

RBHS Faculty At-Large Senate Candidate Statements - 2025

Mohammad H. Dastjerdi, MD, Associate Professor of Ophthalmology, Institute of Ophthalmology and Visual Science, NJMS

I am writing to express my interest in serving as the University Senator representing the Rutgers Health Faculty At-Large for the upcoming three-year term, concluding on June 30, 2028. As a dedicated member of the Rutgers Health community, I am confident in my ability to represent our faculty's interests and actively engage in the critical discussions and decisions that shape our university's future. I am deeply passionate about fostering collaboration and promoting an inclusive environment that supports and strengthens our educational and research missions. My primary goals are to enhance faculty resources, advocate for our students, and build stronger connections between our health disciplines and the broader university community. I am committed to ensuring that the voices and needs of the Rutgers Health Faculty are central in university governance. I look forward to the opportunity to serve my colleagues and contribute to advancing our shared goals at Rutgers University.

Sabiha Hussain, MD, MPH, Professor of Medicine, Division of Pulmonary and Critical Care, RWJMS

I am honored to submit my nomination for the Rutgers Senate faculty at large, bringing a deep connection to the university as both an alum and a long-time faculty member. I attended Rutgers University as part of the Honors Program and completed the BA/MD program, which gave me a unique perspective on both academic rigor and the student experience. After 25 years on faculty, I now see my children following in my footsteps as they pursue their education at Rutgers, strengthening my commitment to the university's future. I am passionate about advancing policies that will continue to improve the academic environment for students, faculty, and staff alike, locally and globally. I aim to focus on establishing minimum standards for admissions, scholarships, and honors, ensuring that all students have access to opportunities that support their success. Additionally, I am committed to regulating formal relationships among academic units to enhance collaboration and cohesion across the university. I will also advocate for fair teaching load norms and work towards creating a university calendar that balances academic rigor with the wellbeing of the Rutgers community. With my unique perspective as both an alum and faculty member, along with my long-term commitment to the university, I am excited to serve on the Senate and work toward a more effective, supportive, and collaborative Rutgers. Thank you for considering my nomination.

Keith R. Stowell, MD, MSPH, MBA, Chief Medical Office, UBHC; Associate Professor of Psychiatry, RWJMS

As an Associate Professor of Psychiatry and the Chief Medical Officer of Rutgers University Behavioral Health Care, I bring experience in both academia and healthcare leadership. Throughout my career, I have been deeply committed to advocating for the needs of healthcare faculty as part of the large University community. This commitment, along with my extensive background in shared governance and organized medicine, has inspired me to seek a role as a Rutgers Health Faculty At-Large Member of the University Senate. In addition to my current role at Rutgers, I have had the privilege of contributing to the University governance structure in my prior work at the University of Pittsburgh, where I actively participated in shaping academic and institutional policies. My work in organized medicine, particularly with the American Psychiatric Association and the American Medical Association, has further honed my skills in advocating for effective policies and approaches that serve both faculty and the university community at large. As President of the Pennsylvania Psychiatric Society, I championed initiatives that addressed the needs of mental health professionals and worked to enhance the delivery of care across the state. I am passionate about fostering an environment of academic excellence and inclusivity, and I believe that these values align well with the mission of the Rutgers University Senate. I appreciate your consideration of my candidacy as a member of the Senate and hope to be able to further contribute to the continued growth and success of our university.

Anthony T. Suriano, D.M.D., Assistant Clinical Professor, Department of Orthodontics, RSDM

I am seeking the nomination for Senator to represent the collective and legitimate interests of the Rutgers Health Faculty At-Large. I make this request not out of a desire for privilege but to extend my sense of duty to serve selflessly. Twenty-one years of public service in local and county government have prepared me for this role. I have served as Chair of the Land Use Board (a body entrusted with the semi-judicial responsibility of ensuring justice in local governance), Finance Chair of the Peapack-Gladstone Municipal Budget Committee, President of the Governing Body, and Chairman of the Somerset County Library System. Throughout my tenure in public service, I have proudly upheld the principles of objectivity, equity, and transparency. I have always believed that public service is the most admirable undertaking for demonstrating commitment to the communities we serve. While it may be easy to stand firm when decisions are popular, the true test of leadership arises during moments of disagreement. I have learned that even the disappointment associated with said disagreement can be effectively mitigated through a dedication to procedural integrity, ensuring fairness and inclusion in formulating equitable decisions. I am confident that my prospective service to this esteemed institution will make those involved very proud.