



Jean M. Silvestri, MD

The Woman's Board Chair of Pediatrics

Advancement of Medicine

My mission as the Woman's Board Chair of the Department of Pediatrics aligns with the mission of the Woman's Board of Rush University Medical Center. The endowment helps me lead and partner with our faculty to provide the best health care for the individuals and diverse communities we serve by supporting our outstanding patient care, original research and community outreach initiatives.

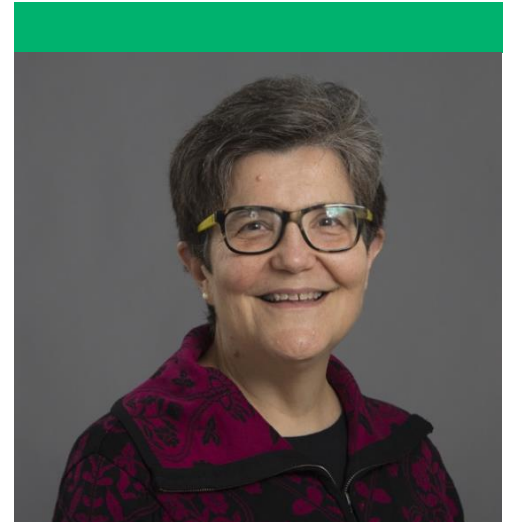
The Woman's Board endowment generously supports three specific areas in our department.

Pediatric Residency Quality Improvement and Patient Safety Track

This track for our pediatric residents is led by **Laura Meltzer, MD**, associate professor and Hospital Medicine division chief, and **Laura Seske, MD, MS**, assistant professor and patient safety officer. The endowment supports these two leaders in educating residents on quality principles and metrics and leading mortality and morbidity conferences and other educational conferences. Three pediatric residents are currently in this track and have presented abstracts of their quality improvement work at national meetings with excellent feedback. Their projects have made important changes in clinical workflows. We look forward to these projects continuing to enhance patient care and future collaborations with other residency programs in other Rush departments.

Pediatric Residency Community Advocacy at Rush for Equity (KidsCARE) Track

The endowment supports **Karen Lui, MD**, and **Laura Pabalan, MD**, both assistant professors and passionate leaders of this program that trains future physician leaders in health equity and community engagement. Four pediatric residents and one combined internal medicine and pediatrics resident are currently enrolled, leading meaningful, community-centered initiatives such as enhancing EpiPen education in schools and daycares, delivering comprehensive sex education in a youth homeless shelter, and improving access to therapy for children in shelters. Our faculty and





residents participate in local, state and national advocacy forums. They look to participate in the American Academy of Pediatrics Advocacy Conference, collaborate on local projects and develop scholarly projects that promote health equity.

Department of Pediatrics DEI Committee

This is an active group that, over the past year, has deepened its efforts to cultivate an inclusive, equitable and connected department. The endowment supports our two co-chairs, **Kyle Bersted, PhD**, associate professor, and **Janet Yarboi, PhD**, assistant professor. Their leadership and drive have sustained and expanded restorative justice efforts, which are an integral part of our annual retreat. They use our yearly climate survey to understand the impact of our DEI work and help drive and focus our priorities for the following year. They are leaders not only in the department but across Rush. In addition, they have presented at national conferences and participated in other scholarly activities, such as a collaboration with **Jay Behel, PhD**, associate professor, titled “The great reconnection: Restorative justice as a remedy for fragmented health care communities.” Looking ahead, they aim to expand our initiatives and collaborations to better understand issues within our Rush community and the neighborhoods where our patients live.

I am so grateful for the support of the Woman’s Board, because these funds have allowed these talented faculty to have the time to develop programs and educate, inspire and support our residents. This work is a tall order in addition to their clinical duties, and this time enables them to follow their passions. Over the past year, with your generous support, each program has grown academically to present its work and publish its findings to enrich the communities we serve.

Additional Support

The endowment has also assisted me in supporting different roles in the department. Resources are limited, and time is precious. I am grateful that this has allowed me to unburden some of our faculty and given them sufficient time, offset by the endowment. Faculty supported in this way include **Paul Severin, MD**, PICU medical director; **Cyndi Sosnowski, MD**, pediatric echocardiography lab director; **Elizabeth Portin, DO**, general pediatrician board-certified in pediatric sports medicine; and **Aloka Patel, MD**, NICU division chief and associate vice chair of research.



With Gratitude

Thank you for your generosity, as it is an incredible investment in the Rush Department of Pediatrics. We acutely feel the limited resources available in health care today, and even fewer resources are available for the most vulnerable.

I also want to acknowledge the leadership of the Woman's Board Appropriations Committee, which annually funds the Woman's Board grants to support the innovative work of our pediatric faculty and fulfill the Woman's Board's mission. It is a pleasure to work with this committed group of Rush Woman's Board members who have such great insights to advance our faculty's work.

Thank you for your generous support, without which we would be unable to carry out these important activities that make such an impact on learners, faculty, patients, families and our community.