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PEOPLE + NEWS

OCTOBER 2012 ISSUE



Super Women

by Colleen Patrice Clark; photo by Tim Hawk

When it comes to finding a balance between work and life, many women will agree there is no absolute harmony; there will always be give and take, sacrifices to make, priorities to set. But that doesn't mean it's not worth it, and it certainly doesn't mean it goes unnoticed.

Whether they're working from home, the office, or out in the community, these women are finding ways to do it all, and they're changing lives in the process. Here, we recognize just a sampling of them, carefully chosen from the hundreds of nominations you

submitted this year.

Plus, this year we chose to honor a special family as the joint recipients of our first-ever Woman of the Year Award, a family that is turning tragedy into change and spreading a powerful message from high school auditoriums all the way to Trenton. Read on to hear their story, along with the inspiring work of 37 others worthy of being defined a Superwoman.

Women of the Year: Annette, Mary and Angela Donato

Ryan Bolis hadn't even been born yet, but he already had a nickname. RJ, as he was affectionately referred to by his loving mother, Toni Donato-Bolis, father, Eric, and big sister, Mia, was a mere two days from being welcomed to the world when the Donato and Bolis' families lives were quickly, and horrifically, changed forever. After leaving her final pre-natal visit in June 2011—and just a mile away from home in Washington Township—Toni's car was struck head on by a young driver allegedly distracted by his GPS. Both mother and unborn son were killed, and the other driver faced no charges.

But from a tragedy no family should ever bear witness to arose a foundation honoring Toni and baby RJ, and in just a year's time, their heartbreaking story has touched hundreds if not thousands of lives.

The family—including mother Mary and sisters Angela and Annette, formed the Toni Donato-Bolis & Baby RJ Foundation, making appearances on local television and speaking regularly at high schools all across South Jersey.

"I wanted to speak out to students and let them know how dangerous distracted driving is and how easy it is to look at your phone and, in that one second, change someone's entire world," Angela says.

Along with speaking engagements, they have held fundraisers—such as the Ride to Stop Distracted Driving motorcycle event—done a slogan-writing contest in Washington Township, and given out four scholarships to date already. Angela was recently honored in the State House in Trenton as one of 12 women in the state who are making a difference, and the whole family recently partnered with legislators and other families to put a law in place that makes it easier for prosecutors to get convictions for vehicular homicide or assault by auto against a person who illegally uses a cell phone while driving and, as a result, kills or injures someone. It was signed into law in July.

Angela, Annette and Mary all say they wanted to make a statement, to make sure Toni's name was not forgotten. While nothing will bring Toni and RJ back, they say they'll be happy to know future lives are saved.

"The choices that we make from day to day do not just affect you, but they affect everyone around you," Angela says. "Sharing my sister's story opens the opportunity to save lives, not to scare, upset or worry anyone. My only motive is to prevent another family from experiencing this pain."

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Shelley Levitan Adler, Esq.

Adler was already an admirable woman—a corporate lawyer who became a stay-at-home mom to raise four boys with former U.S. Rep. John Adler, him serving constituents and her getting elected to town council in Cherry Hill, serving as PTA president, and volunteering for numerous local charities. But when her husband died last year at the age of 51, just a year after being ousted from office by now Rep. Jon Runyan, she's now decided the best way to honor him is to pick up where his fight left off.

A Harvard graduate, Adler is running against Runyan in the November election for a shot at her husband's former seat in the 3rd Congressional District because she says she wants to see children, families, small businesses and veterans come first. If elected, she'll be the first-ever congresswoman from South Jersey.

Lindsey Giannini

The current Miss Gloucester County, Giannini chose an outreach platform that hits close to home—educating the community on the dangers of texting and driving. In the last year, she had permanent, self-designed “Stay Alive, Don't Text and Drive” signs approved in Hammonton, Mantua, Pitman and Washington Township. She has partnered with Mike Kellenyi, father of Washington Township High School senior Nikki Kellenyi, who was killed in a car accident earlier this year. Giannini wears a purple bracelet made in her memory at all of her speaking engagements. “Not only is my campaign changing minds and habits, it is making legislative change,” says Giannini, who just began her freshman year at Rowan.

In addition to her platform, Giannini is an ambassador for Children's Miracle Network Hospitals and Children's Specialized Hospital of New Jersey.

