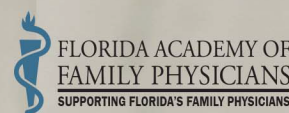


## FAFP MARCH MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

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I have practiced primarily as a Family Medicine Hospitalist since completing residency at St. Vincent's Indianapolis Hospital. Over the most recent years working as a managed care Hospitalist and primary care physician, I have had the pleasure of being a part of a value-based system that is built on preventive care while managing cost, utilization, and quality. These goals align closely with my personal values and goals as a clinician. It is the most cohesive and comprehensive practice of medicine that I have experienced so far in my career. As a Hospitalist working within a value-based system, I am helping to bring health back into healthcare.

It is well-documented and widely known that the Covid-19 pandemic has been especially taxing physically and psychologically to healthcare workers. While I gather much joy and purpose treating patients and challenging our team and myself to continuously improve the care we deliver, the pandemic continues to increase awareness of the importance of self-care and personal wellness. Sticking to a daily routine that uplifts my mental and emotional health is crucial to my well-being and the quality of care I provide. I practice ten minutes of meditation, read biblical scriptures and spiritual devotions and exercise at the start of most days. Not only am I a Hospitalist but also the mother of two happy and active children. I greatly value getting adequate sleep regularly. Good sleep hygiene before bed includes taking warm baths, journaling, and light reading for me, all to prevent insomnia and improve my mood, state of being and consequently,

productivity. I introduce my children to these habits in a child-appropriate fashion, as I believe that the early introduction of healthy habits positively impacts our lives. Mental health has emerged in scientific research over the years as a significant contributor to both cardiovascular and overall health. In this vein, I emphasize the importance of wellness in all areas of life when I counsel patients. Negative psychological health conditions such as chronic stress, depression, pessimism, anger and dissatisfaction with one's life are associated with harmful biological responses such as inflammation, increased blood pressure, increased digestive complaints and with unhealthy behaviors such as an unhealthy diet and lower levels of physical activity. When I am not working to care for and improve myself, my children, or my patients, I spend time resting and engaging in scheduled activities that bring me joy. I have learned that scheduling our joy is as important as scheduling work and service activities. The Covid-19 pandemic has also highlighted the importance of sharing sound medical information with the public. It is important for healthcare providers to generously share the wealth of knowledge, experience, and scientific guidance that we have accumulated over years. Helping the public to obtain, process and understand basic health information to make appropriate health decisions for themselves and loved ones, also called health literacy, is an often overlooked but invaluable effort. I work on behalf of the local American Heart Association to spread public awareness about heart disease through

presentations that focus on the epidemiology, prevention, and detection of the early signs of heart disease. I have also presented regularly on behalf of the diabetes education section of Texas A & M Health Science Center to educate the public on diabetes-related topics. I believe that when we help to improve health literacy, we are working to reduce healthcare expenditures and improve the value of the care we provide. I encourage other medical providers to consider and emphasize health literacy in their interactions with individual patients and the public. To bring health back into healthcare, we must continue to work to reduce health inequalities. The inequalities that exist within our health systems devalue medical interventions and overall patient care. Overcoming this systemic issue requires system-wide interventions and also personal reflection. Considering the subtleties of implicit bias, I challenge myself and others to judge our thoughts to identify biases that affect decision making in caring for patients. Working from a place of rest, self-care, and compassion, as much as possible, helps us to successfully engage in this moment-to-moment exercise. Open yet thoughtful and self-aware communication aimed at identifying and combatting injustices in all forms, fosters healthcare culture with less bias, better employee wellbeing and more equitable patient care. I plan to continue to increase my understanding and develop appropriate interventions to address this complicated and important problem leading to worsened outcomes for the very people whom we have pledged to "do no harm."