



The Thirteenth



SHINING KNIGHT

*Gala*

Honoring Those Who Protect and Save Lives  
in Central Virginia

Benefitting injury and violence prevention programs through VCU Medical Center and in the community.

Verified five consecutive times for excellence in trauma care by the American College of Surgeons, VCU Medical Center is the only comprehensive Level I adult, pediatric and burn trauma center in the region and the longest-standing, state-designated trauma center in Virginia.



**VCU**Health™

The Thirteenth



SHINING KNIGHT  
*Gala*

*Saturday, May 21, 2022*

7:00 p.m.

**Honorary Chair**

Chief John Venuti

associate vice president of Campus Safety and  
Chief of Police for Virginia Commonwealth University

**Cole Sydnor Trauma Survivor Giving Back Award Recipient**

David Girard

Trauma Survivor and Social Worker

**Featured Presentation**

"Immeasurable Impact: The Ripple Effect of Shining Knights"

**Featured Knights**

Community Members and Health Care Providers

Share the celebration on social media using

**#SKG2022**





# *Program*

## **Michael Roussos**

president, VCU Medical Center

## **Art Kellermann, MD, MPH**

senior vice president for health sciences at VCU and CEO of VCU Health System

## **Michel Aboutanos, MD, MPH, FACS**

professor and chief, Division of Acute Care Surgical Services  
medical director, VCU Trauma Center/Trauma System Network

## **John Venuti**

associate vice president of Campus Safety and Chief of Police for Virginia Commonwealth University

## **Injury and Violence Prevention Program Project Impact**

Video courtesy of students at Hermitage High School

## **Presentation of the Cole Sydnor Trauma Survivor Giving Back Award**

## **Feature Presentation - "Immeasurable Impact: The Ripple Effect of Shining Knights"**

## **Presentation of the 2022 Shining Knights**

## **Video Message from Michael Rao, PhD**

president of VCU and VCU Health System

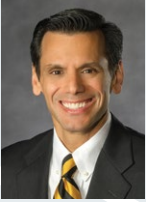
## **Concluding Remarks**

*Saturday, May 21 2022*



VCU and VCU Health

## *Leadership Reflections*



### **President Michael Rao, PhD**

Dr. Rao is the fifth president of Virginia Commonwealth University and VCU Health System. He shared:

“As the region’s safety net hospital and top-ranked hospital, the VCU Health team is steadfast in their work to put patients first and provide comprehensive care to all who need it. Our exemplary colleagues are the reason why we’re the only comprehensive Level I trauma center in the region that is verified in burn, pediatric and adult trauma care.

Our team of trauma care providers take their work outside the hospital to educate the community on ways to prevent the very injuries that bring patients to us. We’re all grateful for their work with community leaders and with advocates with the Injury and Violence Prevention Program to promote safe behavior and care for one another. The trauma team offers endless compassion and unmatched comfort as they save lives and put patient needs first every day.”



### **Art Kellermann, MD, MPH**

Dr. Kellermann is the senior vice president for health sciences at VCU and CEO of VCU Health System. He shared:

“When a traumatic injury occurs, every minute counts. That’s why VCU Health’s comprehensive Level I trauma center is a model for the Commonwealth and our nation. As the only Level I trauma center in the region verified by the American College of Surgeons in adult and pediatric trauma and burn care, we offer unique capabilities to handle the most complex traumatic injuries 24/7. Our integrated trauma teams operate as one – all centered around the patient – from front line EMS providers, emergency medicine doctors and nurses, trauma surgeons, anesthesiologists, intensivists and rehabilitation medicine, the team ensures the best-possible outcomes no matter what.”



### **Michael Roussos**

Mr. Roussos is president of VCU Medical Center. He shared:

“One aspect of our Mission here at VCU is to ‘preserve and restore health for all people of Virginia and beyond’. Honoring the Shining Knights in our Community and Commonwealth exemplifies both their commitment and VCU’s commitment to ‘preserve and restore health’ in our community and beyond. Each of these individual’s contributions are imperative to ensure our trauma system provides the highest quality care close to home. The Shining Knight Gala is an exemplary display of the team dynamics and level of access for adult and pediatric trauma and burn patients at the highest level at VCU’s Trauma Center.”



