

Cardiovascular Team Celebrates 10-Years of Saving Cardiac Patients Through Its STEMI Program



Dr. Francesco Rotatori; Dr. Srinivas Duvvuri; and Iwona Gargala, PA, with their plaques presented by the Cardiovascular Department.

On April 17, the Cardiovascular Department celebrated the 10-year anniversary of Richmond University Medical Center's STEMI program. STEMI is an ST elevation myocardial infarction, or heart attack, known to be more severe and dangerous than other types of heart attacks.

The program at RUMC was created 10 years ago because data showed that residents along the North Shore were experiencing high numbers of STEMI and the only hospital capable of treating them through angioplasty was on the other side of Staten Island. The program was developed in less than a year and certified by the New York State Department of Health. RUMC cares for over 50 STEMI patients annually.

Since its inception 10 years ago, RUMC has maintained the designation from New York State as well as

earned several national accreditations, including the American Heart Association's Get With the Guidelines-Coronary Artery Disease STEMI Receiving Center Gold award in recognition of its commitment to offering rapid, research-based care to people experiencing a STEMI.

During the celebration, the team presented plaques to the founders of the program Chair of the Cardiovascular Department, Francesco Rotatori, MD; and Srinivas Duvvuri, MD. The team also recognized Iwona Gargala, PA, for her dedication and commitment to patients being cared for the hospital's Cardiac Catheterization Laboratory.

Each year, about 285,000 people in the U.S. experience a STEMI heart attack, caused by a complete blockage in a coronary artery.

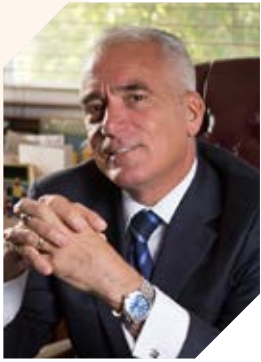


Dr. Duvvuri shares a laugh with Dr. Rotatori as he cuts the cake with surgical precision.



The RUMC Cardiovascular Department

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



As we celebrate National Nurses Month this May, I want to take a moment—on behalf of our Board of Trustees, medical staff, and the entire executive leadership team—to extend our deepest and most heartfelt gratitude for the extraordinary work you do each and every day.

Florence Nightingale once said, “Nursing is an art; and if it is to be made an art, it requires an exclusive devotion as hard a preparation as any painter’s or sculptor’s work.” Her words reflect the spirit and strength I see in each of you. Nursing is not simply a profession—it is a calling. A calling that demands skill, empathy, strength, and unwavering commitment.

You are the heart of healthcare. The very foundation of Richmond University Medical Center. Your care, compassion, and clinical excellence extend far beyond our walls—reaching into the homes and hearts of the patients, families, and communities we serve. Whether at the bedside, in classrooms, in leadership roles, or on the front lines of innovation—you make a difference in every shift and in every life you touch.

Your impact is profound. You are there during the most vulnerable moments of a person’s life—offering hope, comfort, and healing. You help bring new life into the world and offer dignity and compassion at the end of life. You serve as advocates, educators, leaders, and healers. You elevate the standard of care every day through your professionalism and dedication. Quite simply, the story of our hospital—and our ability to care for this community—could not be told without you.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, the medical staff, and the entire organization, thank you. Thank you for your tireless service, your resilience, and your passion for nursing. Your work inspires us all, and we are honored to support you—not just during this month of recognition, but every day throughout the year.

I would also like to take a moment to recognize someone whose legacy will forever be etched in the history of Richmond University Medical Center: Rosemarie Stazzone, RN, MSN, our former Chief Nursing Officer and Chief Operating Officer, who is retiring this month. Rosemarie’s career has been defined by leadership, grace, and an unwavering commitment to excellence in patient care. From her early days as a bedside nurse to her invaluable contributions as a senior executive, she has been a cornerstone of our institution. I personally thank her for her years of counsel, service, and friendship, and we all wish her a happy and well-deserved retirement.

To all of our incredible nurses: thank you for being the calm in the chaos, the light in someone’s darkest hour, and the strength our patients rely on when they need it most. I am proud to stand beside you—and honored to walk these halls with you.

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

“I recently went here to the emergency room, but I went again yesterday for a procedure. Each time I had a wonderful experience. The hospital was very clean. Each and every staff member that I encountered was exceptionally kind and professional. I can’t say enough good things about this hospital.”

