

CARE

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INSIDE

A GUIDE TO THE NEW HON. JAMES P. MOLINARO EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT

Richmond University
Medical Center

A Message from the President & CEO



I am pleased to say our amazing new state-of-the-art Emergency Department was officially unveiled on October 25 with all the pomp and circumstance befitting this world class emergency trauma center. To our Board of Trustees, architects, engineers, elected officials, regulatory officials, and construction crews, thank you for this gift that will save lives for many generations to come.

Thanks to support from our donors, collaboration with our elected officials, and a leadership team that worked tirelessly behind the scenes, the James P. Molinaro Emergency Department is the centerpiece of over \$250 million in capital improvements that continue to unfold at Richmond University Medical Center. We are honored the new Emergency Department bears the name of James P. Molinaro. He is a highly regarded hospital trustee, our former borough president and a dedicated friend of Richmond University Medical Center.

In a time when health equity and access to quality care is top of mind across our country, our new ED is a symbol of our hospital's continuing commitment to being guardians of our community's health and well-being. This Emergency Department could not come at a more critical time for our community. According to recent city data, Staten Island residents experience more health challenges than their neighbors citywide and nationally, facing more health risk factors and higher mortality rates due to chronic disease. More than 1 in 5 adult Medicare beneficiaries living on Staten Island have six or more chronic health conditions. Accidental overdose deaths on Staten Island have increased by nearly 23% since 2019 and substance use is on the rise, especially among our young people. Staten Island has historically had a higher rate of death due to heart disease, and has a higher cancer incidence rate than the rest of the nation. We also still continue help those in need of advanced care because of COVID-19.

Our RUMC family has the expertise, technology, and state-of-the-art facilities to address all of these issues that affect each and every neighborhood in our borough. Our new Emergency Department is a beacon of hope to everyone on Staten Island. It is a shining symbol that the most advanced, evidence based care, and state-of-the-art technology are here, right in their backyard. Richmond University Medical Center has served Staten Island for nearly 120 years. It will continue to do so for many more years to come.

In this issue of CARE Magazine, we have provided you with an in-depth guide to your new Emergency Department. You will have an opportunity to read about its features, specialized units, and hear from the physicians and medical professionals who stand ready to care for you and your family. We are honored to have your trust. Thank you for your support and dedication as we continue to add to our storied history!

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

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Editorial

**ALEX LUTZ, MEREDITH GASKINS &
CLAIRE REGAN**

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Richmond University Medical Center Unveils New State-of-the-Art Emergency Department



James P. Molinaro officially opens RUMC's new Emergency Department that bears his name.

Richmond University Medical Center welcomed community leaders, healthcare professionals and members of the community as the hospital officially unveiled Staten Island's newest Emergency Department on October 25.



RUMC President and CEO, Daniel J. Messina, PhD, FACHE, addresses guests who attended the ribbon cutting ceremony.

"This Emergency Department is a symbol of our hospital's continuing commitment to being guardians of our community's health and well-being," President and Chief Executive Officer Daniel J. Messina, PhD, FACHE, said. "It is our promise that everyone in need of care will have continuous access to the most advanced evidence-based

emergent, life-saving services; and it is our pledge to provide the highest quality care consistently to each and every patient who comes through our doors. And what's unique about this new world-class facility is that our exceptional emergency medicine staff will now be teamed up with a world-class academic partner, Mount Sinai Health System."

The new Emergency Department is named in honor of former three-term borough president, James P. Molinaro, who served in government for over 40 years and recently retired from the RUMC Board of Trustees after serving for 15 years.

Among the over 300 people who attended the ceremony was New York City Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services, Anne Williams-Isom. "For the child that falls off their bike and needs immediate help - you'll be here for them; for the mom or dad that needs care after a potential heart-attack - you'll be here for them; for that person that may have experienced one of the most heartbreaking circumstances in life, a sexual assault - you'll be here for them. In short, RUMC is a safe haven and a cornerstone of care for residents here on Staten Island

and all New Yorkers," she said.

