

CARE

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■ A NEW ERA OF BREAST CANCER PREVENTION AND CARE ON STATEN ISLAND

Dr. Tihesha Wilson Provides Individualized
Treatment in a New State-of-the-Art
Breast and Women's Center

PATIENT SUCCESS STORY

She Conquered Cancer and is Ready
for Another Marathon



Richmond University
Medical Center

A Message From the President & CEO



This past October over 150 people helped Richmond University Medical Center officially open our new Breast and Women's Center at the corner of Victory Boulevard and Clove Road in Sunnyside. The beauty of this center is that it is not just for people battling breast cancer. Whether you have breast pain, have found a lump, have been diagnosed with breast cancer, are coming in for your routine mammogram, or are experiencing any type of breast issue, this center is designed for you.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, breast cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death among women overall, and the leading cause of cancer death among Hispanic women. Every year in the United States about 237,000 cases of breast cancer are diagnosed in women and about 41,000 die from the disease. The risk of getting breast cancer goes up with age. In the United States, the average age when women are diagnosed with breast cancer is 61.

Men are not immune to breast cancer, which is why the services at the center are not just for women only. Each year 2,100 men will be diagnosed with breast cancer across the country, about 450 will die. Men who get breast cancer are diagnosed usually between 60 and 70 years old.

When you think about these statistics and think about the hope this new center will provide to so many people, you can understand why our entire staff at Richmond University Medical Center is so excited that this center is now open. Lives will be saved not by traveling off the island, but by staying right here on Staten Island at the corner of Victory Boulevard and Clove Road.

In this issue, you will learn more about our new Chief of Breast Surgery and director of our new center, Tihesha Wilson, MD, FACS. An experienced oncoplastic breast surgeon, who has practiced for more than 10 years, Dr. Wilson is able to surgically treat cancer while at the same time combining plastic surgery techniques to provide patients with better aesthetic outcomes and improved quality of life.

Dr. Wilson along with the Breast and Women's Center are just the latest examples of our continued commitment to providing Staten Island with the most advanced and innovative health care services. This past summer we opened our Center for Cancer Care at 1100 South Avenue and a new cardiopulmonary rehabilitation center on the ground floor of the residents' building behind the main hospital. As we enter 2019, we expect to break ground on our new 35,000 sq. ft. emergency department in early spring. Private treatment rooms, expanded trauma bays, a larger waiting area, new sections for pediatrics and intensive care will all be part of the future of emergency care at Richmond University Medical Center. The future is certainly bright.

Finally, on behalf of everyone at Richmond University Medical Center, I would like to wish happy holidays to everyone and a healthy 2019. May the blessings and joy of the holiday season be with you, your family and friends.

Wishing you all the best,

Daniel J. Messina, PhD, FACHE, LNHA
President & Chief Executive Officer

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

The Medical Center is a not-for-profit healthcare provider serving the diverse community of Staten Island and its neighbors. We provide quality patient-centered care through a full spectrum of emergent, acute, primary, behavioral health and medical services. We do this in an environment that promotes the highest satisfaction among patients, families, physicians and staff.

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EDITORIAL

Alex Lutz, Laura Gajda and Claire Regan

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The information contained within this magazine is not intended as a substitute for professional medical advice, for which your physician is your best choice.

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Start the conversation about prevention, warning signs and early detection.



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FOR DR. TIHESHA WILSON, EVERY PATIENT IS A PERSON FIRST

The soothing scent of lavender and the soft gurgle of a mountain stream fill the room as the lights are dimmed and images of forests, fields and waterfalls are projected on a screen.

Welcome to the Breast and Women's Center at 1161 Victory Blvd., where patient comfort is a priority and a spa-like atmosphere reduces the fear and stress most women face when undergoing a routine mammography.

Under the direction of Tihesha Wilson, MD, FACS, a specialist in oncoplastic breast surgery, the center provides evaluation and management of breast cancer and benign breast disease. Counseling, surveillance and genetic testing for high-risk breast cancer patients is also provided.

Dr. Wilson is highly skilled in minimally invasive diagnostic techniques with a focus on breast conservation surgery, skin- and nipple-sparing mastectomies.

When it comes to breast cancer, one treatment does not fit all, explains Dr. Wilson, who oversaw the design of the new center in Sunnyside at the corner of Clove Road and Victory Boulevard. The disease calls for integrated and holistic approaches that meet the unique medical and psychological needs of each patient.

▼ Healing is very individual and comes from many modalities. The world is big and there are many perspectives. ▲

"I'm a western surgeon, but I appreciate there are many modalities that are useful for patients," she adds. "There can be multiple paths to healing."

