

GW Heart and Vascular Institute e-Newsletter: September 2023

We're BACK! Honduras Mission 2023



Dr. Cynthia Tracy & Dr. Marco Mercader returned to Honduras for the 11th annual GW Heart and Vascular Institute Cardiac Mission. After a three-year hiatus due to COVID, our GW brigade spent twelve days at the Centro Medico Comayagua Colonial, Comayagua, Honduras examining past patients. Dr. Tracy and Dr. Mercader also provided essential pacemakers and defibrillators to new patients who have limited access to healthcare.

Over the past decade, our GW team has donated and performed a staggering 422 pacemaker and defibrillator implantations. Within two weeks, our dedicated team supplied half of Honduras' annual requirement for these life-saving devices.

This year, Dr. Tracy exceeded her past remarkable impact by successfully implanting **52 devices**.

Additionally, the GW team conducted 200 evaluations, including 138 pacemaker/defibrillator device interrogations and 80 echocardiograms.

During this year's mission, the team, which included: Dr. Tracy, Dr. Mercader, Medtronic engineer, Maria Fernanda, GW Medicine Resident, Ornella Simo, GW cardiology fellow, Dorys Chavez and GW Hospital electrophysiology technician, Elias Sevilla, encountered diverse clinical scenarios; including critically ill patients with heart block requiring urgent ventricular pacing.

Lastly, the team followed up with patients, performed pacemakers and defibrillator device

interrogations and occasionally observed that the devices provided timely defibrillator shocks; ultimately saving lives.



September Health Screenings Supported by the GW Heart and Vascular Institute

With fifteen years of dedicated service to the Montgomery County Maryland, Dr. Allen Solomon, in collaboration with second year fellows Ezra Lee and Malik Ghawanmeh, provided health screenings for athletic students at the Albert Einstein High School. Using the American Heart Association 14-point athletic screening tool, the team examined over 75 students.



In addition, September 16th the Heart and Vascular Institute supported a hypertension health screening in the heart of Southeast Washington DC at the Union Temple Baptist Church Plant Based Health Fair.

HVI provided blood pressure measurements and donated pill boxes, blood pressure devices, and pamphlets to inform attendees about proper blood pressure technique and the low-salt DASH diet.



GW Welcomes the Class of 2026 Cardiology Fellows

Under the tutelage of Dr. Allen and Dr. Bradley, four new cardiology fellows began their three-year training this past July. This year's cohort consists of a diverse group of fellows from around the world.

Hailing from Honduras, Doris Chavez is an internal medicine resident at George Washington.

Fotios Gkargkoulas from Greece, completed his residency at Washington Hospital Center.

Roy Taoutel from Lebanon conferred his residency at Lankenau Hospital/Jefferson Medical School in Pennsylvania.

Bahamian, Kathie Smith, attended Howard University Medical School; Smith completed her residency at Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center, where she served as the 2022 chief resident.



D. Chavez



F. Gkargkoulas



R. Taoutel



K. Smith

GW Cardiology Faculty Present at International Medical Meetings

Professor of Medicine and the Walter G. Ross Professor of Clinical Research, **Dr. Mardi Gombert**, was an invited speaker at the September 2023 European Respiratory Society International Congress in Milan Italy. Dr. Gombert presented an update on "Characteristics and Treatment of Pulmonary Artery Hypertension in Patients with Comorbidities."



Dr. Andrew Choi, Co-Director of Multi-Modality Imaging and clinical lead for GW's Complex Lipid Program, was invited by the American College of Cardiology to speak at the British Cardiology Society meeting in Manchester UK. Dr. Choi joined with current ACC President Dr. Hadley Wilson, ACC Past-President Dr. Mike Valentine, BCS President Dr. John Greenwood and BCS Centennial Scholars to discuss approaches to cardiovascular care in the United States and United Kingdom. Dr. Andrew Choi's talk was entitled "Mind the Gap: Achieving Generational Change in Cardiovascular Medicine".



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20037 US

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