

Richmond University Medical Center Welcomes Its First Baby of 2023

At 5:35am, on the morning of January 1, Jonathan Matthew Tafone became the first baby of 2023 born at Richmond University Medical Center (RUMC). He weighed in at 5 pounds, 10 ounces and was 20 inches long. He is the first child born to proud parents Matthew and Melissa Tafone. Jonathan's mom is a social worker and his dad is a New York City firefighter.

"We are very excited to be new parents and can't wait to take Jonathan home," his father Matthew said. "We love him so much."

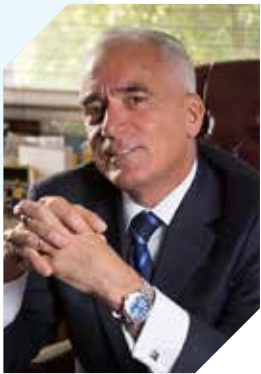
Nearly 3,000 newborns are welcomed into the world each year at RUMC, which is the only hospital on Staten Island to carry the "Baby Friendly" certification from the World Health Organization (WHO) and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), a certification RUMC first earned in 2016. Today, RUMC is one of only 44 healthcare facilities in New York State with this certification and one of only 27 in New York City. The WHO and UNICEF launched the Baby-Friendly Initiative in 1991. The goal of the initiative is to protect, promote, and support breastfeeding and the mother-infant bonding experience.

A major two-phase modernization project is currently underway in RUMC's Mother/Baby Unit. Designed to enhance the mother-baby bonding experience and provide greater privacy, all rooms will be converted into single-bed suites, complete with new in-suite bathrooms, showers, flooring, and windows. Each suite also has larger space for family and visitors. Phase one of the project, renovating existing rooms to single occupancy, is nearing completion. Phase two, which begins shortly, involves converting underutilized space in the Mother/Baby Unit into new one-bed suites. This will enable RUMC to maintain its current bed capacity. Completion of the entire project is anticipated by end of 2023.



Jonathan Matthew Tafone arrived at 5:35am to proud first-time parents Matthew and Melissa Tafone

From the President & CEO, Daniel J. Messina, PhD, FACHE



Let me first begin by wishing everyone a Happy New Year!

Every three years, along with most healthcare facilities, Richmond University Medical Center conducts a Community Health Needs Assessment. This assessment compiles data from the city and state that are used to identify major health disparities and barriers to healthcare. Each facility then assesses this information, determines how to address some of the identified

disparities based on services it provides and other factors, and then develops specific actions to undertake over the next three years to help bring about improvements.

After careful examination of the current data collected for Staten Island, our hospital will focus on conducting screenings and educating the community to help prevent chronic disease, specifically, diabetes, women's breast cancer, prostate cancer, colon cancer, lung cancer, and cervical cancer. Over the next three years, we will increase our reach further into our communities to provide free health screenings for these illnesses. We will also provide our residents with the latest educational materials. Our hope is to simultaneously increase early detection to bring about better outcomes while also raising awareness of symptoms, risk factors, and available treatments.

Additional areas we will focus on over the next three years include reducing the number of preventable overdose deaths from opioid use and suicides. Our behavioral health team will attack both issues with a variety of strategies. Increased Narcan trainings, connecting patients to our emergency department Peer Counseling program, and providing patients with connections to state, city, and local

addiction treatment services will help turn the tide on the opioid wave that continues to hit our borough. To prevent suicides, our team plans to screen all individuals presenting for intake in our gamblers treatment program to identify patients with gambling addictions who may also be suffering from depression. These individuals will receive appropriate referrals to follow up behavioral health services.

To address all of these disparities will be a multi-departmental undertaking. We will build new bridges with community and faith-based organizations and work hand-in-hand with neighborhood leaders and elected officials. With our exceptional staff, facilities, and state-of-the-art technology, we will address these disparities and improve the overall health of Staten Island. Updates on our progress will be periodically shared over the next three years and I am confident that we will be able to bring about significant changes we can all be proud of. If you would like to read our entire Community Health Needs Assessment for 2022-2024, visit our website at www.RUMCSI.org/community-health-needs-assessment.

So here's to a happy and healthy 2023 for you and your families. Thank you for everything you do for our patients and our community. The future is bright for the family of services and facilities at Richmond University Medical Center.

Remember the Power of One — You Make A Difference!