Those paths include non-conventional options like reiki and aromatherapy, which can supplement standard treatments, Dr. Wilson says.

She sees cancer treatment as a collaboration between doctor and patient.

"We discuss where we need to go and look for multiple ways to get there."

Her interest in alternative approaches has taken her to India, China and Japan – and to Scotland, where she studied with J. Michael Dixon, MD, a pioneer in oncoplastic surgical techniques at the Edinburgh Breast Unit of Western General Hospital, which treats over 800 breast cancers a year.

Oncoplastic breast conservation surgery adds an aesthetic approach by reshaping or rebuilding the breast to maintain a natural look and feel. This type of surgery not only removes the cancer, but is also designed to prevent excessive scarring.

The two surgeons first met at a conference in Miami.

"Tihesha was interested in oncoplastic breast surgery – something that is not widely used by most U.S. breast surgeons," Dr. Dixon recalls. "We got on well together and had similar views on how to optimize outcomes."

During two subsequent visits to Scotland, Dr. Wilson worked alongside Dr. Dixon,

observing his techniques and immersing herself in the operation of his clinics.

"Tihesha is a very quick learner and became skilled at a variety of oncoplastic breast procedures," Dr. Dixon affirms. "She has a very easy way with her. She is vivacious and engaging – which I believe is important in a breast surgeon. Tihesha is also very competent and has training and expertise that is not widely available in the U.S."

The two surgeons had a chance to collaborate again when Dr. Wilson was working at Valley Hospital in Ridgewood, N.J., and Dr. Dixon was pursuing a sabbatical at Yale University. He visited the hospital and gave several presentations to other members of the breast team.

Dr. Dixon hopes to visit Dr. Wilson at the Breast and Women's Center.

"Richmond University Medical Center is very lucky to have her," Dr. Dixon says. "She is a lovely, caring person and a dear friend to me. Tihesha is very smart and has a huge knowledge and understanding of breast diseases."

"I am certain Tihesha will do great things at Richmond University Medical Center," Dr. Dixon continues. "The women who are unfortunate enough to need her care are very fortunate to have Tihesha."





RUMC'S LATEST MILESTONE: A DEDICATED CENTER FOR BREAST HEALTH

Each year in the United States, about 237,000 cases of breast cancer are diagnosed in women and about 2,100 in men. The disease takes the lives of about 41,000 women and 450 men.

Staten Island women who receive the diagnosis can now count on state-of-the-art treatment at the new Breast and Women's Center, located at the corner of Victory Boulevard and Clove Road in Sunnyside.

"This is a jewel for Richmond University Medical Center and for the Staten Island community," said Rosemarie Stazzone, chief nurse officer and chief operating officer of the hospital, at a ribbon-cutting ceremony on Oct. 25. "It will impact and improve the lives of thousands of Staten Islanders."

Kathryn Krause Rooney, Esq., who chairs the hospital board, pointed out the center's prime location -- "a spot right in our own backyard" with easy access and ample parking. And she lauded

its architectural transformation from a Walgreen's store, led by Mark D. Lipton Associates.

"But the real key was getting Dr. Wilson," she told 150 guests gathered for the opening ceremony, praising the physician's "quiet competence and self-assuredness."



The Breast and Women's Center is located at 1161 Victory Blvd., at the corner of Victory Boulevard and Clove Road.

Tihesha Wilson, MD, FACS, a specialist in minimally invasive oncologic breast surgery, is director of the Breast and Women's Center and Richmond University Medical Center's new Chief of Breast Surgery. She brings strong credentials and a commitment to compassionate care.

A graduate of Rutgers University, Dr. Wilson received her medical degree from UMDNJ-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School in New Jersey and completed a general surgery residency at St. Luke's-Roosevelt Hospital Center in Manhattan.

In addition to a fellowship in advanced laparoscopic surgery, she completed a breast surgical oncology fellowship at Anne Arundel Medical Center in Annapolis, Md., and studied oncoplastic surgery with J. Michael Dixon, MD, a pioneer in oncoplastic surgical techniques, in Edinburgh, Scotland.

She practiced at Mercy Hospital in Miami, Fla., and at The Valley Hospital in Ridgewood, N.J., before joining RUMC earlier this fall.

"I bring to this center oncoplastic surgery, the marriage between cancer surgery and plastic surgery," Dr. Wilson explained to guests. "It leaves the woman feeling intact, whole, complete. It is my honor and privilege to be able to do that."

She said customer service is a top priority at the new center.

In the past, after receiving news of a



suspicious lesion, a woman had to navigate alone through next steps and overwhelming information. "She was left to figure it all out herself," Dr. Wilson said.

