

# Connections

NEWSLETTER



## Where Possibility Becomes Reality

Ability Partners is more than a place—it is a connected network of programs, services, and communities where possibility is not just imagined, but realized every day. Across our agencies, individuals with disabilities and those facing life’s challenges are met with opportunity, support, and a belief in what’s possible. Whether in our classrooms, residences, workplaces, or community settings, we create environments where people can build skills, foster independence, and pursue lives defined by their own goals and aspirations.

Possibility takes shape in so many different ways. It’s seen in the confidence gained through a first job, the independence of a new living arrangement, the joy of meaningful connections, and the steady progress made toward personal milestones. Together, we are not just imagining a more inclusive community—we are building it, one person, one achievement, and one opportunity at a time.

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**Darrell J. Whitbeck**

PRESIDENT & CEO

## AN UPDATE FROM THE CEO

At the foundation of our work is a shared purpose, one that calls us to advocate, to serve, and to strengthen the communities we are so privileged to support. Today, that purpose is especially clear as New York State’s budget is discussed and debated. We remain steadfast in our commitment to ensuring that the needs of people with disabilities are protected and prioritized. These decisions have real and lasting impacts, and we will continue to raise our collective voice to champion dignity, access, and opportunity for all.

This past year has also demonstrated how purpose can guide thoughtful transitions. Over the summer, we had the privilege of assisting a local Traumatic Brain Injury Waiver Service business owner as they moved toward retirement. Through this process, we successfully transferred the entire service line from Rochester Counseling and Assessment Services to Happiness House, ensuring uninterrupted care for more than 100 individuals who rely on these vital supports. It is a powerful example of how collaboration and shared values can preserve essential services while honoring the legacy of those who built them. In the same spirit, we have been proud to support the Gavras Center in Auburn, an organization that feels deeply connected to our mission through its similar programs and services.

Our purpose also comes to life through growth and partnership. I am pleased to share that we will soon welcome the Pencils & Paper program, previously operated by Jewish Family Services, into the Rochester Rehabilitation Center family. This program is truly a community jewel, providing free school supplies to students in need, and ensuring that every child has the tools to succeed. We are honored to carry this work forward and to expand its reach, reinforcing our commitment to supporting individuals and families in meaningful, tangible ways.

Looking ahead, we are energized by the many opportunities before us, from community events to new partnerships, that will help grow awareness and deepen our impact. Together, guided by purpose, we will continue to build a stronger, more inclusive future for all those we serve.

Thank you for all that you do to support Ability Partners!



# CHAT WITH THE CHAIR

One of the greatest joys of serving as Board Chair of Ability Partners is seeing purpose come to life. Every day, across our programs and communities, people are working together to open doors, create opportunities, and ensure that individuals with disabilities are supported, valued, and empowered.



That is why I am especially proud to congratulate our CEO, Darrell Whitbeck, on being named to the Rochester Business Journal's Power 100 List for the third consecutive year. This honor reflects Darrell's exceptional leadership, while also representing something much bigger: the collective dedication of our staff, volunteers, partners, and supporters who make our mission possible. When purpose guides an organization, recognition follows. Not because it is sought, but because the impact cannot be ignored.

We are also energized by the momentum building across Ability Partners. From strengthening essential services to expanding programs and partnerships, there are many ways to be part of this important work. Whether you attend an event, volunteer, advocate, or simply share our story, your involvement helps extend our reach and deepen our impact.

On behalf of our Board of Directors, thank you for believing in this mission and for walking alongside us as we build a more inclusive future for our community.

Because when purpose brings people together, possibility has no limits.

With gratitude,

*Joyce Weir* | AP Board Chair



*Congratulations to Marsha (middle), Happiness House's Clinical Nursing Supervisor and Coordinator of Health Services, for being recognized by the RBJ for her excellence in nursing. We're so grateful for the compassion and commitment she brings to those we serve every day.*

# PROS SHOWS



Artists from Ventures PROS expressed themselves through the Art & Talent Shows. Singing, painting, dancing, sculpture, photography, embroidery, spoken word, oragami, and more were on display for family and friends. The supportive and loving atmosphere ensured that each participant was celebrated.





