

Transcript Details

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Spotlighting Excellence in Cardiology Care Amid the COVID-19 Pandemic

You're listening to a special edition of Heart Matters on ReachMD. I'm Dr. Matthew Sorrentino, and as part of ReachMD's "Heroes in Healthcare" initiative, we're going to highlight some of the inspiring cardiologists who were nominated by their peers for outstanding contributions to medical care throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

First up is Dr. Enrique Gongora, a cardiac surgeon and the Surgical Director of the Adult ECMO Program at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. According to one of his peers: Dr. Gongora has been putting COVID-19 patients on ECMO and managing them 7 days a week. He has gone above and beyond to help patients beat COVID-19 after the ventilator stops working. He has worked tirelessly with his team to develop strategies to keep COVID-19 patients alive and works with a passion for each patient.

Next, we turn to cardiologist Dr. Joyce Wald. Here's what one of her peers at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania shared with us: Dr. Wald has worked tirelessly, many times volunteering in the COVID-19 unit of the hospital. She has also virtually educated the cardiology community about COVID-19 with a lecture called "COVID-19 and Cardiac Effects: Treatment from the Frontlines." She updated her lecture with timely and pertinent information for community cardiologists so they could have guidance in caring for their patients.

Another inspiring figure in the fight against COVID-19 is Dr. Carlos Sotolongo, a board-certified invasive, non-interventional cardiologist at Baptist Heart Specialists in Jacksonville, Florida. In the words of one of his peers, Dr. Sotolongo is a selfless, dedicated cardiologist in Jacksonville who always places the well-being of others before his own. He has never let COVID-19 stop him from going the extra mile for the patients in need. I have never seen a physician like him who gives so much to others. During this pandemic, he has continued caring for patients even when he knew his own health may be at risk. His devotion to the health field is well recognized by all his cardiology colleagues; he is very deserving of recognition as he sets an example for other physicians.

Lastly, we have Mr. Shawn Sussman, who's a critical care cardiothoracic surgery physician assistant at NYU Winthrop Hospital. As shared by one of his colleagues, He was literally on the front lines during the COVID-19 pandemic and was responsible for the makeshift ICUs that were created in the 8 operating rooms with no help because there was not enough staff. He is a true hero!

We couldn't agree more with that sentiment. The commitment to care shown by these individuals among many others is an inspiration to us all. And you have our sincerest gratitude.

For ReachMD, I'm Dr. Matthew Sorrentino. To access more episodes from this series, visit us at ReachMD.com/HeartMatters, where you can Be Part of the Knowledge. Thank you for listening.