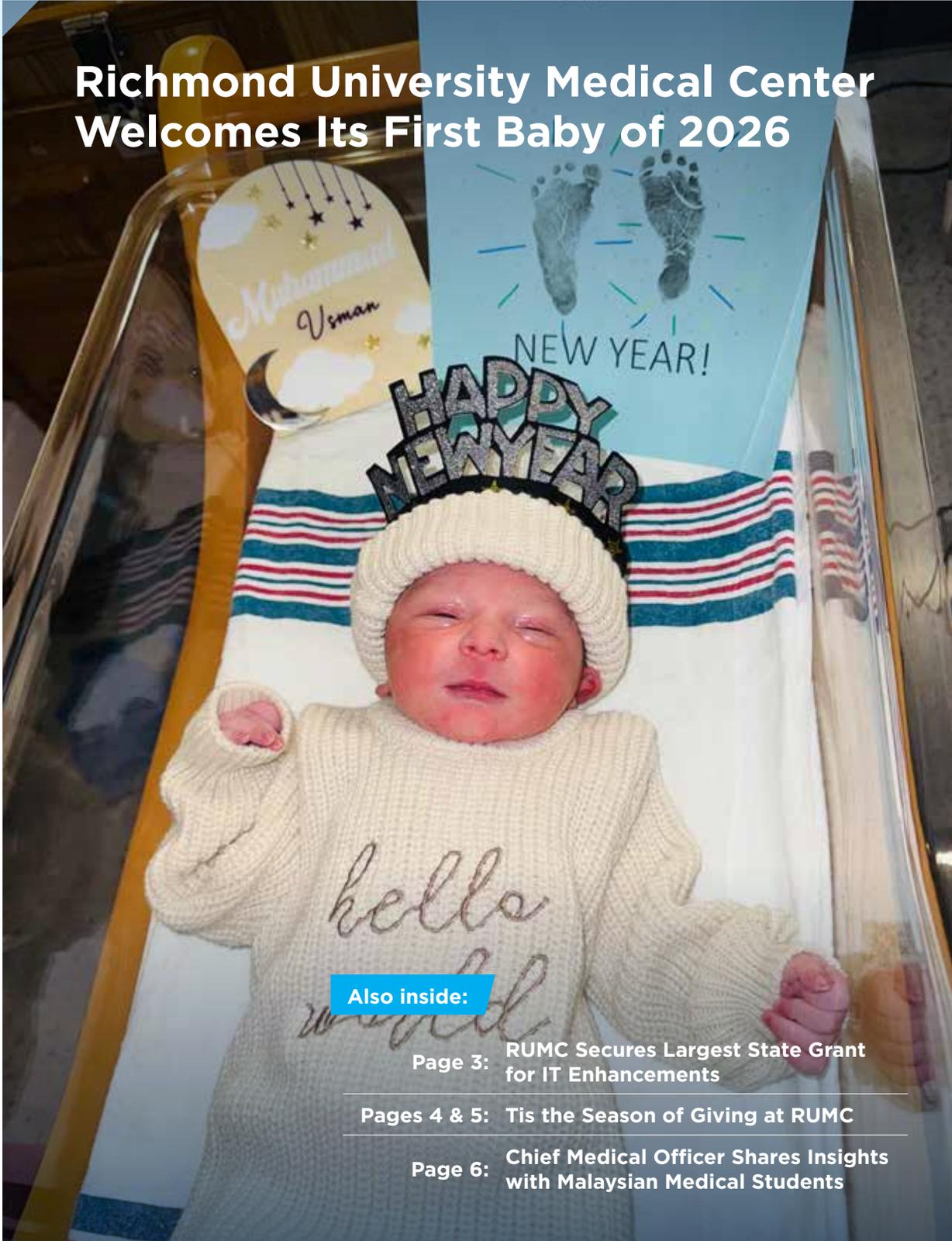


# Richmond University Medical Center Welcomes Its First Baby of 2026



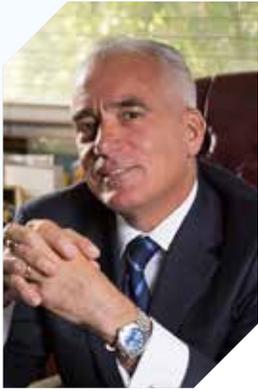
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## From the President & CEO Daniel J. Messina, PhD, MPA, FACHE