AL SIGL COMMUNITY OF AGENCIES  
**WALKABOUT**

At this year's WalkAbout, our team brought the fun to life with three creative tables that delighted participants of all ages. Rochester Rehabilitation Center's Ventures PROS welcomed visitors to a Candyland-inspired world full of color and treats, CP Rochester hosted a playful Go Fish-themed table, and SportsNet brought Toy Story to life with games and interactive activities. Through our tables, we engaged with the community, spread joy, and showcased the creativity and spirit of our programs.

**Save the date! WalkAbout returns next year on Sunday, October 18, 2026.**  
 We can't wait to bring even more fun and community spirit.

# HELLO JOE!



Joe Shane was selected as the guest team captain of the Hobart Statesmen football team on October 25, 2025 for the 15th Annual Tackles & Touchdowns game! The preschooler donned his best orange and purple and greeted the opposing team captains before flipping the coin at midfield to start the game. For the past 15 years, this event has been both a great fundraiser and bonding opportunity for the Happiness House Geneva preschool program and the Statesmen. 29 of the college players visited the Geneva site prior to the game to spend time with the students.

Joe has attended the Universal Pre-Kindergarten Programs at Happiness House in Geneva for two years. He is a great friend to his classmates in the Blue Room. Joe is described by his teachers as "kind-hearted and fun loving with an amazing sense of humor!"

Joe loves to learn and he is always curious and inquisitive! He especially enjoys building with LEGO and blocks and playing with police cars, fire trucks, and tractors. Joe and his friends also enjoy playing on the playground!



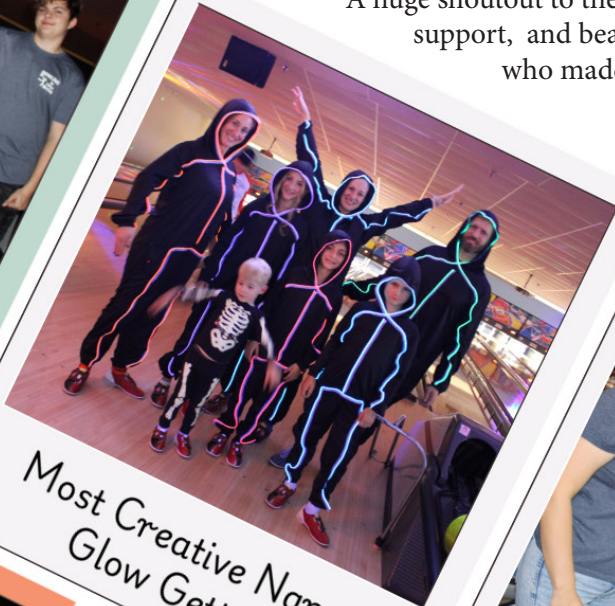


# BOWLING to raise BUCKS

Our Bowling to Raise Bucks event on November 7, 2025 was a sellout success — all 34 lanes were filled for a night of fun, friendly competition, and fundraising! Teams brought the energy, prizes kept the excitement rolling, and we listened great music from DJ Matt Tumblekis of Sound Entertainment.

A huge shoutout to the incredible staff at Roseland Bowl for their help, support, and beautiful facilities. We're so grateful to everyone who made the night such a success!

We look forward to seeing you at our next Bowling to Raise Bucks on November 6, 2026!



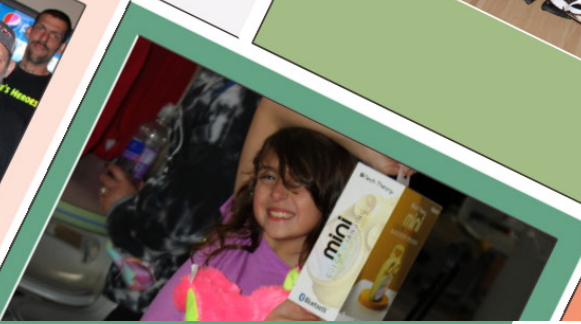
Most Creative Name:  
Glow Getters



Most Team Spirit:  
Total Speechie Island



Most Creative Dress:  
Kiki's Kumquats





# HONORING HEROES

## *A Night of Fortune & Fate*

We thank our heroes, award winners, generous sponsors, and guests for helping us to raise over \$108,000! This money will be used to fund programs and services at Ability Partners agencies.