The new 35,000 square-foot Emergency Department features a world class trauma section and urgent care areas, and dedicated units for pediatrics, behavioral health, cardiac/stroke emergencies, sexual assault victims, and more. The new Emergency Department also has increased ambulance bays and a larger patient drop off area at its front entrance. Throughout the new Emergency Department, patients will receive care from experienced physicians and medical personnel assigned to Richmond University Medical Center and from world renowned Mount Sinai Health System.



Over 300 people, including many elected officials and community leaders from across Staten Island, attended the ribbon-cutting ceremony.

A New Era of Healthcare Arrives

Emergency Medicine

**Richmond University
Medical Center**

In Affiliation with Mount Sinai Health System



The structure rises majestically behind the main hospital building, its steel and glass frame glistening in sharp angles against the sky. Richmond University Medical Center's new Emergency Department (ED), a multi-story state-of-the-art addition with more than twice the space of its predecessor and a host of patient amenities, is a testament to the hospital's commitment to the community.

The centerpiece of a six-year, \$250 million historic expansion project, the ED occupies the ground level of a new pavilion, offering private trauma bays and treatment rooms and comprehensive specialty areas for pediatrics and urgent care. Each exam room and treatment bay has double headwalls, enabling RUMC to double the ED's capacity in the event of a patient surge.

It replaces an aging and undersized Emergency Department built in 1978, when Staten Island's population was 25 percent smaller. For designers and hospital leaders, ushering in a new era of critical care while maintaining RUMC's high standards of treatment was the expansion project's top priority.

"It's about expediting care and enhancing the patient experience," summarized Johnathan LeBaron, DO, chair of emergency medicine. "And it's about providing privacy and dignity to each and every patient in their time of need with the latest in critical care technology." RUMC is an American College of

Surgeons (ACS) and New York State Department of Health designated Level I Adult Trauma and Level II Pediatric Trauma Center. This designation means RUMC has trained medical staff, nurses, equipment, and protocols in place to treat all adult and pediatric patients in need of emergency care. RUMC is also a nationally recognized stroke center, Staten Island's only provider of inpatient behavioral health services



for adolescents, and the borough's only New York State Department of Health certified Sexual Assault Forensic Examiner (SAFE) Center of Excellence. RUMC was also recently recognized as a High Performing Hospital by US News and World Report for its expertise in treating COPD, heart failure and kidney failure. RUMC's Emergency Department has been at the epicenter of the COVID-19 pandemic, caring for more than 11,000 COVID-positive patients since the pandemic began in 2020.

EASILY ACCESSIBLE

The patient-friendly ED experience for walk-ins begins on arrival at the main entrance, now easily accessible from Castleton Avenue with an adjacent parking lot nearby.

Patients take a seat in the spacious waiting area before moving into triage and to one of three private trauma bays, fully equipped and ready for rapid assessment and treatment. The former ED had only one trauma bay.

New ultrasound and airway equipment in the ED facilitates surgical intervention and other life-saving measures, Dr. LeBaron said. "It is a much better space for a high volume of patients and the care teams assigned to treat them," he added.

Along the way, family members remain close to their patient in designated zones with comfortable seating, where they can monitor the situation and stay informed.

"When you care for a patient, you care for the entire family," emphasized Francesco Rotatori, MD, chief of cardiology. "As physicians, we know the best recoveries happen when a patient's family is by their side."

With the Surgical Department located directly above the ED, critically ill patients will be whisked by elevator to the second-floor surgical suites. The proximity of 10 new operating rooms on the second level will cut down on travel time from the ED in life-threatening situations. "Turnaround time will be improved," Dr. LeBaron said. "Here, every minute matters."



Meet the Man at the Helm of Emergency Medicine



JOHNATHON LEBARON, DO,
Chair for the Department of
Emergency Medicine

To say Johnathon LeBaron, DO, works well under pressure is an understatement.

As chair of emergency medicine at Richmond University Medical Center, he makes split-second judgment calls with his team about conditions ranging from stings to seizures, stabilizing patients as they hover between life and death.

“I’ve always wanted to have an impact on people’s lives,” he shares with characteristic humility. “Emergency medicine offers the best chance to have the most direct impact on patients.”

Dr. LeBaron started preparing for a career in medicine as an undergraduate at the University of Connecticut, where in 2008 he earned a bachelor of science degree in physio-neuro biology and molecular and cellular biology, with a minor in chemistry.