### **Michel B. Aboutanos, MD, MPH, FACS**

Dr. Aboutanos is a professor in and chief of the Division of Acute Care Surgical Services and the medical director of the VCU trauma center. He shared:

“Our collaborative, multidisciplinary teams are providing cutting-edge care to patients with life-threatening injuries.

Through the VCU trauma system of care, we serve and educate an entire spectrum of care providers, from EMS providers, care partners and technicians, to nurses, physicians, specialists and beyond. Our teams of Shining Knights learn, train and refine how to treat extraordinary injuries and burns – repeatedly – until these life-saving actions become ordinary to them. But they are never ordinary to the patients and families who have been forever altered from these life-threatening injuries.

I am honored to convey that our mortality rate is 50 percent lower than the national average compared to more than 500 other Level I and II trauma centers in the country, and complication rates are lower in every aspect of care. I am proud to serve with an amazing team of trauma and injury specialists across a variety of professions. These shining knights are true heroes!”



## **Honorary Chair, Chief John Venuti**

John Venuti is currently serving as Associate Vice President of Campus Safety and Chief of Police for VCU and VCU Health. Around VCU he is better known as simply “Venuti”. Venuti joined VCU in 2010 after serving 26 years with the Richmond Police Department.

During his tenure working specifically homicides and shootings, he supervised the investigation and prosecution of over 450 homicides in the City of Richmond. Interestingly, Venuti also starred in the A&E network production of Crime 360, a television show that highlighted the process of murder investigation in Richmond, Virginia.

Venuti also launched an anti-violence initiative while with the Richmond Police Department called “Stop the Pain 804”. This initiative came as a result of his desire to see a decrease in violent actions being committed in the city. Venuti wanted to focus efforts and resources to prevent violent crimes. The program focused on the destructive impact of trauma and violence on families and communities.

While he was an officer with the Richmond Police Department, Venuti had the opportunity to work with the VCU trauma center’s Injury and Violence Prevention Program (IVPP) Bridging the Gap program because of his significant interaction with trauma victims while overseeing the investigation of all violent crime in the City of Richmond. He also worked with VCU trauma center’s program GR-ACY: Get Real – Alcohol/Drug Choices and Consequences for You when he first joined VCU’s police force and was assisting with educating youth about the dangers of, and consequences of becoming involved in taking drugs and alcohol and the long-term effects that can come from driving impaired and distracted.

Venuti loved working for Richmond Police and had an amazing career there before joining the VCU Police Department. He came to VCU to transform the police department into a highly professional, capable, competent law enforcement agency in the region. He also wanted to revolutionize and transform campus policing.



In his current position, Venuti has come in contact with care providers from many different departments at VCU Health. He had already been aware of the VCU trauma program's excellent reputation within the Central Virginia community before joining VCU, and he now has a strong relationship with the VCU trauma team and sees the inner workings of what goes in to saving people's lives who were the victims of traumatic incidents. Venuti works hard to do what is needed to safeguard the environment surrounding and including the VCU Trauma Bay, so that the VCU trauma team can do its incredibly important, life-saving work that occurs 24-hours-a-day, 365-days-a-year.

Venuti had worked in restaurants as a teenager and began his professional career as a chef, receiving his degree in Culinary Arts from the Culinary Institute of America. He also received a Bachelor's Degree in Management and Leadership from Bluefield College, and is a graduate of the FBI National Academy. In putting his Culinary Arts degree to work, Venuti became the youngest banquet chef for the Hyatt Corporation before leaving to become a police officer. He jokes that he added an "I" to "chef" to become "chief".

