Nicklaus Children's Hospital

Milestones in Medical Education

Volume 16, Issue 6
November 2026

Special points of interest

- Leading from the Middle
- Trainees Compliments & Recognitions
- Hospital Awards and Recognitions
- CME News
- Trainees, Alumni, & Faculty Publications & Scholarship
- FIU Med Students Events



From the Editor

Fall Brings Holidays, Hope, and GME Recruitment Hype

This November 2026 issue of ***Milestones in Medical Education*** comes at a time in the academic year whereby the new trainees have settled in their roles. This issue marks the end of the first quarter and the beginning of a new academic year quarter. This is a busy time for Medical Education whereby residents are preparing to apply for fellowship, fellowships are interviewing applicants and preparing for a new match, medical students are applying for residency, and residency programs are gearing up for another busy recruitment season.

We also welcome at this time holiday celebrations. Trainees are busy prepping their scholarly work for submission to multiple academic conferences whose abstract deadlines are due at this time of the year.

This issue highlights important milestones and achievements that Medical Education trainees and faculty achieved in the past two months.

This issue features the following Milestones in Medical Education:

- Trainees continue to receive e-Recognition from peers, colleagues, staff, and patients for their professionalism, humanism, and teamwork
- Trainees and faculty continue to present and disseminate their scholarly work on the national stage and in print.
- Preparations are underway for the GME transition of NCH GME to FIU College of Medicine
- Nicklaus Children's Hospital continues to earn national awards

As we start a new recruitment season, we are excited about the opportunity to showcase our programs, our institution, and our city to potential candidates exploring the potential of training in a wonderful academic environment with high complexity, diversity, and pediatric pathology.

Enjoy this issue and happy reading!!!

Rani S Gereige, MD, MPH,
FAAP - DIO

Inside this issue:

Milestones in Faculty Development	2
Milestones in Teamwork & Professionalism	4
Milestones in Hospital National Rankings & Recognitions	5
Milestones in Scholarly Activities	6
Milestones in FIU med Students Pediatric Activities	7
Milestones in CME News	8
Milestones in Alumni News	8
Milestones in Med Ed Staff Recognition	8

Milestones in Faculty Development

Nuts & Bolts: Leading From the Middle: *Important Skills for Clinical Educators to Bring Out the Best in their Teams*

The *Academic Pediatrics* Journal started a micro-faculty development section called **"Nuts & Bolts"**. In each of the Milestones in Medical Education issues, we will begin featuring one of the Nuts & Bolts short articles or snipits from the articles.

NUTS AND BOLTS

Faculty Development for the Busy Clinical Educator



Lindsay Johnston, MD, MEd[1]; Megan Aylor, MD[2]; Lynn Thoreson, DO, MS[3]; Kiley Alpert, C-TAGME[4]
On Behalf of the Association of Pediatric Program Directors Faculty and Professional Development Task Force
[1]*Yale School of Medicine;* [2]*Oregon Health & Science University;* [3]*The University of Texas at Austin Dell Medical School;*
[4]*Goryeb Children's Hospital-Atlantic Health System*

LEADING FROM THE MIDDLE

Important skills for clinical educators to bring out the best in their teams

KEY POINTS:

- Leadership skill development is essential for all clinical educators
- Individuals have innate preferences for leadership style, but effective leaders can shift their approach depending on the situation
- Effective leaders can break down hierarchy, demonstrating both leadership and "followership" skills to move teams forward and address challenges

Consider this situation...

You are the ward attending on a busy clinical service. Despite high clinical volumes, your team has managed to attend morning report every day for interactive case-based learning. Midweek, you are contacted by the inpatient medical director on the way to rounds. They request that you and your team stop attending morning conference during this busy viral respiratory season in order to focus attention on discharging patients by 11am.



What leadership style would be most effective to address these concerns?



Can a leader change their innate leadership style?

Traditional leadership training has focused primarily on teamwork and communication skills. Daniel Goleman described 6 "kinetic" or "dynamic" leadership styles (see page 2), suggesting that an optimal leadership style depends on a number of factors, including the teams' expertise, critical nature of events, and overall stakes. Although there are inherent individual preferences based upon personality, conflict resolution style, and interpersonal skills, skilled leaders can tailor their style based upon the situation encountered. Incorporating education on leadership styles (including strengths, limitations, and optimal use) may enhance learners' leadership skills.

What is meant by "leading from the middle"?

