



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Phoebe Names Physician and Advanced Practice Provider of the Year**

**Albany, Ga.** – A U.S. Navy veteran who graduated from Phoebe’s physician residency program and a critical care nurse practitioner have been named the physician and advanced practice provider (APP) of the year for Phoebe Physicians. Phoebe held a ceremony on its main campus Monday evening to announce Dr. Jeffrey Lowery and Rhonda Haynes as winners of the awards for 2022.

“Jeff and Rhonda are exceptional providers who are certainly deserving recipients of these prestigious awards,” said Suresh Lakhanpal, MD, Phoebe Physicians Chief Executive Officer. “Not only are they experienced clinicians who provide exemplary care, but they are both known for the extraordinary compassion they show their patients and the support and cooperation they demonstrate with their colleagues every day,” Dr. Lakhanpal added.

Dr. Lowery served as a U.S. Navy Hospital Corpsman before earning degrees from Northwest Florida State College and the University of West Florida. He graduated from Ross University School of Medicine and joined the Phoebe Family Medicine Residency Program, graduating in 2013. During his final year in the residency program, Dr. Lowery served as Co-Chief Resident and was named the Resident Physician of the Year and the Resident Physician Educator of the Year. Currently, Dr. Lowery is a hospitalist at Phoebe Putney Memorial Hospital, coordinating the hospital’s diagnostic, therapeutic and consultative resources and managing day-to-day care for hospital inpatients.

Dr. Lowery was nominated for the 2022 Physician of the Year Award by dozens of his colleagues. One nominator wrote, “I have been employed as an RN here at Phoebe for 20+ years. I have never experienced any negativity from Dr. Lowery toward his patients or staff. We are blessed to have him here in south Georgia helping us. He is a true asset, extremely intelligent, kind, compassionate, professional and the list goes on!”

Another said, “He is a physician every doctor should strive to be. He is kind, caring and takes time to teach the patients and nurses. If anyone deserves recognition, he does. I always look forward to working with him.”

Dr. Lowery left Phoebe for a few years, but when the hospital was hit hard during the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic, he offered to come back to assist with Phoebe's response. He then decided to rejoin Phoebe's hospitalist group on a full-time basis.

"One of the things I worried about during COVID is that we, as a society, stopped treating one another with kindness and respect. People just weren't as nice as they usually were before COVID. I feel that it's upon us to move forward and make changes in the world to make it a better place," Dr. Lowery said while accepting the Physician of the Year Award. "It's truly an honor and a privilege to take care of folks and to have the relationships that I have with the people I work with," he added.

Haynes also received multiple nominations for her award. One colleague said, "She is always a pleasure to work with and is very passionate when it comes to patient care and putting her patients' needs first. She communicates excellently with all staff and values everyone's opinions."

Another person who nominated her for APP of the Year wrote, "She always goes above and beyond to take care of her patients, as well as their families. She ensures complete understanding through difficult hospitalizations. She is dedicated and always willing to assist the team. She is the example that everyone should mirror."

Haynes worked in finance and as a medical transcriptionist before deciding to go back to school to become a nurse, eventually earning a master's degree in nursing. She is also certified as a family nurse practitioner and an adult-gerontology acute care nurse practitioner. She has served as a critical care intensivist APP for Phoebe since 2017, working at both the main campus in Albany and Phoebe Sumter Medical Center in Americus.

"It's been a great seven years. I really love everything I do. I couldn't ask for a better team to work with. Not just the critical care team but the hospitalists, the ER, everybody that's involved. It's been wonderful, and I consider this family," Haynes said.

Phoebe Physicians currently employs around 185 physicians and 160 APPs. Those clinicians work in Phoebe's hospitals, as well as primary care, urgent care and specialty care clinics throughout southwest Georgia.

"We are fortunate to have a large and diverse team of highly-skilled and experienced providers serving the healthcare needs of the people of southwest Georgia. We are proud to work together to provide quality continuum of care for our patients, and we are certainly grateful to have Jeff and Rhonda and our many other outstanding physicians and advanced practice providers on our team," Dr. Lakhanpal said.

Forty-two physicians and 26 APPs received nominations for the calendar year 2022 awards. Anyone, from co-workers to patients to patients' family members, may nominate providers for the honors. Nominations for the 2023 awards will open later this year on Phoebe's website.

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**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Attached photos show Physician of the Year Dr. Jeff Lowery, APP of the Year Rhonda Haynes and Phoebe Physicians CEO Dr. Suresh Lakhanpal.