Sincerely,

Daniel J. Messina, PhD, FACHE
President and Chief Executive Officer

Patient Satisfaction: A Note of Thanks

To Diane Donaghy RN in Labor and Delivery,

I wanted to thank you from the bottom of my heart for your support during my induction. I truly don't think I could have gotten through that epidural without you. I will be forever grateful that you were my nurse.

— Love, Jessica, Adam and Vienna

I have had ambulatory surgery here three times now in three years. This hospital is wonderful and is amazing to everyone that walks in here. The whole staff is so kind and really truly cares about everyone. Marc is the best and when he wheels you into the operating room, he keeps you so calm. In addition, Anthony is the nicest person. I would highly recommend this hospital for surgery.

— On-line Review

Kevin Roger was brought to RUMC 11 years ago for respiratory issues. Kevin was treated and rescued in the Medical Intensive Care Unit (MICU) at Richmond University Medical Center before being transferred to Columbia University for Extracorporeal Membrane Oxygenation (ECMO). Since then, Kevin and his parents return every year to RUMC showing their appreciation and gratitude for the MICU team. Kevin returned in 2022 along with the oldest of his three daughters.



Chief of Neurology Named President of NY State Neurological Society

The New York State Neurological Society (NYSNS) elected Allan B. Perel, MD, FAAN, as its new president during its recent annual winter meeting. Dr. Perel has been practicing neurology on Staten Island for over 25 years and is the chief of Neurology at Richmond University Medical Center (RUMC).

“It is a privilege and honor to represent Staten Island and RUMC as president of the New York State Neurological Society,” Perel said. “The society represents thousands of neurologists throughout the state with a goal of providing outstanding patient care and professionalism.”

Dr. Perel has served on the board of directors for NYSNS in numerous capacities including chair of the Advocacy Committee and delegate to the Medical Society of the State of New York. He will serve a two-year term as its president. The mission of NYSNS is to promote the

practice of neurology in New York State; advocate for the highest quality of care for patients with neurological disease; offer educational programs and foster a sense of community for neurologists, neurologists in training, and allied professionals; and serve as a forum for career planning in both academic and practice environments.

Dr. Perel completed medical school at the State University of New York in 1985. He completed his neurology residency at the Neurological Institute of Columbia University-Presbyterian Hospital. Dr. Perel founded Alpha Neurology, an adult neurology practice on Staten Island. Dr. Perel’s area of subspecialty expertise is in multiple sclerosis. The Multiple Sclerosis Center of Staten Island, founded by Dr. Perel, recently celebrated its 25th anniversary. Dr. Perel currently serves as the center’s medical director.



Allan B. Perel, MD, FAAN

Richmond University Medical Center Earns Marketing Awards at International Competition

The Public Relations and Marketing Department at Richmond University Medical Center (RUMC) earned a total of 10 awards during the recent 2022 MarCom competition, one of the largest marketing and advertising competitions of its kind in the world. In the past four years, RUMC’s Public Relations and Marketing Department has won 27 MarCom awards for its publications and advertising campaigns.

“A lot of time and effort goes into creating an ad or publication, making sure it has the right message and visual to make an impact with our intended audience,” RUMC Vice President, Public Relations and Marketing, Alex Lutz, said. “These awards are not earned by our department alone. We would like to give tremendous thanks to DavidHenry Marketing and Media, our longtime creative consultant and partner, as well as everyone at RUMC whose input contributed to the development, design, and success of these campaigns.”

RUMC earned two platinum awards, the highest honor, for its cancer annual report and for its bus shelter ad campaign, which featured several of the hospital’s service lines at shelters across Staten Island. RUMC also earned four gold awards, the next highest award presented, and four honorable mentions. Gold awards were earned for the hospital’s 2022 employee calendar, capital projects construction newsletter, hand sanitizing kiosk ad campaign at the Staten Island Mall, and for print ads promoting RUMC’s Brain and Spine Center. Honorable mentions were earned for RUMC’s Breast and Women’s Center print ad campaign, colon cancer print ad campaign, capital projects print ad campaign and for print ads promoting the hospital’s annual Arnold Obey/RUMC 5K run. In the past four years, RUMC

has earned six platinum awards, 14 gold awards, and seven honorable mentions from MarCom.



Vice President, Public Relations and Marketing, Alex Lutz, and Meredith Gaskins, Senior Public Relations & Marketing Specialist, with their 2022 MarCom awards.

