

Winter 2023/2024

Achieving More Together

CP Rochester
 Empowering People's Independence (EPI)
 Medical Motor Service
 National Multiple Sclerosis Society, Upstate New York
 Rochester Hearing and Speech Center
 Rochester Rehabilitation
 Starbridge



Athlete.
Graduate.
Entrepreneur.
Mentor.

These are just a few of the words that describe Patrick Staley. An avid Buffalo Bills fan, he loves to play sports, especially football. He likes to read and watch movies with friends. He enjoys bike rides along the canal with his roommate. He is also on the autism spectrum. Because of access to AI Sigl Member Agency programs and strong family support, Patrick has been able to envision, and create, a successful future fully included in community life.

“Don't ever give up on what you are trying to achieve. Everyone's path is different.”

At 18 months, his mother, Dee, began to notice that Patrick had difficulty engaging with others. Their pediatrician said to give him time. By the age of 4, Patrick was speaking only a few words at a time. A friend suggested that Dee connect with the agency known today as Starbridge, one of AI Sigl's seven Member Agencies, to find ways to help Patrick learn, grow and connect with additional community resources.

Today, Patrick is a member of the AI Sigl Facilities team, where he has worked for the last five years. He is a graduate of Roberts Wesleyan College's BELL (Bridge to Earning, Learning, and Living) Program, which is a partnership with Monroe 2 BOCES Orleans and CP Rochester, another AI Sigl Member Agency. He has his own yard care business, called Pat's Green Machines, and volunteers in the community.

“I may have autism, but autism doesn't keep me from realizing my goals.”

In 2020, Patrick achieved another important goal when he moved into an apartment that he shares with a roommate. He utilizes Self-Direction services, goes to work, and makes time to exercise and play sports with friends.

Your gift this year-end can help ensure that people of all ages and abilities, like Patrick, are able to choose their own path.

Your continued support of our work together helps provide access to the resources that make success possible for over 55,000 children and adults served on AI Sigl's six campuses.

Each year, more individuals and families turn to AI Sigl Member Agencies for access to critical services. Through your generosity, you can help thousands of children and adults with disabilities® and special needs become more independent, achieve their goals, and be more fully included in community life.

To make your gift today, please visit aisigl.org.

This issue of broadcast is generously underwritten by:

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Member Agencies



Howdy Neighbors

Fall colors usher changing seasons, focusing our attention on transformations happening all around us while we double down on seasons of gratitude. At AI Sigl campuses there are many exciting transitions. These include executive level leadership roles bringing new strategies and vision as well as introducing new services that will be a catalyst for different types of support. I hope you have a chance to cross paths with folks you read about in this issue.

I recently attended and led a forum for Social Purpose Real Estate in Detroit, Michigan. Non-profit leaders, practitioners of shared services and space, funders and policy makers from the US and Canada all met in the Motor City to dive deeper into collaboration, forward-thinking practices and cross-sector alliances. AI Sigl is recognized internationally as an innovative model sixty years into our history for flexibility, mission and community impact. Having the opportunity to share our stories and interact with colleagues reinforces the value that our Founder Justin Vigdor created.

Back here at home we celebrate our exceptional volunteer leaders. Recently as part of National Philanthropy Day, AFP Genesee Valley recognized two remarkable families that have been tremendous supports to AI Sigl and our community at large.



Dr. Jack Howitt received AFP's 2023 Outstanding Philanthropist Award. Dr. Howitt is a tireless and inspiring leader. He has served in many volunteer roles at AI Sigl, always engaged and willing to provide expertise and remarkable support. And he's been doing this for more than 50 years. We are truly grateful for Dr. Howitt's personal philanthropy, leadership, and dedication to causes critical for the health and wellbeing of the community.

David and Alex Whitaker received this year's AFP Multi-Generational Award. David joined Medical Motor Service's Board in the 1960s and began serving on AI Sigl Community's Board in the 1970s. He stays involved as an Honorary Board Member. Following in his proud father's footsteps, Alex joined AI Sigl's Board in 2015 and also gives generously of his time and resources.



Each Autumn AI Sigl recognizes loyal friends at our President's Circle of Hearts event. Andy and Karen Gallina and Gallina Development Corp. hosted us at Innovation Square. This incredible, transformative shared space that epitomizes forward-thinking practices, collaboration and partnerships for the

betterment of our downtown and greater community is a perfect space to honor those closest to our hearts.