"No more," she announced. "From the very first touch of the door, we hold her hand. Someone is with her every step of the way to coordinate and facilitate." A dedicated nurse navigator at the center makes this possible.

"That's the level of service we are dedicated to providing" at the Breast and Women's Center, she added. "Everyone who comes through the door is greeted with a smile, kindness and compassion."

The center is spa-like in its design. Exam rooms are infused with aromatherapy and there is a coffee bar for patients.

"This is the result of a tremendous team effort," said Daniel Messina, Ph.D.,

FACHE, President and CEO of the hospital as he thanked the staff. "With this center, we are saving lives and extending our reach" and Staten Islanders will no longer need to travel to Manhattan or New Jersey for comprehensive breast care."

The Breast and Women's Center provides routine mammograms and ultrasounds and features two GE 3-D mammography machines. It is part of the Krishna Urs Medical Pavilion, named for the orthopedic surgeon whose support made the center possible.

"It is a satisfying legacy to be able to improve the health of Staten Island," Dr. Urs said.

Breast and Women's Center
1161 Victory Blvd.
Staten Island NY 10301
Phone 718-818-1161



▲ I bring to this center oncoplastic surgery, the marriage between cancer surgery and plastic surgery. ▲

– Tihesha Wilson, MD, FACS

Dr. Tihesha Wilson, director of the Breast and Women's Center, designed the spa-like atmosphere that reduces fear and stress for patients.

NEWS BRIEFS

GRATEFUL GRANDMOTHER

The Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) received a \$5,000 donation from Staten Island Elks Lodge # 841 in Eltingville, inspired by lifesaving care provided to the grandson of one of its members.

Syris Clarke weighed only 2 pounds, 14 ounces when he was born over two months premature on March 2, 2014. He would remain in the NICU for two months under the care and watchful eye of the medical center's highly trained physicians and nurses.

Today, Syris is a thriving preschooler. In gratitude to the NICU staff, his grandmother organized a fundraiser through her Staten Island Elks Lodge that generated \$5,000. This generous gift will be used to support the daily operations of the NICU so the same lifesaving care Syris received can be provided to others.



Puerto Rico Governor Ricardo Rossello, right, joins RUMC President and CEO Daniel J. Messina during a relief visit for Hurricane Maria victims.

HELP FOR HURRICANE VICTIMS

Richmond University Medical Center President and CEO Daniel J. Messina, Ph.D., FACHE recently joined a delegation of health care professionals from the New York City area to deliver greatly needed medical supplies and equipment to community health care facilities still recovering from Hurricane Maria.



RUMC President and CEO Daniel J. Messina and members of the NICU staff accept a \$5,000 donation from Elks Lodge 841.

The visit, which also included a welcome reception from the governor of Puerto Rico, was sponsored by the Greater New York Hospital Association and the Afya Foundation. Messina and the delegation were in Puerto Rico from November 7 to 10.

The delegation toured two urgent care centers, a mental health facility and a pharmacy located in the village of Hatillo, which is about 90 miles outside of San Juan. The facilities are still recovering from Hurricane Maria, which hit Puerto Rico in September 2017.

The visit allowed the group to see current health care needs, and the challenges medical facilities are still facing as the recovery process continues.

"It was amazing to see firsthand the passion displayed by the people of Puerto Rico and their commitment to helping one another recover from Hurricane Maria," Messina said. "Their appreciation for everything that people are providing them to help them get back on their feet is overwhelming."

INFORMATION AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

A new app for mobile devices is putting the services of Richmond University Medical Center at the community's fingertips.

The app allows for easy access to all of the medical center's services. You can scroll through departments, find a physician, chat with medical staff through Patient Portal, pay a bill or locate a medical center affiliated facility.

It is available through the Apple App Store and Google Play.

PERINATAL CARE RECOGNIZED

Richmond University Medical Center, the only hospital on Staten Island designated as "Baby Friendly" by the World Health Organization (WHO) and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), has earned Perinatal Care Re-Certification from The Joint Commission.

The certification program recognizes hospitals that are committed to achieving integrated, coordinated and patient-centered care for mothers and their newborns.

"Richmond University Medical Center cares for over 3,000 newborns annually," said medical center President and CEO Daniel J. Messina, Ph.D., FACHE. "We register one of the highest infant survival rates in New York City with a survival rate of 997.2 out of 1,000 births, saving babies weighing as little as 1.5 pounds. We are delighted to receive perinatal care re-certification from The Joint Commission."

