



# FOCUS

The Valerie Fund's mission is to provide support for the comprehensive health care of children with cancer and blood disorders

DECEMBER 2023

## EXPANDING HEMATOLOGY CARE AT THE VALERIE FUND CENTER AT GORYEB CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

**D**r. Christopher Lawlor joined The Valerie Fund less than a year ago, but is already making a huge impact on care for our Valerie Fund patients. His goal is to provide world class medical care for children and the whole family from start to finish. We are excited to announce new funding for Hematology programs at The Valerie Fund Children's Center at Atlantic Health System Goryeb Children's Hospital with a new full-time Hematology social worker and a full-time Hematology nurse navigator.

Care for children with blood disorders can be complex. At Dr. Lawlor's Valerie Fund Children's Center at Goryeb Children's Hospital, they care for pediatric patients with chronic and complex blood disorders like hemophilia and other bleeding disorders, clotting issues, sickle cell disease and more.

***"I am thrilled that we have the support from The Valerie Fund for a hematology social worker and a hematology nurse navigator. They will allow us to further advance the world class care that we are already providing for patients here, as well as increase our ability to reach out to new patients and participate in new innovative care."***

*~Dr. Christopher Lawlor,  
The Valerie Fund Children's Center  
at Goryeb Children's Hospital*

Having a full-time hematology social worker and nurse navigator will add to the care of Valerie Fund patients. First and foremost, these two new positions will enable the Center to better serve the children with blood disorders currently being treated. It also enables the Center to engage in community outreach, to reach all patients including those in previously underserved areas. Patients and families may not realize what the center provides and what the full scope of the psychosocial services are, that being the hallmark of The Valerie Fund.

The hematology social worker will help patients better manage complex disorders that require chronic care and often medications. Blood disorders such as Sickle Cell Disease and Hemophilia are chronic diagnoses. These patients need to be cared for lifelong to help them maintain good health and achieve their goals and potential.



*Dr. Lawlor with The Valerie Fund patient Ellie.*

The nurse navigator will help facilitate the multiple layers of specialty care that blood disorder patients require from the different specialists evaluations and procedures required to maintain health. This role will coordinate access to transportation for appointments, follow up with patients pre and post appointment and create educational materials in different languages.

Having these new positions supporting the lifelong diagnosis of a blood disorder will help give the patients the education and tools necessary to help them transition from pediatric to adult care.

The addition of these two new positions continues our efforts to help Dr. Lawlor expand the program and increase access to new medications, new clinical trials, and innovative therapies and opportunities for patients.

Dr. Lawlor is passionate about providing the best care possible for patients. Exuberant and energetic, and with an exciting vision for the future at The Valerie Fund Children's Center at Goryeb Children's Hospital. Dr. Lawlor is breaking down barriers to care and expanding access to treatment and we are excited to support his efforts.



## PSYCHOSOCIAL NEWS AT THE VALERIE FUND CENTERS

### Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia

**Accolades—Kaitlin Murtagh** has been chosen as a recipient of the CHOP Cancer Center’s Extra Mile Award! **Dr. Natalie Nageeb** received the Oncology Humanitarian Award. This award recognizes a faculty member and/or attending physician who goes out of their way to support patients and families, colleagues, and is an overall “good citizen.”



### New York-Presbyterian Hospital at CUMC

**Accolades—Dara Steinberg, Ph.D.** received an Innovation Nucleation Fund Grant from the Children’s Board at CUMC to revise and create new patient educational materials on stem cell transplant, with a specific focus on health literacy and the connection between physical and emotional health.

### The Unterberg Children’s Hospital at Monmouth Medical Center

**Summer Party**—On July 19, 2023, patients and their families enjoyed an evening of dancing, food, face painting, games, and more at McCloone’s Pier House. Families enjoyed being back together after years of not being together due to COVID-19.

**Sickle Cell Awareness**—The Valerie Fund Center at Monmouth Medical Center acknowledged their sickle cell patients and families for Sickle Cell Awareness Month with a personal letter and gift card.