Sen. Diane Allen

Allen, who has worn many hats in addition to being a five-term senator including mother, pilot, competitive hang-glider and award-winning journalist, has always been known as someone who doesn't hold back, so it was no surprise that even illness couldn't slow her down when she was diagnosed with an aggressive form of oral cancer.

She was absent from Trenton while undergoing treatment in 2010, but not completely gone. Though she had part of her tongue removed, she stayed in touch with her staff to ensure her constituents remained a priority. And she has bounced back, becoming the regional director for the National Foundation for Women Legislators, recently attending the GOP convention, and also spearheading legislation to prevent teacher-on-student bullying. Though she was told she'd never talk normally again, you can often find her reading to her fourth grandchild, born last month.

Johari Rollins

Johari and her husband, Phillies shortstop Jimmy Rollins, acknowledge they were very lucky to be raised by loving parents—but they're aware that isn't the case for all children, which is why this Woolwich resident recently became a spokeswoman for Prevent Child Abuse Pennsylvania.

Their own organization, the Rollins Family Foundation, has partnered with Prevent Child Abuse on several events, such as the upcoming A Night in Paris, their second annual gala to benefit prevention and awareness efforts.

The Rollins Family Foundation holds other events throughout the year, all geared toward supporting multiple causes, including children and young adults living with arthritis and families struggling financially with extracurricular activities.

“My ultimate, long-term goals are to expand the Rollins Family Foundation to the West Coast as well, where Jimmy is from, so that we can increase the amount of funds and spread awareness that will ultimately help more children,” Rollins says.

“In addition to that, I'd like to get back into all of my health and fitness endeavors. I always said I would be the next Donna Richardson and put out a few workout DVDs so, watch out.”

Nadine Coburn

Coburn isn't just the wife of Philadelphia Flyer Braydon Coburn; she's a pretty big player herself.

As co-chair of the Flyers Wives Fight for Lives Carnival, which will celebrate its 36th year next February, Coburn helps organize the largest fundraiser of the year for Comcast-Spectacor Charities. The event has raised \$25 million so far, and benefits several local groups including the March of Dimes and United Way.

Haddonfield residents, Coburn and her husband are also a well-known supporters of animal rights, launching the Paws & Claws Fund at the Philadelphia Animal Welfare Society, which provides free veterinary care at the society's Spay/Neuter and Wellness Clinic for low-income pet owners.

Val Traore

It was in 2006 that Traore became CEO of the Food Bank of South Jersey, an \$11 million

nonprofit that distributes food to more than 200 charitable food providers in the region. In the time since, she has tripled the organization's revenue base and she's been instrumental in leading the nonprofit through its expansion project, which will see the Pennsauken-based facility build out to 65,000 square feet.

The food bank has garnered quite a bit of attention lately, as it has entered into a unique partnership with Campbell's to produce 54,000 jars of peach salsa that'll raise money for the food bank. But it's their outreach with children and seniors that Traore is most proud of, such as the Kids Café, KidzPack and School Pantry programs, which ensure children have access to three meals a day, seven days a week; and the Twilight Harvest program, which provides two weeks' worth of groceries to area senior citizens.

Amy Welsh

You might think choosing the in-school nurse for a special needs child would be a mother's right, but it wasn't in New Jersey—at least not until Welsh had her say. Her son Isaiah, one of her triplets born prematurely in 2002, suffers from epilepsy and cerebral palsy. Though he attends Burlington County Special Services School District, his home district of Collingswood is responsible for the bill, so the district chose its own nurse—a stranger to Isaiah.

But after leading the charge to fight the district and garnering support from legislators, Welsh's story became the inspiration for a new bill—signed into law in May—that protects medically fragile students and gives their parents a choice. "I will be proud if my actions were able to help other families like mine, especially those families that are overwhelmed with the demands of caring for and advocating for children with special needs."

Betty Maul

Maul uses the words of motivational speaker Nido Qubein to explain why giving back to the community is important to her: "Your present circumstances don't determine where you can go; they merely determine where you start." Fitting, considering what was a life-changing diagnosis for her family only led to a determination to persevere and make a difference for others suffering from a disease they hadn't even heard of before—Reflex Sympathetic Dystrophy Syndrome.

Maul's daughter was diagnosed with RSDS 13 years ago, which is a chronic neurological syndrome characterized by severe burning pain, caused by a misfire of the brain in which the pain from an initial injury never ends. After seemingly endless visits to find the right treatment, Maul became involved with the Reflex Sympathetic Dystrophy Syndrome Association, then based in Haddonfield. She now serves on the association's board and has helped raise more than \$1 million in the past 11 years.