He received a doctoral degree from the UMDNJ School of Osteopathic

Medicine, and completed a residency in emergency medicine and a fellowship in emergency medicine administration at New York-Presbyterian, Queens.

The Connecticut native is currently studying for a master of business administration degree from the UMass Amherst Isenberg School of Management, and is an assistant professor of emergency medicine at the Icahn School of Emergency Medicine at Mount Sinai. Dr. LeBaron joined RUMC in November 2020, when the hospital’s historic expansion project was underway. His guidance was invaluable as the new Emergency Department neared completion.

The pandemic added an extra challenge for the new ED director, increasing the annual number of patients treated from over 60,000 to much higher numbers.

“Patients come to us in their time of need, when they have no one else to turn to” while facing a medical emergency, he explains with compassion. The new Emergency Department, “provides the privacy and dignity they deserve.”

More room to accommodate care givers, family members and life-saving equipment benefits all ED patients, Dr. LeBaron points out.

He appreciates the opportunity to contribute to the success of a hospital so firmly planted in the community it has served for nearly 120 years. “I feel blessed,” he says succinctly.

RUMC, Mount Sinai Health System Expand Affiliation to Include Emergency Care

Richmond University Medical Center’s new Emergency Department is strengthened by a partnership with the Mount Sinai Health System, offering access to some of New York City’s most distinguished physicians.

The two healthcare organizations are working together clinically and academically to provide elite trauma services to the Staten Island community.

A range of physicians, physician assistants, specialists and other medical personnel is enhancing the state-of-the-art RUMC Emergency Department, which has more than doubled in size to 35,000 square feet in a new two-story pavilion connected to the hospital.

“We are delighted to further expand and enhance our affiliation with Mount Sinai Health System,” said Daniel J. Messina, PhD, FACHE, president and chief executive officer of RUMC.

“Adding Mount Sinai’s emergency medicine expertise with our own team of experienced professionals at RUMC provides our community with expanded access to outstanding healthcare services available in the New York metropolitan area in a setting that’s close to home. This is an exciting time for RUMC and the residents of Staten Island.”

The partnership between the two providers also extends admitting privileges at RUMC to Mount Sinai medical specialists. It offers RUMC physicians academic appointments with opportunities for continued training and education, as well as collaboration with specialist teams for accurate diagnosis and treatment options for patients. The Mount Sinai Health System is one of the largest academic medical systems in the New York metropolitan area, with more than 43,000 employees working across eight hospitals, over 400 outpatient practices, nearly 300 labs, a school of nursing, and a leading school of medicine and graduate education.

“It’s our goal to use our resources as a large provider to offer the people of Staten Island the very best in health care,” said Brendan G. Carr, MD, MS, system chair of emergency medicine at Icahn School of Medicine and the Mount Sinai Health System.

From Broken Bones to Heart Attacks, Cutting-Edge Care with Compassion



As a Level I Adult, Level II Pediatric Trauma Center, Richmond University Medical Center is equipped to handle any medical emergency possible. Each year nearly 60,000 people receive care for acute and chronic conditions requiring the most advanced care available. RUMC's new Emergency Department features larger triage and trauma units to improve patient flow and increase immediate access to care for situations where every second counts.

"The new ED allows us to continue providing that same cutting edge care in a brand new state-of-the-art environment that matches the level of quality and service we provide

every day to our patients," Johnathon LeBaron, DO, chair of Emergency Medicine, said with conviction. "It is a physical representation — a symbol — of the advanced care that the people of Staten Island deserve and should expect when they are faced with a medical emergency."

Triage

The new ED's Triage Unit, the first stop for patients not arriving by ambulance, features partitioned treatment bays, reclining chairs, and extra room for family members to wait with loved ones while their condition is assessed.

Trauma

At 958 square feet, the main trauma unit provides adequate space for

medical personnel to examine patients and immediately administer life-saving care as needed. Enhanced lighting fixtures, rotating medical equipment stations, and additional state-of-the-art equipment are just some of the features within the unit.