I hope you enjoy all the stories in this issue. It is an especially challenging time for our agencies and the people they serve so well. It is impossible to express our gratitude enough yet let me begin by saying **Thank You For All That You Do.**

Sincerely,

Thomas O'Connor
President



New Agency Leadership



before moving into leadership roles.

Formerly serving as the COO, **Darrell Whitbeck** became President/CEO of Ability Partners Inc., in March. Ability Partners, Inc. is the passive parent to CP Rochester, Happiness House, and Rochester Rehabilitation. Whitbeck first served as an Occupational Therapist for years



Previous roles include emergency manager for Rochester Regional Health; deputy public safety director and emergency manager for Monroe County; and assistant fire chief of the Ridge Culver Fire District.

Medical Motor Service (MMS) welcomed **Tim Kohlmeier** as Executive Director in late 2022. A firm believer in passion through service, Kohlmeier was pleased to join the only nonprofit with the sole focus of providing transportation for people with special needs in Monroe County.



Commissioner for the City of Scottsdale, AZ, as well as a District Executive for the Boy Scouts of America.

Andy Yates became President of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society (NMSS), Upstate NY office in May upon the retirement of Stephanie Kunes. With global research and governance roles at DAI and IRI, Yates also served as Human Services Commissioner, then Transportation



Achieving Goals

Zachary, a Special Olympics athlete in his mid-twenties, is described by family and friends as driven, genuine, and kind. Diagnosed with cerebral palsy and epilepsy as an infant, Zach also has hemiparesis, a condition that affects one side of his body. Earlier this year, he served as run Ambassador for the 18th Annual 5K Run for Fun/1M Walk for Wellness

at CP Rochester's Winton Campus. An avid Bills fan, Zach likes to participate in as many sporting events as possible.

Zach is also a long-time participant in the CP Rochester Day Habilitation Program where he enjoys spending time with his friends and the variety of activities each month. He admires his staff, and says that they have become mentors. His determination has helped him to achieve his goals both at his program at CP Rochester and with his participation in Special Olympics. To learn more about CP Rochester's programs for all ages and abilities, visit cprochester.org or call 585.334.6000.



Free Seizure Recognition Training



Many misconceptions still surround epilepsy, despite the fact it is a common neurological disorder. Most people do not know what epilepsy is, or what to do when someone has a seizure. Most are also not aware of epilepsy medications' side effects, or impact on employment and driving. To help raise awareness and provide important information, Empowering People's Independence (EPI) provides no-cost Seizure Recognition and First Aid Training to a wide variety of groups, including school staff, to increase safety and understanding for students with seizures. Trainings can be tailored to provide age-appropriate training

for classrooms from K-12th Grade. These types of presentations can be very effective in increasing student safety, reducing stigma, feelings of isolation, and bullying. Online on-demand options are also available. To learn more, contact Michael Radell at mradell@epiny.org or 585.442.4430 x2741.



Courtesy Anne Levy

Filmmaker Raising Awareness About MS

Jason DaSilva is a filmmaker and advocate best known for his Emmy Award-winning documentary "When I Walk." The film, which followed his experience being diagnosed with multiple sclerosis (MS) at age 25, aired on WXXI-TV in 2016 as part of AI Sigi's *Dialogue on Disability* week. In DaSilva's latest documentary, "Predicting My MS," he explores the possible causes of MS, including genetic risk factors. With each project, he not only shares his own personal story, he also seeks to raise awareness and help others. DaSilva also developed a crowd-sourcing app called AXS Map that helps people with mobility issues share their experience to help others learn more about the accessibility of a business or other location. For his dedication, DaSilva was recently

recognized by the National MS Society (NMSS) as an Inspiration Award Winner.

To learn more about the NMSS, including the MS Navigator Program that helps individuals living with MS find the resources, services and support that they need, visit nationalmssociety.org/Chapters/NYR.