Anne Sceia Klein

Several public relations graduates from Rowan University can thank Klein for helping to jumpstart their career. As the professional advisor to their chapter of the Public Relations Student Society of America—and as the founder/president of Anne Klein Communications Group in Mount Laurel—for 32 years, she has hired nearly 20 grads to kick off their fledgling careers. In 1987, the chapter renamed its student-run public relations agency in her honor.

A Wharton graduate, Klein spent 16 years in the corporate world before branching out with her firm in 1982. Known as an expert in strategic planning and crisis communication issues, she is also dedicated to giving back. She has been a volunteer with the American Heart Association for more than 10 years, was chairwoman for the Central/Southern New Jersey Board for the past two, and works closely with the association's Go Red for Women program.

Kasey Massa

Not everybody knows what they want to be when they grow up by age 11, but surviving pediatric cancer provided a pretty clear direction for Massa. By 19, the Mount Laurel native founded Camp No Worries in Tabernacle, a free, one-week program that serves as a support system for children affected by cancer. Since 1995, the camp has reached 1,300 youth.

"It is my hope that, as long as childhood cancer exists and there are children and families in New Jersey that are fighting, there will be Camp No Worries," Massa says. Massa is also a licensed social worker for the Children's Regional Hospital at Cooper University Hospital, and just last month began working as a child life specialist at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia.

Kelly Adams and Kim Pohubka

Adams, a longtime horseback rider and special education teacher at Haines Sixth Grade Center in Medford, wanted to find a creative way to help children with special needs, so she and her friend Pohubka founded the KaleidoScope Therapeutic Riding Program in 2009. The nonprofit, which made the move to Flora Lea Farms in Medford earlier this year, offers equestrian therapy for kids and adults with special needs such as autism, cerebral palsy and traumatic brain injuries. Adams was honored earlier this year with the Sy Kantowitz Humanitarian Award for her work, which is said to enhance clients' self-esteem as well as physical strength.

Gwen DeVera

DeVera doesn't go anywhere without her tote bag full of voter registration forms and absentee ballots, paperwork she gives out to people she meets at events throughout the year. As a retired nurse, she serves as vice-chair of the Camden County Human Relations Commission, is a

founder of the Voorhees Cultural and Diversity Committee, and is the regional director for political affairs for the National Filipino Federation Association of America. Born in the Philippines, she is well known for being an advocate for the local Asian-American community, giving immigrants a voice by helping them register to vote.

DeVera's community activities also include putting on the annual Philippine Independence Day Celebration and the popular International Day in Voorhees.

Linda Karanzalis

Giving confidence back to children with learning and social issues is what drives Karanzalis, the founder of ADDvantages Learning Center in Cherry Hill. "The suffering of these students and myself, as I was one of those kids, motivated me to find ways for them to experience success and have a bright future," she says.

Karanzalis left teaching to start ADDvantages Learning Center in 1997 and help fill a gap she saw, one created by an educational system that was failing these students.

Today, ADDvantages serves clients ranging from children with ADHD and autism to senior citizens dealing with mild cognitive impairment. Karanzalis is also a blogger for ADDitude magazine and the coordinator of CHADD (Children and Adults with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder) in South Jersey.

Dr. Gloria Bonilla-Santiago

Bonilla-Santiago had a vision to change lives by providing better opportunities to the children of Camden, a desire that resulted in her founding the LEAP Academy University Charter School—a K-12 public school that operates on one basic notion: all children and families deserve access to a quality public education.

Opened in 1997, the school has graduated seven classes with a 100 percent graduating rate. It has since expanded throughout Camden and, through its different programs, serves children from infancy through college.

Earlier this year, Bonilla-Santiago was honored as the New Jersey Charter School Advocate of the Year due to her leadership in the launch of the Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) academic program, and leading the school to break ground on its new \$12.5 million STEM Campus.

Bonilla-Santiago is also a Rutgers professor, creator of the Alfredo Santiago Endowed Scholarship and Gala in honor of her late husband, and founder of the Center for Strategic Urban Community Leadership.

Liza Cartmell

Haddonfield's Cartmell came out of retirement last year, following a career with ARAMARK Sports and Entertainment Group, to take on a position with a pressure-filled objective—returning Atlantic City to its rightful place in tourism.

