

Richmond University Medical Center

JUNE 2025 • RICHMOND UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER • WWW.RUMCSI.ORG

Richmond University Medical Center Certified as Advanced Thrombectomy Stroke Center



Richmond University Medical Center has achieved certification from both the American Stroke Association and The Joint Commission for its expertise and high-quality care performing thrombectomies for patients who have suffered a stroke. Their certification officially designates RUMC as an Advanced Thrombectomy Capable Stroke Center.

A thrombectomy is a minimally invasive procedure where a hair-thin catheter is inserted into a stroke victim to remove a blood clot from a vein or artery, restoring normal blood flow. The catheter is inserted through a small puncture site, usually in the neck, groin, or arm, and then navigated using X-ray imagery inside the vein or artery to the site of the clot. Once there, the catheter is equipped with devices that can grasp and remove the clot. The faster the procedure is performed, the better the chances of reducing disability, organ damage, and death.

"We are delighted that we have been awarded this designation, which demonstrates our neurointerventional team's commitment to providing the highest level of thrombectomy care available in coordination with our emergency department, neurology team, and critical care services," RUMC's Chief Medical Officer, Philip Otterbeck, MD, said. "In the context of a stroke, time is brain, and Richmond University Medical Center is committed to helping our stroke patients achieve the best outcomes and recovery possible."

To achieve certification, RUMC, which has provided healthcare services on Staten Island for over 120 years, underwent a rigorous, unannounced onsite review. During the visit, a team of Joint Commission reviewers evaluated compliance with numerous related certification standards, including program

management and patient care. The reviewers also conducted onsite observations and interviews. The Joint Commission standards are developed in consultation with health care experts and providers, measurement experts, and patients.

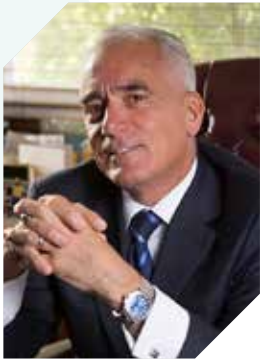
Richmond University Medical Center first launched its thrombectomy program in 2019. Even before the hospital began the thrombectomy sub-specialty program, RUMC was recognized as a leader in stroke care, earning numerous certifications and accreditations over the years from the American Heart Association, New York State Department of Health, and The Joint Commission.

RUMC President and Chief Executive Officer, Daniel J. Messina, PhD, FACHE, said "Achieving this certification for performing thrombectomies marks a significant milestone in our continuous commitment to delivering advanced stroke care. This recognition reflects the relentless dedication of our entire medical team and ensures that our patients have access to the highest standard of treatment when every minute counts."

Founded in 1951, The Joint Commission is the nation's oldest and largest standards-setting and accrediting body in healthcare. To earn and maintain The Gold Seal of Approval from The Joint Commission, an organization undergoes an on-site survey by a Joint Commission survey team at least every three years

The American Stroke Association was created in 1998 as a division of the American Heart Association and is recognized as the leader in the latest evidence-based information on stroke, post-stroke recovery, caregiver information, resources, and education for health care professionals.

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



Last month, I had the incredible honor of taking part in a deeply moving and meaningful tribute—one that touched the hearts of all who attended. On May 22, we gathered together to dedicate our brand-new EMS Lounge in memory of two extraordinary responders: Emergency Medical Technician Brian Demarest and Paramedic James Barghaan.

This powerful celebration took place just outside the new lounge, located within our James P. Molinaro Emergency Department. Family members, friends, and colleagues stood side by side as we unveiled a plaque bearing both of their names—a lasting tribute to two men whose lives were defined by compassion, bravery, and unwavering service.

A special thank you goes out to Dr. John Pepe for his generosity in helping fund this new space. Because of his support, our EMS professionals now have a place of their own—a place where they can rest, reflect, and recharge, with the memory of Brian and James ever-present.

Brian Demarest devoted 28 years of his life to helping others. Married to fellow first responder Danielle and proud father to their daughter Avery, Brian served in many agencies before finding his home here. He retired in November 2021 and sadly passed away just one month later.