Save
the
Date

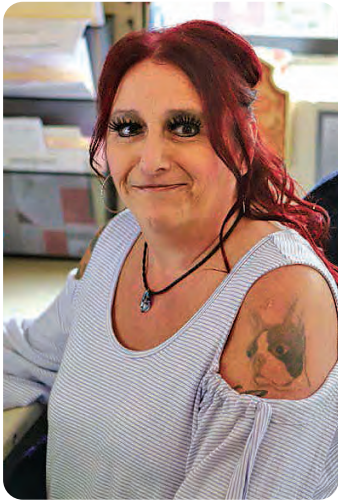
on **Dialogue**
Disability
THE HERMAN & MARGARET
SCHWARTZ COMMUNITY SERIES

Tune in to WXXI **January 22-28** for *Dialogue on Disability: the Herman & Margaret Schwartz Community Series*. This week-long series, made possible with generous support from the Fred L. Emerson Foundation, serves as the cornerstone of the year-long *MOVE TO INCLUDE* initiative celebrating abilities. For program listings, visit alsigl.org.

WXXI

Member Agencies

Fostering Relationships



Dawn's office space is decorated with cards and notes from riders, their families, and staff pleased with her efforts. "It's nice to hear those things, to get something in the mail for all the good work you do," she says.

Dawn has been an integral part of the Medical Motor Service (MMS) team for the past five years and currently serves as the nonprofit's Foster Care Representative. "I like the challenge of it," she says. "This job keeps me going all day, every day." Dawn is so dedicated to her program that she knows all the

children and families by name. Tim Kohlmeier, MMS Executive Director, noted, "Dawn has an amazing capacity to retain information about our Foster Program. She is invested in the families and children, working every day to make sure they get the best out of us in the tough situations they experience." To learn more about Medical Motor Service, visit mmsnys.org.



Link Between Hearing Health and Overall Health



Did you know that the average person waits 7 years before seeking help after they start to suspect they have issues with their hearing? This delay can seriously impact not only hearing health, but an individual's overall health. Hearing loss has been linked with worsening

heart disease, dementia, and more. To help raise awareness about this issue, Rochester Hearing and Speech Center (RHSC) is partnering with the Monroe County Department of Public Health to provide free hearing screenings for adults of all ages.

These community screenings are "a critical first step and can help reduce the amount of time older adults wait to address an issue that is central to their overall well-being," notes RHSC President & CEO, Bob Russell.

As the only nonprofit hearing center in the greater Rochester area and one of only two audiology practices accepting Medicaid and Medicare, RHSC plays a critical role in ensuring access to quality hearing health, regardless of need. To learn more, visit rhsc.org or call 585.271.0680.



ROCHESTER HEARING & SPEECH CENTER

Steering Independence



For over 50 years, Rochester Rehabilitation's DriveOn program has been helping people of all ages and abilities learn to drive, or return to driving, safely and confidently. The program offers driver evaluation, training, and equipment/vehicle recommendations

for individuals 16 or older who have health conditions or other unique needs. In 2023, DriveOn was awarded funds by Ability Partners Foundation to purchase adaptive equipment for one of their vehicles. These innovative cameras and monitors are placed in a way that enables clients with limited range of motion in their necks to see far enough down the road to the left and/or right to check for oncoming traffic. DriveOn is currently the only local driving school with this specific equipment. To learn more, visit rochesterrehab.org/driveon.



Creating Connections



Jen has served as a Direct Support Professional at Starbridge for 7 years. Recently, she was recognized by the family of a young man that she helps support. They noted how the pair's relationship had strengthened over the years, including the hard days of the pandemic. One example was how Jen used a shared interest in cooking and baking as a way to stay connected. They would find recipes that he wanted to make for his family and learn them together.

Jen also encouraged the young man to try yoga to help improve his balance. He wasn't in favor of the idea at first, but with encouragement, he saw dramatic improvement. With renewed confidence, he was able to spend more time out in the community, feeling confident and safe. This was a great outcome, as he had mostly stayed home before working with Jen. His mom says, "Jen has a wonderful upbeat attitude that motivates him to go out." To learn more about Starbridge's programs, visit starbridgeinc.org.



AI Sigl Welcomes New Staff

This September, AI Sigl welcomed Brenda Geglia as Vice President of the AI Sigl Foundation. As part of the senior leadership team, Brenda will guide the Foundation's fundraising and stewardship initiatives, including campaigns, and planned giving. She brings over 16 years of experience in the field, having most recently served as Senior Director of Advancement for Neurosurgery and Psychiatry at the University of Rochester.



