

MILESTONES



**THE POWERFUL STORY
OF PHILANTHROPY**
The Del Priore Family
FEATURE ARTICLE ON PAGE 7

Monmouth Medical Center
and the Dawkins Family proudly announce

**THE JUDITH W. DAWKINS
AMBASSADOR OF
EXCELLENCE AWARD**

**2024 RECIPIENT
CLAIRE KNOPF**



*Please join us in celebrating Judi's legacy by honoring
Claire Knopf with this prestigious award at The Power of Pink.*

Claire's dedicated service spanning twenty-four years has left an indelible mark across every aspect of Monmouth Medical Center, echoing the enduring legacy of Judi's decades-long commitment to excellence and service. Her impact spans a broad spectrum, stretching back to the early days when she was a committee member, chair and host for Power of Pink. From there, she advanced to the role of co-chair of the Leon Hess Cancer Center Council, ultimately assuming the position of chair of the Foundation Board of Trustees.

Claire's philanthropy has supported special event initiatives, women's services, the emergency response fund, behavioral health, planned giving and beyond. Her unwavering dedication to MMC, coupled with her enthusiasm and commitment, truly distinguishes her as a deserving recipient of this award.

**MILESTONES
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FOUNDATION PURPOSE

Monmouth Medical Center Foundation, a charitable organization dedicated to supporting Monmouth Medical Center (MMC) and its programs and services, has a five-fold mission:

- To develop and implement Foundation programs that provide charitable financial support to Monmouth Medical Center.
- To demonstrate to the public at large how philanthropy benefits donors, patients and the community served by Monmouth Medical Center.
- To increase public awareness and enhance the community's positive perception of Monmouth Medical Center by being an advocate for the community.
- To serve responsibly as the steward of contributed funds to Monmouth Medical Center.
- To develop candidates for leadership positions for Monmouth Medical Center Foundation and Monmouth Medical Center.

COVER PHOTO CAPTION: The Del Priore Family
BACK FROM LEFT: Everett, Michael Jr., Mary, Jack, Meghan, Mark
MIDDLE FROM LEFT: Leo, Carson Jane
FRONT FROM LEFT: Cole, Nancy, Michael, Conor

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ERIC CARNEY
President and Chief Executive Officer
Monmouth Medical Center and
Monmouth Medical Center Southern Campus

MESSAGE FROM LEADERSHIP

“ Our success is fueled by the incredible generosity of our donor families, as well as the dedication of our caregivers to safety at all times and with every patient.

We continue to make strides toward the opening of a truly state-of-the-art, five-story, 150,000-square-foot outpatient center at the Vogel Medical Campus in Tinton Falls. This center will offer seamless access to surgical and imaging services and comprehensive cancer care, together with Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey, the state’s only National Cancer Institute-designated Comprehensive Cancer Center. And while we look to the anticipated 2026 opening of this new center with tremendous excitement, we also are proud to share amazing recent accomplishments for our cancer program.


Through a highly successful RWJBarnabas Health Southern Region Thoracic Oncology Program led by Dr. Richard Lazzaro, Chief of Thoracic Surgery for the Southern Region and a renowned national leader in the field, Monmouth Medical Center (MMC) has introduced three new advanced highly precise technologies used to both diagnose and treat lung cancer. MMC is the first in central and southern New Jersey to introduce Ion, a robot-assisted platform designed to enable minimally invasive lung biopsies that aid in early diagnosis. The hospital continues to expand the advanced capabilities of its thoracic oncology program, including firsts in New Jersey with the introduction of minimally invasive technology to ablate lung lesions called the Aliya PEF System and LungVision, intraoperative AI-driven CT imaging for use with the Ion.

Exciting developments such as these are made possible thanks to the generosity of our forward-thinking philanthropic supporters. We are extraordinarily grateful to share in this issue news of two more significant gifts to support the Vogel Medical Campus. Our cover story details a transformative gift from legacy supporters Michael and Nancy Del Priore that will fund the installation of an advanced, 16-foot digital LED wall in the main lobby of the campus’s landmark outpatient center. Additionally, we spotlight a generous gift from hospital trustee Valerie Montecalvo and her husband, Frank, that will name the Montecalvo Family Infusion Room.

We are also tremendously proud to share that MMC has been named to Newsweek’s 2024 World’s Best Hospitals’ list. This is the third consecutive year that MMC has received this prestigious award presented by Newsweek and Statista Inc., the world-leading statistics portal and industry-ranking provider. This year MMC was recognized for an additional award, World’s Best Infection Prevention Hospitals, identifying which of the U.S. hospitals featured in the national ranking were performing “above national average” based on six reported measures. Awards such as these, and our standing as the hospital with by far the most Leapfrog A’s for patient safety in the region, truly reflect the hard work and unwavering commitment of the entire MMC team.