### Children’s Hospital of New Jersey at Newark Beth Israel



**Cancer Survivorship Day**—The MAGIC Clinic held their second annual Pediatric Cancer Survivorship Day on September 17, 2023. Mind Body Spirit Therapist Leslie Connor gave out yoga mats, aromatherapy and wellness books and discussed wellness techniques with the families. Dr. Laura Hogan from The Valerie Fund Center at Stony Brook Children’s Hospital spoke and joined a panel of survivors and patient parents sharing their experiences.

Brook Children’s Hospital spoke and joined a panel of survivors and patient parents sharing their experiences.

### St. Joseph’s Children’s Hospital

**Uber Healthcare Funding**—The Valerie Fund has been providing funding for St. Joseph’s Uber Healthcare program. The funding has already provided 495 patient rides for a total of \$6,900 just through the end of July.

“I cannot begin to tell how much of a difference this has made with patient compliance with both visits and on-time arrivals. It has also helped us get patients to related appointments, such as radiation oncology, etc. that families would have otherwise struggled with. In my opinion—a game changer.”

~**Bill Copeck**, Nurse Manager

## THE VALERIE FUND 2024 SPECIAL EVENTS SCHEDULE

Thursday, March 7	<b>Taste of Giving</b> Mandarin Oriental New York, NY
Saturday, June 8	<b>The Valerie Fund Walk and JAG Physical Therapy 5K</b> Verona Park Verona, NJ
Saturday, June 14	<b>Kids Ice Cancer</b> Cody Arena West Orange, NJ
Monday, August 5	<b>The American Express Charity Golf Outing at Baltusrol</b> Baltusrol Golf Club Springfield, NJ
Thursday, September 19	<b>CAREoke for the Kids</b> Irving Plaza New York, NY
Tuesday, September 24	<b>27th Annual Burger King Golf Outing</b> Brooklake Country Club Florham Park, NJ
Friday, November 22	<b>33nd Annual Thanksgiving Ball</b> The Grove Cedar Grove, NJ

## LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Year 47 of The Valerie Fund supporting over 6,000 kids fighting cancer and blood disorders is shaping up to be another incredible year. We continue to expand our impact in all eight children's centers from New Jersey out to Long Island. We've committed over \$250,000 in new funding to expand the hematology programs and educational support at Morristown and St. Joseph's. This

brings our total psychosocial program support to almost \$4 million across the centers.

Our scholarship program expanded again. This year we awarded 132 scholarships and over \$530,000 to encourage our courageous teens

to expand their frontiers and continue their education at colleges and universities from New Jersey to Florida to California. Camp Happy Times picked up where it left off pre-pandemic to provide another amazing free summer camping experience for kids who have or have had cancer. And next summer, we're expanding the joy of Camp Happy Times to include siblings of our patients!

The biggest challenge in 2023 has been in meeting the emergency needs of our families who have children fighting cancer, sickle cell disease and other blood disorders. Many parents have to stop or pause their jobs to take care of their children when they enter treatment. Our emergency support has doubled this year as we're now providing over \$250,000 in direct support to help with rent, food insecurity and other day to day needs. And we're proud to do it.

Help us do even more for our kids in New Jersey, Metro Philadelphia, New York City, and on Long Island by supporting our mission now and in the future. As always, we remain **all about the kids!**

Barry Kirschner, Executive Director

## THANKSGIVING BALL GALA



Neil Yaris, Barry Kirschner, Dawn and John Gallucci with TVF patient Georgia



JC Uva, Neil Yaris, Vanessa Murdock, John Elliot, Barry Kirchner with TVF patient Madison

The 32nd annual Thanksgiving Ball Gala was held November 17th in Cedar Grove, NJ. This event introduces our Valerie Fund Ambassadors and showcases the talent and inspiration of our amazing Valerie Fund kids. River Munõz performed a beautiful musical number and Carter Taylor shared his Valerie Fund journey.

