & Gynecology at Sloane Hospital for Women, Columbia-Presbyterian Medical Center, before moving to the Worcester area, in 1970.

Since his arrival, Dr. Halpin has been a pillar of the Worcester district Ob/Gyn community. He has provided compassionate and comprehensive care for generations of women, delivered *thousands* of babies and has contributed to the training of literally hundreds of medical students and Ob/Gyn residents, who now practice across the country. A former trainee, now colleague recalls that for the past 25 years, Dr. Halpin has dedicated almost every Monday at 4pm to Socratic case-based gynecology discussions with residents and students that have respectfully and affectionately come to be known as 'Halpin rounds.' His dedication to teaching and mentoring is evident in him being a recipient of numerous resident selected teacher of the year awards (1983, 1998, 2001, 2005, 2014) as well as the National American College of Obstetrician and Gynecologists' and Council on Residency Education's Ob/Gyn Excellence in Teaching Award (2002). Dr. Halpin served as an Assistant Professor at the University of Massachusetts Chan Medical School from 1973 to 1980. By 1988 he had been promoted to Full Professor and served in that capacity for the next 32 years. Additionally, he has served the medical school as a member of the admissions committee from 2004 to the present.

Dr. Halpin has been a foundational and innovative leader in the Worcester district medical community, having served on the Board of Trustees for the Central Massachusetts Health Care, Inc. (HMO-IPA) and the Chair of their finance Committee (1981-1988). And in the UMass Memorial Health Care System and University of Massachusetts Chan Medical School community Dr. Halpin led or chaired numerous committees. He was President elect (1979-1980) and President (1980-1982) of the Medical Staff of the Memorial Hospital, Chairman of the committee to study the feasibility of a Memorial Hospital Preferred Provider Organization (1982) and Trustee of the Memorial Hospital Foundation (1984-1988), former Acting Chair (1988-1989) of the Division of Reproductive Medicine, now the UMMH/UMMS Department of Obstetrics & Gynecology.

After the separation of the medical school from the clinical system, and the merging of Memorial Hospital with the University hospital, Dr. Halpin was Vice President (1990-1991) and President (1991-1992) of the University of Massachusetts Medical Center Medical Staff, and the President elect (2007-2009) and President (2009-2011) of the UMMHC Medical Staff and Chair of the credentials committee (2007-2009).

With the COVID-19 pandemic, Dr. Halpin made the difficult decision to retire from clinical practice after 50 years as a highly respected and accomplished Ob/Gyn attending and health care leader. However, he remains deeply dedicated to education and continues in his role as a Medical School Learning Community Mentor. As a full Professor at the University of Massachusetts Chan Medical School for over thirty years, his contributions to health care delivery and leadership, education, and academic medicine, Dr. Halpin was recently awarded Professor Emeritus status.

The description of Dr. Halpin would not be complete without recognizing the love and gratitude for his family; his wife of 57 years, Pat, his four children and nine grandchildren, for all of their support.

Congratulations Dr. Halpin!!