Our success is fueled by the incredible generosity of our donor families, as well as the dedication of our caregivers to safety at all times and with every patient. We are so deeply thankful for these remarkable investments in MMC, as well as the unwavering dedication of our hospital physicians and staff to delivering the safest, most compassionate care to our community, now and in the future.




BILL ARNOLD
Executive Vice President RWJBarnabas Health
President RWJBarnabas Health Southern Region
Chief Executive Officer Robert Wood Johnson
University Hospital



“ I am humbled to join the sisterhood of strong, visionary women who have been honored and presented with the Judith W. Dawkins Ambassador of Excellence Award.

— CLAIRE KNOPF

I remain in awe of the steadfast dedication of our supporters. It is these people, whose efforts in collaboration, communication and compassion, that are the foundation of Monmouth Medical Center’s many successes. This year I am humbled to join the sisterhood of strong, visionary women who have been honored and presented with the Judith W. Dawkins Ambassador of Excellence Award. Judi’s tenure with Monmouth Medical Center included time as donor, advocate, trustee, and Board Chair, all of which were driven by a passionate commitment to women’s healthcare. This mission resonates deeply with me, and I am delighted to join the distinguished community of leaders who have come before me and who served as inspiration. Like them, I have dedicated decades of my life to community service. It is encouraging to see the next generation of women leaders stepping up to serve. Each year I am overjoyed to celebrate the accomplishments, the goals, and the strength of our community and its leaders.



CLAIRE KNOPF
Chair, Monmouth Medical Center Foundation
Board of Trustees

MESSAGE FROM THE FOUNDATION

“ Our community deserves a new facility that prioritizes cutting-edge medical care, patient comfort, and accessibility – and together we are building it brick by brick.

— CAITLIN OLSON

What an incredible year 2024 is shaping up to be, and we are not even halfway through! The Foundation has recently received several landmark gifts from friends of the hospital, and I am consistently impressed by the incredible generosity of this community. Time and again, people stretch themselves to give what they can to help their neighbors: from families who have supported the hospital for generations, to new residents showing their support by purchasing a ticket to Swing Pink or another event, we are so grateful for YOU. And for the many of you who look forward to our events season, and especially for all the *Sopranos* and *Nurse Jackie* fans out there, we are thrilled to have Edie Falco joining us as keynote speaker at this summer’s Power of Pink luncheon! Our community deserves a state-of-the-art facility that prioritizes cutting-edge medical care, patient comfort, and accessibility – and together we are building it brick by brick. When it opens in 2026, the Vogel Medical Campus will be just 15 minutes away from our Long Branch Campus, allowing for seamless coordination between facilities to meet patient needs, and bringing an NCI-designated comprehensive cancer center to Monmouth County. As the hospital shapes a path for the future of medicine in Monmouth County, I am grateful to have a front row seat to the community that makes it possible.


CAITLIN OLSON
Regional Vice President of Development
Monmouth Medical Center and
Monmouth Medical Center Southern Campus





Nancy and Michael Del Priore

The Powerful Story of Philanthropy The Del Priore Family

For more than 30 years, Michael and Nancy Del Priore have been a part of the Monmouth Medical Center (MMC) Foundation's story. Today, the Del Priore family continues their generous legacy with a transformative gift that will inspire all who enter the new Vogel Medical Campus in Tinton Falls. The five-story, 150,000-square-foot outpatient center is due to open in 2026. The center is designed to enhance the patient experience by providing easily accessible, comprehensive care for patients. It will offer same-day surgery, on-site specialty physician offices and advanced diagnostic imaging. There will be dedicated floors exclusively for cancer services, including a comprehensive oncology clinic and centers for infusion and radiation therapy treatment.

The Del Priore family will fund the installation of an advanced, 16-foot digital LED wall in the main lobby of the inaugural building of the Vogel Medical Campus. This cutting-edge technology will be a dynamic platform that showcases the rich history and ongoing philanthropic endeavors that have shaped Monmouth County's healthcare landscape. The "Nancy and Michael Del Priore and Family" LED wall will highlight stories of generosity and community support to underscore the significance of MMC's evolution as a healthcare provider. It will recognize the generous families from our past, present, and future who are pivotal to our growth. Its impressive size ensures that it will serve as a prominent focal point. Nancy and Michael shared, "We believe in the power of gratitude and recognition of others. Through our support for the Donor Wall, we seek to celebrate the generosity of our community and cultivate a culture of giving that motivates future contributions."