The Valerie Fund was proud to honor John & Dawn Gallucci (JAG Physical Therapy) and John Elliot (CBS2 Meteorologist) for their years of support for the Annual Walk & 5K Run. JAG Physical Therapy has been a presenting sponsor of the Walk & 5K for over 15 years, while John Elliott has partnered with us broadcasting our mission from Verona Park every year. We are grateful for their support and proud to call them Valerie Fund partners. This year's gala raised \$1.4 million dollars.

## THE VALERIE FUND'S YOUNG PROFESSIONAL NETWORK GALA

The Valerie Fund's Junior Board, relaunched as the Young Professional Network, held their annual gala October 14, 2023. Almost 200 people gathered together in Greenwich Village's Atrium to network and raise over \$60,000 to support the patients and families of The Valerie Fund



Young Professional Network chairs Dominick Kaceor, Chuck Kohart, and Manar Sarkania

## SPECIAL EVENTS RECAP

### A Taste of Giving



The 12th annual Taste of Giving was held March 2, 2023 at New York's Mandarin Oriental. Guests got a deeper understanding of The Valerie Fund and raised \$1.8 million dollars to support our full array of programs. Celebrity auctioneer and stand-up comic, **Colin Quinn** entertained the crowd. Thank you to co-hosts **Daniel Choquette, Matthew DeNichilo and Rachel Cecil, Brendan and Jenifer Garvey, Brad and Jennifer Henis, Daniel and Mary Hoffman, Jeffrey and Katina Mayer, Randy Reiff, Bob Richter, Lou and Blair Rosenfeld, Jonathan and Debbie Sebiri, Marc and Bridget Toscano, Josh and Sharon Weintraub, Scott and Rachel Yedid, and Ben Zhang.**

### Kids Ice Cancer

The Kids Ice Cancer hockey game benefiting The Valerie Fund took place on June 2, 2023. Partnering with The Valerie Fund, Andrew Low continues to organize and lead his Kids Ice Cancer event to new heights. Andrew and his teammates raised \$65,000, this year and have raised over \$323,000 in just four years for our kids!



### The American Express Charity Golf Tournament

The American Express Charity Golf Tournament is held annually at Baltusrol Golf Club. Chaired by

**Steve Squeri** and co-sponsored by **Dell**, this tournament has been a staple event for The Valerie Fund for 23 years and has raised millions of dollars for the children and families of The Valerie Fund. This year over \$465,000 was raised! Thank you to event sponsors **American Express Global Business Travel, Technologent, Turnbridge, GM Advisory, Cast Iron Media, Dentsu, and JDP Mechanical.**

### The Valerie Fund Walk/5K Run

The Valerie Fund Walk & 5K Run presented by **Ed & Sue Goldstein** and **JAG Physical Therapy** returned to the spring, as we came together with our Valerie Fund community on June 10th. This is one of our favorite days of the year, as we see our patients, families, and

their supporters celebrate and honor the strength and courage of The Valerie Fund kids.

Over two thousand people came to Verona Park for the Walk & 5K Run. Everywhere we turned, we were met with smiling faces, happy families and kids running and playing. The efforts of our Walk & Run captains and their teams, along with our generous sponsors, and amazing volunteers helped us raise over \$925,000. Thank you to event sponsors **RWJ Barnabas Health, Atlantic Health, and Oritani Foundation.**

We welcomed the **3rd Annual Lawyers Run** again. They raised over \$80,000 to support The Valerie Fund since forming in 2021!

Our friends at **The Learning Experience** were back for a 150 yard Color Run Kid's Sprint, where The Learning Experience's mascot, Bubbles, waited to congratulate them.



The day's impact truly resonated, hearing from Valerie Fund patient Ben, treated at The Valerie Fund Children's Center at Newark Beth Israel Medical Center. Ben battles Sickle Cell disease and he shared how it was in our Valerie Fund Center, where he receives treatment, that he feels the most normal.

It's never too early to form a team and start fundraising for next year's event which will be June 8th!

