

Nemours Infectious Disease Doctors Honored Among ‘Change Makers of the Year’ by Heart of Florida United Way

Orlando, Fla. (Nov. 20, 2020) – [Heart of Florida United Way](#) has recognized two of the Infectious Disease specialists at Nemours Children’s Hospital, Dr. Kenneth Alexander and Dr. Adriana Cadilla, as “Change Makers of the Year” at a special virtual ceremony today. This year, instead of naming an individual, Heart of Florida United Way honored select healthcare heroes and first responders who served the community during the COVID-19 crisis, coming from Nemours and six other organizations.

Selection was based upon the healthcare industry’s response to the pandemic in the central Florida community. These doctors are representative of the sacrifice, skill and dedication of healthcare heroes in our community, according to the United Way.

“2020 has held more significant change than anyone could have predicted, with COVID-19 causing much disruption,” said Jeff Hayward, President & CEO, Heart of Florida United Way. “Despite this disarray in our community, there are those who have stood out among the chaos. They showed their dedication and service to the greater good by being change makers in a time when a commitment to others was needed most. This year, more than ever, we are proud to highlight our community’s efforts to unify and uplift, to fearlessly lead the way.”

For parents of school-age children, COVID-19 brought an added layer of stress and worry for fears of infection and spread among classrooms. Schools re-opening safely was an important step for the Central Florida community, but also the students, families of students, teachers, faculty and school staff on campus.

Nemours Infectious Disease’s Dr. Alexander, MD, PhD, and Dr. Cadilla, MD, jointly and individually collaborated with Central Florida’s superintendents of schools to offer medical advice and presentations on ways the schools could reopen safely during the pandemic.

“As infectious disease specialists, it is our job to stay up to date on this novel coronavirus and keep our families, colleagues, and community safe by sharing science-based information,” said Dr. Kenneth Alexander.

Dr. Alexander and Dr. Cadilla presented on COVID-19 and school reopening recommendations for many surrounding school districts and continue to serve on task forces for school districts in Orange and Osceola counties, as they monitor community infection rates in schools.

“Sharing information and collaboration has been a key element in helping schools determine their safest course of action,” said Dr. Adriana Cadilla, who is serving on the Medical Advisory Committee of Orange County Public Schools.

Dr. Alexander and Dr. Cadilla also partnered with their colleague at Advent Health, Dr. Fatma Levent, MD, to author the letter, entitled “Considerations for Teachers and Staff,” that drew on the latest science and experiences with COVID-19 in children’s hospitals to inform the recommendations for schools. Their hope was to guide school districts’ leadership in their decision-making on how to minimize the risk of exposure in the school environment.

Additionally, the Nemours infectious disease professionals collaborated with their peers from AdventHealth for Children and Orlando Health-Arnold Palmer Children’s Hospital to devise a tool aimed at providers across our local communities so they may be better equipped to discuss with parents the advantages and disadvantages of at-school and virtual education from a unified standpoint.

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About Nemours Children’s Health System

[Nemours](#) is an internationally recognized children’s health system that owns and operates the two free-standing children’s hospitals: the Nemours/Alfred I. duPont Hospital for Children in Wilmington, Del., and Nemours Children’s Hospital in Orlando, Fla., along with outpatient facilities in five states, delivering pediatric primary, specialty and urgent care. Nemours also powers the world’s most-visited website for information on the health of children and teens, [KidsHealth.org](#), and offers on-demand, online video patient visits through Nemours [CareConnect](#). [Nemours ReadingBrightstart.org](#) is a program dedicated to preventing reading failure in young children, grounded in Nemours’ understanding that child health and learning are inextricably linked, and that reading level is a strong predictor of adult health.

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Established as [The Nemours Foundation](#) through the legacy and philanthropy of Alfred I. duPont, Nemours provides pediatric clinical care, research, education, advocacy and prevention programs to families in the communities it serves.

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