Michael Del Priore's extensive tenure as a trustee of the MMC Foundation reflects his unwavering commitment to the hospital. The family's dedication was recognized with the prestigious community leadership award in 2015 honoring their exceptional support not only for MMC and its Foundation but also for the broader Monmouth County community. Their impact goes beyond their own involvement at MMC by recruiting others to the Foundation Board, actively participating in hospital and foundation events and generously contributing to multiple hospital campaigns and building projects. Their sons, Michael and Mark, along with their wives, Mary and Meghan, have continued this legacy with Meghan joining the Foundation Board and supporting initiatives such as the MMC Toast to Children's Health. "Stepping into this role, I was inspired by my in-laws' enduring legacy of dedication and service. It's an honor to continue their work on the Board, shaping a brighter future for all those we serve," said Meghan.

"We express enormous gratitude to the entire Del Priore family for their partnership and the inspiration they bring to continued investment in our collective future," said Caitlin Olson, Regional Vice President of Development, MMC and MMCS.

“Stepping into this role, I was inspired by my in-laws’ enduring legacy of dedication and service. It’s an honor to continue their work on the Board, shaping a brighter future for all those we serve.”

— MEGHAN DEL PRIORE,
Monmouth Medical Center
Foundation Board of Trustees



Valerie and Frank Montecalvo

“We are involved with numerous local charities, lending volunteer support as board members and directing our philanthropic resources to many healthcare organizations, strategically investing in research and bringing the best care to New Jersey.

— VALERIE MONTECALVO,
Monmouth Medical Center
Board of Trustees

Vogel Medical Campus The Montecalvo Family Infusion Room

Valerie and Frank Montecalvo, owners and founders of the Bayshore Recycling Family of Companies, have made investing in the health and wellness of our community a central mission of their work and life. Of her family’s investment in community health, Valerie said, “We are involved with numerous local charities, lending volunteer support as board members and directing our philanthropic resources to many healthcare organizations, strategically investing in research and bringing the best care to New Jersey.” As a trustee on the Monmouth Medical Center (MMC) Operational Board, Valerie has served as a trusted advisor for our hospital’s leaders for years. Earlier this year, Valerie and Frank joined over 45 community leaders who have contributed to MMC’s capital campaign, supporting our expansion to the Vogel Medical Campus. Their generosity will be recognized with the naming of the Montecalvo Family Infusion Room at the outpatient center.

With a significant footprint on the fifth floor at the outpatient center, therapeutic infusion care will support patients with a variety of needs from brief visits in community infusion bays to private rooms for those patients who may require more intensive symptom management. Designed with a range of comfortable spaces, the infusion floor will have inviting areas for companions, designated areas for patients’ personal belongings, ambient lighting, privacy screens, and finishes throughout to maximize patient comfort.

In 2026, when MMC expands to the Vogel Medical Campus, our community will benefit from a new facility that prioritizes cutting-edge medical care, patient comfort, and accessibility. The Vogel Medical Campus will be just 15 minutes away from the Long Branch Campus, allowing for seamless coordination between facilities based on patient needs. In partnership with Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey, the Vogel Medical Campus will bring a comprehensive cancer care center to Monmouth County; with patient comfort and ease of access top of mind, patients will be able to access the hospital’s outpatient surgery, infusion, and imaging services in one place.

“This exciting evolution of our hospital’s ability to serve our community would not be possible without supporters like the Montecalvo family,” said Caitlin Olson, Regional Vice President of Development, MMC and MMCSC.



Rendering of a private infusion room



Terry Ullmann

Anne Vogel Family Care and Wellness LiveWell Center

The LiveWell Center, located within the Anne Vogel Family Care and Wellness Center in Eatontown, is a hub for all things wellness related serving community members of all ages. The LiveWell Center emphasizes education through workshops on topics including nutrition, chronic diseases, mental health, childbirth and postpartum health. Programs are free and open to all members of the community, with no insurance required.

Among the most active participants is Tinton Falls resident Terry Ullmann, a retired nurse who attends as many as three programs a week. Terry has had an expansive nursing career including two years as a neonatal intensive care nurse at Monmouth Medical Center (MMC) and tenures in public health, school nursing and a pediatrician’s office. She took her first class at the LiveWell Center in August of 2022 after seeing information on the MMC website. She’s been active ever since, noting she particularly enjoys the cooking and movement classes.

