



# The Responder Report

WORLD TRADE CENTER HEALTH PROGRAM  
AT  
RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY  
CLINICAL CENTER OF EXCELLENCE  
ENVIRONMENTAL AND OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH SCIENCES INSTITUTE



**PAGE 2**  
**HEALTH & COMMUNITY  
RESOURCE FAIR!**

Please join us for our first health & community resource fair on **May 8, 2019**. There will be a raffle for a Fitbit Alta and several other prizes. Also, please do not forget to register your vehicle **BEFORE** this event. Please see page 2 for more details!

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**INTERESTED IN A  
SERVICE DOG?**

Have you been diagnosed/certified with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)? You may qualify for a service dog. Please attend the next information session on **June 24, 2019**. Read a story about one of our member's personal experiences with his service dog Pete on page 4!

**PAGE 7**  
**DR. IRIS UDASIN  
HELPS AGAIN!**

Dr. Iris Udasin testified in front of the NJ Assembly Homeland Security Committee on **March 11, 2019** to help expand disability benefits for firefighters and police officer who volunteered for the 9/11 search, rescue and recovery efforts. See page 7 for the entire story!



**SPRING INTO THE WTC HEALTH & COMMUNITY RESOURCES FAIR!**

On May 8, 2019 we will have almost 20 different vendors to provide information on health and community resources. Please be sure to register your vehicle for parking at :

<https://rudots.nupark.com/events/Events/Register/e2691ed7-45ab-48c6-b8bb-6171ebcf12fb>

# SPRING INTO THE WTC HEALTH & COMMUNITY RESOURCES FAIR!

## MAY 8<sup>TH</sup>, 2019

Monitoring and Treatment  
  
**9.11**  
 WTC Health Program

**TO SEE A FULL LIST OF PARTICIPANTS AND TO REGISTER, PLEASE VISIT:**  
[HTTPS://EOHSI.RUTGERS.EDU/WTCHEALTHFAIR/](https://EOHSI.RUTGERS.EDU/WTCHEALTHFAIR/)

**LUNG ASSOCIATION OF NJ**

**NUTRITION COUNSELOR**

**AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY**

**NJ STATE DEPT. INCLUDING SOCIAL SERVICES BENEFITS**

**AND MANY OTHERS!**

RAFFLE PRIZES INCLUDE A **FITBIT ALTA!!!\***

Prizes provided to Rutgers by:



\*Prizes for WTC patients only\*

**WORLD TRADE CENTER HEALTH PROGRAM AT RUTGERS**

170 Frelinghuysen Road  
 Piscataway, NJ 08854

2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Conference Rooms A, B, & C

Wednesday, May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2019  
 12-2PM

# Victim Compensation Fund Update

The September 11<sup>th</sup> Victim Compensation Fund (“VCF”) was created to provide compensation for any individual (or a personal representative of a deceased individual) who suffered physical harm or was killed as a result of a terrorist-related aircraft crashes of September 11, 2001 or the debris removal efforts that took place in the immediate aftermath of those crashes. For more information on how to file a claim, please visit the website below:

<http://www.vcf.gov/>



The Special Master of the VCF,  
Rupa Bhattacharyya

## “Determination of Funding Insufficiency”

PAID CLAIM AMOUNTS ARE DECREASING

As explained in the Seventh Annual Status Report released by The Special Master of the VCF on February 15, 2019, it has been determined that there is insufficient funding remaining in the Fund to pay all current and projected claims at the same levels as under the current policies and procedures.

As the law requires, the Special Master is adjusting the VCF policies and procedures. As a result, The Special Master is required to reduce awards to make sure the VCF does not run out of money. These reductions take effect for any award letter that is dated on **OR** after **February 25, 2019**. For details on these reductions, please visit: <https://www.vcf.gov/fundinginsufficiency.html>

Special Master, Rupa Bhattacharyya states, “I am painfully aware of the inequity of this situation. I deeply regret that I could not honor my intention to spare any claim submitted before this announcement from any reductions made due to a determination of funding insufficiency. But the stark of the reality of the data leaves me no choice...” (Bhattacharyya, 2019).

If you have any questions, please call the VCF’s toll-free Helpline at **1-855-885-1555**.

**Reminder: the VCF is a separate program from the WTC Health Program. The VCF is administered by the Department of Justice.**

([www.VCF.org](http://www.VCF.org), 2019)

“Unfortunately,  
the situation  
the VCF  
currently faces  
is a difficult  
one...I am  
painfully aware  
of the inequity  
of the  
situation.”