Brenda Geglia



Megan Sassenhausen

Earlier in the year Megan Sassenhausen and Laura Merkel joined the AI Sigl Foundation team as Database Specialist and Manager of Fundraising Events & Volunteer Engagement. You may have already seen their smiling faces as Megan checked in guests or Laura helped guide volunteers at recent AI Sigl events. Beth Martin also joined the AI Sigl Community of Agencies Finance Team as Controller in 2023.



Laura Merkel



Beth Martin

Volunteer Spotlight

An AI Sigl donor since 2007, the first AI Sigl event Tom Adamski attended was the 2021 AI Sigl Council Paddle Tournament. Deanna, General Manager at Tennis Club of Rochester (TCR) had recommended that Tom join Ryan Brandt, who was still looking for a Doubles partner. Since that lucky introduction, Tom has played in two AI Sigl Sports Classic Golf Tournaments and joined us on the slopes for our inaugural Ski Benefit. But it has been the AI Sigl Tennis Benefit Committee where Tom has really made a difference, sharing his time and talents as a volunteer.

For two years, Tom has served as a team captain, recruiting and motivating his team in such a genuine and heartfelt way. His generosity has enabled participation by several young adults who otherwise wouldn't be able to take part, as a way of introducing them to the event. Tom even creates custom hats and shirts for his team. This year they were Kings and Queens of the Courts. To learn more about AI Sigl Events, or becoming an event volunteer, please contact Laura Merkel at lmerkel@alsigl.org or [585.442.4102](tel:585.442.4102) x8929.



Remembering Barry

Brimming with ideas and great enthusiasm, Dr. Barry Culhane always had a talent for making good things better.

He played a pivotal role in shaping the story of AI Sigl's commitment to inclusion and empowering others with his visionary leadership and dedicated support for more than 30 years. He served as Board Chair for AI Sigl as well as the National MS Society. Through his stewardship, collaborative spirit, and vast engaged network Barry has shaped community-wide initiatives addressing the discussion around abilities and inclusion in the Rochester area.

He will be remembered for his amazing intellect, quick wit, stalwart courage, endearing smile, incredible sense of humor and the kindness he showed to all.

Barry once said that "Collaborations are the threads that create the fabric of a community." He was a fierce advocate for Veterans and people of all abilities served by AI Sigl Community of Agencies. He helped transform AI Sigl's annual Schwartz Lecture into a partnership with WXXI called *Dialogue on Disability*, which grew with generous support from the Golisano Foundation to become *Move To Include*, a national programming initiative that uses the power of public media to promote inclusion.

His time at RIT included many leadership roles, including serving as executive assistant to three RIT Presidents and Associate Dean at NTID. He helped envision Imagine RIT: Creativity and Innovation Festival. He helped spark AI Sigl's access technology partnership as well as the LiveAbility Lab resource.

Barry made a profound impact, creating a legacy of service and compassion that touched the lives of countless people in our community. 🤝🙏👉

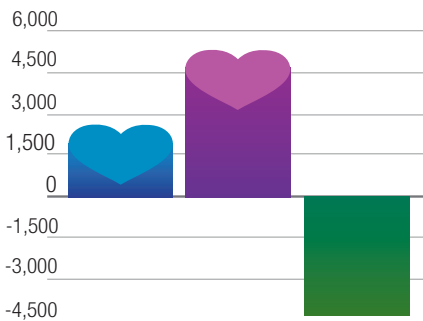
2022 Annual Report



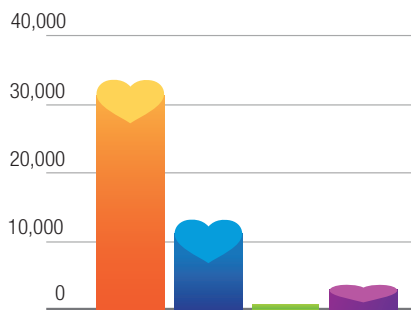
With gratitude to the caring friends, volunteers, donors, and staff who made it possible for AI Sigi Community to maintain accessible and flexible spaces throughout our six campuses and 20 buildings during the past year so our Member Agencies, Affiliates and neighbors can provide essential services in our community.