“From my very first class, I found I really like coming here – they do a wonderful job and I’m always greeted with a smile whenever I walk in,” said Terry, who grew up in Bayonne and moved to Monmouth County more than 50 years ago. “I’m not one to talk much, but I’ve made friends here; there is such great camaraderie and the community they’ve created is fantastic. From the support groups, to the programs for babies and toddlers and teens to get them excited about healthy eating – I love being a part of something that is truly for all age groups.”

The Community Health Education team aims to equip individuals with knowledge, skills, and support to improve health outcomes, with a specific focus on vulnerable populations. “Our programs focus on preventing chronic diseases and helping those with a diagnosis to make behavior changes that can allow them to live a longer, healthier life,” says Abigail Thompson, MPH, CHES, Regional Program Director, Community Health and Social Impact & Community Investment. “Programs are data-driven and tailored to meet the needs of individuals at every age and stage of life. We also place a focus on reaching underserved and vulnerable populations. We strive to connect community members to needed healthcare services in their community, and work beyond the walls of this center and our hospital to embed ourselves in the communities we serve.”

For a complete listing of all monthly programs at the LiveWell Center, visit rwjbh.org/mmccalendar

“Our programs focus on preventing chronic diseases and helping those with a diagnosis to make behavior changes that can allow them to live a longer, healthier life.”

— ABIGAIL THOMPSON
MPH, CHES, Regional Program
Director, LiveWell Center,
Community Health and
Social Impact & Community
Investment, MMC and MMCS



SCAN HERE
TO FIND OUR
COMMUNITY EDUCATION
EVENTS CALENDARS

Create a healthy tomorrow by leaving a lasting legacy today.

Help ensure that the next generation has easy access to extraordinary health care by including Monmouth Medical Center in your estate plans. You can create your legacy today by including the medical center as a partial beneficiary of your will or retirement account. It's simple. It's impactful. It's lasting.

For more information, please contact Greg Ellmer at 973-322-4302 or Gregory.Ellmer@rwjbh.org. Information is also available online by visiting rwjbh.org/monmouthplanned



Let's be healthy together.



The Leon Hess Cancer Center Council
cordially invites ladies to

Swing PINK

A WOMEN'S LUNCHEON & SPORTING EVENT
TENNIS | PADDLE | PICKLE | GOLF

SEPTEMBER 16, 2024
NAVESINK COUNTRY CLUB

Availability Limited—Prompt Response Recommended—Valet Parking

TO REGISTER FOR SWING PINK VISIT
WWW.RWJBH.ORG/SWINGPINK

Invitation generously underwritten by The Ingram Family

For more information contact Kelly Boyer at
Kelly.Boyer@rwjbh.org or 732-932-6884



THE LEON HESS CANCER CENTER COUNCIL

PRESENTS

THE 29th ANNUAL POWER of pink

**THURSDAY,
JULY 18, 2024**

The Home of Amy and Daniel Reich
41 Oakes Road
Rumson, New Jersey

THE JUDITH W. DAWKINS
AMBASSADOR OF
EXCELLENCE AWARD

**2024 RECIPIENT
CLAIRE KNOPF**



CELEBRITY SPEAKER

EDIE FALCO



SCAN HERE TO SEE
WHY EVERYONE'S
STILL TALKING ABOUT
LAST YEAR'S EVENT



Availability Limited
Prompt Response Recommended

For more information,
contact Kelly Boyer
at 732-923-6886 or
Kelly.Boyer@RWJBH.org.



SPECIAL EVENTS

Power of Pink Keynote Speaker Bio Edie Falco

Edie Falco is best known for her roles as Diane Whittlesey on the HBO series *Oz*, Carmela Soprano on *The Sopranos*, and the title role of Showtime's *Nurse Jackie*. For her television work she has received multiple Emmy, Golden Globe, and SAG Awards, as well as the American Film Institute's Award for Female Television Actor of the Year. Broadway credits include the Tony Award-winning play *Sideman*, *Frankie and Johnny in the Clair De Lune*, *'Night Mother*, and *The House of Blue Leaves*, for which she received a Tony Award Nomination. Off-Broadway she has appeared in *The Madrid*, *This Wide Night*, *The True*, and *Morning Sun*. Her work in feature film includes *Cost of Living* (American Film Institute's Best Actress Award), *Laws of Gravity* (Independent Spirit Award nomination), *Sunshine State*, *Landline*, *Hurricane*, *The Funeral*, *The Addiction*, *Freedomland*, *The Land of Steady Habits*, *Judy Berlin*, and the *Avatar* sequels.

