

# National Women's History Month

## Employee Spotlight

### Clarita Galindo Frazier Dawson, M.D.

Division Chief, Anesthesiology and Critical Care Medicine  
Howard County General Hospital



#### What is your role and area of focus at Johns Hopkins?

I am currently the Chair of the Department of Anesthesiology at Howard County General Hospital. Since coming on staff in August 1995, I have served in many leadership roles which have included President of the Professional Staff, Vice Chair of the Department of Anesthesiology, Chair of the Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee, Chair of the Anesthesia Department Clinical Review Committee, and Director of Obstetrics Anesthesia.

#### Who helped you pursue your career path?

My father was a hospital administrator, and he showed me how to think about life and to learn from others. My true role model was my mother and my namesake, Clarita Galindo Frazier. I was also influenced by an experience I had visiting my mother's homeland, the Philippines, for 3 months when I was 7 years old. While staying with family in Cabanatuan City, I suffered an asthma attack. I was given both Theophylline and natural remedies by the local health provider, resulting in a 50% improvement and eliminating weekly allergy shots. That experience demonstrated the impact one individual can have on the power of healing, and it inspired me to study medicine.

#### What challenges did you face?

Once I decided to become a physician, I stayed laser focused. I graduated from high school at age 15 and from college at age 18. Throughout college, I was living at home with an 11pm curfew. My real emotional development occurred in medical school. That was the most stressful time in my life because I was truly on my own.

#### What episode of women's history most resonates with you?

It has been 55 years since Congress passed the Equal Pay Act of 1963 and yet women working full time still make 80 cents for every dollar earned by men. The gender pay gap is even worse for physicians. It is astounding that after half a century, we still have so far to go to level the playing field.

#### What are some fun things about you that you want readers to know?

Besides traveling and skiing, one of my favorite things to do is to read. In 1996, I wrote a novel as part of a group of six women from my local bookclub. We spent four years writing and editing the book. Going through the process of idea sharing, working toward a common goal, collaborating with girlfriends, and getting the book published by Simon and Shuster in 2010 were some of the greatest highlights of my life. We are still friends today and share the author name 'B.W. Read' which stands for 'Because We Read'.

#### What advice can you give other women pursuing medicine?

Before investing years into rigorous learning and training, take the time to be introspective—know thyself and be your true self. It is essential to have confidence in your uniqueness. As Oscar Wilde said, "Be yourself, everyone else is already taken." If you approach life with authenticity, people will respect you.

#### What mark do you hope to leave on Johns Hopkins, your community, the nation, or the world?

Being able to make a difference in the community in which I live is vital. I am proud to be a member of Johns Hopkins

Medicine, which serves such a vast and diverse community, inclusive of women and underrepresented groups. As a leader, it is important for me to work with Howard County General Hospital as it partners with community groups exploring population health in our county and as it evaluates access to healthcare, especially for women. Women are the backbone of families and too often neglect their own health while taking care of their loved ones. I will continue to work with the leaders of the hospital and my community to deliver the highest level of care to our patients in a safe environment.