Training program directors and coordinators frequently function as **connecting leaders** while simultaneously functioning as proactive leaders to **direct reports** (i.e., trainees, members of educational team) and engaged followers to **management** (i.e., section chief, department chairs, institutional/ GME leadership). They must navigate the varied priorities of these groups and **lead from the middle** of their organization to achieve goals and address challenges. When done effectively, this approach can minimize hierarchy and bring levels of an institution together.



Milestones in Faculty Development

Nuts & Bolts: Leading From the Middle: *Important Skills for Clinical Educators to Bring Out the Best in their Teams* (Cont'ed)



PRACTICAL PEARLS

1. Recognizing one's inherent leadership style and its pros/cons can help leaders adjust, particularly in situations where one's inherent style is less effective.
2. Embrace the role of "middle" leader as a strong position to positively influence the culture and work done in an organization.
3. Practice leadership skills, first in low stakes settings, to develop comfort with multiple strategies.
4. Recognize that leading from the middle can have a high emotional and cognitive cost. Create support systems for yourself and others when utilizing these strategies.

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Goleman's Six Kinetic Leadership Styles

Authoritative
-Transformative
-Mobilize in common direction, but allows team to choose methods
-Positive impact on organization/ culture
-Optimal for novice teams

Affiliative
-Focus on emotions, relationship building
-Optimal during times of emotional distress
-Due to focus on praise, poor performance may go uncorrected
-Team members may lack direction

Coaching
- Focus on individual development
- Best for individuals committed to performance improvement
-Ineffective with resistant team members

Coercive/ Commanding
-Demands immediate compliance
-Useful during times of crisis when a unified direction is necessary
-Inhibits organizational flexibility
-Decreases employee motivation and satisfaction

Democratic
-Obtains consensus amongst team members to gain "buy-in" for decisions
-Optimal when quick decision not required
-Can lead to "endless meetings" and lack of clear leadership

Pacesetting
-Expects and models excellence & self-direction
-Optimal with motivated, skilled teams when quick results necessary
-Perceived as micromanaging, impatient
-High emotional cost, anxiety

Addressing Challenges in Leadership

Optimally addressing programmatic challenges may require a leadership style outside of an individual's inherent or preferred approach. Identifying opportunities to practice alternative strategies, and receive feedback from mentors or peers, may increase comfort and confidence with using new strategies. For example:

- *Reports of bullying or sexual harassment by faculty → Coercive/ Commanding*
- *Supporting trainees during pandemic → Affiliative*
- *Improving administrative skills of chief residents → Coaching*
- *Ensuring completion of paperwork before ACGME site visit → Pacesetting*

Tensions can arise between "direct reports" and "management," leading to stress and discomfort for "middle leaders." It may be necessary to seek additional support from peers or mentors while navigating different priorities of stakeholders.

Back to your team…

You reflect on what leadership style will be most effective and utilize the *democratic* approach to address the medical director's concerns. You understand the medical director's priority to discharge patients when they are medically ready and share your hope to do this while still attending educational conference. You utilize an *authoritative* approach to empower your intern, senior, case manager, and charge nurse to provide strategies to optimally prepare patients for discharge in advance of medical readiness. The team determines that they will prepare instructions and medications for patients the afternoon prior to discharge. By incorporating team members perspectives, you are able to determine a solution to optimize discharge workflow and timeliness without interrupting team attendance at morning report.

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Milestones in Teamwork & Professionalism

NCH Trainees Compliments & e-Recognitions



Dana Mysler, MD (PL2)

Dr. Dana Mysler received a recognition from Mr. Jose Roza; Social Services Department for her professional communication skills. Mr. Roza commented: ***"Today I received a call from her in which she shared information about a patient being medically assessed in the ED for possible non accidental trauma. Dr. Mysler wanted to consult with Social Work to see if all appropriate measures had been taken by involved team members to ensure the safety of the patient.***

During our brief conversation I was truly impressed by Dr. Mysler's thorough and well-sequenced presentation style. In a concise manner, she described the patient's recent visit to our hospital, a subsequent visit to the pediatrician's office, and today's visit to the ED. She provided details and concerns about the three occurrences that clearly warranted a report to DCF. We both concluded that prompt reports by the pediatrician and our ED medical team were in order to protect the well-being of the child.

Dr. Mysler's sense of responsibility and interdisciplinary collaboration was evident during the call and left me thinking that she will be the kind of physician that will genuinely make a positive impact on the patient population we serve." Congratulations Dana!! done!!!