Your partnership helped us enhance access control at all campuses and modernize spaces to provide a safe and sustainable environment. We welcomed many friends, old and new, at events during the year, showcased the work of our agencies, and witnessed the collective impact on children and adults with special needs right here in the Rochester area.

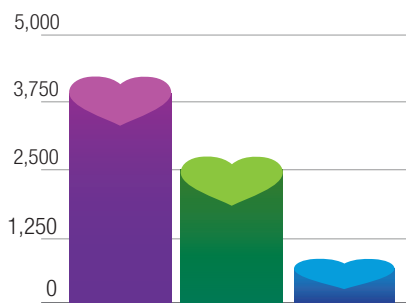
Thank you for helping us **Achieve More Together.**



Consolidated Support and Revenue		In Millions
Contributions & Bequests		\$1,161
Revenues		\$5,298
Investment Earnings		(\$4,376)
	Total	\$2,083
	Expenses	(\$7,985)
	Total Change in N/A	(\$5,902)



Assets		
Cash And Investments		\$33,707
Net Fixed Assets		\$13,066
Pledges & Crt		\$431
Other Assets		\$3,626
	Total Assets	\$50,830



Liability		
Long-Term Debt		\$3,379
Accounts Payable & Accrued		\$2,175
Amounts Held/Designated		\$678
	Total	\$6,232
	Net Assets	\$44,598
	Total Liability and Net Assets	\$50,830

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Visit alsigl.org/donate to make a gift





A Lift for Abilities

We were thrilled to welcome friends to Hunt Hollow for our 2nd annual Ski Benefit. It was a great day to hit the slopes to support individuals of all abilities! Shared Ski Adventures joined us with adaptive ski equipment ensuring everyone was able to enjoy the beautiful trails. Mark your calendar and join us at Hunt Hollow on February 23, 2024. Learn more at alsigl.org/ski

Thank you
to our lead
sponsors

BOB AUGUST
PAYCHEX

the **Ski**
Company
Mountain Sports

WOODS
OVIATT
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A Heartfelt Celebration

In June, the café at our Golisano Campus at Elmwood was filled with friends and warm smiles as we recognized Debbie Salmon's many years of dedicated service to Al Sigi Community. In addition to her role at Al Sigi, Debbie is respected across the community for her volunteerism and dedication, generously sharing her time while also personally supporting many different organizations. We at Al Sigi wish Debbie the best for this new chapter and hope it is filled with exciting adventures and experiences.



Thank you to our
lead sponsor

THEODORE & CASHMERE
MENDICK FOUNDATION

Paddle Tournament

On a beautiful spring day, we welcomed morning and afternoon flights to Tennis Club of Rochester and Shadow Lake Golf & Racquet Club for the 6th Annual Al Sigi Council Paddle Tournament. Players enjoyed a day filled with competitive paddle matches and camaraderie!

Thank you
to our lead
sponsors

Pike



Rochester's
Cornerstone Group Ltd.



Bright Lights



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Bronze

SWBR
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54th Annual Al Sigl Sports Classic Golf Tournament

Celebrating 54 years, this tournament continues to make a difference for thousands in our community! Grey skies and raindrops could not dampen the spirits of the more than 140 golfers who joined us at Midvale Country Club for this long-standing tradition. Heartfelt thanks as well to our amazing Al Sigl Sports Committee volunteers who make this event possible!



Save the Dates

55th Annual
**Golf
Tournament**
Midvale
Country Club

MONDAY
**JUNE
10**

2024
**Tennis
Benefit**
Tennis Club
of Rochester

FRIDAY,
**AUGUST
9** AND
SATURDAY
10

AI Sigl Tennis Benefit

We were excited to welcome even more friends to join us this year for the Tennis Benefit held at Tennis Club of Rochester. In addition to a sold-out team tournament on Saturday for 72 players we hosted 24 for our inaugural Friday Social Round Robin. We are grateful for the support of our incredible committee volunteers, Tennis Club of Rochester, and the tennis community.

