

The NOVA logo is displayed in a stylized, metallic blue font. It is set against a dark blue background featuring a glowing planet with a ring, similar to Saturn, and a starry space pattern.

## 7 DOCTORS, 21 YEARS—NOVA CAPTURES REAL-LIFE DRAMA FROM MED SCHOOL TO M.D.

### *DOCTORS' DIARIES*

Tuesday, April 7 and 14 at 8pm ET/PT on PBS  
[www.pbs.org/nova/doctors](http://www.pbs.org/nova/doctors)



Produced for PBS  
by the WGBH  
Science Unit

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BOSTON, MA—In 1987, NOVA's cameras began rolling to chronicle the lives of seven young, bright medical students, embarking on the longest and most rigorous endeavor in higher education: the years-long journey to become a doctor. From their first days at Harvard Medical School to the present day, none of them could have predicted what it would take, personally and professionally, to become a member of the medical community. In this final installment, NOVA returns one last time to find out what sort of doctors—and people—they have become, on *Doctors' Diaries*, a two-part NOVA special premiering Tuesday, April 7 and 14 at 8pm ET/PT on PBS (check local listings).

The longest-running U.S. documentary of its kind, *Doctors' Diaries* begins by reuniting the physicians on the steps of Harvard Medical School 17 years after graduation. Footage from the previous four installments in the series offers a rare and candid look at the rewards and personal sacrifices each has made over the last two decades—from the stress of medical school exams, to the first cut into a cadaver, through first wedding ceremonies (and sometimes second or third), internship, residency, and life as a certified M.D.

*Doctors' Diaries* is filled with in-depth insights offering raw perspectives on the medical profession. "First-year medical school is absolutely something that one cannot be emotionally prepared for," says Tom Tarter, a board-certified emergency physician. "This has been the most emotionally trying period of my life ... I can't remember crying until last week."

Today, all but one doctor is still practicing medicine, and although they each chose different specialties—from cardiology to anesthesiology, ophthalmology to psychiatry—all share the distinct privileges and demands of dealing with matters of life and death.

"It's been an incredibly satisfying project," reflects producer and director Michael Barnes, who conceived of the project and has filmed over 700 hours for this final installment. "I'm grateful that through the years these seven individuals have allowed me to film significant moments in their lives. I hope that the film provides a greater understanding of a doctor's life, one that is truly filled with drama and demands extreme focus and commitment, but in the end offers huge rewards."

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Reflecting on his career, Tarter concludes, "In my years of practice, now I have seen all the ranges of extreme tragedy, extreme joy. I can't think of anything that has grounded me so much in my life as being a doctor."

The seven physicians featured in *Doctors' Diaries*:

**Tom Tarter**, Bloomington, IN—The Bronx-born, long-haired, tattooed ER doctor has constantly grappled with how he is perceived as a physician. After his contract was terminated at the local hospital he became an itinerant M.D., forcing him to look for work in distant locations. Once a bouncer, an Olympic-hopeful weight lifter, and a mechanic, Tom is now on his fourth marriage and struggles to make ends meet.

**Jane Liebschutz**, Boston, MA—Currently an internist specializing in underserved populations, domestic violence, and addictions. NOVA was there for the gut-wrenching moment when Jane first witnesses a patient dying on the operating table.

**Jay Bonnar**, Belmont, MA—This private practice psychiatrist is also involved in outpatient group therapy and teaches at the hospital.

**Elliott Bennett-Guerrero**, Durham, NC—A successful anesthesiologist who picked his specialty partly based on the less demanding hours—this now affords him more time to be at home with his second wife and two young sons and pursue his new passion: golf.

**Luanda Grazette**, Thousand Oaks, CA—Originally trained as a clinical cardiologist, Luanda now works for a pharmaceutical company to develop drugs that will help heart patients.

**David Friedman**, Baltimore, MD—As an ophthalmologist and assistant professor at Johns Hopkins University, David aims to one day establish a hospital to provide eye care to the millions of people worldwide who currently have no way to improve their poor vision.

**Cheryl Dorsey**, New York, NY—Although she eventually completed her pediatrics training, she never practiced. Cheryl put her residency on hold to found a program that provides free curbside health services for minority communities; today she is the president of the same nonprofit that funded her Family Van mobile clinic.

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Now in its 36th season, NOVA is television's most-watched primetime science series, reaching an average of five million viewers weekly. The series remains committed to producing in-depth science programming in the form of hour-long (and occasionally longer) documentaries, from the latest breakthroughs in technology to the deepest mysteries of the natural world. NOVA airs Tuesdays at 8pm ET/PT on WGBH Boston and most PBS stations. The Director of the WGBH Science Unit and Senior Executive Producer of NOVA is Paula S. Apsell.

Funding for NOVA is provided by ExxonMobil, Pacific Life, David H. Koch, the Howard Hughes Medical Institute, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, and public television viewers.

NOVA is closed-captioned for deaf and hard-of-hearing viewers and described for people who are blind or visually impaired by the Media Access Group at WGBH. The descriptive narration is available on the SAP channel or stereo TV and VCRs. To order NOVA direct from WGBH Boston Video, visit [shop.wgbh.org](http://shop.wgbh.org) or call 800.949.8670.

### **Production Credits**

#### ***Doctors' Diaries***

Senior Executive Producer Paula S. Apsell

Produced and directed by Michael Barnes

A NOVA Production by Periscope TV for WGBH/Boston

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