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**SUPER-
WOMEN**
pg. 52

RMA Marlton
expands its clinical
staff in its quest to
help local residents
overcome their
infertility issues
and bring new
life into the
world.

—See insert
after page 32

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RMA Marlton's clinical team has grown to include (from left) Dr. Emily Osman, Dr. Michael Simoni, Jessica M. Kestler, and Dr. Jason Franasia, three reproductive endocrinologists/infertility specialists and a women's health nurse practitioner.

Positive Signs

RMA Marlton

expands its clinical staff in its quest to help local residents overcome their infertility issues and bring new life into the world.

A HUMAN FETUS TAKES NINE MONTHS BEFORE IT'S READY TO COME INTO THE WORLD. ONE MIGHT SAY RMA MARLTON HAS HAD A "GESTATION" PERIOD, TOO, NURTURED BY ITS CREATORS INTO SOMETHING TRULY SPECIAL.

Since opening its doors in April 2019, RMA Marlton has steadily grown, matured, and increased its capabilities to better serve the clients who seek out its particular brand of expertise: overcoming the infertility issues that have prevented would-be parents from bringing new life into the world.

RMA Marlton, which is one of 10 fertility clinics that comprise RMA New Jersey, belongs to the IVI-RMA Network, a global organization whose reach extends across

the country and around the world. While all RMA clinics benefit from the resources of the collective—namely, the wisdom and expertise of a team of more than 500 physicians, embryologists, and researchers—each clinic has its own team of experts devoted to helping patients become parents.

In addition to performing in vitro fertilization cycles, egg retrievals, and embryo transfers, RMA Marlton's in-house embryology and andrology laboratory provides preimplantation genetic testing of blastocysts—embryos aged five to six days after fertilization—to test embryos for specific genetic disorders, as well as screening to ensure the embryo has the correct number of chromosomes. The center also has the capability to perform male-related procedures, such as sperm retrieval, for use in IVF treatment.

Jason M. Franasiak, M.D., FACOG, HCLD/ALD, leads RMA Marlton in its quest to help residents of South Jersey and surrounding areas seek solutions to their in-

fertility issues. Over the past three years, Dr. Franasiak has seen a marked increase in the number of individuals and families seeking out his particular area of expertise. As a reproductive endocrinologist who serves as the lead physician and laboratory director at RMA Marlton, Dr. Franasiak has helped hundreds, if not thousands, of individuals and families achieve the goal of starting or building a family.

"No matter what's happening in the world around us, people will always want to build a family; it's an innate desire that all of us share," Dr. Franasiak says. "We're going to ensure that our patients can build a family safely and securely, delivering success rates that are at or above the national average. A safe pregnancy has always been our No. 1 priority, and it always will be."

His colleague, Emily Osman, M.D., FACOG, joined RMA Marlton in 2020. As a reproductive endocrinologist and infertility specialist, Dr. Osman continues two of RMA's proudest traditions: providing expert care designed to help RMA patients become



Although we're very proud of what we have accomplished so far, we feel as though we have only just begun."

—Dr. Jason Franasiak
RMA Marlton



rma
New Jersey



With the additions of Dr. Simoni and Jessica Kestler, RMA Marlton now has four providers devoted to helping patients build their families safely and efficiently.

parents, while keeping them fully informed at every step of the process; and participating in cutting-edge research that has helped lead to groundbreaking advancements in treatment that “enhance patient outcomes in a way that results in healthy moms and healthy babies.”

In addition to being an RMA physician, Dr. Osman is a former patient. She underwent preimplantation genetic testing and an IVF cycle at a sister RMA facility in Basking Ridge, New Jersey. As a result, she and her husband welcomed their second child, a girl, into the world in the summer of 2020.

“There’s nothing in the world like having a child,” Dr. Osman says. “In the same breath, there’s nothing quite like the frustration and disappointment that comes from thinking that might not be possible. As a mother and as a clinician, I’m grateful for the opportunity to help other women build their families.”