James Barghaan was a proud member of our team for 29 years. A skilled paramedic and a vibrant personality, James was married

to Angela Ciocia—one of our most dedicated paramedics—for 25 years. He was named EMT of the Year in 1997, loved animals, fishing, and rode motorcycles since his teenage years. James passed away in December 2023.

We often speak of the “RUMC family,” and it’s not just a phrase—it’s a promise. Brian and James will forever be part of that promise, and their spirit will live on in the lounge that now bears their names. Every EMT and paramedic who walks through that door will know they are supported by more than their team—they are guided by guardian angels who once stood where they stand.

As poet Maya Angelou once wrote: “I’ve learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.” Brian and James made us feel safe, supported, and inspired. And that legacy will never fade.

To both families—thank you for allowing us to honor your loved ones. And to Brian and James—thank you for your service, your sacrifice, and the example you set for us all. May peace be with you.

Remember the Power of One — You Make A Difference!

Sincerely,

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



RUMC Celebrates National Nurses Month

In honor of May is National Nurses Month, Nursing Administration rolled out the red carpet at the beginning of

the month for our nurses as they arrived for their shifts. Specially prepared breakfast boxes were also provided on

May 5 for each nurse as a show of appreciation for their dedication and commitment to helping others.



Annual Patient Symposium Highlights Quality and Safety Improvements From Many Departments

On May 1, the 11th annual Patient Safety and Quality Improvement Symposium was held, showcasing the many improvements made in the areas of patient safety and quality service. Projects were submitted from several different departments, with winners selected in the categories of oral presentation and poster presentation.

Throughout the day, posters were on display throughout the hospital's main lobby for staff and visitors to view and meet the teams who submitted the projects for consideration. A panel of judges from different departments selected the following as this year's winners:



Representatives from the winning departments display with their projects selected by a panel of judges as winners for this year's symposium.

- ▶ **Improving Mental Health Processes, Workflows, and Responses:** Franhe Melean, MD, Mansi Ranasaria, MD, Murtaza Fatir, MD, Sarah Tedesco, MD, Hassan Bushra, MD, Dareji Nesaratnam, MS, Kiran Hashmi, MS, Jieun Ahn, MS, Kim Wagner, RN, Jean Gordon, RN, Johnathon LeBaron, MD, Inna Miroshnichenko, MD, Melissa Grageda, MD, Department of Pediatrics.

- ▶ **Transforming Emergency Department Efficiency: Tackling Inappropriate Admissions for Better Patient Outcomes:** Nkafu Bechem Ndemazie, MD, MPH, PhD, Gauvain Kankeu, MD, Merschelle Tindoy, MD, Arni Djunadi, MD, Namrata Shrestha, MD, Nancelle Ndema, MD, Nkeng Fouching, MD,

Marvel Changoh, MD, Abiramy Karunanathan, MD, Cyril Afuh, MD, Luc Sumo, MD, Vaithilingam Arulthasan, MD, MBA, Anum Humayun, MD, MBA, Jessie Saverimuttu, MD, PhD, Jay Nfonoyim, MD, Department of Internal Medicine.

- ▶ **Social Determinants of Health Affecting Thirty Day All-Cause Re-Visits in the Internal Medicine Department of Richmond University Medical Center (RUMC):** Nkafu Bechem Ndemazie, MD, MPH, PhD, Sabastain Forsah, MD, Gnana Kouyate, MD, Maria Relente-Santos, MD, Agbor Divine, MD, Ugwendum, Derek, MD, Ziteze Azeze, MD, Aung Nyan, MD, Victoria Sebho, MD, Bibi Razak, MD, Heba Maraie, MD, Jessie Saverimuttu, MD.

Former Chief Nurse Officer Rosemarie Stazzone Retires After Extraordinary Career



After nearly five decades in nursing, nursing administration, and hospital management, Rosemarie Stazzone, former Chief Operating Officer, Chief Nursing Officer, and Executive Vice President officially retired on May 9.

With a career that started in the 1970s, many of Rosemarie's friends and

colleagues joined her family and current RUMC staff to give her a heartfelt "clap out." On her way out, Rosemarie was presented with a Proclamation by Jasin Djokovic from the office of Staten Island Borough President Vito Fossella, proclaiming May 9, 2025, as Rosemarie Stazzone Day in the borough of Staten Island.



