



The Brown Medical Alumni Association awarded Rajiv Kumar, MD, its Early Achievement Award this year.

Virgin Pulse to expand in RI after acquiring ShapeUp Inc., founded by Rajiv Kumar, MD

PROVIDENCE – Virgin Pulse, which acquired ShapeUp Inc. earlier this year, a company co-founded by Brown alumnus **RAJIV KUMAR '05, MD '11**, in 2005, will significantly expand its Rhode Island presence and create nearly 300 new jobs in the next five years, the office of Gov. Gina Raimondo announced on Dec. 15 at a press conference.

Virgin Pulse is part of Sir Richard Branson’s Virgin Group.

Dr. Kumar, ShapeUp’s CEO, will be staying on as Virgin Pulse’s president and as chief medical officer at its research arm, the Virgin Pulse Institute.

ShapeUp developed comprehensive integrated wellness platforms which included biometric screening, health risk assessments, smoking cessation programs, stress management programs, as well as team events.

Dr. Kumar also co-founded Adopt A Doctor, a nonprofit organization established in 2003 that provides financial support for underpaid doctors in Africa. The roots of Dr. Kumar’s self-described “passion for preventive medicine” run deep in his family. He comes from a family of 30 doctors.

“Prior to its acquisition by Virgin Pulse, ShapeUp benefited immensely from strong partnerships with the Rhode Island state government, local institutions and community leaders. I’m thrilled that Virgin Pulse saw the potential that exists here and decided not only to stay, but to grow our footprint in this supportive and vibrant community,” said Dr. Kumar.

Virgin Pulse is a Framingham, Massachusetts-based wellness company, along with another business, Global Corporate Challenge of Melbourne, Australia. The three-way merger creates what Virgin Pulse says will be the largest well-being company in the world, with more than 450 employees and 2,200 customers across 185 countries.

The company is a provider of software and technology solutions that increase employee productivity and business performance by improving employee health, wellbeing and engagement. Third-party analysis projects the expansion will generate an additional \$10.5 million in revenues to the state and nearly \$60 million of additional GDP, once Virgin Pulse completes its full hiring.

“We considered a Boston office but ultimately chose Providence because of the access to talent and supportive business climate,” said David Osborne, President and COO of Virgin Pulse. “Our growth strategy is centered on hiring high-potential, early-in-career talent. With its hip vibe, low cost of living and high density of college students, Providence was a great fit from both a business and cultural perspective.” ❖

Johnson & Johnson chooses RI for a Health Technology Center

PROVIDENCE – Johnson & Johnson plans to open its new health technology center in Rhode Island. The center will specialize in optimizing information technology and data analytics to create software applications that will serve to improve health outcomes. The center expects to fill



approximately 75 highly-skilled positions in the first half of 2017.

The new center plans to lease approximately 9,000 square feet of temporary office space at One Ship Street in Providence’s Innovation & Design District and expects to complete its move to Rhode Island by spring 2017. To support its new center, the company intends to apply for incentives under the Qualified Jobs Incentive Act and the First Wave Closing Fund.

“Rhode Island has a strong network of educators, employers and decision makers that are advancing the integration of different health-related technologies,” said **STEVE WRENN**, Global VP-Chief Applications Officer for Johnson & Johnson. “The I-195 corridor is uniquely suited to support Johnson & Johnson’s new health technology center and Rhode Island gives us access to the economic development tools and university assets we need to stay competitive in the rapidly growing health tech space. As a company with locations and options worldwide, we are very pleased with the opportunity the Ocean State provides for this new center.”

The 75 employees expected to be hired for the new center will specialize in advanced information technology. With assistance from the Rhode Island Commerce Team, Johnson & Johnson will work with local colleges and universities to fill these open roles with top-tier candidates. The company has already begun outreach for this purpose. ❖