### 27th Annual Burger King Golf Tournament

The 27th Annual Burger King Golf Tournament at Brooklake Golf Club was to be held September 26, 2023. We were looking forward to welcoming Burger King Franchisees and guests to a day of golf and to honor Amir Syed of Syed Restaurant Enterprises. Unfortunately heavy rain canceled the day. Despite this, we were still able to raise over \$70,000 to support the 6,000 Valerie Fund kids seen every year, bringing the grand total of 27 years of support to more than \$1.6 million.

### CAREoke for the Kids

The 18th CAREoke for the Kids brought together old friends, as well as some first timers all having fun at this extraordinary event held October 5th. This unique event brings together media industry executives to have a great time and raised over \$320,000 to support



The Valerie Fund patients and their families. Thank you to **Adam Mark, Cara Lewis, Dave Tennenbaum, Eric Hawes, Jonathon Ciancetta, Lee O'Connor, Mike Graf, and Pat Brennan.**

## IT'S CAMP HAPPY TIMES!

**"Thank you for changing my life."**

*~ Camper to counselor*



It was a magical "Under the Sea" adventure at Camp Happy Times this year. Counselors and campers went all out decorating and celebrating the aquatic theme – turning the Tyler Hill campus into a world filled with pirates, mermaids, sharks, and other sea creatures. The joy of being

at camp, where kids with cancer get to be just like everybody else, is amazing to see. First time campers may board the bus as strangers, but they go home as members of the Camp Happy Times family.

Camp Happy Times is a beautiful reunion and established tradition for campers and counselors alike. The many volunteer counselors often started out as campers, whose time at camp is measured not in years but decades. Our campers are surrounded by a group of counselors and staff whose caring and compassion are unparalleled.

Highlights from camp include the classic camp activities of gathering by the bonfire, tubing on the lake, arts and crafts, cooking, swimming, the climbing wall and ropes course, the talent show, hanging out in the canteen, Chanel beauty day, and the annual camp dance. With all the summer rain, we were able to open the water slide. And we can't forget the week-long fishing tournament where the boys were able to win back the fishing trophy.

A round of applause goes out to Camp Director Matt Ruttler; Lynne Jones, our staff director; Nurse Marty Viegas, who served as Medical Coordinator; and Ellen Ruban, Program Director.



## JERSEY MIKE'S SUPPORTS JERSEY KIDS

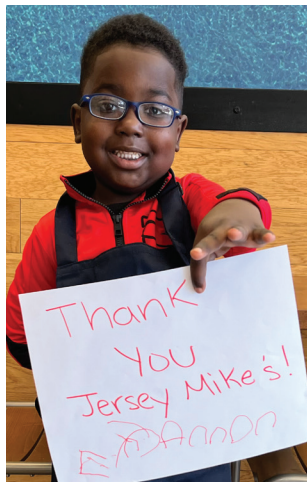


The Valerie Fund was honored to be chosen as the charity partner for Jersey Mike's 13th Annual Month of Giving campaign to support local charities, joining forces with over 120 Jersey Mike's locations across New Jersey. During March, the Month of Giving, customers were able to donate directly to The Valerie Fund at any participating Jersey Mike's and on the Day of Giving, these

restaurants donated their resources and 100% of the day's sales to The Valerie Fund!

This exciting and impactful partnership resulted in an amazing \$1.27 million dollars donated to support The Valerie Fund patients and families. We can't thank Jersey Mike's enough, as well as our wonderful supporters who came out on the Day of Giving!

We are excited to announce that Jersey Mike's has chosen The Valerie Fund again to partner with the entire state of New Jersey for the 2024 Month of Giving Campaign.



## THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS

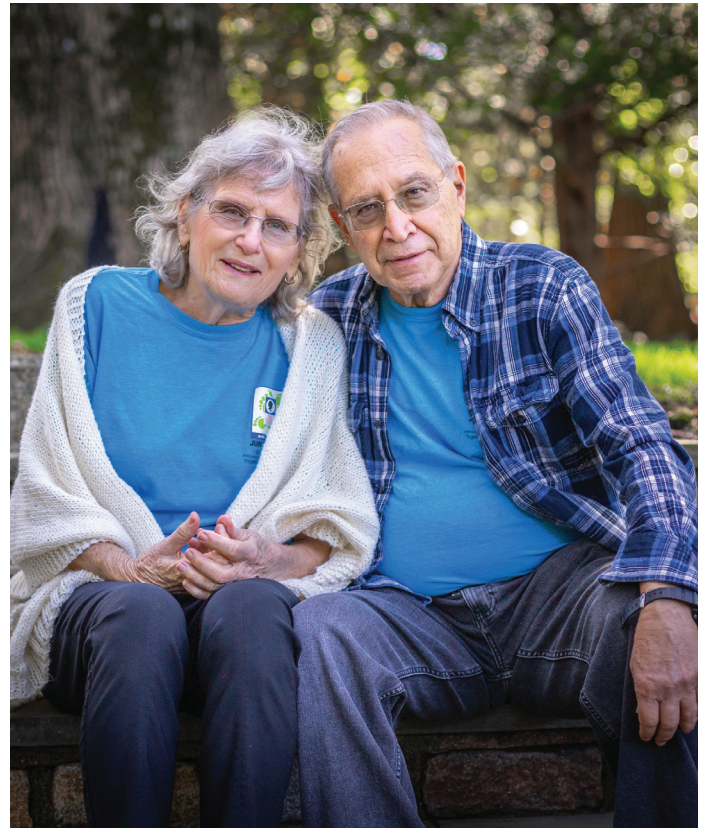
### Valerie Fund Grandparents Establish New Scholarship

Long before remote technology was ubiquitous, Helen and Barry Reiter's six-year-old grandson Aaron was lent a VGo robot by his Valerie Fund educational liaison. It was placed in his classroom so that he could participate in school and interact with his first-grade teacher and classmates from home. The Reiters were so impressed with the way the robot helped Aaron feel less isolated while he was on treatment for leukemia that they purchased an additional robot so more kids at his Morristown Valerie Fund Children's Center could benefit.

Ten years later, Aaron is a healthy 15-year-old high school sophomore in a STEM program and likes robotics. The Reiters are further expanding Valerie Fund patients' access to education by endowing a scholarship. The Helen and Barry Reiter Scholarship will be life-changing for Valerie Fund kids pursuing medical or nursing school, offsetting the cost of the recipient's education by \$25,000 each year.

The Reiters said, "We are so grateful for everything The Valerie Fund did for Aaron and our family, so we've been thinking about how we can help."

The Valerie Fund Scholarship Program currently supports patients studying a vast array of disciplines, including medicine and nursing. Prioritizing medicine is a logical decision for the Reiters. Barry Reiter is a retired oncologist who set up practice in Morristown in 1974, coming from Memorial Sloan Kettering to New Jersey, where he and Helen, a retired nurse and nurse educator, would raise their three children. It would be several years before The Valerie Fund would bring pediatric oncology and hematology care to families in New Jersey. Coming full circle, the Helen and Barry Reiter Scholarship will help future Valerie Fund kids return to medicine as caregivers for kids just like themselves.



Helen and Barry Reiter



### The Valerie Fund Celebrates the 31st Annual Morgan Stanley Rec Day

On the Morgan Stanley trading floors and throughout the executive offices, first- and second-year analysts raised money for The Valerie Fund for the 31st consecutive year.

Co-chairs Matthew Hirschfeld and Alexis Kline led the group in a successful campaign that raised approximately \$150,000, including a grant from the Morgan Stanley Foundation. In addition to funding psychosocial care and Camp Happy Times, the Morgan Stanley campaign covers the cost of the annual "Rec Day," which brought more than 250 Valerie Fund patients and family members to enjoy a day at Turtleback Zoo.

The tradition was started by board member Dave Novak and his brother Ken, along with board member Julie Rubinstein in the early days of their successful careers in finance.