MarCom awards honor excellence in marketing and communication. Since its inception in 2004, MarCom has evolved into one of the largest creative competitions in the world. Each year over 6,500 print and digital entries are submitted from dozens of countries. MarCom is administered by the Association of Marketing and Communication Professionals (AMCP).

RUMC Physician Shares Facts Behind Premature Births



Michael Cabbad, MD, Chair, Department of Obstetrics & Gynecology, and Director of Maternal Fetal Medicine

In the following interview, Michael Cabbad, MD, chair, Department of Obstetrics & Gynecology, and director of Maternal Fetal Medicine, discusses the medical complications pre-term babies can face, factors that can increase the risk of prematurity, and ways mothers can help prevent pre-term deliveries. Nearly 400,000 babies are born prematurely each year in the US.

How are pre-term deliveries defined and how prevalent are they?

Dr. Cabbad: With 39 weeks considered 'full-term,' 'early term' refers to delivery from 37 weeks to 38 weeks and six days, and anything prior to delivery before 37 weeks is considered 'premature' or 'pre-term.' According to the CDC, the rate of pre-term births in America was 10.5 percent in 2021, essentially meaning that a pre-term birth affected roughly one in every 10 US infants born that year. The US rate of pre-term birth mirrors that of the world rate, which currently stands at 10 – 11 percent according to the World Health Organization (WHO).

What are some of the possible medical risks faced by babies born prematurely?

Dr. Cabbad: Prematurity can potentially expose infants to many conditions — from respiratory distress syndrome, intraventricular hemorrhage, and bronchopulmonary dysplasia (BPD) to necrotizing colitis, retinopathy, apnea, cognitive delays, and motor performance difficulties. The degree to which these conditions can develop often correlates to how prematurely the baby delivers — i.e., the earlier the baby delivers, the greater the likelihood that any of these conditions may arise, with delivery prior to 32 weeks being the critical period when many of these things can occur.

When are pre-term deliveries medically appropriate or recommended?

Dr. Cabbad: There are many situations where pre-term delivery is medically indicated for the benefit of the mother and/or baby, such as if the mother has diabetes or hypertension, or has developed pre-eclampsia or a placental disorder, or if the baby is surrounded by excess amniotic fluid or develops any of a number of other fetal conditions.

What risk factors can predispose a woman to delivering prematurely?

Dr. Cabbad: Race is a factor; currently, the African American population has the highest risk of premature delivery, followed by Native Americans, Hispanics, those of Asian-Pacific descent, and Caucasians. Other risk factors include smoking, substance abuse, high levels of stress in the home and/or work environment, and compromised social determinants of health (such as low economic status, limited education, poor eating habits, and the presence of periodontal disease, etc.). Being either overweight (with a body mass index, or BMI, over 30) or underweight (with a BMI less than 19.6) can also increase the risk of pre-term delivery, as can the presence of vaginal or sexually-transmitted infections, a history of spontaneous or induced abortion, use of fertilization technologies, cervical irregularities, and multiple gestation (twins, triplets, etc.). Finally, patients who begin prenatal care at a later point in their pregnancy are also at greater risk for pre-term delivery, making early prenatal care and intervention highly encouraged. Interestingly, while there are programs in place to help predict/identify those patients at risk for pre-term delivery, 50 percent of all patients who deliver pre-term have no predisposing factors.

How can women help reduce their risk of delivering prematurely?

Dr. Cabbad: Getting prenatal care early in the pregnancy and engaging in pregnancy planning with your doctor, especially if you have pre-disposing medical conditions, are strongly encouraged. Behaviors related to healthy living — such as eating well, getting adequate exercise, and reducing stress — are also highly recommended.

How are pre-term babies cared for at Richmond University Medical Center?

Dr. Cabbad: After identifying an individual at potential risk of pre-term delivery, collaborative efforts take place between our obstetricians, pediatricians, neonatologists, and nurses to monitor all of the physiological dynamics occurring within the child and provide the utmost respiratory, nutritional, and other support to the baby at a pace that supports its successful transition from the mother's womb to the world. It's a critical time that requires a whole team, including the parents, to be deeply involved and committed to the well-being of the child to help get them through that experience. Richmond University Medical Center has the specialists and support staff to expertly address these situations, and the personalized, family-oriented care that they deliver to both mothers and babies is exceptional and truly helps so many premature babies turn out well. Thanks to the combined efforts of our team, technology, and the families involved, we're able to help get babies through this critical and vulnerable time successfully.