The medical center underwent a rigorous two-day onsite review in September to assess its compliance with certification standards. It included interviews with staff and patients, auditing of charts and records, review of policies and procedures addressing risks to mothers and newborns, and quality practices in place for early identification of high-risk pregnancies and births.

WEIGHT LOSS SURGERY

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Alex Barkan, MD, MBA, FACS, FASMBS
Chief of Bariatric Surgery



"I just wanted to be healthy. I wanted to guarantee a spot for me in my children's future." – Kristen, actual patient of Dr. Alex Barkan



KELLY MORRIS-CACERES

Kelly Morris-Caceres remembers the first time she looked in the mirror and noticed some swelling in her stomach area. She shrugged it off as weight gain that often accompanies menopause and put in more time at the gym to try to work it off.

But the swelling progressed, and her self-esteem plummeted.

“I put blankets over the mirror so I wouldn’t have to look at myself,” she recalls. “I had always struggled with weight.”

Even while working two jobs and caring for two pre-teen daughters, Kelly made sure she went to the gym twice a day. But her weight did not budge and her mid-section continued to expand.

A friend suggested she change gynecologists and make an appointment with Inna Tubman, MD.

“As soon as Dr. Tubman saw me, she sent me to the ER” at Richmond University Medical Center. “She visited me there and was very adamant that I be admitted.”

Tests determined the swelling was ascites, or fluid in the peritoneal cavity, and she was diagnosed with ovarian cancer and a benign tumor on her appendix. Three days after being admitted to the hospital on March 12, 2018, Kelly underwent surgery.

“They didn’t know if it was too late” or how far the cancer had progressed.

Kelly, who turned 50 during her hospital stay, says faith in God and in her surgeon, Eli Serur, MD, shepherded her through the ordeal.

The surgery was a success and she was relieved to learn from her oncologist, Thomas Forlenza, MD, that chemotherapy was not needed. Now, less than a year later, she is even more surprised to look back at how quickly her recovery went.

“Dr. Serur was a life-saver,” Kelly says. “His hands work miracles.”

She also recalls the personalized, compassionate care she received from the hospital staff.

in Brooklyn on Sept. 8 – just six months post-surgery.

The day after the T.E.A.L. event, she ran the Fifth Avenue Mile for ovarian cancer awareness, and dedicated her mile to Dr. Serur.

She is eager to spread the word about the disease, which caught her off-guard.

“It’s a silent cancer and we need to talk about it,” she affirms.

At home in West Brighton, where she lives with her husband of 14 years, Vicente, and daughters, Marina, 13, and Georgia, 10, Kelly is staying fit and looking ahead.

“My goal is to qualify for the 2020 New York City Marathon,” she says with determination.

No doubt she’ll be a contender.



“As I was being wheeled to my room from the ER, and reality about what lay ahead was just beginning to hit me, I remember a nurse named Lana took the time to ask, ‘How do you like to be tucked in?’”

These days, Kelly is busy living life to the fullest – and raising awareness about the cancer she conquered. She is an active member of T.E.A.L., or Tell Every Amazing Lady About Ovarian Cancer, and participated in the organization’s walk/run



GALA GUESTS ARE TREATED TO A NEW ORLEANS THEME

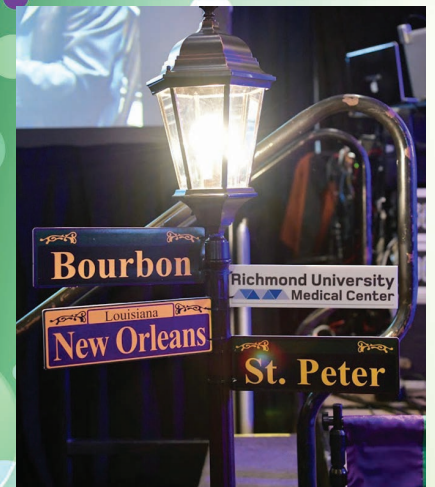
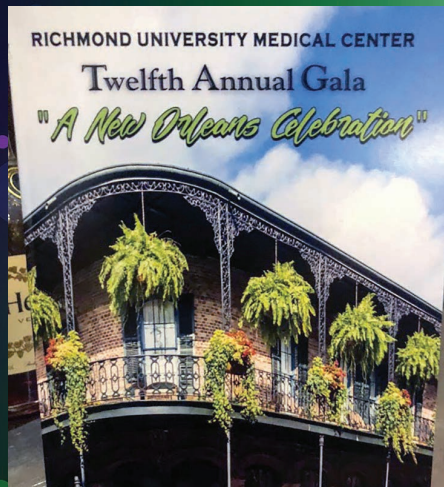
Close to 600 supporters enjoyed a New Orleans theme during Richmond University Medical Center's 12th annual gala, held Nov. 3 at the Hilton Garden Inn, Bloomfield.