STILL GROWING

RMA Marlton’s clinical team has since grown by two. Most recently, Michael K. Simoni, M.D., joined the clinic as a reproductive endocrinologist and infertility specialist. Born in Hawaii and raised in South Florida, Dr. Simoni completed his medical school training at Harvard Medical School, his OB/GYN residency at the Yale School of Medicine, and his REI fellowship at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. His expertise includes the full range of reproductive endocrinology and infertility care, specializing in embryo implantation issues such as recurrent implantation failure and recurrent pregnancy loss.

“As I was going through medical school, I had no idea I would go into OB/GYN,” Dr. Simoni recalls. “Initially, I thought I would go into psychology or neurosurgery, or possibly orthopedic surgery, but as I was doing my clinical rotations, a lot of what I saw in other specialties was somber or not rewarding in any fashion. When I did my OB/GYN rotation, I saw physicians that were involved in the happiest moments of people’s lives, and I thought: *I want to be part of this every day.*”

He strives to treat the whole patient, not just their infertility. Given his early interest in psychology and how the brain

works, Dr. Simoni has devoted his time and energy to understanding the mental and emotional aspects a family goes through during pregnancy as well as during struggles with infertility.

“I have great empathy for my patients,” he says. “Mostly it’s an uplifting area of medicine, but of course there are depressing moments, because everything can’t be perfect all the time. Part of the work we do here is helping people through the tough times, and then celebrating with them when you’re able to help them through to the other side.”

Dr. Simoni, who lives in Philadelphia with his wife and three-year-old daughter, was rather familiar with RMA before joining the organization as a full-time physician. During his third year of residency, he participated in a training program for physicians who had a distinct interest in reproductive endocrinology and infertility. The program, which he describes as “an eye-opening experience,” is where he first crossed paths with Dr. Franasiak.

Like his fellow physicians at RMA Marlton, Dr. Simoni has a passion for research. He has done extensive research on the role of viral infection on implantation and the placenta, particularly relating to the Zika virus; he and his wife—an immunologist at the University of Pennsylvania—authored a paper about the subject. He also has an interest in social issues such as disparities in health care and reproductive justice, as well as the barriers to diversity among professionals in reproductive medicine.

“I may be relatively new to RMA Marlton, having joined just after Labor Day, but I feel like I’m fitting right in,” he says. “Dr. Franasiak is an experienced researcher and a great mentor. Dr. Osman has been extremely helpful, and has shown me the ropes at the Princeton office, where I will be working one day a week. Everyone has been very welcoming, and I look forward to working closely with patients to help them on their journey.”

RMA Marlton’s growing team also includes Jessica M. Kestler, MSN, APN, WHNP-BC, who first joined RMA in 2016 as a registered nurse. Later, at the suggestion of an RMA physician, she obtained her graduate degree at Drexel University to become a women’s health nurse practitioner. A native of northern New Jersey,

Kestler did most of her training in RMA’s Basking Ridge office before relocating to South Jersey in July.

Kestler’s responsibilities include meeting with patients for new consultations, doing morning monitoring, and performing procedures such as ultrasounds, saline sonograms, endometrial biopsies, intrauterine inseminations, and hysterosalpingograms, as well as assisting with embryo transfers. She values the opportunity to develop close relationships with her patients and be an integral part of RMA’s multidisciplinary team.

“RMA Marlton is a state-of-the-art office,” she says. “We have been getting busier and busier, and our volume has been increasing steadily. We have hired a lot of new nurses for this office, I relocated here, and now we have brought on Dr. Simoni. We see every type of patient, and I’m proud to be in a practice that not only helps patients and guides them accordingly, but also does amazing research that helps not only our patients but patients of other practices around the world.”

Dr. Franasiak has been with RMA Marlton from the very beginning; in fact, he was instrumental in planning the clinic from the ground up. He is pleased with the clinic’s growth and the commitment of the entire team—from the clinical staff, to those who work their magic in the laboratory, to the administrative staff and others who make a difference behind the scenes. More importantly, he is excited to see where RMA Marlton goes from here.

“Since we opened our doors three years ago, we have continually expanded our services and added to our staff,” he says. “We now have a total of four providers here to help us achieve the goal we set out to achieve when we opened this facility, which is to help locally based patients build their families safely and efficiently. Although we’re very proud of what we have accomplished so far, we feel as though we have only just begun.” ■

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