Initially, Venuti was simply following an urge to try law enforcement, thinking he would do it for a few years and then open a bar or restaurant. Little did he know at that time that 38 years later he would be the Chief of Police for VCU and VCU Health. He reflected that these two careers are wildly different but do share one key aspect – preparation. Preparation is vitally important to both occupations.

In 2015, Venuti was honored as a Shining Knight for the care and compassion that was provided to the Shining Knight Gala's featured patient, Bette Wallerstein.

Venuti has been married to his wife Christina for the past 39 years and has two children, Maria and Vincent. He remains very versatile in the kitchen and enjoys cooking for friends and family.





**Gold Knight (\$10,000)**



**Silver Knight (\$7,500)**



**Bronze Knight (\$5,000)**

Drs. Sharline and Michel Aboutanos

Atlantic Constructors

Hourigan

MCV Foundation

Sheltering Arms Foundation, Sheltering Arms Institute,  
Sheltering Arms Physical Rehabilitation Centers

Virginia Premier

**Squire (\$1,000)**

CartyMac Consulting

Ginny and Charles Crone

Dunbar

Ford & Thomas Insurance Agency, Inc.

Shirley R. Gibson, DNP, MSHA, RN, FACHE

Dr. Clarence A. Holland

JLL

Lansing Building Products

Molnlycke

Helen and Dr. Wilhelm Zuelzer

**Other Sponsors**

ASAP Program

*Saturday, May 21 2022*



## *Personal Shining Knights*

Marci Akers

honored anonymously

Yvonne Carter, MSN, RN, TCRN

honored anonymously

Eric S. Edwards, MD

honored by Brenda and Tyler Hancock

Aimee Girard

honored anonymously

David Girard, MSW

honored by Lorraine Mimms

Ajai Malhotra, MD

honored by Brenda and Tyler Hancock

James Patrick McGowan, MD

honored anonymously

Krista Neiman, BSN, RN

honored by Greg Neiman

Laura Schatz, MSN, BSN, RN

honored anonymously



## *2022 Shining Knights*

Mike Abbott, BS, RN, NRP, Flight Paramedic

Marci Akers, Care Partner

Rahul Anand, MD, FACS

Ashley Barner, RN

Philip Breidenbaugh, MS, PT

Brian Cameron, MD

Francisco Chuidian, MD

Daniel Coughlin, Firefighter/Paramedic

Jeffrey Elbich, MD

Jeffrey Ferguson, MD

Leticia Flores, MD

Jamie Graff, RN, CEN, CFRN, NREMT-B, Flight Nurse

Catherine Grossman, MD, FCCP

Mike Hanville, MA, BBA, EMT-P

Robert "Hawk" Hawkins, CRT

Philip Hillman, Firefighter/Paramedic

Maral Javadifar, PT, DPT, CSCS

Taylor Jennings, BSN, RN

Lanney Jones, NREMT-P, FP-C

Julie Kacmarcik, BSN, RN

Richard Kunz, MD

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## *2022 Shining Knights*

Dallas Larsen, Firefighter Paramedic

Stephanie Louka, MD

James Patrick McGowan, MD

Rachel Middlebrook, BSN, RN, CEN, Clin IV

David Morath, Firefighter/Paramedic

Don Nobles, Flight Paramedic

Dianna Nothacker, RN, CCRN

Latisha Perry, RN

Levi Procter, MD, FACS

Edgar Rodas, MD, FACS

Lois Rowland, MS, RRT-NPS

Rebekah Rupp, BS, RN, CCRN

Jibanananda Satpathy, MD

Meg Shea, MSN, RN

Andrew Slater, EMT-I

Laura Stevenson, BSN, RN, SCRNP

Melinda Tepe, PT, DPT

Raquel Weston, MD

James Whelan, MD, FACS

Trearell White, Care Partner


Shani "Cookie" Wright, ADN, RN

Allen Yee, MD, FACEP, FAAEM, FAEMS



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# Injury and Violence Prevention Programs (IVPP) and Support Initiatives at and through VCU Medical Center

The funds raised by this year's Shining Knight Gala will benefit **Injury and Violence Prevention Programs** at and through VCU Medical Center. Programs accompanied by the Knight's Helmet image  have been supported by the generosity of supporters and attendees in past years. For additional information on all of the programs available, please visit our [website](#).