As the CEO of the nonprofit Atlantic City Alliance, Cartmell says she's thrilled to be in a position where she can make a difference following years of corporate objectives. Already she has seen several accomplishments, such as launching the DO AC campaign, and implementing a series of free attractions, such as a 3D light and sound show.

Cartmell also serves on the board of directors of the Please Touch Museum in Philadelphia, where she says she's a firm believer in their mission of enabling children to explore and develop through undirected play.

Lynda L. Hinkle, Esq.

Hinkle founded her own law firm three years ago in Marlton, Blackwood and Woodbury, and remains a community advocate beyond the legal realm. She has volunteered with Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Burlington, Camden and Gloucester Counties, is involved with fundraising for the Cooper Foundation and Bellmawr Lions Club, and serves as founding editor for the MP Journal, an online, international peer-reviewed feminist academic journal.

With her law degree from Rutgers University, a master's in teaching from Rowan University as well as a master's in English from Rutgers, Hinkle has worked in politics, run a boutique writing and PR company, and taught at the high school and community college level. "We are all supposed to be giving as much as we get," she says. "That's how community works."

Melodie Homer

Homer says she stopped making long-term plans after Sept. 11, 2001, the day her husband, LeRoy, the co-pilot of Flight #93, was killed. Instead she focuses on the next step. Eleven years later, the focus remains preserving her husband's memory through the LeRoy W. Homer Jr. Foundation, which has given out more than a dozen scholarships to men and women to obtain their pilot's license. "This was my husband's first step in his aviation career, and it seemed like an appropriate way to honor him," Homer says.

Homer, a registered nurse who recently published her book *From Where I Stand: Flight #93*

Pilot's Widow Sets the Record Straight, says the foundation also goes into disadvantaged schools to inspire children, particularly girls and minorities, which are underrepresented in the industry, to pursue aviation.

Dr. Mary F. Campagnolo

Campagnolo, an avid cyclist, recently led a team from the Medical Society of New Jersey in the Bike MS: City to Shore Ride 2012, a 150-mile, two-day trek that raises funds for the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, an organization she has long supported. As the newly elected president of the medical society—and only the third woman in its 236-year history—Campagnolo is leading by example when it comes to giving back.

As an advocate for medical quality and health care improvement, Campagnolo's work with the society includes encouraging the advancement of women in medicine and increasing access to physicians and other health care services. A resident of Columbus, Campagnolo practices medicine with the Virtua Medical Group of Burlington County, is chief of the Department of Family Medicine at Virtua Memorial Hospital, and she cares for nursing home and sub-acute patients at Virtua Health and Rehabilitation Center.

Terri Merlino

Meeting survivor after survivor during her 18-month treatment for colorectal cancer at the age of 42 inspired Merlino. "I committed to myself that once I had completed my treatment, I was going to do whatever I could so that others would not hear those words: 'You have cancer.'"

A busy woman to begin with as a senior vice president at PHH Mortgage and married mother of three, Merlino committed herself to local causes, becoming the board president of the American Cancer Society of Southern New Jersey and joining the board of directors of the society's Eastern Division. She also shares her story as a participant in local Relay for Life events, but says it's in the "mundane"—family dinners and days at the beach—where she finds the most joy in life.

Christine Ulch

In her 20 years of experience in the Air Force, Ulch mentored more than 100 people, helping them achieve educational goals they didn't realize were attainable because they didn't understand the military benefits available to them. Ulch, a retired sergeant, recently accepted a post as director of Military Education and Veterans Services at Burlington County College, where it is "a blessing to continue to serve such an important population," she says.

Ulch oversees a staff of 13, helping the college's veteran students from the time of admissions to graduation, benefits she truly understands the importance of because all four of her degrees (two associates, a bachelor's and master's) were the result of military tuition benefits, and she's not done; the married mother of four is currently seeking a doctor of general psychology degree.

Dr. Kathryn Lambert

During high school football season in South Jersey, it wouldn't be rare to find Dr. Kathryn Lambert on the sidelines at Collingswood High School, acting as the staff physician for these young athletes, a passion of hers since she is a fan of football and all local sports. She has worked the sidelines for five area schools during the past 20 years. Lambert, the acting assistant dean for student affairs at UMDNJ's School of Osteopathic Medicine, also practices family medicine at UMDNJ along with being a professor and mentor to the area's budding physicians. "I think it is important to exemplify to my students that we need to give back to our profession and communities through leadership and service," she says.