***"For the past two years, our family has attended The Valerie Fund's Morgan Stanley Rec Day at The Turtle Back Zoo. These days have come at times when we've needed a break from the reality of childhood cancer the most. They've provided Charlotte with amazing memories outside of her treatment, allowing her to be a kid. For that, I'm forever grateful."***

*~Charlotte's Mom*



This year, The Valerie Fund Scholarship Program awarded 132 scholarships to patients at eight Valerie Fund Centers for the 2023-24 academic year. **The total scholarship funding for this academic year was more than \$530,000.** These scholarships have been made possible through the generosity of individuals and families to whom The Valerie Fund and our scholarship recipients are extremely grateful.

The essays students submit as part of the application reveal a special combination of determination, wisdom and humility. A number of scholarship recipients tell us they are planning careers influenced by their experiences as patients, crediting their illnesses for career choices that include pediatric oncology, social work, nursing and art therapy.

**ARNOLD A. LESHNER SCHOLARSHIP**

**Kayla Johnson**  
University of Pennsylvania,  
Master of Public Health

**BRODY PEAK SCHOLARSHIP**

**Sylas Yarad**  
University of Pittsburgh,  
English Writing/Poetry

**CHOQUETTE-BERTOLANI FAMILY SCHOLARSHIP**

**Carter Taylor**  
Widener University, Biology  
**Leonard Jasper**  
Virginia Tech,  
Biomedical Engineering

**DOSHI FAMILY SCHOLARSHIP**

**Rhea Kochhar**  
Pennsylvania State University,  
Business Marketing & Management

**FINKEL FAMILY SCHOLARSHIP**

**Jakob Brower**  
Gettysburg College, Political Science

**FRIENDS OF THE VALERIE FUND SCHOLARSHIP**

**Francisca Kwakye**  
University of Pennsylvania,  
Health & Societies

**GLORY FAMILY SCHOLARSHIP**

**Gwen Cinquemani**  
University of Delaware, Nursing

**HANNAH XUE ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP**

**Judi-Dexi Lokko**  
Rutgers New Brunswick /  
School of Arts and Sciences,  
Biological Sciences

**JOANN SPERA SCHOLARSHIP**

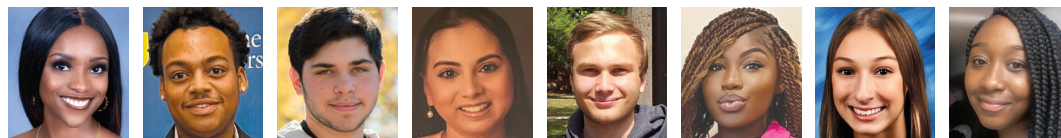
**Katrina Young**  
University of Rhode Island,  
Conservation Biology

**JULIA L. WEINTRAUB SCHOLARSHIP**

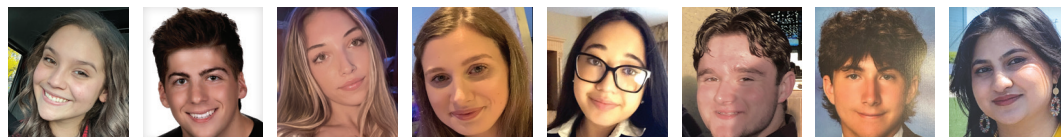
**Luc Chapall**  
University of Tennessee,  
Business Analytics

**KATHY RICHTER SCHOLARSHIPS**

**Alexandra Figueroa**  
Binghamton University  
**Brianna Gansert**  
Rowan University,  
Liberal Studies/Public Relations  
**Jessie Galarza-Cornejo**  
Rutgers University-New Brunswick,  
Psychology  
**Joseph Kurzeja**  
Monmouth University,  
Biology; Molecular Cell Physiology  
**Matthew Donnelly**  
Roger Williams University,  
Criminal Justice  
**Minna Irfan**  
Saint Joseph's University,  
Patchogue, MBA in Marketing  
**Rebecca Shannon**  
Pacific University,  
Clinical Psychology PsyD