Guests were treated with a magic show by Joel Greenwich, silent auction, wine cork pull, live auction, award presentations, dessert auction and two keynote speeches from the Legott Family & Patricia Davila.

Four award recipients were recognized congratulations to:



**Catherine & Elmar Frangenberg**  
Humanitarians of the Year

**Nixon Peabody**  
Volunteers of the Year

**Bill Cram Chevrolet**  
Community Partner of the Year

**Jeffrey Baker**  
Board Member of the Year



# EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION

WE HAD A GREAT TIME CELEBRATING THE DEDICATION AND HARD WORK OF OUR ROCHESTER REHABILITATION CENTER TEAM DURING OUR EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION EVENT!



**2025 Professional Service Award Winners**  
Mark Cohen, Sandra Michaels, and Kara Bardeen

## *Rochester Rehabilitation Center*

### *5 Years of Service*

Cody Brosseau  
Edward Genias  
Rickie Sanders

### *15 Years of Service*

Steven Lamonte  
Dauren Parker

### *10 Years of Service*

Patricia Bergan  
Cleo Brent  
Earlene Dennison  
Sandra Michaels  
Melvis Roman  
Veronica Carrion-Sanchez

### *20 Years of Service*

Jennifer Bellows  
Luis Reyes

### *25 Years of Service*

Timothy Murphy  
Pauline Marzouk

### *Professional Service Award Finalists*

Kara Bardeen  
Mark Cohen  
Christopher Davis  
Sandra Michaels  
Maude Nichols

Ray Ornt  
China Phillips  
Gary Staccone  
Jonna Terhune  
Peter Zamniak



## *New York State Industries for the Disabled(NYSID)* *Outstanding Performance Award: Shawn Brown*

Shawn joined Rochester Rehabilitation Center as a custodian eager to learn and grow. Over five years, he has shown dedication, reliability, and pride in his work, gaining new skills, engaging with staff, and taking on increasing responsibilities. Today, he manages three NYSID janitorial contracts, including one as the sole custodian on duty!

His growth, independence, and positive spirit make him a true example of outstanding performance and we are proud of this recognition.





# HOLIDAY GIVING

This holiday season, the generosity of our donors, corporate partners, and staff made an extraordinary impact.

Because of donors like you, 53 families totaling 230 individuals enjoyed a Thanksgiving meal, and 70 families totaling 157 individuals had gifts to open on Christmas morning.

Donors like Jeff & Carol Baker, Canandaigua National Bank, and Pactiv-Evergreen also sponsored our preschool classrooms; during special visits from Santa, Mrs. Claus, a police horse, and even a reindeer or two, each child in our programs received a gift to open.

Thank you to all who helped bring comfort, celebration, and happiness into the homes of our families this year.

If you're interested in participating in Holiday Giving or volunteering in general please reach out to Erin Greenfield, Volunteer Coordinator at [egreenfield@cprochester.org](mailto:egreenfield@cprochester.org)

# LET IT SNOW

After the incredible success of CP Rochester Day Habilitation Program's 2025 Snow Ball, the celebration grew in 2026, bringing the magic to both our adult program and our preschool community.

Our Day Habilitation participants once again welcomed friends from Shear Ego International School of Hair Design, who helped everyone get event-ready with hair and nails. Thanks to the generosity of Fairy Godmothers of Rochester, participants also had beautiful dresses that made the afternoon feel even more special.

Later that day, Snow Ball Jr., our preschool celebration, brought families and staff together for an evening filled with singing, dancing, crafts, snacks, and plenty of time with special guest, Olaf.

Both events created joyful, meaningful moments for the individuals and families we support and we're already looking forward to continuing this tradition in the years ahead.



## GRANTS RECEIVED BY THE AGENCIES IN 2025

### NY STATE / HARRY BRONSON WAYS & MEANS COMMITTEE (VIA DASNY)

\$250,000 was awarded to Rochester Rehabilitation Center to support the roof replacement and construction project at University Avenue.

### UNITED WAY

\$50,000 was awarded to Ability Partners for planning for affiliations between Happiness House/CP Rochester and the E. John Gavras Center.

\$68,400 was received by Rochester Rehabilitation Center to support the remaining program participants in the United Way program SWIFI.

