



UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL
Newark, New Jersey

*****PRESS RELEASE*****

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**UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL TO HOST INTERNATIONAL WALK TO
SCHOOL DAY AT MARION P. THOMAS CHARTER SCHOOL'S
PAC ACADEMY IN DOWNTOWN NEWARK**

Dr. Shereef Elnahal and University Hospital staff to organize assemblies and walkability safety checks, and help students plan safe routes to and from schools and neighborhoods.

Event takes places on Wednesday, October 2. Press availability begins at 10 AM.

Newark, New Jersey – On Wednesday, October 2nd, University Hospital will host activities and programs at Marion P. Thomas Charter School's PAC Academy, for International Walk to School Day. Dr. Shereef Elnahal, University Hospital President and CEO, and Dr. David Livingston, Professor and Chief of the Trauma Division at New Jersey Medical School, will participate in the events throughout the day. These will include pedestrian safety education assemblies, walkability checks, and planning to help students find the safest routes to and from schools and neighborhoods.

"As a neighbor to PAC Academy, we are very aware of how busy the roads around the school are, and the potential danger that poses to the young students walking between home and school," said **Dr. Shereef Elnahal, President and CEO of University Hospital**. "University Hospital has a responsibility to the Newark community, in not only addressing medical needs within our walls, but to reinforce health and wellness practices where Newark residents work, study, and live every day."

International Walk to School Day is dedicated to bringing awareness about pedestrian safety issues in the community. This year, University Hospital will be working with more than 400 students, ranging from kindergarten to the fourth grade, in sharing best practices as a pedestrian and working closely on identifying the safest routes they can take between their destinations.

"Marion P. Thomas Charter Schools' PAC Academy is thrilled to be this year's host school," **Robert Gregory, Superintendent of Marion P. Thomas Charter Schools**. "Because PAC Academy is located in downtown Newark, we are often concerned about heavy traffic, distracted

drivers and preoccupied pedestrians. The Walk to School Day activities provide a phenomenal opportunity to educate our students and parents about ways they can ensure students are alert and safe during their journey to and from school.”

“Being a pedestrian means possibly putting oneself in danger of being hit by a driver who has either lost control of the vehicle or is distracted from using their cell phone while behind the wheel,” said **Dr. David H. Livingston, Professor and Chief of the Trauma Division at New Jersey Medical School**. “Children are particularly vulnerable due to their physical size and lack of life experience navigating traffic. In the worst-case scenario of a pedestrian injury, children can be left with lifelong physical impairments as well as emotional trauma from post-traumatic stress.”

Other partners for the event include the Newark Police Department, FedEx, and the Brain Injury Alliance of New Jersey.

“The Newark Police Division wholeheartedly supports University Hospital’s Walk to School Day at PAC Academy,” **Public Safety Director Anthony F. Ambrose said**. “This event brings much-needed awareness to pedestrian safety, especially with a rising number of people walking while distracted by texting, talking on cell phones and engaging on social media. It’s critical that students walking to and from school, as well as drivers, are keenly focused on pedestrian safety.”

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About University Hospital

University Hospital is part of one of the nation's leading academic medical centers and is the Level 1 Trauma Center for Northern New Jersey. Located at University Heights in Newark, University Hospital is a principal teaching hospital of Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences and a regional resource for advanced services across many medical specialties. For more information about University Hospital, please visit www.uhnj.org.