**Happy New Year to the Richmond University Medical Center Family.**

As we begin January 2026, I am filled with optimism and excitement for the year ahead. Much is underway as part of our strategic plan, including the completion of the Joan & Alan Bernikow Cardiovascular Institute, the ribbon-cuttings for both our new cogeneration power plant, and the New Springville Family Health and Specialty Service Center at the Staten Island Mall, and the groundbreaking for our adult psychiatry inpatient unit expansion and renovation, which will add 10 new beds.

Work also continues on the design and final fundraising for our new Level III Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, a project near and dear to our hearts, dedicated to caring for our most vulnerable patients — newborns who rely on us the most.

We are also finalizing the redesign of our new lobby renovation into a more welcoming patient and visitor center thanks to Lois and Richard Nicotra.

As we enter 2026, I am very pleased to also report the completion of our NYSNA nursing contract negotiations. Thanks to the support on both sides, we have reached an

agreement for our exceptional nurses. We value all of our nurses and respect the important role they play every day in caring for our patients and their families.

We also plan to continue strengthening strategic partnerships and evaluating academic affiliation options with the New York State Department of Health in 2026. As Helen Keller said, "Optimism is the faith that leads to achievement," and I remain optimistic that a new and deepened partnership will help create a final blueprint for a path ahead facilitated by the New York State Department of Health, led by Deputy Secretary Angela Profeta, PhD.

Thank you to our entire team, your families, our committed Board members, medical staff and local elected officials. I wish you health, happiness, and success in the year ahead.

Sincerely,

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

## 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 **Vahak Bairamian**. Dr. Bairamian is a PGY-3 in the Department of Radiology. He attended medical school at Saint George's School of Medicine, and his hometown is Los Angeles, California.



## Congratulations to our Employee of the Month:



**Richard Salhany, Jr.**  
MRI/CT Technologist, Department of Radiology

## Richmond University Medical Center Welcomes Its First Baby of 2026

Just a few hours into 2026, Richmond University Medical Center welcomed its first baby of the new year, Muhammad Usman. The bundle of joy arrived at 2:27 AM to proud parents Sahar Irfan and Usman Janjua who reside in Dubai but are currently staying with family in Queens. Muhammad weighed 6 pounds, 10 ounces and was 19 inches in length. He is the couple's first child.

"We are welcoming 2026 with immense gratitude as we celebrate the birth of our first-born son, Muhammad Usman," Irfan said. "Special thanks to Dr. Jeanette Voice and her entire staff for their exceptional care and support in making my delivery the easiest."



## RUMC Secures Largest State Grant for IT Enhancements



*Governor Kathy Hochul allocated over \$54M to RUMC for the Epic Electronic Health Record (EHR) system.*

Richmond University Medical Center was among 22 healthcare institutions statewide to receive state support for projects focused on enhancing health information technology, strengthening cybersecurity, and expanding telehealth services. RUMC was allocated over \$54M from Governor Kathy Hochul, which will be used to implement the Epic Electronic Health Record (EHR) system, one of the most advanced and widely trusted healthcare information systems in the world. RUMC's allocation was the single largest award provided to the 22 institutions.

"Implementing Epic EHR is a transformative step for our hospital," said RUMC President and Chief

Executive Officer Daniel J. Messina, PhD, MPA, FACHE. "This investment ensures that our patients continue to receive the highest quality care while at the same time giving our medical staff the tools they need to serve our community more efficiently. Our thanks to Gov. Hochel for partnering with us to improve lives inside and outside our hospital walls."