To read the entire message  
from Special Master Rupa  
Bhattacharyya  
Please visit:

<https://www.vcf.gov/blogprogstatsfeb2019.html>

## MORE ABOUT THE SPECIAL MASTER

**Special Master Rupa Bhattacharyya** has a distinguished career in public service. Rupa joined the Department of Justice in 1996 through the Attorney General’s Honors Program as a Trial Attorney in the Civil Division. As a Civil Division litigator, she defended government entities ranging from the Department of Defense, and the Treasury, to the Federal Communications Commission and the Federal Election Commission, to the United State Census Bureau and Selective Service Commission. In August 2008, Rupa supervised a team of attorneys handling legal to a broad range of international economic financial and regulatory matters.

In April 2012, Rupa returned to DOJ as Director in the Torts Branch, where she managed three offices: The Vaccine Injury Compensation Program, the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act program and Constitutional Torts staff. Prior to her professional legal career, Rupa graduated from Harvard Law School and has a Master’s degree in international relations from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University. Her undergraduate degree is from Tulane University in her hometown of New Orleans ([www.vcf.org](http://www.vcf.org), 2019)

# Upcoming Service Dog Presentation

## **PUPPIES BEHIND BARS INFORMATION SESSION JUNE 24, 2019**

Puppies Behind Bars is a non-profit organization that trains prison inmates to raise service dog for veterans and first responders diagnosed with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) or Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI). Puppies are trained from the age of 8 weeks to 24 months and know more than 90 service dog commands when training is complete.

The World Trade Center Health Program at Rutgers was lucky enough to have Gloria Gilbert-Stoga and Nora Moran from Puppies Behind Bars come and speak to our patients in April and October 2018. Since these presentations, several patients have already with placed with a service dog of their own.

**Please be sure to join us for our next presentation on:**



**When:**  
June 24, 2019 from 1-3PM

**Where:**  
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, EOHSI Building  
170 Frelinghuysen Rd  
Piscataway, NJ 8854  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Conference Room C

**For more information about this program,  
please contact Laura Smith at 848-445-0217**

## TESTIMONIAL PUPPIES BEHIND BARS EXPERIENCE

“Puppies Behind Bars has really given me my life back. I struggled with how much freedom I felt I had lost because of the service I had provided and the injuries I sustained, but I feel like I have regained that because Pete (my service dog) has always “got my back.” Beyond me, my wife and kids not only love Pete but feel they see the huge impact he’s had on our lives as well. Having a service dog is definitely an adjustment since it changes the way you do everything, but Puppies Behind Bars made sure I had the training, comfort level and ongoing support to make it work. There’s no question I would recommend Puppies Behind Bar’s service dogs for anyone who struggles with service-related injuries. You’ll be amazed at what a balancing force these dogs are—the best partner you’ll ever have.”

**-Brian Andrews & Pete**



## THE COOKING CORNER

### CAULIFLOWER FRIED RICE

YEILDS: 4 SERVINGS    PREP TIME: 20 MIN    TOTAL TIME: 20 MIN

#### INGREDIENTS

1/2 large head cauliflower  
2 tbsp. vegetable oil  
1 orange pepper, cut into thin 1/2" pieces  
1 scallion, thinly sliced  
1 2" piece ginger, cut into thin matchsticks  
2 tbsp. low-sodium soy sauce  
2 tsp. chili garlic paste  
2 tsp. honey  
4 large eggs  
1 c. frozen peas, thawed  
1 c. frozen edamame, thawed  
Lime wedges, for serving

#### DIRECTIONS

1. Cut the cauliflower into florets, discarding the tough inner core and leaves. Working in batches, transfer the cauliflower to the bowl of a food processor. Pulse until the cauliflower resembles rice, about 15 seconds (be careful not to over-process or cauliflower will get mushy). Set aside, then repeat with the remaining cauliflower (you should have about 4 cups of cauliflower).
2. Heat 1 tablespoon oil in a large cast-iron skillet over medium-high heat. Add the pepper, the white parts of the scallion, and the ginger; cook, stirring, 2 minutes. Add the cauliflower, toss to combine and cook, covered, stirring once, for 5 minutes.
3. Meanwhile, in a small bowl, whisk together the soy sauce, chili garlic paste, and honey. In a separate small bowl, lightly beat the eggs. Push the cauliflower mixture to one side of the skillet, add the remaining 1 tablespoon oil, then the eggs, scrambling until cooked, 2 minutes.
4. Remove skillet from heat and fold in the eggs, sauce, peas, and edamame. Serve with thinly sliced scallion greens and lime wedges.