The unit is purposely located adjacent to the ED's ambulance receiving bay and across from new elevators that can take patients from the trauma unit to new surgical suites located directly above the Emergency Department. The unit also features a shower area where patients exposed to chemical, biological or other agents can be decontaminated without affecting the integrity of the entire Emergency Department.

State-Of-The-Art Equipment Enhances Care for Stroke and Cardiac Patients



(l-r) Allan Perel, MD, Chief of Neurology, and Francesco Rotatori, MD, Chief of Cardiology

When it comes to stroke and cardiac issues, rapid assessment and treatment are critical, physicians stress.

A stroke occurs when blood flow to a region of the brain is interrupted, preventing it from getting enough oxygen, explained Allan Perel, MD, chief of neurology at Richmond University Medical Center.

The blockage can be treated with timely administration of tissue plasminogen activator (tPA), a drug given intravenously within three hours of onset to break up a clot so blood flow can return to normal.

When the situation calls for a thrombectomy, larger treatment rooms in RUMC's new Emergency Department make it easier for doctors to perform this innovative surgical procedure, Dr. Perel pointed out.

To assist with stroke diagnosis, RUMC will soon offer biplane imaging, one of the most advanced forms of

interventional medical technology available in healthcare. Two-dimensional and three-dimensional capabilities allow the neuroradiologist to view the brain, arteries and spine with one single injection of dye.

Enhancements in the ED also allow family members to stay with their loved ones to observe them during treatment and recovery.

"They can sit and be involved with the patient," Dr. Perel said.

Every minute counts when treating a stroke, which is why neurologists list the warning signs with the acronym F.A.S.T. – face drooping, arm weakness, speech difficulty and time to call 9-1-1. Patients can recover from strokes over time, Dr. Perel confirms.

SEAMLESS MONITORING

The new Emergency Department also offers a seamless monitoring system that enhances cardiac care, said Francesco Rotatori, MD, chief of cardiology at RUMC.

State-of-the-art telemetry is more accurate and can store data for each patient that transitions from the ED to the catheterization lab for further testing and treatment.

"This makes it easier to retrieve information. The new monitoring system is a game-changer," especially for emergency intervention, said Dr. Rotatori, who has been affiliated with RUMC since 2007.

Space in the former Emergency Department, built in 1978, was restricted, the cardiology chair pointed out. The new ED offers larger stations for emergency procedures including cardioversion, which uses quick, low-energy shocks to restore a regular heart rhythm for patients with irregular heartbeats, or arrhythmias.

"The bottom line is that the new ED enhances the top-notch care we already provide to our patients," Dr. Rotatori said.

Emergency Medicine

Richmond University Medical Center

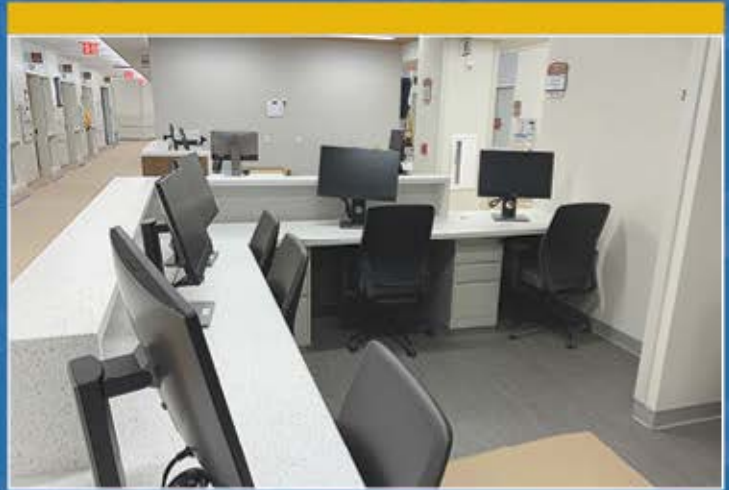
In Affiliation with Mount Sinai Health System

“This Emergency Department is a symbol of our hospital’s continuing commitment to being guardians of our community’s health and well-being.”