Epic EHR provides a unified platform for managing patient health information, streamlining clinical workflows, and ensuring secure interoperability across various care settings. Its advanced features include real-time documentation, integrated order entry, and comprehensive

decision support tools. Epic EHR will enhance care by simplifying provider workflows and enhancing communication across multiple departments, allowing caregivers to focus more directly on their patients.

RUMC's patients will benefit from MyChart, Epic EHR's secure portal that enables easy access to their medical records appointment scheduling, and has the capabilities to provide direct communication with their healthcare providers.

RUMC's allocation was announced by Gov. Hochul on December 12. The awards, totaling more than \$300 million to 22 different healthcare systems across New York State, were made through the Statewide Health Care Facility Transformation Program IV and V. Funds will be administered by the New York State Department of Health and the Dormitory Authority of the State of New York.

Awardees include hospitals in every region of New York State and the funding prioritized healthcare providers seeking to modernize their health information technology infrastructure; strengthen their cybersecurity and patient information security; and/or expand their telehealth services.

## Tis the Season of Giving at RUMC

Throughout the month of December, pediatric patients were at the forefront of numerous organizations who made generous donations of toys for children who are being treated at the hospital

during this holiday season. These gifts will help to brighten long days, reduce stress, and create moments of happiness during their time in the hospital. The gifts were distributed to

various departments throughout the hospital including pediatrics, child and adolescent inpatient psychiatry, and the Theurer Family Health Center located at 800 Castleton Avenue.



*Students from the Hispanic Student Association at Curtis High School.*



*Teddy bear donation courtesy of New York City Council Member Frank Morano and his Chief of Staff Frank Rapacciuolo.*



*The Italian American Police Society of New Jersey and NYPD Columbia Association.*



*Verrazano Kiwanis Club donates toys for RUMC's pediatric patients.*

## Tis the Season of Giving at RUMC



*Santa Claus drops off toys from the MTA.*



*Members of the Staten Island MTA Depots.*



*NYPD Cops for Kids.*



*Members of the NYC Department of Sanitation's Columbia Association and the Holy Name Society.*

# Wayne Zenna NICU Gets a Special Holiday Gift from the North Shore Rotary



Members of the North Shore Rotary pose with RUMC Leadership and NICU staff as the hospital accepts the club's donation.

On December 16, the North Shore Rotary Club announced a pledge of \$100,000 to benefit RUMC's Wayne Zenna Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU). To date, this commitment is the largest contribution in the Rotary's 68 years of history. Maternal and child health is one of Rotary International's core area of concern since it focuses on not only making improvements for access to care for mothers and their children, but supporting the healthcare professionals who take care of them daily in the community.

Earlier this fall, North Shore Rotary provided a complete Thanksgiving dinner to the staff of RUMC's NICU in gratitude

for their continued care and support for RUMC's tiniest patients. The club also provided a holiday meal for the NICU staff to enjoy when members of the club came to RUMC to announce their NICU contribution.

Following the presentation of the pledge check, members of the North Shore Rotary went on a tour of the NICU led by Santosh Parab, MD, Chief of Neonatology and Kelly Reinhold, RN, Director of Nursing, Maternal Child Health Division. "This is the most significant gift our Club has ever made, and it reflects our commitment to supporting families at some of their most critical moments," said

Dennis Surmanek, president of the North Shore Rotary Club. "Maternal and child health is a core focus for Rotary, and helping with the redesign and renovation of RUMC's Wayne Zenna NICU is a direct investment in that mission, right here in our community."

RUMC's Wayne Zenna NICU is a Level III intensive care unit consisting of 19 intensive and intermediate care beds and six continuing care beds. The unit specializes in the care of high-risk newborns, with some newborns weighing only one pound when born. The NICU's survival rate stands at over 99%, one of the highest survival rates in the country. RUMC's NICU was also one of the first facilities to receive certification from the City of New York in the 1960s, a time when NICUs were still something of a novelty.

As a Level III unit, the NICU has a full range of pediatric medical subspecialists, advanced respiratory support, and innovative imaging services.