In addition to acting, Edie actively supports and performs for the 52nd Street Project, a non-profit arts education and mentoring organization serving young people living in the Hell's Kitchen neighborhood of New York City. All of Edie's proceeds from the Power of Pink 2024 event will benefit the 52nd Street Project.

To register or for more information on this year's Power of Pink event, please visit www.rwjbh.org/POP or contact Kelly Boyer at 732.923.6886 or email Kelly.Boyer@rwjbh.org

“Doing good is always rewarding. We are so excited to be hosting the Power of Pink at our home again this year.”

— AMY & DANIEL REICH
Homeowners and Hosts



THE 29th ANNUAL POWER of pink COMMITTEE

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Terry Ingram
Claire Knopf

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Leah Soltas
Ann Unterberg

*Founder

“ We are thrilled our local fitness studios and businesses are so supportive of the Fit Crawl. The energy and enthusiasm we feel from our fit crawl participants continue to grow stronger each year. I couldn’t be more proud to be a part of such an incredible, ongoing movement.

— CAROLYN DESENA
Founder and President of the WEforum Group, MMCF Trustee



WEforum Fit Crawl participants enjoy studio classes

WEforum Fit Crawl

WEforum, the Women’s Education Forum, along with Monmouth Medical Center held its ninth annual WEforum Fit Crawl event on Saturday, February 24. This dynamic, one-day health and wellness extravaganza promotes an active lifestyle and community engagement. With over 300 attendees, the event took place across multiple fitness studios throughout Monmouth County. Participants sampled three back-to-back fitness and wellness classes and the day concluded with a post-crawl event at Triumph Brewery in Red Bank, featuring local vendors offering food, juices, health and wellness services, and apparel.

The 2024 Fit Crawl also celebrated the dedication of local youth coaches and mentors who play a pivotal role in the lives of our community’s young athletes, both on and off the field. The signature event supports WEforum’s important mission to provide free educational health and wellness programs and the funds raised support the WEforum Demonstration Kitchen programming at the Anne Vogel Family Care & Wellness Center in Eatontown.



FROM LEFT: Rob Gill, CEO of EPIC Financial Strategies and Founder of EPIC Elite AAU Basketball; Chris “Shempy” Champeau, Coach RFH Boys Varsity Basketball; Carolyn DeSena, Founder and President of the WEforum Group, MMCF Trustee; Dorothy Whitehouse, Chair of the Rumson Recreation Commission, and Trustee and Head of the Rumson Travel Basketball League; Caitlin Olson, Regional Vice President of Development, MMC and MMCSC; Val Barnaby, Founder of ESSA Sports Performance & Fitness; Jennifer Borenus, Executive Director, WEforum Group



FROM LEFT: Jackeline Mejias-Fuertes, DM and Louis Rodriguez, MMC Operational Board members; Eric Carney, President and CEO, MMC and MMCSC



FROM LEFT: Bill Faverzani, Senior Vice President, Children's Health Services at RWJBH; Meghan Del Priore, Event Co-Chair; Molly Kroon, Event Co-Chair; Eric Carney, President and CEO MMC and MMCSC; Jonathan Teitelbaum, MD, Chair of Pediatrics at The Unterberg Children's Hospital and Division Director of Pediatric Gastroenterology; Charles Concodora, MD, Pediatric Urology; Mark McCollum, MD, Director of Pediatric Surgery; Caitlin Olson, Regional Vice President of Development, MMC and MMCSC

The Unterberg Children's Hospital Toast to Children's Health 2023

On November 2, 2023, over 100 community members joined Monmouth Medical Center (MMC) leadership and physicians at Triumph Brewery in Red Bank to Toast to Children's Health. The event was co-chaired by Meghan Del Priore and Molly Kroon. It was an interactive evening filled with mingling and food and beverage tastings from around the world. Proceeds from the event supported pediatric services and programs for the future Vogel Medical Campus in Tinton Falls.

MMC President and CEO Eric Carney kicked off the evening with a warm welcome before introducing Jonathan Teitelbaum, MD, Chair of Pediatrics at The Unterberg Children's Hospital and Division Director of Pediatric Gastroenterology. Next to the podium were Charles Concodora, MD, Pediatric Urology, and Mark McCollum, MD, Director of Pediatric Surgery. They shared exciting updates about the comprehensive range of children's health services available to the community at The Unterberg Children's Hospital, the Ann Vogel Family Care and Wellness Center and across the RWJBH system. Focused on the importance of offering top specialty care close to home, the group highlighted the significance of family-centered care, built on open communication and the continuity of care.