The Quality and Patient Safety “Q Corner”

From Joan Gleason Scott, PhD, RN, NEA-BC, CPHQ, CPPS
Vice President Quality, Infection Prevention, Patient Experience, Language Services



Joan Gleason Scott

Catheter Acquired Blood Stream Associated Infections (CLABSI) are common infections acquired within healthcare establishments.

According to the American Journal of Infection Control, infections that enter the blood stream heavily increase the likelihood of morbidity and mortality.

According to literature the detriments of CLABSIs are so profound that the centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services requires public reporting of all cases and have the potential to decline hospital reimbursements for high rates of infections (Rahmani et al, 2022).

At Richmond University Medical Center, great emphasis is placed on CLABSI prevention by performing measures that are geared towards aseptic techniques, insertion site maintenance, and infection prevention surveillance.

According to the National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN), the most profound pathogens responsible for CLABSI are: Gram

positive organisms such as staphylococci and enterococci, and Gram negative organisms such as Klebsiella, Enterobacter, pseudomonas, E.coli, Acinetobacter and candida (Wright et al, 2018).

Research has shown that utilizing proper PPE, isolation signage, proper central line placement technique, and the use of CHG products, prompt dressing changes, and removal of lines, are all effective methods that contribute to combating causative organisms (Haddain et al, 2022).

As central lines continue to be a staple in delivering lifesaving medications to critically ill patients, the staff at Richmond University Medical Center continues their much-appreciated effort of decreasing central line blood stream acquired infections.

My thanks to Nakiya Torres, DNP, RN, for her contribution to this update.

Promotions Announced to Improve Patient Experience

Recently, the following promotions were announced.



Robert J. MacFadyen, JD, was promoted to assistant vice president of Regulatory Affairs, Quality and Patient Relations. During his 12-year career, Robert has progressed into several leadership roles. After law school, Robert started his career at Saint Peter's Healthcare System as the safety manager and quickly took over Survey Readiness. While at Saint Peter's, Robert was also performance improvement manager and regulatory director. Robert

joined Richmond University Medical Center in 2021. He holds a juris doctor from Widener University School of Law and numerous certifications including a graduate certification in The Law of Patient Care from Seton Hall University School of Law. Robert will continue to report to the vice president of Quality, Patient Relations, Infection Control, and Language Services.



Nancy Taranto, who had been vice president, Regulatory, has assumed a new role as vice president for Hospital Throughput. She will be playing an important role in assuring hospital efficiency and improving the patient experience. As a best practice, many organizations utilize the benefit of this position to optimize patient throughput. Nancy has spent the last 35 years of her career in patient care, quality, regulatory, and informatics. In her

new position Nancy will report to the chief operating officer and chief nurse officer.

Richmond University Medical Center Adopt-A-Family Program Spreads Holiday Cheer

For over 20 years, Richmond University Medical Center (RUMC) has spread holiday cheer to needy families through its Adopt-A-Family program. This year, thanks to the generosity of hospital staff and local businesses, over 200 students from the hospital's Head Start program and more than 50 families received toys, gift cards, and more through this annual RUMC tradition.

"The success of this year's program is directly because of the many departments at RUMC and our friends in the community. We could not have this program be so successful every year like we have had if not for them," Jennifer Dominguez, coordinator for RUMC's Continuing Medical Education Department, said. Dominguez coordinates the Adopt-A-Family program each year.

This year, Shoprite, which has supported the program for many years, donated \$750 in gift cards. The cards were distributed to each of the families. Additional donations came from the Staten Island Kiwanis and MVS Heating & Air-Conditioning Company. Departments and employees at RUMC that purchased gifts for families included staff from the Breast and Women's Center, 1199 SEIU, Care Coordination, Human Resources, Infection Control, Patient Experience, and the Surgical Department, among others.

Students were selected from among those attending one of the Head Start programs run by Staten Island Mental Health Society, a division of RUMC. Families were chosen from among those



(l-r) Shoprite employees Mary Santoro and Samantha Despotovich dropping off gift cards for RUMC's Adopt-A-Family program with RUMC "elves" Jennifer Dominguez, Nichol Yodice, and Keisha Daniels Murrell.

who receive care at RUMC's Family Health Clinic, located at 800 Castleton Avenue.