## Chief Medical Officer Shares Insights with Malaysian Medical Students

On the morning of December 1, 2025, over 200 students, most pursuing medical careers, received an education in the latest medications and research trends from Richmond University Medical Center's Chief Medical Officer Philip Otterbeck, MD. What made the lecture different: the students were over 9,200 miles away in Malaysia.

Dr. Otterbeck, who also serves as the chair of medicine and chief of endocrinology at RUMC, was selected by students from Sekretariat Sukarelawan India at Universiti Sains Malaysia after students expressed interest in learning the latest medical advances in diagnosing and treating diabetes. Established in 2013, Sekretariat Sukarelawan India is a student-led organization at Universiti Sains Malaysia that has six campuses throughout Malaysia and nearly 40,000 enrolled students.

The students selected Dr. Otterbeck from

the list of medical providers who are part of RUMC's Speakers Bureau. Located on the hospital website, the list enables organizations to select from one of the many experienced professionals at RUMC who are available through the bureau to speak at no cost about their areas of expertise.

"Sharing information with my patients and our community has been my passion since I have been in clinical practice," Dr. Otterbeck said. "I was so pleased to provide this education internationally, collaborating with young minds to increase access to evidence-based medicine and to encourage healthy lifestyle practices."

Among the topics Dr. Otterbeck discussed were an overview of Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes, and changes in treatment thanks to the emergence of medications such as Ozempic, Mounjaro, and Jardiance. Dr. Otterbeck also



Dr. Phil Otterbeck speaking with medical students over 9,200 miles away in Malaysia.

engaged in a question and answer session with the students, who asked for his expertise on the future of diabetes care, current medication recommendations in the United States, and early screening initiatives for diabetes.

Dr. Otterbeck also shared some sobering statistics with the students. According to the International Diabetes Foundation, 589 million adults aged 20 to 79 years are living with diabetes globally, which is more than the population of the United States, Canada, Mexico, and the Caribbean combined.