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



- Reception and main lobby
- Patient intake and discharge
- Elevators and stairwells
- Fast Track treatment area
- Pediatrics
- Main ED (exam rooms, trauma care, ambulance entrance, SAFE rooms)
- Administrative and staff support offices
- Imaging services
- Mechanical support space



The New Emergency Department Features an Enhanced Specialty Area for Pediatrics



Even the youngest patients deserve privacy when experiencing a medical crisis. The enhanced specialty area for pediatrics is adjacent to the main ED area, but with restricted access and privacy glass in each treatment bay - and room for family members.

The pediatric-friendly zone inside RUMC's new Emergency Department features six treatment rooms, at 120 square feet each, with televisions and visitor chairs for family members. Bright and cheerful wall coverings in

primary colors make young patients of all ages feel welcome. Private bathrooms are available across the hall.

"The pediatrics unit is decorated appropriately to make young patients of all ages, from toddlers to teens, feel welcome, safe, and comfortable as they receive treatment," Johnathon LeBaron, DO, chair of Emergency Medicine, pointed out.

"As a recipient of the Gold Seal of Approval from the Joint Commission

for patient safety and quality, parents can be assured that their children are in the very best hands, period," RUMC President and Chief Executive Officer, Daniel J. Messina, PhD, FACHE, said. "Our board certified pediatricians, specialists, and pediatric nurses treat children with congenital, acute, and chronic conditions, providing the patient-focused, nurturing care that can only come from proven experience."



For Sexual Assault Victims, Specialized Care with Privacy

Since 2008, Richmond University Medical Center has offered highly individualized and compassionate care to sexual assault victims as Staten Island's only S.A.F.E. (Sexual Assault Forensic Examiner) Center of Excellence.



That specialized care has been enhanced with a dedicated suite as part of RUMC's new Emergency Department (ED), guaranteeing the privacy and safety assault victims need and deserve.

After disclosing their injuries during triage, patients are escorted immediately to the S.A.F.E. suite, located adjacent to the ED with access to ED physicians, but with a separate entrance. The suite includes an interview



room, an adjoining examination room and a private bathroom with shower.

"The ambience says a lot," confirms Isangozi (Isa) Shoneyin, RN, MSN WHNP, forensic nurse coordinator. "It's patient-centric. It's transformative."

RUMC's team of state-certified forensic nurses follows a patient-centered approach to help restore a sense of control and personal safety.

"We let them take charge of their care," Shoneyin explains. "It's important to



return control to patients" after the trauma of a sexual assault, she adds.

Treatment can include a comprehensive examination with evidence collection, an accurate documentation of injuries, and the administering of pregnancy, STD and HIV prevention medication. The exam room features a new colposcope, a lighted magnifying instrument used to check the cervix, vagina and vulva.

For the first three quarters of 2022, RUMC treated 59 victims of sexual assault, reports Shoneyin, who has been a S.A.F.E. nurse at the hospital for 14 years.

Follow-up care is as important as emergency treatment for assault patients. The S.A.F.E. team makes after-care appointments, offers referrals for additional supportive services and stays in touch with patients as they continue to recover. They are also available to testify in court if the patient chooses to prosecute.

"We are always concerned about psychiatric outcomes," Shoneyin stresses.

An ED Designed with the Patient in Mind

A Welcoming Front Reception Lobby: The expanded waiting area comfortably accommodates walk-in patients and their family members with vending machines, water fountains and designated restrooms with baby-changing stations.



Specially Designed Bariatric Treatment Room: At 243 square feet, this room offers a larger private bathroom and a larger bed for patients with obesity-related conditions.



An Expanded Ambulance Bay: The new RUMC Emergency Department provides parking for 11 emergency vehicles on the north side of the pavilion.



Larger Nursing Stations: Multiple nursing stations are positioned for closer patient monitoring and are larger than current stations in the ED to provide more space for medical personnel.



Multiple Isolation Rooms: Designed to control the spread of chemicals or contagious illnesses a patient may have been exposed to, these rooms contain decontamination showers and are located away from main treatment areas.



Patient Friendly Discharge Area: Multiple workstations are set up in a dedicated section of the ED close to the main entrance to speed up the discharge process and get patients home quicker after receiving care.



Patient Parking and Amenities: Parking space has been set aside adjacent to the front entrance of the new ED and new bike racks are located in several locations.