Holiday Toy Donations Spread Cheer to RUMC Pediatric Patients

Throughout December, many local organizations donated toys and other items to be distributed to pediatric patients receiving care at Richmond University Medical Center. Among them were the MTA, who partnered with Kids Against Cancer; and Arms

Wide Open Childhood Cancer Foundation. Our thanks to both organizations for remembering our youngest patients during this past holiday season.



MTA and Kids Against Cancer



Arms Wide Open Childhood Cancer Foundation

January Observances

Please join us in acknowledging the following health-related observances for the month of January:

Month-Long

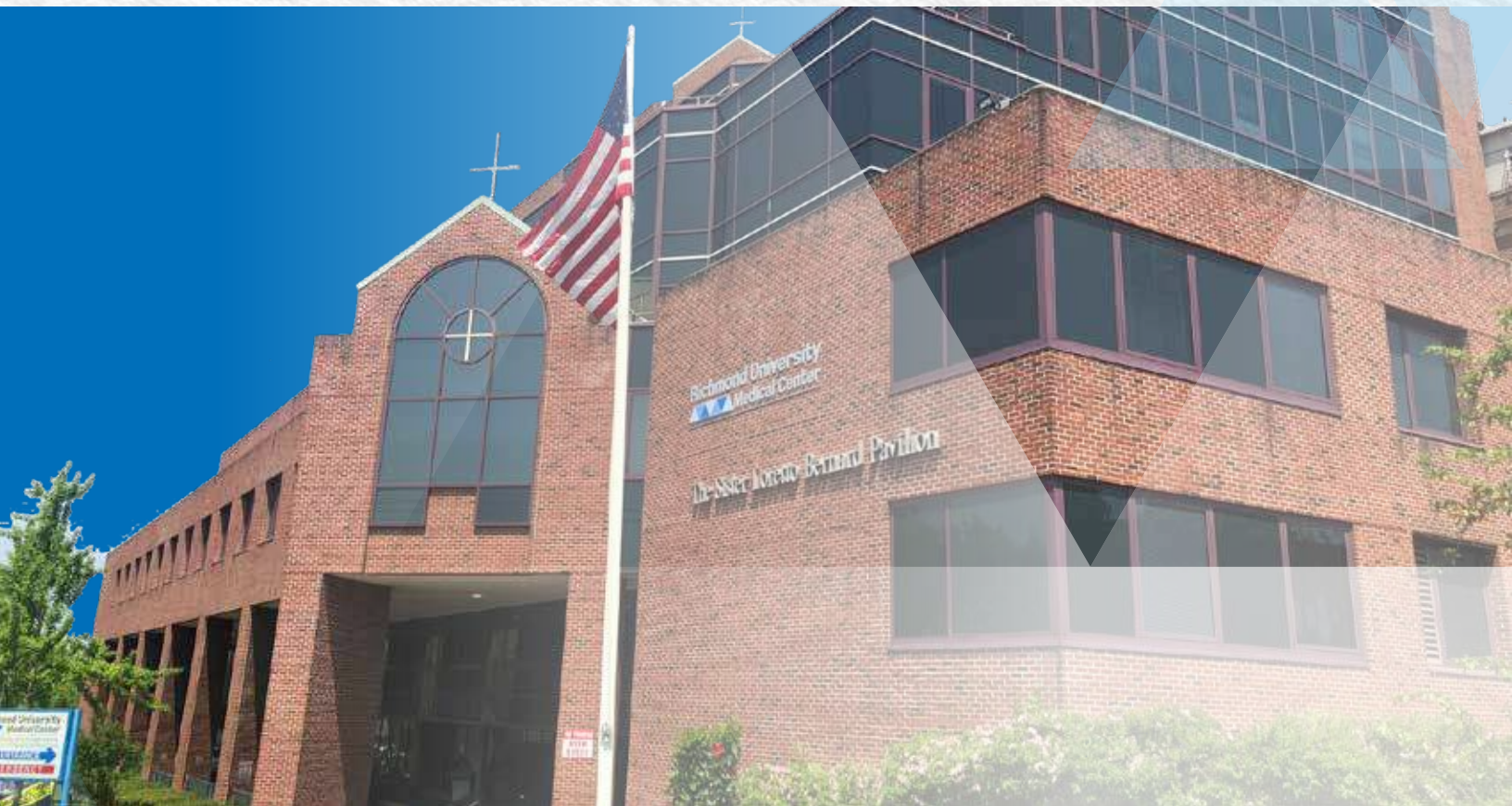
Cervical Health Awareness
Glaucoma Awareness
National Birth Defects Prevention
National Blood Donor Month
National Eye Care Month
Thyroid Awareness

Week-Long Observances

World Leprosy Week: Jan. 29 to Feb. 4

Recognition Days

World Braille Day: Jan. 4
National Pharmacist Day: Jan. 12
Intravenous Nurse Day: Jan. 25
World Leprosy Day: Jan. 29



New Hires — Welcome to RUMC!