### RCIPA FOUNDATION-HAPPINESS HOUSE MICHAEL & CHERYL COPPOLA APPRECIATION FUND

In recognition of Mike & Cheryl's dedication to the agencies, \$25,000 was received for Ability Partners agencies.

### WEGMANS

\$8,000 was awarded to Rochester Rehabilitation Center to update computers and software, and \$8,000 to be split evenly between Workforce Academy and DriveOn.

### CP STATE

\$7,885.60 was awarded to the CP Rochester Family Dental Center to purchase dental equipment.

### DASNY NONPROFIT INFRASTRUCTURE CAPITAL INVESTMENT PROGRAM (NICIP)

\$181,486 was awarded to Rochester Rehabilitation Center for renovations at the University Avenue location.

### FLORENCE M. MULLER FOUNDATION

A \$45,000 grant was awarded to CP Rochester towards Family Dental Center operations.

### OFFICE OF PEOPLE WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES (OPWDD)

CP Rochester was awarded \$25,540 towards a new chair & table for the Family Dental Center through the Regional Disability Health Clinics Program.

### RCIPA

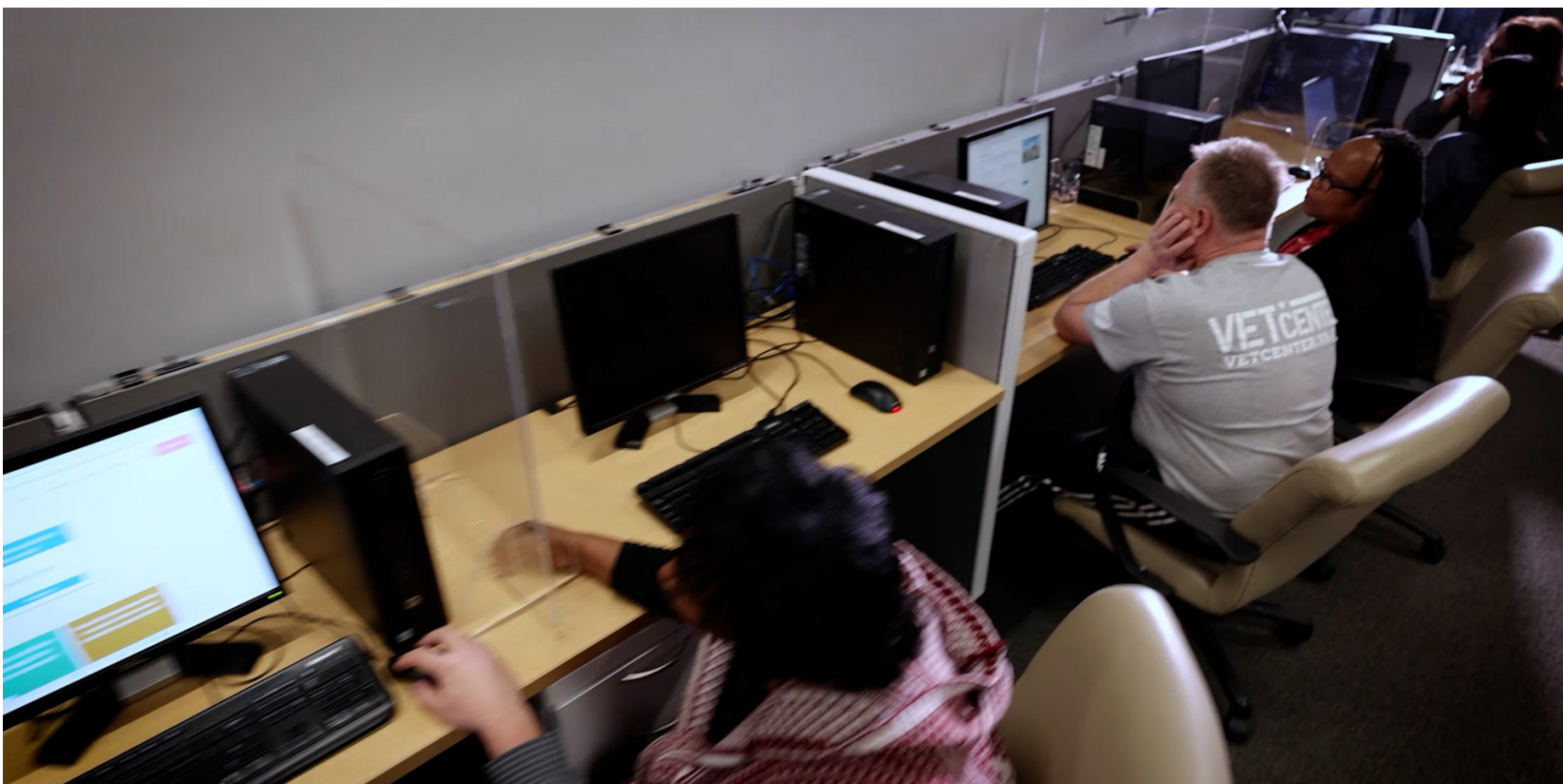
CP Rochester was awarded \$25,000 to support the Family Dental Center.