"The gala is an opportunity to reflect on successes of the past year and honor the people who have helped our hospital continue to provide life-saving services to the community," said President and CEO Daniel J. Messina, Ph.D., FACHE.

Honorees were John and Debra Santora and the cardiac physicians of Richmond University Medical Center.

Gala committee members recreated The Big Easy with jambalaya, a stilt walker and a robotic fortune teller named Zoltar. Each guest received a Mardi Gras mask.

The evening also included photos and videos highlighting the hospital's rich history and previews of the new \$40 million emergency department. Construction on the state-of-the-art 35,000-square-foot ED is scheduled to begin in spring 2019.



YOUR DOCTOR...ON YOUR TIME.

Richmond University Medical Center

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RICHMOND UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER BEGINS CANCER AWARENESS PIN CAMPAIGN

Lapel Pins Available to Raise Awareness, Remember Those Lost to Cancer

Every year millions of people are diagnosed with cancer throughout the United States. As researchers and doctors continue to work to find better treatment options, Richmond University Medical Center is offering colored lapel pins to raise awareness for cancer patients, their loved ones, and anyone who might be affected by cancer now and in the future.

The pins are designed to represent some of the most common types of cancer and can be ordered on line at no cost. The pins are a great way to start the conversation about prevention, warning signs and early detection. They also provide an opportunity to talk to friends, family, and coworkers about risk factors, and urge them to consult a doctor about cancer screenings.

The following pins are available:

- ▶ **Breast Cancer:** Pink
- ▶ **Cervix/Ovarian Cancer:** Teal
- ▶ **Colon Cancer:** Navy Blue
- ▶ **Childhood Cancers:** Yellow
- ▶ **Leukemia:** Orange
- ▶ **Lymphoma:** Green
- ▶ **Lung Cancer:** White
- ▶ **Melanoma:** Black
- ▶ **Prostate Cancer:** Light Blue
- ▶ **All Cancers:** Purple

“Cancer can affect anyone and does not discriminate based on ethnicity, age, gender, income or religion. Wearing a pin will not cure cancer, but it will raise awareness and hopefully start conversations that can lead to screenings. Early detection can save lives,” said medical center President and CEO Daniel J. Messina, Ph.D., FACHE.

To order your pin, visit www.rumcsi.org/cancerawarenesscampaign and complete the online form. Pins will be mailed and are available while supplies last.



With Philip Otterbeck, MD,
Chief of the Endocrinology
Division

Healthy Living Tips

ENJOY THE HOLIDAYS WITHOUT GAINING WEIGHT

Americans gain an average of one to two pounds during the holidays. While this may not seem dramatic, research shows it adds up over the years. Luckily, there are ways to avoid holiday weight gain. Here are five tips from the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.

Tip No. 1: Don't skip meals

Saving your appetite for a big holiday party or feast? Don't. Skipping meals during the day may result in overeating. It is especially important to have breakfast, as research shows that those who eat this important morning meal tend to consume fewer calories throughout the day. Include lots of fiber by eating fruits, vegetables and whole grains. Fiber-rich foods are high in volume and will satisfy hunger, but are lower in calories.

Tip No. 2: Eat small portions

Holiday meals tend to be large, buffet-style and include second and third helpings. While one might not eat an entire cake, a common mistake is eating large portions of foods that are perceived as healthy. It's important to include nutrient-rich foods in your diet, but also remember that these foods have calories as well and should be eaten in moderation.

Tip No. 3: Pick a strategy to avoid overeating — and use it!

There are many strategies to help you avoid overeating. Using a smaller plate, for instance, allows you to put less food on your plate and encourages proper portion sizes. Also, start by filling your plate with vegetables and salad before going to the entrées and desserts. Eating a salad before your meal can help you eat fewer calories overall. Eat slowly and savor every bite, and before you go back for seconds, wait 10 minutes to see if you really still are hungry.

Tip No. 4: Keep moving

Finally, after dinner, get some physical activity. This is a great time to go for a walk and catch up with family members, or play catch or a game of basketball with the kids.

Tip No. 5: Visit with a registered dietitian nutritionist

Need help figuring out how to politely refuse Aunt Sally's push to fill your plate again? How about ways to stick with your personal lifestyle goals? For more information on eating well, contact a registered dietitian nutritionist in your area.

For more information, visit www.eatright.org.

VITAL

OUR CAMPAIGN TO TRANSFORM
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