## GRILLED BEEF AND BLUE CHEESE TACOS

YEILDS: 6 SERVINGS

PREP TIME: 25 MIN

TOTAL TIME: 35 MIN



### INGREDIENTS

2 medium red onions, cut into 1/4 inch slices  
2 tablespoons canola oil  
1/2 teaspoon salt, divided  
1 beef top sirloin steak 1 1/2 pounds  
1/4 cup soy sauce  
2 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce  
1 tablespoon brown sugar  
1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar  
1 garlic clove, minced  
1/4 teaspoon pepper  
12 flour tortillas (6 inches), warmed  
1 cup crumbled blue cheese

### DIRECTIONS

1. Brush onions with oil; sprinkle with 1/4 teaspoon salt. Sprinkle steak with remaining salt. Grill onions and steak, covered, over medium heat until meat reaches desired doneness and onions are tender (4-6 minutes per side). Let steak and onions stand 5 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, in large bowl, combine soy sauce, Worcestershire, brown sugar, vinegar, garlic and pepper. Halve onion slices; cut steak thinly across grain. Add onions and steak to soy mixture; toss to coat. Serve in tortilla with blue cheese.

## Dr. Iris Udasin Helps Again!

Dr. Iris Udasin, our clinic's Medical Director, testified in front of the NJ Assembly Homeland Security Committee to help expand disability benefits for firefighters and police officers who volunteered in 9/11 search, rescue and recovery operations.



Not only is Dr. Udasin the Medical Director for the World Trade Center Health Program Rutgers Clinical Center of Excellence, she cares for her staff like her own children, attends hearings for individual members, runs a 5K faster than pretty much everyone her age (and younger), speaks at conferences about her medical expertise on health-related environmental exposures and the list goes on! So it is no surprise that she is at it again doing her best to help First Responders any way she can- this time by testifying in front of the NJ Assembly Homeland Security Committee!

On March 11, 2019, Dr. Udasin testified in front of this Committee in an effort to help expand the disability benefits for firefighters and police officers who volunteered in the 9/11 search, rescue and recovery efforts. The bill A-4882 would provide a member or retired member of the Police and Firemen's Retirement System (PFRS) and the State Police Retirement System (SPRS) to be eligible to receive an accidental disability retirement allowance. This allowance would be eligible for a permanent and total disability resulting from the participation in 9/11 World Trade Center search, rescue, recovery and/or clean-up efforts. The bill also outlines that if a member participated in any of these activities for a minimum of 8 hours, with a disability resulting from a qualifying condition or health impairment would be presumed to be caused by a member's regular or assisted duties and NOT as a result of the member's willful negligence (unless proven otherwise).

Members who do not meet the 8-hour minimum requirement, would be eligible for the benefit if:

- The member participated in the activities at the World Trade Center disaster site between
- **September 11, 2001 and September 12, 2001**
- The member sustained a documented PHYSICAL injury at the World Trade Center disaster site between **September 12, 2001 and September 12, 2001;**
  - o This is a qualifying condition or health impairment that resulted in disability that prevented the member from continuation to participate for the 8-hour minimum requirement;
  - o And the injury resulted in disability

Because of the evidence and testimonies provided, along with Dr. Udasin's wonderful testimony, the bill passed the Committee unanimously! For more information about the bill and to track the progress, please visit: <https://legiscan.com/NJ/bill/A4882/2018>

**THANK YOU DR. UDASIN FOR YOUR HELP AND CONTINUED SERVICE!**

## Like Us on Facebook!

Please visit and like our Facebook page so that you can receive more up-to-date information, messages and events pertaining to the WTC Health Program at Rutgers.

Our Facebook page can be found at:

<http://www.facebook.com/rutgerswtchp>



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**EVEN IF YOU FEEL FINE OR ARE RECEIVING TREATMENT THROUGH YOUR OWN PERSONAL HEALTH CARE PROVIDER AND/OR ON OF OUR EXTERNAL PROVIDERS, PLEASE BE SURE TO ATTEND YOUR ANNUAL MONITORING EXAMS!**

Please don't forget to update your contact information.