According to US News & World Report, RWJBarnabas Health Children's Hospitals rank among the nation's best for 2023-2024.

“This ranking is great news for New Jersey families. Our communities can be assured they are receiving the highest quality care for children close to home.

— BILL FAVERZANI
Senior Vice President,
Children's Health Services
at RWJBH

SAVE THE DATE FOR THIS YEAR'S EVENT

Saturday, November 2, 2024
at Triumph Brewery

For more information on the 2024 event, contact Kelly Boyer at 732.923.6886 or email Kelly.Boyer@rwjbh.org



The Simoes and Sosnowski Families

The Hirair and Anna Hovnanian Foundation Neonatal Intensive Care Unit Big Steps for Little Feet 2023

A little rain did not dampen the spirits of the participants at the 17th annual Big Steps for Little Feet event on Sunday, October 15, 2023. The event moved indoors to the gym at Long Branch Middle School where over 150 attendees joined in the festivities. There were refreshments and fall fun activities including pumpkin picking and bouncy houses for the little ones to enjoy.

This peer-to-peer fundraising event raised over \$40,000 for the Hirair and Anna Hovnanian Foundation Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) at Monmouth Medical Center (MMC). The event was chaired by NICU nurse Kristin Chaparro, who said "Our NICU, which celebrated its 55th anniversary this year, is a very special place created at MMC for our tiniest, most fragile patients to receive constant monitoring and 24-hour care." To have so many of the NICU families attend this event is especially meaningful for the nurses and physicians who develop an immeasurable bond with the families. Many families return to this event year after year, thankful for a positive experience during an incredibly difficult time.

The event honored two former NICU patients, including Mila Simoes, who weighed 1 pound 4 ounces and was 12 inches long when she was born January 25, 2021 at 25 weeks and 4 days. The second honoree was Ava Sosnowski, who weighed 2 pounds, 11 ounces and measured 14.5 inches when she was born prematurely on April 30, 2021. Mila was discharged after nearly four months in the NICU, and Ava following a 66-day stay.

The NICU is uniquely equipped to meet the needs of infants like Mila and Ava who are born too early or too small, or who require special care or surgery. The Unterberg Children's Hospital board-certified neonatologists and nursing team specialize in family-centered treatment, providing a multidisciplinary experience to give every baby their best chance to thrive, while offering comfort and convenience for families.

“Our NICU, which celebrated its 55th anniversary this year, is a very special place created at MMC for our tiniest, most fragile patients to receive constant monitoring and 24-hour care.”

— KRISTIN CHAPARRO
NICU nurse



NICU team and family honorees receive donation check

**SAVE THE DATE
FOR THIS YEAR'S EVENT**
Sunday, September 22, 2024

For more information on the 2024 event, contact Kelly Boyer at 732.923.6886 or email Kelly.Boyer@rwjbh.org



Luke and Melissa DiTella with big brother Rhodes and baby Redford

“The NICU team was amazing. It is the family that you never expected to be a part of, and once you are, you’re welcomed by everyone with open arms.

— MELISSA DITELLA

Grateful Patient The DiTella Family

In February of 2023, Luke and Melissa DiTella, and soon-to-be big brother Rhodes, were eagerly and patiently awaiting the arrival of their newest family member. With nearly a month to go, everything seemed to be proceeding according to plan. They never expected the 36th week of Melissa’s pregnancy to change everything.

Melissa woke up that morning and felt amazing. She recalls feeling a positive energy around her and she felt strong physically. Everything was calm and then without any warning, everything changed. Within the span of two hours the calmness went away, and a sense of unease filled her mind and heart. She knew something was terribly off.

When they arrived at Monmouth Medical Center (MMC), Melissa was filled with uncertainty while experiencing the physical signs of labor. The medical team felt it best to admit her for overnight observation. However, her situation escalated quickly and emergency surgery was necessary. Despite everything looking like it would be fine when she went into the operating room, their son, Redford Ames DiTella was born on February 13, 2023, with no signs of life, not breathing and without a heartbeat.

Melissa remained in emergency surgery, while the incredible MMC Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) team quickly whisked Redford away. The skilled NICU staff performed CPR on Redford for nine minutes, saving his life. Shortly after, Dad, Luke, was in the room with his newborn as the situation was explained to him. “It was difficult to watch our son lay there, but the team was transparent and explained everything in the easiest way so I could understand it in these critical moments. Processing everything that was happening around me was a blur, but they brought a sense of peace during the challenging scene that was unfolding in front of me. They are truly angels on earth,” said Luke.