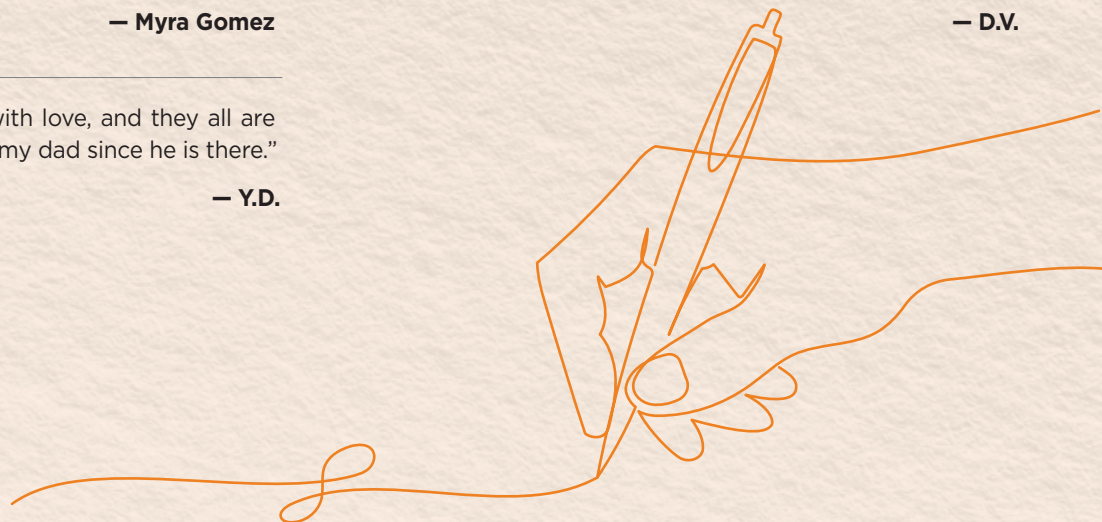
— Myra Gomez

“Excellent service they treat patients with love, and they all are so kind. They have taken good care of my dad since he is there.”

— Y.D.

“Dr. (Lina) Leykina is an exceptional endocrinologist who consistently provides outstanding care. She is incredibly patient, knowledgeable and takes the time to address my concerns with a clear explanation. I feel very confident in her expertise and highly recommend her to anyone looking for a top-notch doctor.”

— D.V.



RUMC and College of Staten Island Sign Agreement to Expand Partnership



RUMC President and CEO, Daniel J. Messina (left) and President of the CUNY-College of Staten Island, Timothy G. Lynch after formally signing the agreement between their institutions.

Richmond University Medical Center and the CUNY-College of Staten Island joined forces on April 28, with the signing of a letter of intent agreeing to combine resources that expand educational, clinical, and community health initiatives between both institutions.

The agreement was signed by RUMC President and CEO, Daniel J. Messina, PhD,

FACHE, and President of the College of Staten Island, Timothy G. Lynch, PhD.

The agreement sets forth a number of initiatives. Among them, expanded training programs to create a pipeline for CSI students enrolled in courses such as social work, nursing, information technology, finance, management, engineering, and community health to complete practicums

and clerkships at RUMC starting as early as Fall 2025. In addition, RUMC will also work with CSI leadership to create new post-graduate employment opportunities and include CSI as an active member of its Community Health Advisory Board. The focus of the board is to identify gaps in community access to health care and target social determinants of health that RUMC can address through its wide array of services. As a member, CSI would help identify health care concerns that impact its students and their families and work with board members to develop solutions.

Other key areas outlined in the agreement are the development of sports medicine coverage for CSI's athletic programs, expansion of on-campus student health services, and collaboration on donor opportunities and sponsorships.

"This agreement outlines the shared vision of both institutions to create new opportunities that will enhance the educational, healthcare, and social landscape of our community," Messina said.

New EMS Lounge Latest Addition to Emergency Department

On April 24, hospital leadership unveiled a brand-new lounge in the Emergency Department dedicated exclusively for use by all EMS personnel to utilize while on break during their shifts. The generous gift of the lounge was made

possible by John M. Pepe, MD, attending nephrologist at RUMC. The lounge will be stocked with refreshments for staff to enjoy and among the amenities are laptop charging ports, comfortable seating, a large screen television and a

kitchenette. The lounge is located adjacent to the Emergency Department trauma bays and ambulance entrance.



Hospital leadership was joined by FDNY, EMS and Emergency Department personnel at the unveiling of the new EMS lounge.



Laptop charging ports, comfortable seating, a large screen television and a kitchenette are among the amenities inside the new lounge.

Vice President of Information Technology Honored by SIEDC



Richmond University Medical Center's Vice President of Information Technology, Joseph Cuozzo was named to the Staten Island Economic Development Corporation's 20 Under 40 Class of 2025. Joe was recognized at the SIEDC Annual Business Conference on April 30. Presenting Joe with his award was SIEDC board member and RUMC Trustee Joseph Torres.

Cuozzo oversees IT, Switchboard, Biomedicine, AV and Telecommunications at RUMC. Joe is a native Staten Islander

who joined RUMC in 2016 and has advanced through various positions in key roles as a Systems Analyst, Applications Manager and Director of IT.