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Jena Mazzio

More than 500,000 animals are killed in house fires each year, but in many cases, their death could have been prevented if the rescue squad was equipped with pet oxygen masks. The cost is \$55 for a set of three, a small fee in the mind of an animal lover like Mazzio.

That's why Mazzio, whose husband is a firefighter in Washington Township, formed Project LOMA (Life-Saving Oxygen Masks for Animals) last November, raising money to outfit fire departments and rescue squads across South Jersey with these devices that are specifically designed to fit over an animal's snout. To date, Project LOMA has purchased masks for Washington Township, Medford, West Deptford, the West Jersey K9 Search & Rescue, and more.

Mary Helen Ranieri

Ranieri serves as the executive director of the Haddonfield nonprofit Canuso Foundation,

formed in 1974 when her sister, Joan "Babe" Canuso, was diagnosed with leukemia. Though she won her childhood battle and helped oversee the foundation's raising of more than \$2 million for cancer research, she passed away in 2005 from a brain tumor.

Ranieri, since 2009, has carried on the legacy of the foundation, which helped build the world's first Ronald McDonald House in Philadelphia as well as three others in the region. Just three years ago, the Babe's Kids program branched off of the foundation, a "for kids by kids" organization that holds fundraising events to raise awareness and funds such as the Babe's Kids Dodgeball Tournament, bowling tournaments, and The Chicken Runs at Midnight, a popular family fun run/relay event.

Carol Erickson

Erickson uses her position as a meteorologist with CBS 3 to help raise awareness for two issues close to her heart—breast cancer awareness and animal cruelty.

Erickson, of Burlington County, has received honors from the Pennsylvania SPCA for her on-air stories; she has a popular group on Facebook, Carol Erickson's Pet Page, a place for animal lovers to share their stories and concerns; and she recently published a children's book, *Not a Used Dog, At All*, that promotes shelter animals.

But it was Erickson's stories detailing her own battle with breast cancer that won her an Emmy in 2004, followed by another for her coverage in 2009 of the Susan G. Komen Philadelphia Race for the Cure, which she has become involved in every year. "Confiding health issues, even to friends, is something I don't do. So going public was a big stretch for me," Erickson says. "But I think by now we all know that seeing someone publicly go through the less perfect moments in life, of which there are plenty, is a benefit to everyone."

Maureen Brigham, Colleen Fossett, Michelle Powell and Lydia DeRosso

It started in 2010 when this group of women wanted to make a positive difference, and now the Mullica Hill Women's Tri-Club has grown to include 520 members of all ages and athletic abilities, from as far north as Cherry Hill and down the Shore. With Fossett as president, DeRosso as VP, Brigham as treasurer and Powell as secretary, the nonprofit club offers workouts six days a week during the April-September triathlon season, but their work has a further reach. "Fitness aside, friendships have developed, marriages strengthened and relationships with children improve due to this club," Fossett says.

Their program for young girls in grades first through eighth adds to that. Girls on the GLOW offers endurance, strength, character and confidence-building activities every weekend. The club also chooses a different charity to contribute to each year. This year, the cause was melanoma. They held free screenings, skin checks, happy hours, mum sales and other events to raise money for the Melanoma International Foundation.

Kim Murray

For anyone who has graduated from Lenape High School in the last 19 years with a love for science, Kim Murray might be to thank. As the ChemClub advisor and chemistry teacher, her desire has always been to foster an interest in the sciences at a young age, which is why she created the annual 4th-Grade Family Science Night Program in Mount Laurel schools, in which more than 80 high school students perform science activities for students and families. She also initiated a program between high school students and sixth-graders. "My ultimate goal is to create an outreach program at each elementary level," Murray says. "Two down, one to go."

Murray has racked up some well-deserved awards this year, first being named Teacher of the Year at Lenape, then at the district level, and finally at the county level.

Rose Marie Beauchemin

It was a local radiologist who first approached Beauchemin, a makeup artist in 1990, about the concept of permanent makeup. All she knew was the stigma attached to the word "tattoo," not the healing power it can provide for those whose features have suffered due to illness or injury.

After learning more, she received extensive training and opened up The Beau Institute of Permanent Makeup and Corrective Cosmetics in Mount Laurel, where her work includes camouflaging scars and redefining features for burn victims. But what she's really known for is three-dimensional areola tattooing, which she performs for free for breast cancer survivors, a practice she now teaches around the globe. "A blank canvas does not allow these women to feel complete or feminine, yet alone confident," Beauchemin says. "Nothing gives me greater pleasure than to be able to restore some of this vitality."