### PAYCHEX CHARITABLE FOUNDATION

\$2,500 was awarded to CP Rochester & Happiness House and \$3,000 was awarded to Rochester Rehabilitation Center for general operations and support.

### MARY CLARK THOMPSON

\$1,609 was awarded to Happiness House to purchase an AED machine for the Canandaigua site.





## GRANTS AWARDED

ABILITY PARTNERS FOUNDATION AWARDED **OVER \$30K** TO ABILITY PARTNERS AGENCIES IN INTERNAL GRANTS IN 2025

### CP ROCHESTER

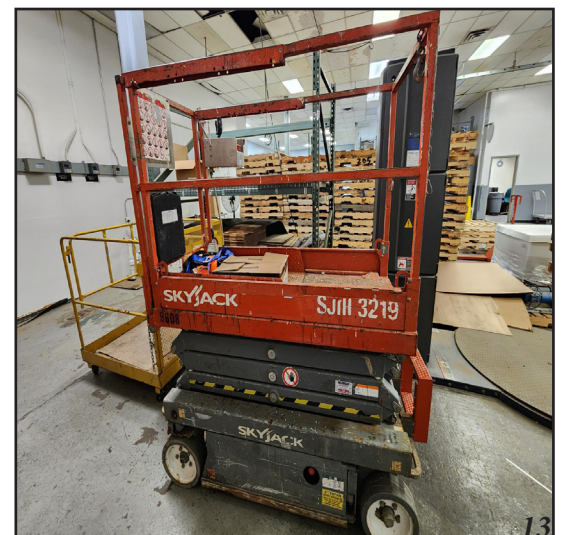
- The Clinic was able to reupholster physical therapy mats, replace clinic stools, and purchase evaluation materials for Occupational & Physical Therapy
- SportsNet purchased golf cart batteries & replaced aquatic equipment. They also were able to repair and revive the floor boards of the Shared Ski Cocoa Hut at Swain.
- The Children's Program purchased a bubble machine to enhance their sensory space.
- The Children's Clinic acquired a Tomato Chair for their Physical Therapy clients and purchased an adaptive swing for the outdoor playground.

### HAPPINESS HOUSE

- Canandaigua Children's Program purchased temporal scanners for each site, adjusted Geneva's playground's accessibility, Canandaigua's Yellow Room upgraded their cabinets, and the Canandaigua site commissioned a mural for the wall of the gross motor room (pictured above!).
- The Lochland School clinic location purchased TheraBands, cuff weights, an OT table, chairs & stools.
- The Clinic Team purchased new tables for Occupational Therapy sessions.
- The Evaluation Team improved and updated the toys and materials in the evaluation rooms.
- The TBI Structured Day Program ordered a second Smart Board for their classrooms.

### ROCHESTER REHABILITATION CENTER

- OneSource Solutions purchased a commercial air scrubber as well as a scissor lift.
- The Mental Health Clinic enhanced their waiting room and purchased play therapy items for children.
- University Avenue purchased a refrigerator and microwave for the employee breakroom.



## ROUND OF APPLAUSE

### *The Inspiration Project Celebrates 15 Years!*

For 15 years, The Inspiration Project has shown everyone has a story worth telling. By bringing together individuals served by CP Rochester and students from the University of Rochester, the program empowers participants to explore their creativity, share their voices, and connect through the written word.