## **Bridging the Gap: Youth/Community Violence Intervention Program (IVPP)**

Bridging the Gap is a combined hospital-community youth violence prevention program designed to reduce the risk of re-injury of Richmond area youths, ages 10-30, who have been hospitalized with violence-related injuries.

## **Child Protection Team**

The Child Protection Team of Children's Hospital of Richmond at VCU evaluates, diagnoses and treats children who have been sexually or physically abused or neglected. This dedicated group of physicians, nurses, nurse practitioners and social workers is available 24 hours a day to perform evaluations for acute sexual assault. They also see patients by appointment in an outpatient clinic. The team works closely with Child Protective Services and law enforcement to ensure the safety and well-being of the region's children. Our team is a nationally accredited Children's Advocacy Center, which is a child-focused, multidisciplinary program aimed at supporting children who have experienced abuse or neglect and to prevent future cases.

## **Emerging Leaders: A Youth Violence Prevention Program (IVPP)**

Emerging Leaders is a hospital community-based violence prevention program for high school students 14-18 years old. Emerging Leaders strives to provide youth with positive strategies to avoid using violence, exposure to health care careers, on-going case management and engagement in the community.

## **Fire Prevention Education**

Evans-Haynes Burn Center provides education to EMTs, special government forces and rural hospitals. We participate in prevention education for child or adult care facilities and schools.

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### **GR-ACY: Get Real – Alcohol/Drug Choices and Consequences for You (IVPP)**



GR-ACY is a hospital-based alternative sentencing program designed with the goals to reduce motor vehicle injuries and fatalities involving youth and adults impaired by alcohol and to reduce underage drinking and marijuana use.

### **Hospital-Based Violence Consult (IVPP)**

All victims with intentional injuries admitted to VCU Medical Center receive a hospital-based violence consultation. This violence assessment and intervention service provides support needed to coordinate follow-up care, mental health care, emergency financial assistance and other resources as needed.

### **It Happened in Seconds**

Through the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program, the DC Firefighters Burn Foundation has been able to develop a burn injury awareness program for firefighters nationwide. The course was developed by firefighters, burn surgeons, nurses, and protective garment manufacturers from around the country. (The course was not developed to teach fire ground operations or tactics as these vary greatly around the country.) It Happened in Seconds runs approximately two hours and is instructed by a firefighter and burn unit professional through a lecture and video presentation.

### **Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)/Depression Screening and Treatment (IVPP)**

A clinical psychologist and their team provide PTSD/Depression screening, PTSD education, inpatient treatment and outpatient referrals for trauma patients at risk for PTSD/Depression post injury.

### **Project EMPOWER: Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Prevention and Advocacy Program (IVPP)**



Project EMPOWER seeks to reduce re-injury of victims through support and resources while raising awareness of domestic violence (DV) within the medical setting and increase patient screening among practitioners through education, awareness and community service.

### **Project IMPACT: Impacting Minors' Perception and Attitudes Concerning Trauma (IVPP)**



The goal of Project IMPACT is to promote safe driving habits through education and a trauma simulation program that is taken to area high school driver's education students. An additional program on high risk behaviors that includes teen dating violence and substance use is offered by our forensic nurse examiners.



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### **Safe Kids Virginia at Children's Hospital of Richmond at VCU**

Since 2000, CHoR has been the lead agency for Safe Kids Virginia, a program dedicated to preventing unintentional injuries from happening to children ages 14 and under. These efforts are in collaboration with the hospital's pediatric trauma center and include outreach, education and advocacy. Our trauma program not only treats children after an injury occurs, but also provides injury prevention outreach and education through public awareness activities such as car seat safety checks, safety fairs, seasonal injury prevention activities and participation in public policy. We believe prevention is the best medicine, and are committed to working with our community to keep children safe.

