

# health care heroes

AT ROBERT WOOD JOHNSON MEDICAL SCHOOL



**Sally Radovick, MD**

Chair

Department of Pediatrics

Congratulations to **Sally Radovick, MD**, who was nominated as a **Health Care Hero at Robert Wood Johnson Medical School**.

*"I am nominating Dr. Radovick for her leadership and inspiration of our department during challenging times. She goes out of her way to ensure everyone is informed and makes special time to always reach out to the residents.*

*Additionally, she takes time to individually reach out to the faculty to recognize our hard work and make you feel special. Her support is unwavering. She does it all with a smile which shows her incredible strength and passion for pediatrics."*

-- Anonymous

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You are invited to **nominate a member of the medical school community** as a Health Care Hero. To submit a nomination, complete a survey **here** identifying how this person's actions during the COVID-19 pandemic have inspired you.

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Front Row, l - r: Christina Cole, ARDMS/RDCS; Benjamin Lentzner, MD; Damaris Messam; Jane Conner; Ann Marie McCann; and Carmen Rosado.

Back Row, l - r: Tamar Thurm, RN, BSN; Nadia Clarke, RDCS; Eric Gozun, CCI; Joseph Gaffney, MD; Mary Homan, RN; and Monica Chugh, MD.

Not pictured: Je'Nelle Tompkins, RDCS; and Robert Manduley, MD.

## Pediatric Cardiology Staff

**Administrators:** AnnMarie McCann, Damaris Messam and Carmen Rosado

**Nursing:** Mary Homan, RN; and Tamar Thurm, RN, BSN

**Sonographers:** Nadia Clarke, RDCS; Christina Cole, ARDMS/RDCS; Eric Gozun, CCI; and Je'Nelle Tompkins, RDCS

Congratulations to the Pediatric Cardiology Staff members, who were nominated as **Health Care Heroes at Robert Wood Johnson Medical School**.

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*"During these challenging times, the pediatric cardiology staff have come together with commitment in providing the best care for our patients. Our administrative staff works diligently and effectively to communicate with each patient and parent to ensure they are seen in our office safely and all their needs are met prior, during and after the visit.*

*The nursing staff has been phenomenal in managing our patients with intense care needs, as well as constantly fielding calls from concerned parents about COVID-19 implications in patients with congenital heart disease. Additionally, our nurse, Tammy Thurm, has been not only working tirelessly in Pediatric Cardiology, but has volunteered to be on the frontlines with Employee Health, testing staff suspected to be affected by COVID-19. She is also a safety advocate and has ensured that all staff and patients who enter our office are appropriately protected.*

*Our devoted sonographer staff continues to work on the frontlines, in the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit and Pediatric Emergency Room, performing urgent echocardiograms in patients affected by COVID-19.*

*This cohesive team is built on a foundation of mutual respect and each member has provided continuous support to not only our patients and families, but also each other. They continue to exude compassion, patience and motivation in ensuring each team member is taken care of, and I am proud to be a member of the team!"*

-- Monica Chugh, MD

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## Kathleen Faup

Practice Manager

Department of Pediatrics

Congratulations to **Kathleen Faup**, who was nominated as a **Health Care Hero at Robert Wood Johnson Medical School**.

*"The COVID-19 pandemic presented enormous challenges in all clinical settings. Ever-changing circumstances required immediate responses no matter the time of day or day of week.*

*The Pediatric Specialty practices excelled during the COVID-19 surge largely due to the leadership of Kathleen Faup, the Pediatric Faculty Practice manager. Ever-present during the past several months, Kathy anticipated and proactively addressed COVID-related process changes, and promptly responded to issues that arose. Kathy's calm, positive approach to quality and safety enabled the pediatric staff to confidently continue to provide their patients with highest quality care. We are all grateful for her leadership."*

-- M. Douglas Baker, MD





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**Sunanda Gaur, MD**

Professor  
Department of Pediatrics

Congratulations to **Sunanda Gaur, MD**, who was nominated as a **Health Care Hero at Robert Wood Johnson Medical School**.

*"Dr. Gaur transformed the pediatric and adult Clinical Research Centers into one cohesive COVID -19 research unit. She initiated more than half a dozen COVID related studies in quick succession to ensure the availability of current trials to both patients and employees.*

*She maintained a steady calmness and generated a strong camaraderie that was the core of our success and survival at this stressful time."*

-- Maya Ramagopal, MD, and Deborah MCCloskey ,RN ,BSN

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## Seherish Ahmad, MD

Resident

Department of Pediatrics

Congratulations to **Seherish Ahmad, MD**, who was nominated as a **Health Care Hero at Robert Wood Johnson Medical School**.

*"Dr. Seherish Ahhmad is one of our pediatric interns who has gone above and beyond to help her fellow residents during this pandemic.*

*She has demonstrated a great deal of flexibility in her willingness to help cover shifts for residents whose childcare fell through or whose family members have taken ill.*

*In addition, her continued positive attitude and ardent commitment to caring for her patients is something to be admired. Thank you, Seherish, for reminding us all of the good we can accomplish if we work together and help one another."*

-- Elizabeth Barrington, MD

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## Dawn Thompson, MD

Assistant Professor  
Department of Pediatrics

Congratulations to **Dawn Thompson, MD**, who was nominated as a **Health Care Hero at Robert Wood Johnson Medical School**

*"Dr. Thompson has redefined the meaning of an essential worker. She has worked tirelessly, providing both in-person and virtual care to our patients."*

*"She has made herself accessible even on the days she is not scheduled and has continued to provide excellent care with a smile. She displays such courage, even with constant changes and reconstruction."*

-- Christina Tran



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## **Tamar Thurm, RN, BSN**

Staff Nurse

Department of Pediatrics

Congratulations to **Tamar Thurm, RN, BSN**, who was nominated as a **Health Care Hero at Robert Wood Johnson Medical School**.