After surgery, Melissa’s traumatic experience would leave some feeling broken, but her head and her heart were hopeful because she knew Redford was in the best hands. Her son was receiving around the clock care and compassion from the right team of people, as they acted as the extension of her heart to his. Redford spent just shy of a month in the NICU. The first 36 hours were the hardest, knowing this was the most critical time and that each time they saw him, they knew they could lose him. However, Luke and Melissa noted that the doctors and nurses had just as much resiliency as the babies, consistently transparent, inviting them to daily rounds, explaining every step of Redford’s healing, and recovery. Melissa believed deep down that the NICU would make them whole again, and they would be home as a family of four before they knew it - even if that timeline felt far away. “The NICU team was amazing. It is the family that you never expected to be a part of, and once you are, you’re welcomed by everyone with open arms,” Melissa said.

On Redford’s due date, by a poetic twist of fate, Luke and Melissa were informed by the NICU team that he was ready to go home. This was highlighted by the incredible sight of Redford being held without tubes, as well as a group of nurses dancing and celebrating at their station. This was a sentimental moment they will always remember. Luke said, “I cannot quantify the gratitude we have for the NICU team and to know we could finally bring him home. This place felt like an extension of our family, and it is because of them, we were able to even have this moment.”



Eric Carney, President and CEO of MMC and MMCSC (front right) and Kenneth Granet, MD, FACP, Chief Medical Officer (front left) gather with members of the hospital's Medical Executive Committee and other attending physicians

National Doctors Day Celebration at MMC

Each March at Monmouth Medical Center (MMC), we celebrate National Doctors Day. This is an opportunity to thank and honor our dedicated physicians for their commitment to providing excellent care to their patients. As a result of that care, MMC has been widely recognized for outstanding quality and dedication to patient safety and experience.

Led by Chief Medical Officer, Kenneth Granet, MD, FACP, MMC has 865 doctors on staff in 11 departments, covering 60 specialties. Dr. Granet states, "MMC's physicians are world-class and they're dedicated to providing the best care to our communities. As a teaching hospital, our physicians also educate the next generation of doctors as part of the MMC mission."

Special thanks to everyone who supported Doctors Day 2024 by donating in honor of their trusted physicians. The physicians especially enjoy reading the notes of gratitude that are sent to them. According to Dr. Granet, "As a physician and educator, it is special to know how our patients feel. It is that connection that makes being a physician so gratifying!"

Grateful patients are always welcome and invited to share their stories with the MMC Foundation. These powerful truths can help to inspire guests at events, create a sense of support and understanding and may inspire a donor to make a philanthropic gift. Please reach out to the Foundation office if you have a story to share.



MMC named to the
2024 World's Best Hospitals
List by Newsweek.

“Our physicians are world-class and they're dedicated to providing the best care to our communities. As a teaching hospital, our physicians also educate the next generation of doctors as part of the MMC mission.”

— KENNETH GRANET, MD
FACP, Chief Medical Officer

If you would like to support Doctors Day, use the envelope provided or visit: monmouthgiving.org and be sure to include the name of the physician in the Tribute Gift section.

To share a grateful patient story, contact Eileen Dupey 723.923.6886 or email Eileen.Dupey@rwjbh.org

**Kindness Brings Joy
to Children at MMC
In-Kind Gifts**

There was magic in the air in late November and December 2023 as day after day, hundreds of holiday gifts arrived for the pediatric patients in the Unterberg Children’s Hospital (UCH) at Monmouth Medical Center (MMC). Thoughtful donors arrived at MMC on motorcycles, in vans, police cars and in SUVs, all bringing toys, gift cards, cheer and kindness to children and their families who spent time during the holidays as patients at MMC.

Every in-kind gift has a story of hope and encouragement for our pediatric patients. As Kelly Calver shared, “Our son Joseph was three weeks old when he spent a month in the hospital and at the Valerie Center. He doesn’t remember, but the gifts we received meant so much to us.” Once things settled, Kelly wanted to give back and began a toy drive, reaching out to family and friends. In 2021, her oldest son’s teacher heard about the toy drive and each year she has her 4th grade class at Saint James Elementary School in Red Bank, bring in a toy and \$2.00, that is added to Kelly’s initiative. This is Kelly’s 9th year of giving back and she says, “It is so emotional. I bring Joe now, so he understands the importance of helping others. I am so grateful for Joe’s health, and everyone who supports our toy drive with donations.”