Jasin Djokovic from the office of Staten Island Borough President Vito Fossella presenting Rosemarie Stazzone with her proclamation.

RUMC Auxiliary Spreads Love to Newborns

Members of the Richmond University Medical Center Auxiliary donated over 100 new and handmade baby clothes

during its May meeting. An annual endeavor of love, the Auxiliary members purchase or make the clothing which is

then available to parents of newborns born at the hospital. RUMC welcomes nearly 3,000 newborns each year.



New baby clothing purchased by members of the RUMC Auxiliary.



From front to back: Kelly Reinhold, Director of Maternal Child Health; Senior Vice President and Chief Nurse Officer, Christine Mahoney; Auxiliary member Lydia Parker; Auxiliary President Sharon Mineo; and Auxiliary Vice President Lucille Forlenza.

Walking for a Good Cause



Team RUMC members Svetoslav Bardarov, MD, and family; Lung Nurse Navigator Nancy Rooney, Vincent Caruso, and Theresa Davis.



On May 17, Team RUMC participated in the 2025 Lung Force Walk in Lower Manhattan. Thousands attended the event which raises awareness for the importance of lung screening and lung cancer prevention. Team RUMC was among the top 10 teams that raised funds for the event, which is sponsored by the American Lung Association.

RUMC Provides Narcan Training and Kits for Students at Port Richmond High School



On May 7 and 9, counselors and staff from Richmond University Medical's Center's Department of Psychology and Behavioral Health Science trained over 200 students at Port Richmond High School in how to effectively administer Narcan, also known as Naloxone, a medication that is used to reverse the effects of a drug overdose. Each student also received their own Narcan kit to keep with them.

Port Richmond High School is located in a section of Staten Island's north shore that has a high rate of illegal opioid use and high number of overdoses due to the use of illegal drugs. The RUMC staff who conducted the trainings were from the hospital's Silberstein Clinic, and Center for Young Adults, which are both housed within RUMC's Center for Integrative Behavioral Medicine, located

in the Bloomfield section of Staten Island at 1130 South Avenue.

RUMC has generously received a grant to increase awareness of its substance use services including the provision of harm reduction services that include Naloxone (Narcan) Kits and Fentanyl and Xylazine testing strips.

Promoting SafeTY.net Programs for Youth and Young Adults

In recognition of May as Mental Health Awareness Month, the SafeTY.net Services team recently provided information about the program at the Staten Island Workforce1 Career Center, located at 120 Stuyvesant Place.

SafeTY.net is a comprehensive program for youth and young adults (16 to 24 years old) who are challenged by the transition from adolescence to adulthood, as well as those at risk of substance use. Services enable youth to achieve individualized goals centered on employment and career-building, educational advancements, community living, mental and physical health, and personal development. Participants work toward personalized goals in key areas such as employment, education, community living, health, and daily living skills.



Basilio Allen, Program Director of SafeTY.net Services; and Life Coach Anthony Incorvaia.

June Observances

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

Month-Long:

Alzheimer's and Brain Awareness Month
Aphasia Awareness Month
Cataract Awareness Month
Men's Health Month
Myasthenia Gravis Awareness Month
National Cytomegalovirus Awareness Month
National Migraine & Headache Awareness Month
National Safety Month
National Scoliosis Awareness Month
Pride Month
Professional Awareness Month
PTSD Awareness Month
Scleroderma Awareness Month

Week-Long:

June 1 to 7: National CPR and AED Awareness Week
June 9 to 15: Men's Health Week

June 22 to June 28: Helen Keller Deaf-Blind Awareness Week

June 23 to 29: World Continence Week

Recognition Days:

June 1: National Cancer Survivors Day
June 8: World Brain Tumor Day
June 13: Rare Chromosome Disorder Awareness Day
June 14: Family Health and Fitness Day
June 14: World Blood Donor Day
June 15: World Elder Abuse Awareness Day
June 18: Autistic Pride Day
June 19: World Sickle Cell Day
June 21: Global MND Awareness Day
June 25: World Vitiligo Day
June 26: International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking
June 27: National HIV Testing Day
June 27: National PTSD Awareness Day

Watch New Episodes of RUMC Vital Signs

EPISODE 25: HELP WITH HERNIAS

Over 200,000 people a year in the United States are diagnosed with a hernia, an often painful bulging in the stomach and abdominal area. In this episode, Vice Chair of Surgery, Alex Barkan, MD, discusses this common condition, its causes and potential complications if left untreated.