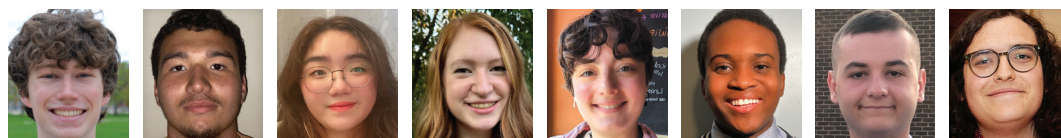
Kayla Carter Leonard Rhea Jakob Francisca Gwen Judi-Dexi



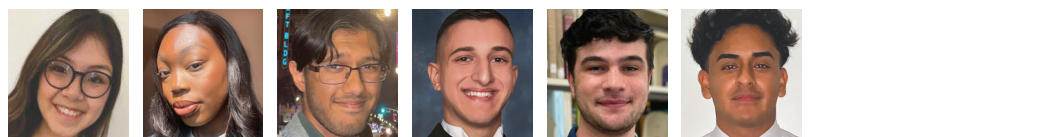
Katrina Luc Alexandra Brianna Jessie Joseph Mathew Minna



Rebecca Maria Alexandria Aidan Joshua Sharon Jessenia Joshua



Nicola Roberto Yu Ting Jillian Willow Benjamin Liam River



Fatima Abigaël Ajay Giancarlo Dane Yover

**KATHY RICHTER ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP**

**Maria Fernanda Toledo Ledezma**  
Montclair State University,  
Master of Social Work

**LINDA DEVITO MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP**

**Alexandria Carson**  
American University, Biology

**MACROMINDS FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP**

**Aidan Lohne**  
Rochester Institute of Technology,  
Chemistry

**MAYER FAMILY SCHOLARSHIP**

**Joshua Lukawski**  
Cedarville University,  
Mechanical Engineering

**MEHTA FAMILY SCHOLARSHIP**

**Sharon Ogundeji**  
Rutgers University, Biological Sciences

**RANDY REIFF SCHOLARSHIP**

**Jessenia Barranzuela**  
Saint Peter's University,  
Health Science

**SEBIRI FAMILY SCHOLARSHIP**

**Joshua Friedson**  
Brandeis University, Biology

**SOON I CHECK SCHOLARSHIP**

**Nicola Boisson**  
University of Illinois  
Urbana-Champaign,  
Finance & Accounting

**SQUERI FAMILY SCHOLARSHIPS**

**Roberto Bulleri**  
Purdue University,  
Aerospace Engineering  
**Yu Ting Gao**  
CUNY/Baruch, Finance

**STEFFA FAMILY SCHOLARSHIP**

**Jillian Olear**  
Stevens Institute of Technology,  
Chemistry

**VALERIE FUND FRIENDS SCHOLARSHIP**

**Willow DeFilippo**  
Montclair State University,  
Psychology BA/MA Program

**VOHRA FAMILY SCHOLARSHIPS**

**Benjamin Duvelson**  
Princeton University  
**Liam McGuire**  
Bentley University,  
Actuarial Science/Data Analytics

**WEINTRAUB FAMILY SCHOLARSHIPS**

**River Muñoz**  
Berklee College of Music, Songwriting  
**Fatima Otarola**  
Rutgers University, Biology Pre-Med  
**Abigaël Saint-Pierre**  
Seton Hall University, Biology

**YARIS FAMILY SCHOLARSHIP**

**Ajay Lalani**  
University of Southern California  
Writing for Screen & Television

**YEDID FAMILY SCHOLARSHIP**

**Giancarlo Cusimano**  
Emory University, Neuroscience &  
Behavioral Biology

**ZHANG EXPLORER SCHOLARSHIPS**

**Dane Hagstrom**  
Drexel University, Civil Engineering  
**Yover Tenezaca**  
Rutgers University,  
Molecular Biology/Biochemistry