### **Screening, Brief Interventions and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) for Substance Use Problems**

SBIRT is an evidence-based approach for identifying patients who are at risk for abuse of alcohol and other drugs. SBIRT is intended to identify patients who have substance use disorders, and reduce the level of risk for those who are at high risk for developing substance use disorders.

### **Survivors Offering Assistance in Recovery (SOAR)**

SOAR is a program initiated by the Phoenix Society that was developed to provide a structured volunteer peer support program for survivors that can be implemented easily by hospital staff. After recovering from a burn injury, many survivors look for ways to give something back to the caregivers at the hospital who have given so much to them. They also want to help new survivors. The program is designed to enable medical centers to create a pool of motivated and trained volunteers with a minimum expenditure of staff resources. To learn more, visit [phoenix-society.org](http://phoenix-society.org).

### **Trauma Survivors Network (TSN) (IVPP)**

The Trauma Survivors Network is a community of patients and families who are looking to connect with one another and rebuild their lives after a serious injury. Services provided include a patient and family handbook that explains every aspect of the trauma services at VCU Medical Center, a peer visitation program that links trauma patients with volunteer trauma survivors and the NextSteps program that is offered upon discharge and assists the trauma survivor in their recovery.

For additional information on the VCU Medical Center's Trauma Survivor Network, please visit its [website](#).



## *Previous Honorary Chairs*

- 2009 – Harry Young, MD  
2010 – Joseph Ornato, MD  
2011 – John Templeton, Jr., MD and James Neifeld, MD  
2012 – John Ward, MD  
2013 – Rosemary Tribble and Wilhelm Zuelzer, MD  
2014 – Vigneshwar Kasirajan, MD and Gil Minor  
2015 – Jerry Strauss, MD, PhD and Senator Thomas Norment  
2016 – Lauren Wade and Will Wade  
2017 – Joyce Johnson and Richard Johnson  
2018 – Brenda Hancock and Tyler Hancock  
2019 – Clay Reynolds and Randy Reynolds, Jr.  
2020 – Shining Knight Gala cancelled due to health and safety concerns related to the COVID-19 pandemic  
2021 – Virtual Shining Knight Gala did not feature an Honorary Chair

## *Previous Featured Patients*

- 2009 – Willie Christy  
2010 – Greg Jones  
2011 – Chris Baker  
2012 – Jonathan Colson  
2013 – Tony Carr  
2014 – Candi Spraggins  
2015 – Bette Wallerstein  
2016 – Nick Watkins  
2017 – Denise Gorondy Toderico, DVM  
2018 – Malina Richardson  
2019 – Dave Johnson and Carter Lewis  
2020 – Event cancelled due to health and safety concerns related to the COVID-19 pandemic  
2021 – Bryan Sides





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## VCU Center for Trauma and Critical Care Education (CTCCE)

For more than 40 years, VCU Health has taken an inclusive and integrated strategy regarding hospital and EMS providers. With a patient centered approach, we regard EMS as part of our team. The care that we provide our patients begins in the field. With that in mind we are fully and demonstrably committed to providing comprehensive and optimal, evidence based education and training, leadership and quality improvement to the EMS community.

Established in 1980 by Dr. Kimball Maul as an extension of the Trauma Center into our community providing education to the volunteer Emergency Medical Services (EMS) providers in Central Virginia, the VCU Center for Trauma and Critical Care Education (CTCCE) has evolved to offer comprehensive training programs for medical center and community care providers, including physicians, fellows, residents, nurse practitioners, nurses, and more, as well as thousands of EMS professionals in Central Virginia and around the Commonwealth.

Over the last 25 years, CTCCE has conducted more than 25 courses and trained more than 500 critical care ground and air providers. VCU CTCCE is also the only institution in Virginia licensed to provide the Pediatric-Neonatal Critical Care Transport Program.