Joe earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Economics from the College of Staten Island, and an MBA with a focus in Technology Management from Walden University. He also holds ITIL Certification and Lean Six Sigma Black Belt from Villanova University.

Joseph Cuozzo with Joseph Torres, SIEDC board member and RUMC Trustee



Richmond University Medical Center Holds Arnie O and Rory Bea 5K Run/Walk

Nearly 450 individuals took part in Richmond University Medical Center's Arnie O and Rory Bea 5K Run/Walk which was held at Silver Lake Park on Saturday, April 12. Despite the wet and windy weather, over 230 runners and nearly 200 walkers navigated the 3.1-mile course around the park and reservoir. Kicking off the festivities was a kids dash that was run by close to 30 children.

Those in attendance saw last year's men's second place finisher, Jose

Morales, take the men's division title while the women's division title went to defending champion, Melissa Kraker. Morales finished with a time of 18:10 to take this year's men's title, while Kraker nailed down back-to-back titles with a time of 22:45.4.

The event was held in memory of Rory DeCristoforo and Arnold Obey. Rory was the youngest child of Mark and Meg DeCristoforo. Rory tragically passed away on New Year's Day 2024, when a fire broke out in her home close to the

hospital. Obey, who passed away in 2020, had a stand-out basketball career at Wagner College where he was a player and eventual assistant coach. An avid runner throughout his life, Obey's adult running career included nearly four decades of participating in the New York City Marathon. He ran in 38 consecutive New York City Marathons.

Proceeds from this year's event will be donated to the Level III Wayne Zenna Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) at RUMC.

For photos from the event, see the last page of this month's Chronicle.

L&D Nurse Helps Kids Forge A Career Path begins at an Early Age



Recently, Stephanie Brown, RN, a nurse in the Labor and Delivery Department at Richmond University Medical Center met with students at Richmond Pre-K, located on Richmond Avenue. In addition to talking about her responsibilities as a nurse, Stephanie read a book to the children and using a baby doll, also showed the students how to swaddle and care for a newborn infant.

Watch New Episodes of RUMC Vital Signs

▶ **EPISODE 23: THE TRUTH ABOUT COLORECTAL CANCER AND COLONOSCOPIES**

In this episode, board certified gastroenterologist Vahe Shahnazarian, MD, talks about the risks, symptoms, and treatment of colorectal cancer as well as why early screening and colonoscopies are critically important in the fight against this form of cancer, which will be diagnosed in over 150,000 Americans this year alone.



To watch this episode and others covering a range of health-related topics, scan the QR code.



Airing on Community Media of Staten Island Channel 34 and available at www.RUMCSI.org, each episode of RUMC Vital Signs covers the latest trends in medicine and provides in-depth information on the services provided at Richmond University Medical Center.



Catch Up on the Latest Episodes of RUMC Connections Podcast

▶ **SEASON 3, EPISODE 4: BREAKING THE CYCLE: HOW PEER ADVOCACY IS CHANGING YOUNG LIVES AT RUMC**

In this episode, Peer Supervisor, Stephen Nico and Peer Advocate, Amber Ramos highlight RUMC's Peer Advocacy Program, a lifeline for young people facing addiction, peer pressure, and difficult home environments.



To listen to these episodes and others covering a range of health-related topics, scan the QR code.



rumcsi.org/RUMCCpodcast

New Hires — Welcome to RUMC!

Halla Al Masarwa — *Classroom Sub*

Navtaj Bajwa — *Paramedic*

Shawn Barrow — *Paramedic*

Ashley Batiancela — *RN*

Blerina Berjolli — *Anesthesia Tech*

Lindsay Bracey — *LMHW*

Lori Ann Burns — *Medical Records Clerical*

Louis Campione — *Staff Accountant*

Cassidy Cruz — *Anesthesia Tech*

Peter DeCesare — *RRT*

Wilneliz Diaz — *MA*

Nina Diccicchio — *RN*

Sarahlee Dieudonne — *MA*

Blanca Gonzalez — *Paramedic*

Zachary Henriguez — *Nursing Assistant*

Riley-Kate Jimenez — *Payroll Clerk*

Christan Kiste — *EMT*

Bryan Lobato — *Staff Accountant*

Kathleen Mascarinas Sr. — *Clerk/ Receptionist*

Ashley Minetti — *PA*

Mary-Lee Mitchell — *EMT*

Darcedalea Navarro — *Custodian*

Crystal Nicosia — *MA*

Jackson Orneus — *Respiratory Therapy*

Arvind Singh — *Paramedic*

Danielle Soloman — *EMT*

Clashani Vaz — *Procurement Specialist*

Nicole Zimmerman — *RN*

Congratulations to our Employee of the Month:

Stephanie Panetta

Admitting/Registrar



Celebrating Excellence in Residency and Fellowship Program Honoree

Each month, one or more residents and/or fellows are selected for their exemplary service, and for embodying RUMC's commitment to fostering a collaborative culture that enhances patient care and professional excellence. Honorees are nominated by their colleagues and selected by the Office of Graduate Medical Education's Wellness Council.