Each year, students and adults from CP Rochester work side by side to produce a new volume of their anthology, *Dignity*. The collection, written and compiled by the participants, is unveiled at the annual capstone reading, where authors share their work before an audience of family, friends, and supporters



### *Congratulations to Dorsey, the 2025 John Clary Award winner!*

At the Happiness House TBI Structured Day Program's holiday party, Dorsey was honored for the strength and spirit he brings to his life and community while living with a traumatic brain injury. 2025 nominees included Kathy, Scott, Walter, Helen, and Jackie.

Erica won the 2025 Continued Success award having previously won the John Clary Award in 2024.

We are so proud of Dorsey—and of every participant in our program—for the strength, dedication, and inspiration they bring each day.



# THANK YOU TO OUR DEDICATED LEGACY SOCIETY MEMBERS

*Few of us will change the course of history, write a timeless symphony, or cure a terrible disease, but everyone has an opportunity to make a difference in the lives of others. By supporting APF through planned giving, you can help to assure more fulfilling lives for future generations.*

IMO William and Mildred Archibald* ~Gerald & Betsy Archibald Estate of Harold Augustin* Jeffrey & Carol Baker Joan Baleno* Charles & Barbara Battle Roy & Nancy Beecher MJ, Michael & Nanci Bentley Andrea Bonafiglia Mary Walsh Boatfield Margaret D. Burns T.U.A. Trust* David & Jane Case Michael & Cheryl Coppola Estate of Ann M. Cigna* Amy Cram Patricia L. Cunningham Paul & Tina Davidson Estate of Robert M. Derr*	DeTorio Family Living Trust* Virginia Elwell Estate of Richard G. Ensman Jr.* Elmar & Catherine Frangenberg Craig & Eileen Gage Mark & Mary Gearan The Golisano Foundation Charles & Donna Graham Marie G. Graham Estate of Henrietta Ann Hamilton* Estate of Muriel Hanselman* Christopher Harris Richard and Linda Hawks The Estate of Michael E. Hawley* Estate of Helen K. Helphrey* Estate of Harold J. Hickey* Estate of Robert F. Horn* John Horvath* Estate of Cynthia W. Janes*	Rodney B. Janes Memorial Fund* Alice & Edward Johnson Foundation Estate of Frances Arline Kenyon* Rachel Kielon Estate of Mary M. Kubanka* Ann E. Kurz Estate of Ralph A. Lomio* Robert C. Maddamma* Estate of Margaret H. McGrath* Brian & Kelly Meath ~Terry Meath Memorial Fund Carol C. Miller Sean & Dawn Ossont Estate of Nancy J. Perry* Estate of Arthur B. Plyter* Estate of Alice E. Ringler* Natalie A. Ross Revocable Trust* Estate of Pasqualina D. Schifano* Estate of Ann M. Schneider*	Estate of Eugene R. Schneider* Anthony & Gloria Sciolino Estate of Marjorie Simmons* Diana Smith Estate of Hazel C. Smith* Estate of Virginia C. Smith* Joseph and Irene Sklany Charitable Trust Elsa & Nick Steo Estate of Virginia P. Thiede* Estate of Dr. Bernard Tofany* Estate of Anthony Tuffio* Estate of Robert G. & Florence E. Van Duyn* Estate of Marion M. Wegman* William & Joyce Weir  *deceased
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**THANK YOU** to the **generous** donors who contributed to the foundation and our agencies. Every effort has been made to ensure this list reflects all donors who have supported our work in 2025. If we have inadvertently omitted your name or listed it incorrectly, please accept our sincere apologies and contact us so we may update our records.

## PRESIDENT'S CIRCLE

\$25,000+

Al Sigl Community of Agencies  
Jeffrey & Carol Baker  
Florence M. Muller Foundation  
RCIPA Foundation-Happiness House  
Michael & Cheryl  
Coppola Appreciation Fund

## LEADERSHIP CIRCLE

\$15,000 - \$24,999

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Buffalo Sabres  
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Cake Baby, LLC  
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Rehab Unit  
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## UPCOMING EVENTS

6/11  
2026

**Mini Golf Masters**

8/5  
2026

**Francis "Ben" Bonafiglia Golf Tournament**

10/24  
2026

**Tackles & Touchdowns**

11/6  
2026

**Bowling to Raise Bucks**



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