AlynMarie Smedley, Esq.

As if it wasn't enough to be going through a difficult pregnancy in the final months of law school in 2004 while juggling a full-time job, Smedley also faced the sudden death of her uncle one week before giving birth to her daughter. A well-respected administrator at Rancocas Valley Regional High School, a 5K was organized to raise money in his name and the ensuing William T. Nace Scholarship was formed. As the money began to dwindle last year, Smedley formed a scholarship foundation and began planning upcoming fundraisers, such as the Tin Man 5K in Pennsauken, to ensure the scholarships can continue to be given out annually, and to expand upon what schools the fund reaches.

Smedley, an associate at Woodbury law firm Trace and Jenkins, LLC, is also a member of the board of directors at Gateway Community Action Partnership, which promotes quality of life and self-sustainability in the region.

Suzanne Zammit

The development of small businesses is at the forefront of economic recovery, and right there to aid in their growth is Suzanne Zammit, manager of the Rutgers–Camden business incubator since 2008. There, she works to attract, develop and retain new companies, helping provide a safety net for these businesses by providing the resources and mentoring any startup would need. She's also the president of the New Jersey Business Incubation Network, which aims to create higher-paying jobs across the state as well as successful, viable businesses. When it comes to charities, Zammit says she's drawn to The American Cancer Society and the American Heart Association, as well as any organization that helps children.

Lisa Bien

Anyone who wants to make a difference can start by being a mentor, according to Bien. As the founder of BIEN Marketing Group in Mount Laurel, she has always taken that very seriously, giving back to her alma mater, Temple University, by teaching in the communications department for the past nine years. "My greatest community outreach is my passion for teaching," she says.

Bien is also involved with The CARES (Child Abuse Research Education and Service) Institute at UMDNJ in Stratford, Cathedral Kitchen in Camden, and the Terri Lynne Lokoff Foundation, which provides grants for programs and scholarships to child care centers and providers. Bien has two sons of her own at home and still finds time for gigs as a standup comic, appearing at venues in Philadelphia and New York.

Elizabeth Ryan, Esq.

There's no typical day for Ryan, who may be traveling the state speaking with legislators one day, speaking to Congress in Washington, D.C., or to members of the New Jersey Hospital Association (NJHA) the next. "Or it may be a combination of all the above," says Ryan, president/CEO of the NJHA, a \$25 million association known primarily for health care advocacy, since 2008.

Ryan, of Florence, who began her career as a lawyer and went on to serve as assistant counsel under Gov. Jim Florio, also oversees the nonprofit's affiliate Health Research and Education Trust of New Jersey along with for-profit Healthcare Business Solutions. In addition to numerous health care-related boards, Ryan also serves on the New Jersey Hall of Fame Foundation Board.

Brenda J. Bacon

Bacon spent her teenage years volunteering for the Red Cross, helping to lay the foundation that led her to a career of helping others. In 1996, she founded Brandywine Senior Living, based in Mount Laurel, which now has 24 communities in five states, plus a new one under construction in Voorhees. She is also the vice chair of the board of directors of the Assisted Living Federation of America.

Beyond the senior service field, Bacon is highly involved with the Boys and Girls Club of Camden County. She was a founding board member and chaired their 2008 gala, which raised more than \$1 million. "I believe that those of us who have been so fortunate as to have involved and supportive parents ... have an obligation to give back," Bacon says.

Jocelyn Mitchell-Williams

Having worked as an OB/GYN at Cooper University Hospital for the past 15 years, Mitchell-Williams couldn't pass up the opportunity to become involved with the new Cooper Medical School of Rowan University. As its associate dean for multicultural and community affairs, she works to establish and maintain partnerships with community organizations, health care providers and educational institutions, to recruit students, and to oversee their community service experiences.

Paying it forward is a requirement of these new medical students. "Passing along that message is important to me as a mother, a teacher, a physician and a member of the community," says Mitchell-Williams, a Moorestown resident, mother of four and wife of Action News' Rick Williams. Along with being involved with Trinity Episcopal Church and Moorestown Theater Company, she also serves as director of prenatal programs for the Camden Coalition of Healthcare Providers, is a board member of Twin Oaks Community Services, and volunteer with Cathedral Kitchen and Volunteers of America.

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