Daniela Ramirez Duque, MD (Peds GI Fellow)

Dr. Daniela Ramirez Duque received an e-Recognition from Ms Patricia Wojtowicz, APRN for **being helpful**. Ms Wojtowicz commented: ***"Dani, thank you for your help yesterday when our service was extremely busy. I appreciate you for looking out for me and our patients. You're doing amazing!"***. Congratulations Daniela on a job well-done!!

Himanshu Meena, MD (PL2)



Dr. Himanshu Meena received an e-Recognition from Dr Kathryn Forbes; Pediatric Cardiology Fellow for **his help**. Dr. Forbes commented: ***"Himanshu stayed after hours to help with a very difficult echo on an agitated patient. He is always very excited to learn and never complains!! He will make an excellent pediatric cardiologist one day!! We are lucky to have him"***. Congratulations Himanshu on a job well-done!!



Joshua Baldwin, MD (PCCM Fellow)

Dr. Joshua Baldwin received an e-Recognition from Ms Briana Santiago, PICU RN. **Kudos: Your great work is appreciated!** Ms Santiago commented: ***"Dr. Baldwin always comes to the bedside when I call him regarding any change in my patient's status without me having to ask. I appreciate that he always comes to lay eyes on the patient with any change, no matter how big or small. It is always a pleasure working alongside him in the ICU. Thank you!"*** Congratulations!!!



Taylor Mayes, DO (PHM Fellow)

Dr. Taylor Mayes received an e-Recognition from Ms Oldine Pierre, 5T Clinical Coordinator for her display of the NCHS Pillar of Amazing Patient Care. Ms Pierre commented: ***"It is with great pleasure that I recognize Dr. Taylor Mayes. This was my first opportunity to work with her, and I was truly impressed by her knowledge, professionalism, and ability to manage her patients effectively.***
One experience that especially stood out was how she handled a difficult discharge involving a patient with complex, chronic medical needs. Dr. Mayes demonstrated patience, compassion, and excellent communication throughout the process. She took the time to address the guardian's concerns, provide reassurance, and help ease their anxiety while ensuring the patient's needs were appropriately addressed.
It was a pleasure working alongside Dr. Mayes. She is doing an amazing job, and I look forward to working with her again! Congratulations Taylor on a job well-done!!

Alexia Perez, MD (PL3)



Dr. Alexia Perez received an e-Recognition from Ms Ana Bandin, Clin Practice Specialist. **Kudos: Your great work is appreciated!** Ms Bandin commented: ***"Thank you for the amazing care, teamwork and support you provide to our patients. You did a great job!"*** Congratulations Alexia!!!

Milestones in Hospital National Rankings & Recognitions

National Rankings & Achievements for Nicklaus Children's Hosp.

Nicklaus Children's Hospital Named in Newsweek's "World's Best Specialized Hospital List"

Nicklaus Children's Hospital has been recognized in ***Newsweek*'s list of the World's Best Specialized Hospitals 2027 for pediatrics**. This prestigious award is presented by *Newsweek* and Statista Inc., the leading statistics portal and industry ranking provider. The award list was announced on **September 17th, 2026**, and can be viewed on Newsweek's website.

The World's Best Specialized Hospitals 2027 ranking awards the leading hospitals worldwide in 13 medical fields: Cardiac Surgery, Cardiology, Endocrinology, Gastroenterology, Nephrology, Neurology, Neurosurgery, Oncology, Orthopedics, Pediatrics, Pulmonology, Urology and Obstetrics & Gynecology. The underlying data analysis is based on three pillars: Reputation, Accreditation, and PROMs implementation.

NCHS Honored with Inaugural Champion for Children's Care Award from Joint Commission

Nicklaus Children's Health System has been recognized with the inaugural **Champion for Children's Care Award from Joint Commission**, an independent, evidence-based standards setting organization that sets the benchmark for safe, high-quality patient care through healthcare accreditation and certification.

This award celebrates healthcare organizations that are transforming the future of children's healthcare. Recipients are recognized for approaches that improve outcomes, enhance safety, expand access to care, and better support children and their families. Their work is helping to shape a healthier future for children and setting a new standard for excellence in care.

The 2026 Champion for Children's Care Award recognizes Nicklaus Children's Health System for setting a higher standard in pediatric healthcare. Through leadership in clinical innovation, patient safety, specialized care, and expanded access to services, the organization has consistently delivered exceptional outcomes for children and families while inspiring progress across the healthcare community.