Kristin Kuhi, Certified Child Life Specialist at MMC said, “Play promotes healing and helps children gain mastery over their fears. The thousands of toys that we receive each year help us bring a sense of ‘home’ into the hospital during the holidays and throughout the year.”

The UCH offers the highest level of pediatric care for children, from newborns to adolescents. With 140 pediatric specialists in over 25 fields of medicine, thousands of children each year receive cutting-edge treatments and specialized expertise. The UCH is also home to the only state designated Children’s Crisis Intervention Services (CCIS) in Monmouth and Ocean counties.

“During holiday times, it is always humbling when the members of our community recognize the work we do, and contribute toys or gift cards for the children,” said Jonathan Teitelbaum, MD, Chair, Department of Pediatrics. “Seeing the pleasure it brings to the children and their parents warms our hearts. Working together with the community makes all of our efforts so rewarding!”

Thank you to everyone involved in our holiday in-kind giving program. Your thoughtfulness changes children’s lives. We are grateful for your commitment to our community, for believing in our mission, and for making the holidays extra special for those in our care.

**“ Play promotes healing and helps
children gain mastery over their fears.**

— KRISTIN KUHI
Child Life Specialist, MMC

**If you would like information about how to support the in-kind giving efforts
at MMC, please contact Eileen.Dupey@rwjbh.org or call 732.923.6886**

PHOTO CAPTIONS FOR IN-KIND DONATIONS DELIVERED BY:

- 1 Monmouth University Cheerleaders
- 2 Under My Skin For Life Foundation
- 3 RWJBarnabas Health IT Department
- 4 Kelly and Joseph Calver, St. James Elementary School
- 5 Bill Blakely of Creative Performance organized a large Motorcycle Run with the JS HOGS and Blue Knights
- 6 Manalapan Police Department





Eric Carney, President and CEO, MMC and MMCSC at the Employee Campaign Kick-off Event



Employee Campaign Kick-off Event

The MMC Team Employee Campaign

Every year, Monmouth Medical Center (MMC) associates show tremendous pride and generosity toward their colleagues through the Employee Campaign. This program gives employees the chance to give back to one another, making donations that are reserved only for employee-related needs and assistance, specifically the Employee Emergency Assistance Fund and Employee Scholarships. As a result of the annual campaign, the Foundation proudly distributes almost \$100,000 to employees each year.

In 2023, the Employee Emergency Assistance Fund supported over 40 employees and their families in times of crisis. Elsy Reina Montejo, Labor and Delivery technician at MMC, is one of the grateful recipients of last year's emergency assistance. Elsy and her family endured the tragic loss of their home to a fire. She was aware of the Employee Campaign from donating to the campaign for seven years while working at MMC. Elsy says that thanks to the help and support received, she is able to provide her family with a home. She feels like she has a second family here at MMC.

Additionally, the Foundation was able to award 49 scholarships to MMC employees' spouses and children with the funds raised through the Employee Campaign. Scholarships are distributed to both full-time and part-time students – full-time awardees receive \$2,000 and part-time awardees receive \$1,000. The Foundation is able to award more and more scholarships each year due to the success of the Employee Campaign.

The Foundation is grateful for the hard work and efforts of MMC employees who continue to show up and support one another through a campaign that works solely to lend a helping hand to a colleague in need.

To make a donation or to learn more about the ways you can be involved, please contact us at 732.923.6886 or go to monmouthgiving.org

“Thanks to the help and support I received, I was able to provide my family with a home. I feel like I have a second family here at MMC.

— ELSY REINA MONTEJO
Clinical Care Technician,
Labor and Delivery, MMC



SCAN HERE
TO WATCH AN INSPIRATIONAL
VIDEO ABOUT WHY EMPLOYEES
GIVE BACK TO HELP THEIR FELLOW
COLLEAGUES.

*A rendering of the
Vogel Medical Campus
Opening in 2026*



“To have a renowned cancer center close by means everything. The collaboration that we are going to be able to see firsthand between Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey and Monmouth Medical Center, and that expertise coming together, is going to make a huge difference.

— VICTORIA TIZZIO
MMC Supporter



**SCAN HERE TO LEARN MORE
ABOUT THE PLANS TO TRANSFORM
CANCER RESEARCH AND CARE.
WATCH THE VIDEO TO SEE
VICTORIA TIZZIO SHARE HER
PERSPECTIVE ALONGSIDE
HOSPITAL LEADERS.**