Naseem Ali — *Radiology*
Anthony Arcuri — *SIMH*
Niuder Beltran — *Housekeeping*
Michelle Berlinsky — *Dietary*
Maya Browning — *Nursing*
Jessica Cafiero — *Nursing*
Melissa Castoire — *Nursing*
Levgeniia Cherkes — *Nursing*
James Corrigan — *Radiology*
Fabian Deal — *Nursing*
Maryann Dipilli — *OR*
Ana Francia — *Emergency*
Pamela Gallagher — *ER*

Tommi Ann Gangi — *Nursing*
Scott Goldberg — *Security*
Rosalinda Gonzalez — *Headstart*
Bridget Grady — *Switchboard*
Nadia Harris — *Nursing*
Marco Ibrahim — *Anesthesiology*
Diane Leyson — *Nursing*
Gondze Lleshi — *Housekeeping*
Lovette Lopez — *Emergency*
Sierra Martinez — *Emergency*
Christine McNeil — *Nursing*
Jerome Monroe — *Dietary*
Megan O'Leary — *Nursing*

Julianna Panek — *Nursing*
Jayasooriya Pathmine — *Housekeeping*
Rangana Piyasena — *Laboratory*
Joseph Pizzonia-Scarangelo — *Nursing*
Justin Rue — *SIMH*
Dora Salcedo — *Housekeeping*
Stephanie Santori — *Nursing*
Emely Santos — *Dietary*
Sarah Tallasken — *SIMH*
Amanda Waage — *Trauma Services*
Paula Zelinski — *Nursing*

RUMC Hosts Family Day for Staff



On December 17, Richmond University Medical Center (RUMC) held a Family Day at the Staten Island Children's Museum in Snug Harbor Cultural Center and Botanical Garden. The event, provided by the hospital, was for RUMC staff and their families as a thank you for their dedication and commitment to the care of the hospital's patients throughout the year. Over 250 people attended the day, which included free admission to the museum, face painting, arts and crafts, and donuts, courtesy of the Country Donuts mobile truck.



Richmond University Medical Center, 1199 SEIU Team Up to Play Santa

On December 17, Richmond University Medical Center (RUMC) and members of 1199 SIEU gave Santa a helping hand by dropping off toys at the Central Family Life Center in Stapleton. The toys were distributed to families utilizing the center for services.

"It was very heartwarming to see many of our staff and departments thinking of others and doing their very best to make this holiday season just a little bit more cheerful for families throughout our community," RUMC President and Chief Executive Officer Daniel J. Messina, PhD, FACHE, said. "The Central Family Life Center and the Rev. Dr. Demetrius Carolina provide so many services for the residents of Staten Island. We are fortunate to have them and RUMC is blessed to consider Rev. Carolina and the staff as partners and friends."

Union members from 1199 SEIU joined with staff and departments from RUMC to collect new items during a hospital-wide toy drive. The result was several holiday bags full of toys, books, stuffed animals, and additional items for children of all ages. Staff delivered the toys right to the door of the Central Family Life Center where the center's staff greeted them along with the Rev. Dr. Carolina.

"We are grateful for our partnership with RUMC and other trusted partners in successfully serving over 700 families this year for the holidays," the Rev. Dr. Carolina said. "Many hands benefit many in a magnanimous manner."

The Central Family Life Center seeks to improve the lives and



RUMC Security Supervisor Marek Mazur (l) dropping off toys at Central Family Life Center where they were accepted by the Rev. Dr. Demetrius Carolina and staff.

environment of Staten Island residents. Established in 1991, the Center is the only minority-led community center of its kind on Staten Island, providing many critical social service programs for residents.

"I would like to thank everyone who participated in this year's toy drive, which helped our wonderful Staten Island community," 1199 SIEU representative Fabienne Josephs said. "The Central Family Life Center has been a wonderful charity organization in our community, helping many families in need of spiritual and educational needs for years. Teamwork is good work."