This month's honoree is Ruth Mamo, MD.

Dr. Mamo is a PGY-2 in the Internal Medicine Department. Her hometown is Addis Ababa in Ethiopia. Dr. Mamo graduated medical school from Tikur Ambessa School of Medicine of Addis Ababa University.



This month's question:

What made you want to become a nurse?



Kevin Karteron, RN

"I like helping and taking care of people. I originally wanted to become an ENT, but my wife suggested I try nursing instead. I went to nursing school and absolutely loved it!"



Theresa Burzo, Nurse Extern and Surgical Tech

"I started off as a surgery tech and my sister is a nurse. She kept encouraging me to become a nurse and I wanted to be more one on one with patients."



Mary Diana Lauria, RN

"I've always been very empathetic to people and very spiritual by my faith, so I've always wanted to help people deal with their medical issues through my faith."



Arnel Aromin, RN

"I used to be an anesthesia tech at RUMC and my aunt was an OR nurse. She encouraged me to become a nurse so I went back to school and pursued my dreams."



Amelia Piccione, RN

"I decided to become a nurse because I really wanted to help people and make a difference. When I was younger some family members were sick and I felt helpless not knowing how to help them."



Diedre Innamorato, RN

"I knew from the third grade that I wanted to be a nurse. I always wanted to take care of people. I love talking to people, meeting people. I love everything about being a nurse."

May Observances

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

Month-Long:

ALS Awareness Month
Arthritis Awareness Month
Better Hearing and Speech Month
Better Sleep Month
Bladder Cancer Awareness Month
Borderline Personality Disorder Awareness Month
Brain Cancer Awareness Month
Cystic Fibrosis Awareness Month
Ehlers-Danlos Syndromes Awareness Month
Food Allergy Awareness Month
Global Employee Health and Fitness Month
Healthy Vision Month
Hepatitis Awareness Month
High Blood Pressure Awareness Month
Huntington's Disease Awareness Month
Lupus Awareness Month
Lyme Disease Awareness Month
Maternal Mental Health Month
Mental Health Awareness Month
National Asthma and Allergies Awareness Month
National Celiac Disease Awareness Month
National Melanoma/Skin Cancer Detection and Prevention Month
National Nurses Month
National Osteoporosis Awareness Month

National Physical Fitness and Sports Month
National Stroke Awareness Month
National Teen Pregnancy Prevention Month
National Teen Self-Esteem Month
National Women's Health Month
Necrotizing Fasciitis Awareness Month
Neurofibromatosis Awareness Month
Older Americans Month
Preeclampsia Awareness Month
Skin Cancer Awareness Month
Tourette's Awareness Month

Week-Long:

May 5-10: North American Occupational Safety and Health Week
May 6-12: National Nurses Week
May 9-15: National Stuttering Awareness Week
May 11-17: National Hospital Week
May 11-17: National Women's Health Week

Recognition Days:

May 2: International Scurvy Awareness Day
May 3: World Ankylosing Spondylitis Day
May 5: World Hand Hygiene Day
May 6: World Asthma Day

May 8: World Ovarian Cancer Day
May 10: National Lipid Day
May 10: World Lupus Day
May 12: International Awareness Day for Chronic Immunological and Neurological Diseases
May 12: International Nurses Day
May 12: ME/CFS and Fibromyalgia International Awareness Day
May 12: National Women's Checkup Day
May 15: Hyperemesis Gravidarum Awareness Day
May 17: World Hypertension Day
May 18: HIV Vaccine Awareness Day
May 19: Hepatitis Testing Day
May 19: National Asian and Pacific Islander HIV/AIDS Awareness Day
May 19: World IBD Day
May 20: World Autoimmune and Auto Inflammatory Arthritis Day
May 22: World Preeclampsia Day
May 24: World Schizophrenia Day
May 25: World Thyroid Day
May 28: National Senior Health and Fitness Day
May 29: World Digestive Health Day
May 30: World MS Day
May 30: National Heat Awareness Day
May 31: World No Tobacco Day

ARNIE O & RORY BEA

5K

RUN or WALK



This year's event kicked off with a Kids Dash. Over 30 children participated.



Over 200 walkers braved the wet weather for a good cause.



Runners prepare for the start of the race.



Melissa Kraker receives her trophy after finishing first in the women's division for a second straight year.



Jose Morales on his way to a first place finish in the men's division.



Among those taking part in this year's event was New York City Council Member Kamillah Hanks.