### Paramedic/EMS Initial Training Programs

The Paramedic Program began in 1980 on the Medical College of Virginia (MCV) campus of VCU under the medical direction of Dr. Kimball Maul, the director of Emergency Medical Services and Trauma for MCV Hospitals. The program initially began as an outreach program in the Department of Surgery's trauma program to provide paramedic education to the largely volunteer EMS community in the Central Virginia region. The program was the first paramedic program in the Central Virginia region and the first program in the Commonwealth affiliated with an academic medical center and Level I trauma center.

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The program began as a two-phase approach with the first phase culminating in Virginia EMT-Cardiac and the second phase resulted in the student's eligibility to sit for the National Registry EMT-Paramedic examination. Over the past forty years, more than 1,500 students have completed the VCU program.

## Paramedic Program Accreditation:

Virginia Commonwealth University is nationally accredited by The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges. The VCU Paramedic Program has been nationally accredited since 2000. The Program is accredited through The Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP). As part of its annual report, CTCCE submits data in regards to the program's National Registry's Cognitive and Psychomotor Test Results.

**93%**

**National Registry  
Cognitive Pass  
Rate**

**95%**

**Retention Rate  
for the Period**

**100%**

**Positive  
Placement**



## *Cole Sydnor Trauma Survivor Giving Back Award*



*Pictured above in spring 2021 are  
Cole and Charisma Sydnor.*

Dr. John Reavey-Cantwell and his wife Dr. Jordana Kron were inspired by Cole Sydnor, Dr. Reavey-Cantwell's patient. In August 2011, 16-year-old Cole dived into the James River in Richmond, Virginia and hit his head on a rock. The impact shattered the C5 and C6 vertebrae in his neck, rendering him a quadriplegic. Once on the road to recovery Cole made the decision to play the hand he had been dealt to the best of his ability.

He maintains a positive attitude and has worked with many organizations to give back to others, working with other paralyzed individuals and using his experience to serve as a motivational speaker.

In May 2018, Cole and (his now wife) Charisma began a YouTube channel called "Roll with Cole & Charisma" to shed light on the realities and lay to rest misconceptions around inter-abled relationships. Recently Cole and Charisma started a new chapter in their lives and moved to California where Cole intends to pursue an acting career.

At the 2014 Shining Knight Gala, Cole was named the first recipient of the Trauma Survivor Giving Back Award. In Cole's honor, Drs. Reavey-Cantwell and Kron made a lead gift to create an Injury and Violence Prevention Program Endowment to establish a fund aimed at long-term stability. This offers another opportunity for donors to engage and support the work of the collective team at the VCU Trauma Center. In 2015, in light of this gift, the Trauma Survivor Giving Back Award was renamed the Cole Sydnor Trauma Survivor Giving Back Award. Subsequent recipients of the award include: Lisette Johnson, Kirk McClure, Richard Bagby, Taylor Jones, Joyce and Richard Johnson, and Kristen Mallory.

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# SHINING KNIGHT *Gala*

## *Celebration, Excellence, Support*

The Shining Knight Gala is an occasion designed to celebrate lives saved and the community of women and men who saved those lives. One of the highlights of the evening is an in-depth look into the journey of trauma patients; from injury to recovery. We will learn about the heroic efforts and collaboration of an outstanding team of “Shining Knights” made up of care providers from first responders, to trauma surgeons, nurses and countless others. We will honor these Shining Knights and learn what it takes to give trauma survivors a second chance at life. Tonight’s program exemplifies the outstanding work we are privileged to be a part of every day.

VCU Medical Center is proud to be Virginia’s longest-standing comprehensive Level I adult, pediatric and burn trauma center. We hope tonight’s program provides insight into what we do and why we are so passionate about it.

Funds raised at the Shining Knight Gala are used to support our Injury and Violence Prevention Program (IVPP) — the Center for Trauma and Critical Care Education (CTCCE), the Trauma Survivors Network (TSN), Stop the Bleed and other programs — that benefit the communities in Richmond, Central Virginia and beyond. Please continue your support this evening by donating [here](#). Thank you for your support of our Trauma Center.