## New Hires — Welcome to RUMC!

Olufunmilola Aduku — *Nursing Assistant*

Hasham Aly — *Speech Pathologist*

Kamila Barrett — *Respiratory Therapist*

Toni Bennett — *Nursing Assistant*

Courtney Byrd — *Social Worker*

Dylbere Celaj-Kurti — *Building Service Worker*

Alexandria Cucuzza — *Nursing Assistant*

Douglas Green — *Building Service Worker*

Clara Hopkins — *Registrar*

Anthony Messina — *Security Guard*

Kimberly Moton — *Nursing Assistant*

Lillian Okunola — *Nursing Assistant*

Alyssa Polemeni — *RN*

Krystal Roman — *Administrative Director*

Megan Santiago — *RN*

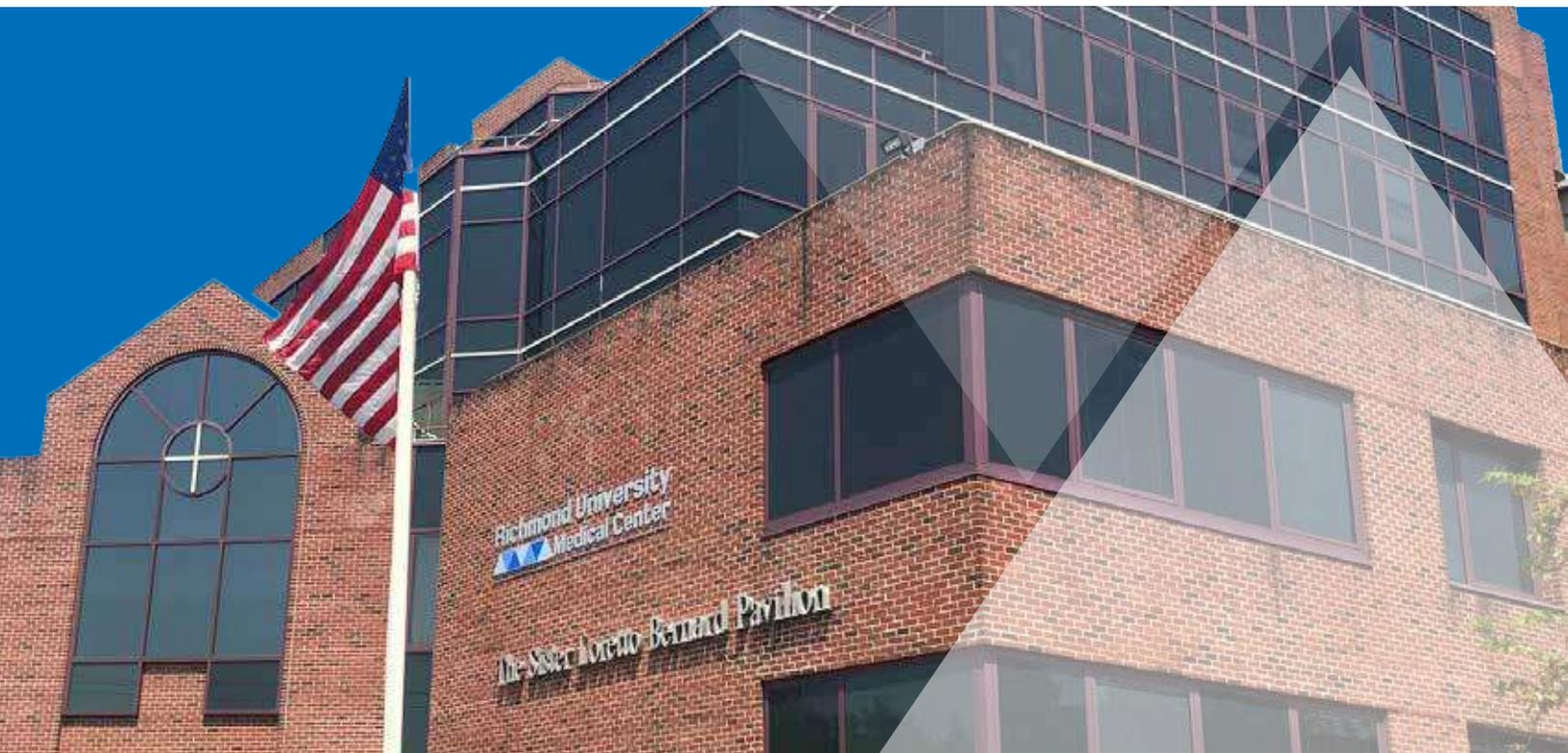
Jessica Simmons — *Staten Island Mental Health Society*