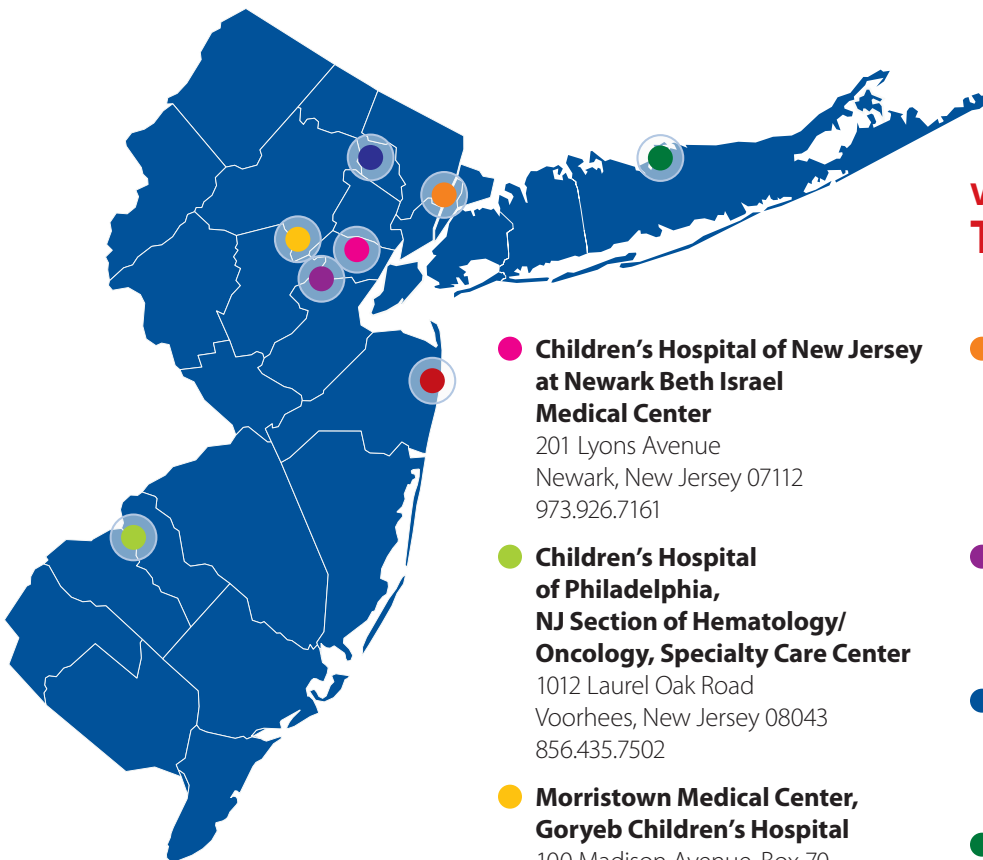


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## HOW TO CONTACT A VALERIE FUND CENTER NEAR YOU



VISIT US AT  
[TheValerieFund.org](http://TheValerieFund.org)

**Children's Hospital of New Jersey  
at Newark Beth Israel  
Medical Center**

201 Lyons Avenue  
Newark, New Jersey 07112  
973.926.7161

**Children's Hospital  
of Philadelphia,  
NJ Section of Hematology/  
Oncology, Specialty Care Center**

1012 Laurel Oak Road  
Voorhees, New Jersey 08043  
856.435.7502

**Morristown Medical Center,  
Goryeb Children's Hospital**

100 Madison Avenue, Box 70  
Morristown, New Jersey 07960  
973.971.6720

**New York-Presbyterian  
Morgan Stanley Children's Hospital**  
Columbia University Medical Center  
161 Fort Washington Avenue, IP 7th Floor  
New York, New York 10032  
212.305.5808

**Overlook Medical Center**  
11 Overlook Road, Suite 230  
Summit, New Jersey 07901  
908.522.2353

**St. Joseph's Children's Hospital**  
703 Main Street  
Paterson, NJ 07503  
973.754.3230

**Stony Brook Children's Hospital  
on Long Island**  
Lauterber Drive  
Stony Brook, NY 11794  
631.444.7720

**The Unterberg Children's Hospital  
at Monmouth Medical Center**  
300 Second Avenue  
Long Branch, New Jersey 07740  
732.923.7455

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