Nicklaus Children's Hospital Ranked #1 in Florida.

According to the ***U.S. News & World Report*'s 2026-27 "Best Children's Hospitals"** survey results posted on September 15 2026 online, Nicklaus Children's Hospital is ranked the #1 pediatric hospital (Tied) in Florida! Nicklaus Children's has been recognized among the nation's top 50 hospitals for the 18th consecutive year. Additionally, all four key institutes ranked as part of the eight specialty programs identified among the best in the nation, making Nicklaus Children's the hospital with the most ranked programs in South Florida.

The 2026-27 rankings are as follows:

- **Neurology & Neurosurgery, #21** (#1 ranked program in Florida, top 25 nationally)**
- **Orthopedics, #30**
- **Pulmonology & Lung Surgery, #43** (#1 ranked program in South Florida)**
- **Neonatology, #47**
- **Urology, #47** (#1 ranked program in South Florida)**
- **Cancer, #48** (#1 ranked program in South Florida)**
- **Cardiology & Heart Surgery, #48** (#1 ranked program in South Florida)**
- **Behavioral Health, Top 50**

Congratulations to the entire Nicklaus Children's family on this achievement!

Since 2008, Nicklaus Children's specialty programs have been consistently ranked among the best in the nation by *U.S. News & World Report*. This ongoing recognition reflects our commitment to excellence in pediatric care and our dedication to serving children and families in Florida and beyond.

Each year, the *U.S. News* survey tool evolves to include new questions and emerging focuses that impact the results. We routinely adapt our programs and offerings to address these changes. Approximately 200 hospitals participated in the annual survey. The methodology evaluates clinical outcomes, such as patient survival rates, infection rates, and complications. It also considers the level and quality of hospital resources related to patient care, including staffing, technology, and special services. Additionally, it assesses healthcare programs designed to prevent infections and adherence to best practices, along with expert opinions from pediatric specialists and sub-specialists.

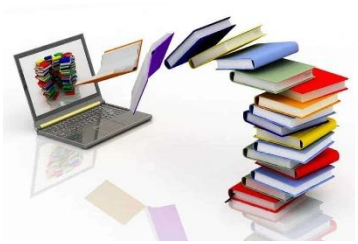






Milestones in Scholarly Activities

NCH Trainees & Faculty Continue to Disseminate their Scholarly Work in Print and as Poster Presentations



Hot Off the Press/ Publications

Dr. Himanshu Meena (PL2), and his faculty co-authors **Drs Daniel Duarte** & **Shayam Sathanandam** published their manuscript titled: ***"Mechanics of Ballon and Stent Angioplasty in Congenital Heart Interventions"*** in the online September 2026 issue of *Pediatric Cardiology*. Congratulations!

Drs Natalie Jennings & **Monica Ramirez** (Alums - Class of 2026) & GI faculty members **Drs Elizabeth Torres Claudio** and **Lina Felipez** published their manuscript titled: ***"Chronic Non-Bacterial Osteomyelitis in Pediatric Inflammatory Bowel Disease: A Case Series"*** in the Fall 2026 Issue of *The Florida Pediatrician* Journal. Congratulations!

Poster Presentations

Dr. Daniela Benitez (PL3) was notified that her abstract tilted: ***"Positive Predictive Value of Transthoracic Echocardiography for Anomalous Coronary Arteries in Children and Young Adults: A 10-Year Single-Center Experience"*** was accepted for a poster presentation at the American Heart Association Scientific Session 2026 in Chicago; November 2026. Congratulations!



Strong NCH/FIU Presence at the 2026 Pediatric Critical Care Colloquium in Tampa.

Several NCH Trainees, FIU Medical Students and their faculty mentors had abstracts accepted and presented at the 2026 Pediatric Critical Care Colloquium in Tampa. Below is a listing of the abstracts presented:

Poster Presentations

- Madison Capote, Prithvi Sendi, Balagangadhar R. Totapally. *"**Hypomagnesemia in Critically Ill Children: Prevalence, Risk Factors, and Outcomes"***.
- Gabriela Canel Rivero, Prithvi Sendi, Balagangadhar Totapally. ***"Implementation of Bolus-Dose Epinephrine and Changes in Pediatric Intensive Care Unit Cardiac Arrest Rates"***.
- Sarah Benoit, Balagangadhar R. Totapally. Temporal Trends of Pediatric ***"Hospitalizations with Staphylococcal Infections in the United States, 2000-2022"***.
- Allie Rodman, Abhinav Totapally, Prithvi Sendi, Keith Meyer, and Balagangadhar Totapally. ***"Longitudinal Trajectories of C-Reactive Protein and Procalcitonin in Children with Septic Shock Requiring Vasoactive Support"***.
- Emma Romero, Balagangadhar Totapally. ***"Short-Term Outcomes of Pediatric Airway Reconstruction Surgery in the United States, 2016–2022".***
- James Orces, Keith Meyer, Kristen Stabingas, Balagangadhar R. Totapally. ***"Cerebrospinal Fluid Diversion Procedures in U.S. Children: National Patterns and Age Related Variation"***.
- Hamsika Totapally, Manette Ness-Cochinwala, Abhinav Totapally, Balagangadhar R. Totapally. **Adenoviral Pneumonia in the PICU: *Epidemiology and Risk Factors for Intubation".***
- Nicholas Arias, Abhinav Totapally, Kristen Lopez, Stephanie Leiva, Janessa Martin, Monique Tarrau, Kaitlin Kobaitri. ***"Improving Compliance with Weight Measurement in Pediatric Intensive Care Unit Patients with Prolonged Hospitalization".***
- Keith Meyer, Emily Ortega, Kristen Stabingas, Balagangadhar R. Totapally. ***"Ventricular Shunt Infections in Hospitalized U.S. Children: Epidemiology, Clinical Characteristics, and Microbiology".***
- Aqsa Khan, Balagangadhar Totapally, Manette Ness-Cochinwala. ***"Pediatric Necrotizing Pneumonia: Trends, Complications, and Risk Factors".***
- Aqsa Khan, Alexia Perez, Carly Stewart, Chiara Pavon, Himanshu Meena, Kaitlin Kobaitri, Michael Leoncio. ***"Quality Improvement Initiative to Prevent Fluid Overload in Intubated Pediatric Intensive Care Unit Patients".***

Oral Presentations

- Jacquelyn Nguyen, Jacqueline Jones, Balagangadhar Totapally. ***"Longitudinal Trajectories of Glucose, Lactate, and the Glucose-to-Lactate Ratio in Children with Septic Shock: Insights into Metabolic Recovery and Outcome".***
- Arelis Seijo, Anushree Malhotra, Jacqueline Jones, Manette Ness-Cochinwala, Toba Niazi, Keith Meyer,

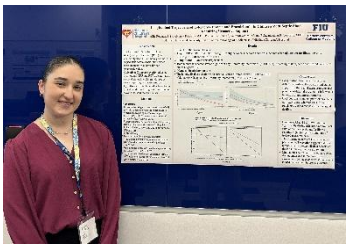
Milestones in Scholarly Activities

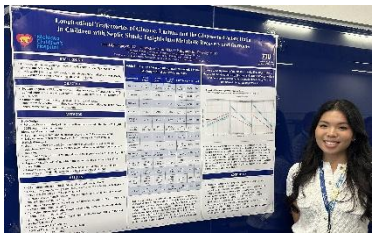
NCH Trainees & Faculty Continue to Disseminate their Scholarly Work in Print and as Poster Presentations (Cont'ed)

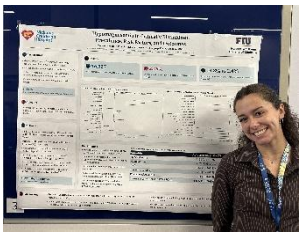
Balagangadhar R. Totapally. ***"Medical and Surgical Interventions in Children with Pediatric Brainstem Tumors: A National Database Study".***

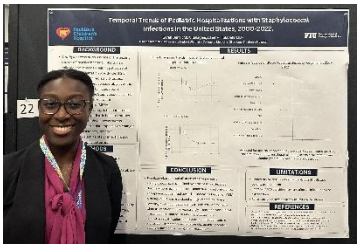
Congratulations to all!!!
Below are students photos from the event.