Camden Washington — *RN*

Maria Whitty — *Administrative Assistant*

Jenna Won — *RN*

Alana Zaytsev — *Registrar*



## January Observances

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

### Month-Long:

Cervical Health Awareness Month

Glaucoma Awareness Month

International Quality of Life Month

National Birth Defects Awareness/Prevention Month

National Blood Donor Month

National Radon Action Month

National Winter Sports Traumatic Brain Injury Awareness Month

Stalking Awareness Month

Substance Use Disorder Treatment Month

Thyroid Awareness Month

### Week-Long:

January 12 to 24: National CRNA Week

### Recognition Days:

World Braille Day

Paget's Awareness Day

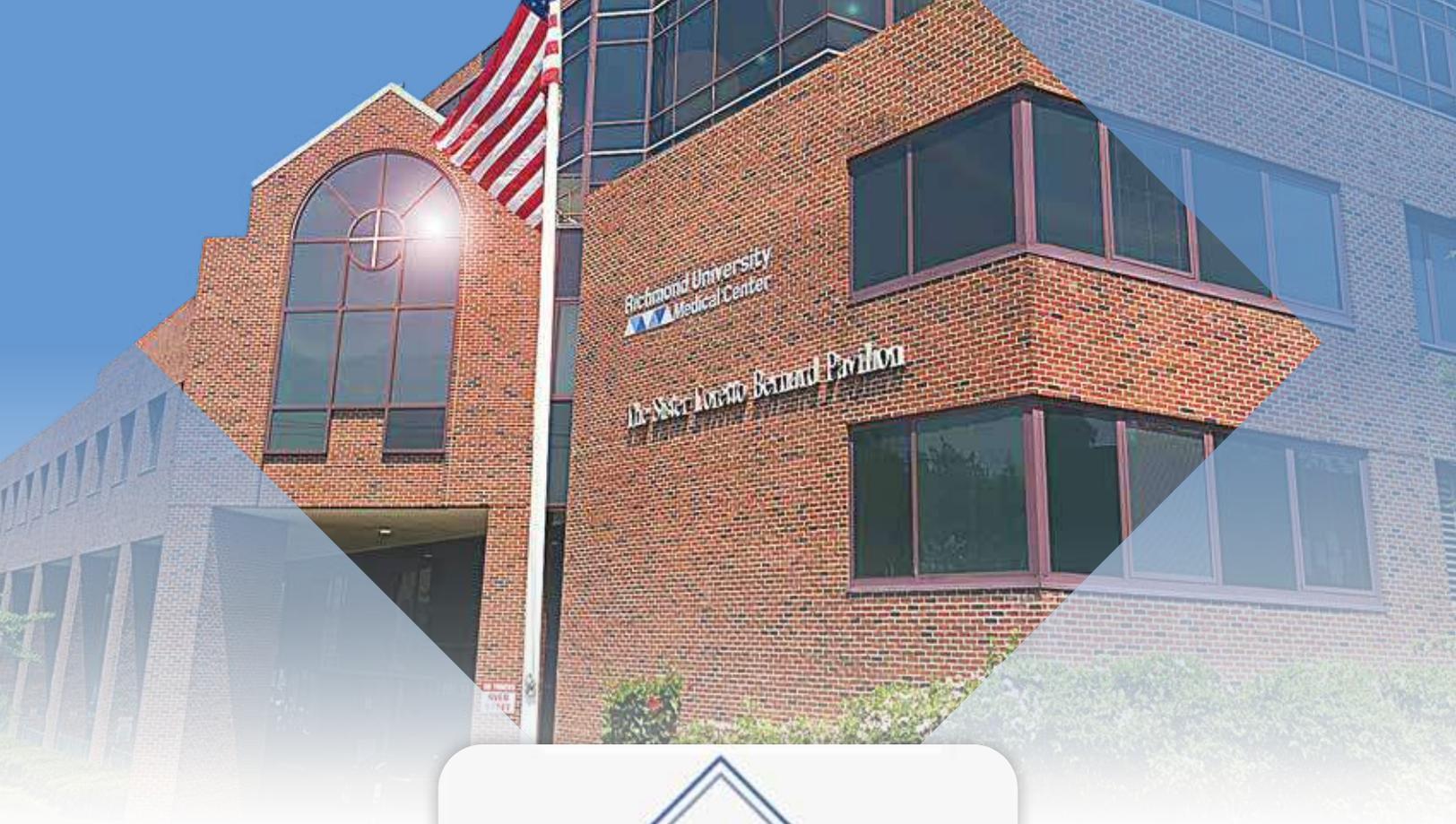
National Pharmacist Day

National IV Nurse Day

Maternal Health Awareness Day

World Leprosy Day

World Neglected Tropical Diseases Day



We are grateful and honored to be a recipient  
of the Staten Island Foundation's  
**Diamond Matching Grant program.**

The Staten Island Foundation's Diamond Matching Grant program award "celebrates a milestone for a nonprofit champion and founding Staten Island Foundation Board member, Mrs. Alice B. Diamond."

Through this program your gift may be eligible for a match on a \$2 to \$1 basis. Eligibility includes gifts from new donors, increased giving from existing donors, and funds raised through new events and strategies.

Visit this site Donation Form to make your gift electronically. If contributing by check please include "Diamond Match" in the memo section.

Scan the QR code to  
visit our giving page