*"Tammy immediately stepped up and offered to help as soon as the pandemic affected RWJMS. She has been integral to the success of employee testing and patient testing.*

*She assisted with the development of the newly established drive through testing for employees and patients, provided training to staff regarding testing and proper PPE procedures and established a relationship with the hospital lab to ensure all results are properly documented.*

*Tammy reached out to RWJMS leadership on a daily basis, ready to pitch in and help in any way she could. She has dedicated herself to ensuring both patients and employees are kept safe during this crisis and has done so with a supportive outlook and kindness to every one on every day."*

-- Mindy Rodden, PCCNP, MSN





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## **Dawn Tortajada, MSN, RN, PNP-BC**

**Advanced Practice Nurse  
Pediatric Pulmonary Division**

Congratulations to **Dawn Tortajada, MSN, RN, PNP-BC**, who was nominated as a **Health Care Hero at Robert Wood Johnson Medical School**.

*"I nominate Dawn Tortajada as a health care hero because of the kindness, bravery and determination that she exhibited before COVID-19, during and after. She stepped into action ensuring that families and children with asthma, pulmonary issues and cystic fibrosis issues, were protected from COVID-19 to the best of her ability."*

*Appointments were changed to telemedicine visits to ensure that these families and children would not be exposed and to lessen their risks. Any families with children brought into the Emergency Room were sure to meet Dawn as she made it her top responsibility to visit them as inpatients on a daily basis.*

*When the department faculty was asked to submit where they could render their services during COVID-19, Dawn stated the Emergency Room and inpatient pediatric floors. She has shown leadership as a pulmonary nurse practitioner leading the rest of our team along with our physicians to keep our pulmonary patients safe.*

*Dawn stayed the extra hours needed, worked the seven days straight and wore the protection gear needed. Dawn also separated from her family to ensure everyone's safety. She has inspired me because I have seen her selfless acts and steady character throughout these COVID-19 days.*

*As a Nurse Practitioner who did not have to really be at the frontlines, Dawn chose to be there. These are my reasons why I nominate Dawn Tortajada as a Health Care Hero."*

**-- Vivian De Los Santos**

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## Donna Weeks, PHR

Program Administrator  
Department of Pediatrics

Congratulations to Donna Weeks, PHR, who was nominated as a **Health Care Hero at Robert Wood Johnson Medical School**.

*"A departmental response to a world crisis calls for all hands on board. Support staff are fundamental to the functioning of our operation. Donna Weeks has been no less than extraordinarily supportive, helpful, and omnipresent during this crisis. Whether it be Sunday evening, Tuesday at 11 PM, or Friday at 8 AM, I'm sure to have my questions or needs met by Donna.*

*During this difficult clinical period there has been no shortage of administrative tasks--websites, evaluations, staff privileges-- I can always rely on Donna to get the job done."*

*Thank you, Donna, for always being there for us."*

-- Ernest G. Leva, MD, FAAP





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## Alan Weller, MD

Associate Professor  
Department of Pediatrics

Congratulations to **Alan Weller, MD**, who was nominated by three people as a **Health Care Hero at Robert Wood Johnson Medical School**.

*"The impact of COVID-19 on the patients, families and staff was uncharted territory and posed many unique challenges. With a degree of urgency the interdisciplinary team needed to come together to implement safe practices and innovative solutions to meet the needs of patients families and staff.*

*From the onset, Dr. Weller was a champion for patient safety and worked tirelessly to ensure practices were put in place that promoted the safety and mental well-being of all. Dr. Weller made sure all staff felt comfortable with proper PPE techniques which definitely positively impacted the morale.*

*He was always mindful to ask the staff from all disciplines how they were feeling and how they were dealing with such uncertainty and stress. Dr. Weller extended genuine care and kindness to all colleagues which was evident in his daily interactions.*

*It is difficult to quantify what these efforts meant to the staff during these challenging times but we are so grateful to have been working side by side with him. He is truly a role model to others and a Healthcare Hero!"*

-- Kathy Sorlano, MS, RN, NE-BC

*"With the uncertainty of the effects of COVID 19 on newborns, Dr. Weller as the medical director of the newborn nurseries, worked collaboratively with all disciplines throughout the hospital to assure the best outcomes were being met for the patient while maintaining safety for patients as well as the nursing and medical team members.*

*Dr. Weller remained up-to-date with the various changes set forth by the CDC and made sure to share those changes with the healthcare team members. Dr. Alan Weller is a true Healthcare hero for his dedication and commitment to the care provided to our littlest patients."*

-- Keeba Souto, MSN, RN

Read more of Dr. Weller's nominations [here](#).

Dr. Weller is the last health care hero we will be sharing. Thank you to ALL our health care heroes, and to those who nominated them. We are thankful to recognize our dedicated and selfless colleagues.