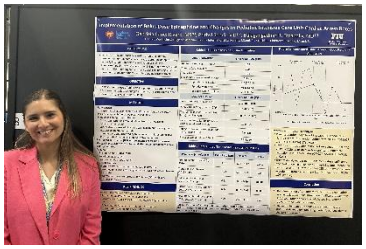












Milestones in FIU Medical Students Pediatric Activities

FIU Students Pediatric Interest Group Activities



- On October 15th 2026; a Pediatric Interest Group **subspecialty panel** & dinner were held at NCH. Thirty Medical Students heard from subspecialty panelists about their pediatric specialties. The event ended with Q&A.
- On November 4th 2026; a Pediatric Interest Group **Advocacy** luncheon was held at FIU campus. Medical students received Pediatric advocacy training.





FIU
Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine



Milestones in CME News

NCH Held its Annual Pediatric Endocrinology Symposium

On Saturday **October 17th 2026**, Nicklaus Children's Hospital held its **Annual Pediatric Endocrinology Symposium**. CME credit was provided by the NCH CME department. The event was attended by Pediatric clinicians, and NCH trainees.



Milestones in Alumni News

NCH Residency Alumnus National Presentation

Dr. Ajay Kasi; a Nicklaus Children's Hospital Pediatric Residency Program Alumn and current faculty in Pediatric Pulmonology at Emory University was invited to present a lecture on Chronic Cough at the AAP National Conference and Exhibition (NCE) in San Diego.



Milestones in Med Ed Staff Recognitions

Med Ed Staff e-Recognition

Ms. Sary Soler; NCH Fellowship Coordinator, received an e-Recognition from Dr. Beatriz Cunill-De Sautu; Pediatric Residency Program Director with **Kudos: Your Great Work is Appreciated!.** Dr. Cunill commented: ***"Sary did an amazing job of pulling together a detailed report I needed on very short notice. She was very diligent, organized, efficient, and turned around exactly what I needed with a big smile! Thank you for your hard work, collaboration, and dedication to your job. We are lucky to have you on our team!".*** Congratulations Sary!!

Dr. Rani Gereige (DIO) received a shout out from the AAP FL Chapter for planning a successful **2026 Annual FCAAP CME Conference** as the conference **co-chair** for the 5th year in a row. The Future of Pediatric Practice (FPP) 2026 brought together over 500+ pediatricians, pediatric clinicians, pediatric trainees, and medical students from all over the State of FL.

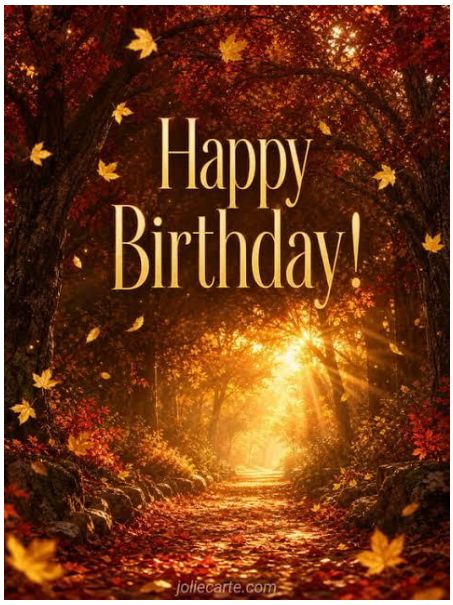


THANK YOU TO OUR FPP2026 CO-CHAIRS!

FCAAP extends its heartfelt thanks to the organizational Co-Chairs of The Future of Pediatric Practice 2026, Dr. Nicole Torres and Dr. Rani S. Gereige! Your vision, leadership, hard work, and commitment have helped shape FPP into a premier pediatric conference with a reach that extends far beyond Florida. Thank you for the time, energy, and vision you invested in making FPP2026 such a tremendous success. Congratulations on a job very well done!

Medical Education Birthdays

November	
Maria Victoria Lorenzo	4
Christina Perez-Arche	7
Natalia Figueroa Ramos	9
Natalia Rios Garcia	10
Alegria Lusinchi Delfino	22
Larissa Gomez Rodriguez	25
Himanshu Meena	25
Andrea Gonzalez Vega	27
Maria Nova Patino	29



December	
Prateek Sharma	6
Maria Abramuk Pacheco	6
Arelis Seijo Lebron	7
Aqsa Khan	8
Niyant Vora	9
Trenton Rivera	11
Oscar Fonseca	12
Dana McCarney	17
Gabriela Lins	22
Son-Isha Coetzee	25
Ariel Collazo Lamb	25
Anubhuti Vashyani	25
Gregory Anash	28
Sofia Candal	31

Nicklaus Children's Hospital | Alumni Network
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To Teach is To Touch a Life Forever