Expediting Care and Enhancing the Patient Experience

Capital Projects Continue Through 2024

Richmond University Medical Center is in the midst of over \$250 million in capital improvements and expansion projects. The new Emergency Department is the centerpiece of these projects that will provide the community with access to high quality healthcare services for generations to come.

Medical Intensive Care Unit (Opened August of 2022): The expanded unit now features 14 patient rooms, including four negative pressure isolations rooms. The unit also includes multiple nurse stations, observation cubicles and double headwalls enabling the unit to expand from 14 beds to 28 in the event of a patient surge.



Co-Gen (On-line in 2023): A new on-site cogeneration power plant will allow Richmond University Medical Center to create its own power, enabling the hospital to remain fully functional in the event of a natural disaster or other disruptive situation. Construction of the plant began in 2020 in a repurposed building at the back of the hospital campus. The engines – 2 by 1.5 megawatt turbines – are built by Rolls Royce and gas fired. Cogeneration is the simultaneous generation of electrical energy and usable heat from a single primary energy source. The cogeneration process can increase overall energy efficiency, lower operational costs and boost self-sufficiency while reducing greenhouse gas emissions and pollutants.



New Surgical Department (Projected Mid-2023): The upgraded Surgical Department features 10 new world class, fully equipped surgical suites located directly above the new Emergency Department.



Mother/Baby Unit Phase 1 (In progress): All existing maternity rooms will be converted into one-bed suites with full bathrooms and more space for guests to enhance privacy and family bonding.



Mother/Baby Unit Phase 2 (End of 2023): Underutilized space will be converted into additional one-bed suites, making the entire unit single occupancy rooms.

Window Improvement Project (Completion in 2024): Over 700 windows throughout the hospital will be replaced with hurricane-force resistant windows. The only hospital on Staten Island located outside of a flood zone, this FEMA funded project will ensure the hospital can continue to provide full services in the event of severe weather conditions.



Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (In Planning): In design development with construction starting in late 2024.



Surgical Intensive Care Unit (In Planning): In design development with construction starting in late 2024.





Federal Officials Secure Over \$1.8 Million in Federal Funds for Imaging Technology Enhancements at RUMC

RUMC will implement state-of-the-art biplane imaging technology thanks to U.S. Senate Majority Leader Charles E. Schumer and Rep. Nicole Malliotakis. Biplane imaging involves two cameras that rotate on each side of the patient, producing images. As the cameras move around the patient, they produce highly detailed images of blood vessels, soft tissue, and blood flow, all in real-time. This imaging can allow surgeons and medical staff to identify and treat vascular blockages, aneurysms, malformations and additional abnormalities that could lead to stroke, hemorrhaging, and other neurovascular complications.



Neonatal Intensive Care Unit Named in Honor of Wayne Zenna

The Zenna Family Trust pledged \$1 million to support renovations to RUMC's Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU). In return, the hospital has renamed the unit in honor of the late Wayne Zenna. The Zenna Family Foundation was founded in 1999. The renovation of the unit will include private spaces where parents and infants can bond, and a new infant transition room, which will allow parents of NICU graduates to spend the night with nursing support in preparation for going home.



RUMC Nationally Recognized for Providing High-Quality Stroke Care

Richmond University Medical Center received the American Heart Gold Plus Get With The Guidelines - Stroke quality achievement award for its commitment to ensuring stroke patients receive the most appropriate treatment according to nationally recognized, research-based guidelines. RUMC also received the American Heart Association's Target: Stroke Honor Roll Elite award for meeting specific criteria that reduces the time between an eligible patient's arrival at the hospital and treatment with the clot-buster alteplase. In addition, RUMC received the American Heart Association's Target: Type 2 Diabetes Honor Roll award for ensuring patients with Type 2 diabetes, who might be at higher risk for complications, receive the most up-to-date care when hospitalized due to stroke.