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

EPISODE 46: INNOVATIVE ONCOLOGY CARE: TAILORING TREATMENTS FOR STATEN ISLAND'S COMMUNITY

RUMC has been a leader in oncology for over 80 years, providing cutting-edge treatments, compassionate care, and a multidisciplinary approach tailored to the unique needs of Staten Island residents. In this episode, Victoria Forte, MD, Chief of the Division of Hematology-Oncology, Cancer Service Line Director, and Fellowship Program Director at RUMC, discusses how the hospital is transforming cancer treatment through advanced therapies, early detection, and comprehensive patient support.



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!

Jenna Peart — *RN*

Guinre Bagnon — *Nursing Assistant*

Minz Cao — *Project Manager*

Christopher Charles — *Nursing Assistant*

Peter DeCesare — *Respiratory Therapist*

Rebecca Dinguis — *Switchboard Operator*

Rebecca Domngo — *DRG Coordinator*

Margarita Garcia — *Receptionist*

James Garigliano — *RN*

Amya Grant — *Receptionist*

Leslie Griffith — *Director, HRIS/HRIT*

Lisa Holiday — *Switchboard Operator*

Dain Jose — *Food Service Worker*

Kasey Kenny — *Paramedic*

Maria Latrace-Wochna — *Asst. Dir of Nursing*

Atlant Maqellara — *Building Service Worker*

Muhammad Mirani — *Physical Therapist*

Sinem Ozen — *Social Worker LMHC L/P*

Georgetta Palmer — *Nursing Assistant*

Aniya Pyram — *Nursing Assistant*

Ludwig Roque — *RN*

Omer Saif — *Pathologist Assistant*

Nicholas Santarelli — *Building Service Worker*

William Sarnov — *Financial System Manager*

Santonio Shand — *Registrar*

Gina Velasquez — *RN*



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 Tiffany Nguyen, MD. Dr. Nguyen is a PGY-3 in the Pediatrics Department. Her hometown is Yorba Linda, California. Dr. Nguyen graduated medical school from St. George's University.



Jack Sipp

Golf • Tennis • Bocce

Outing to Benefit Richmond University Medical Center



This year's honorees Frank A. Oswald (left), and Marino Polisen, DO. Over 100 golfers hit the links at Richmond County Country Club.

Richmond University Medical Center Holds Annual Jack Sipp Outing

On May 19, Richmond University Medical Center hosted its annual Jack Sipp Golf, Tennis and Bocce Outing at the Richmond County Country Club. This year's event honored Frank A. Oswald, who received the John F. L. Sipp Distinguished Service Award, and Marino Polisen, DO, who was presented with the Stanley Stillwell, MD Memorial Award. Over 200 people hit the links, tennis and bocce courts as well as attended dinner at this year's event.

"This event is a celebration of community – of the people who devote their lives to making Staten Island a better, healthier place," President and Chief Executive

Officer, Daniel J. Messina, PhD, FACHE, said. "Frank Oswald and Marino Polisen represent the very best of what it means to serve with integrity, compassion, and commitment. We are honored to recognize their extraordinary contributions."

Mr. Oswald is managing partner of Togut, Segal & Segal LLP, a nationally recognized restructuring law firm. For over 35 years, Frank has dedicated his career to complex bankruptcy and restructuring matters, including many in the healthcare and nonprofit sectors. He also serves on the Richmond University Medical Center Foundation Board and is an Executive Committee Member of

Catholic Renewal, which supports food pantry programs across New York City.

Dr. Polisen is a lifelong Staten Islander and an OB/GYN with deep ties to Richmond University Medical Center. After beginning his career as a volunteer at the former St. Vincent's Hospital, he returned to RUMC in 2016 to serve as Director of Labor and Delivery. He is currently Program Director of the OB/GYN Residency Program, Vice Chairman of the Department of OB/GYN, and practices privately with the Richmond Health Network.



A perfect day was served up for a day of tennis.



Regina Boukhvalova from Northfield Bank was one of many on the bocce courts.