New Trustees Announced, Retiring Trustees Saluted for Years of Service

RUMC's Board of Trustees welcomed five new members: Anita Laremont, Esq., an attorney at Fried, Frank, Harris, Shriver & Jacobson LLP; Rosemarie Maldonado, Esq., an attorney, and deputy commissioner of trials for the NYPD; David McGoy, director of governance and board placement with the Robin Hood Foundation; Courtney Moore, managing director with Merrill Private Wealth Management; and Marcello Sciarrino, co-owner of Island Auto Group, Staten Island's largest dealership. Stepping off the board after 15 years of service each were The Rev. Dr. Tony Baker; Pietro Carpenito, MD; James P. Molinaro; Catherine Paulo, Esq.; Dennis Quirk, and Kathryn Krause Rooney, Esq., who had served as board chair since 2007, and assumed the new role of board chair emeritus. The retiring trustees were honored for their service at the hospital's 16th annual gala, held on November 5.



RUMC Earns High Performing Hospital Awards from U.S. News & World Report

U.S. News & World Report released its hospital rankings for 2022/2023 and Richmond University Medical Center earned three High Performing Hospital designations in recognition of the treatment and care provided to those patients experiencing heart failure, kidney failure, and COPD.

'Angels On Earth'

Travis couple praises NICU staff for their care and compassion

Earlier this year, Scarlett celebrated her first birthday.

Scarlett Sclafani weighed 1 lb. 13 ounces at birth.



Angela and Christopher Sclafani were overjoyed to learn they were expecting twins after undergoing several in-vitro fertilization procedures.

When early labor at 24 weeks placed Angela on bed rest in Richmond University Medical Center, she was still hoping for an uneventful, full-term pregnancy.

But on Feb. 20, 2021 – at 26 weeks “on the dot” – Vincent and Scarlett came into the world without much advance notice.

“I was eating a bagel and watching the Rangers on TV” in the hospital room when her labor suddenly accelerated, recalled Angela, a special education teacher.

Delivered by Cesarean section, the newborns weighed just one pound, 13 ounces each. “Both came out crying,” giving the Sclafanis some comfort, Angela said.

The couple knew their twins were in good hands in the operating room and the Wayne Zenna Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) while they struggled with breathing issues common to micro preemies, the term used for babies born at or before 26 weeks.

“I couldn’t believe how many people were there. Each of us had our own team – each baby, and me and my husband,” she said.

Sadly, Vincent succumbed to a severe pulmonary hemorrhage 36 hours after his birth. Nurses comforted the couple as they grieved their loss in

the NICU.

“We spent time with him at the bedside,” Angela said, praising the NICU staff for their care and compassion. She cherishes a memory box with Vincent’s hand print prepared by NICU nurses.

Scarlett stayed in the NICU for another three months – 87 days altogether – until she was strong enough to go home. With each visit, the Sclafanis bonded with the NICU staff, who shepherded them through their surviving twin’s highs and lows.



Angela, Christopher, and Scarlett Sclafani with RUMC’s NICU nurses on the day Scarlett went home, 87 days after she was born.

“They became part of our family,” Angela said.

When Scarlett developed a problem adjusting to bottle feeding, registered nurse Colleen John got her over the hurdle and saved that first bottle as a keepsake for the Sclafanis.

The NICU staff refused to release the newborn “until they were 110% sure she was never coming back – except for a visit,” Angela said.

Now ready to turn two, Scarlett is thriving at home in Travis, meeting



Although her twin brother Vincent passed shortly after their births, Scarlett is reminded that her brother will always be with her.

all her milestones and talking up a storm, her mother reports. She loves ravioli, scrambled eggs and dancing to Elton John tunes.

“She’s a true miracle,” Angela said, attributing her daughter’s health and happiness to the RUMC care plan that continued after Scarlett was home.

RUMC’s Chief of Neonatology, Santosh Parab, MD, FAAP, made sure a New York State early intervention plan was in place so Scarlett could benefit immediately from visiting nurse checkups as well as physical, speech and occupational therapy.

NICU nurses Elise Raimondi and Danielle Brancale were among the guests at Scarlett’s recent one-year birthday party, postponed because of the pandemic.

“It takes a special person to be a NICU nurse,” Angela said. “The nurses at RUMC are angels on Earth.”



Richmond University
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**OUR HIGH PERFORMING
 HEALTHCARE SERVICES
 JUST KEEP GETTING NOTICED!**

Our Emergency Department features medical specialists from Richmond University Medical Center and Mount Sinai Health System.



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