Thank you to our Sponsors



Jim & Lisa Peacock

A Perfect Match

Each year, Tennis Club of Rochester, Deanna Kernan, and her amazing staff generously donate their time and talents to ensure that the AI Sigl Tennis Benefit and Paddle Tournament are a great success. Deanna's dedication is unparalleled. Joining us for both events, she recruits players and helps ensure the format is inclusive, yet competitive. Deanna and her team pay attention to every detail, making sure players and guests have an enjoyable experience. Says Deanna "Tennis Club of Rochester members and staff enjoy hosting AI Sigl events to help raise funds and awareness through the use of our racquet sports facility. We are looking forward to hosting events in 2024!"



It is individuals and organizations like Deanna and Tennis Club of Rochester who help make AI Sigl's long-standing events so memorable, and meaningful. We are grateful for their continued support!



Bright Lights



Al Sigl Community WalkAbout

For more than 3 decades we have celebrated our unique collaboration by walking and rolling together with a little Halloween fun sprinkled in. Families joined us at Eastview Mall as we celebrated inclusion and abilities with family-friendly activities, treats, and our annual costume contest!

Thanks to an incredibly generous donation from PCHI/Party City, those who joined us at the event could choose a brand-new costume to wear at the event and keep at no cost!

Thank you to our Sponsors

Gold



Bronze

Jaymes & Nicki Keenan
T&T Materials, Inc.
Maria Aslani-Breit, DDS
ROC Kids Smile



Fine Tastings

We were excited to host Fine Tastings at our new venue this year, Monroe Golf Club. Guests enjoyed sipping and sampling from local wineries, breweries, distilleries, and restaurants. Three cheers to our Fine Tastings Committee volunteers for making this event such a success!



Thank you to our Sponsors

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Facilities Spotlights

Bright Futures

Al Sigl is pleased to welcome the Citizenship & Science Academy of Rochester to Patty Mendick Hall. A tuition-free charter school for grades K-3, the school currently serves 240 students. Over 80% of students are from economically disadvantaged households. As with other campuses, students with special needs have their own individualized education plan approved by their home school district. The school seeks to empower all students, preparing them for college, career, and citizenship.



Greater Accessibility at Wolk Hall

Our cycle of construction and improvement at Wolk Hall has come full circle with the installation of a full elevator. We are incredibly grateful to our friends at the Daisy Marquis Jones Foundation, the Al Sigl Sports Committee, and the Burton S. & Charles J. August Family Foundation for their incredibly generous support of this effort. A plaque near the elevator recognizes past Daisy Marquis Jones Foundation President and Trustee Donald Whitney, who helped shepherd this project, which took two years to complete.



Many Ways to Give

You can make an impact by supporting the AI Sigl Foundation. Dedicated friends, like you, help sustain the important work AI Sigl started more than 60 years ago.



- Consider a charitable gift of cash, stock transfer, or IRA direct contribution prior to December 31st to help immediately.
- Build a lasting impact through a charitable gift annuity, life insurance beneficiary, or name AI Sigl Community in your will.
- Honor someone special—a gift in honor or memory of a friend or loved one is a thoughtful tribute.
- Sponsor an AI Sigl event and showcase your support.

If you have already included AI Sigl in your plans, let us know so we can welcome you as a member of the AI Sigl Society, created to honor generous friends who intend to make a lasting impact. Check with your financial advisor to discuss potential tax advantages or contact **Brenda Geglia** at **585.442.4102 x2718** or **bgeglia@alsigl.org**.

AI Sigl Community of Agencies is a collaborative community network that provides high-quality, cost-effective real estate and business services, while fostering community awareness and philanthropic support to a growing array of organizations that serve children and adults with **disabilities**® and special needs.

If you would like to be removed from our mailing list, please contact Megan by phone at **585.442.4102 x8948** or by email at **msassenhausen@alsigl.org**.

GO GREEN

Give us a call to request an electronic copy of future newsletters.
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Donor Spotlight

For over 30 years, the Theodore & Cashmere Mendick Foundation and the entire Mendick Family have been generous supporters of our work together.

Several generations have shared their time and leadership as Board or committee volunteers. In 2002, a generous gift from the Foundation helped open the doors at Patty Mendick Hall, a school on AI Sigl's Feinbloom Campus, named in recognition of their beloved family member.

While the family and Foundation have continually given to different needs, in early 2023 they made an even bigger impact. Rather than making multiple gifts throughout the year, they decided to make one gift that would help ensure the success of multiple events to include the Sports Classic Golf Tournament, Fine Tastings, and Debra Salmon's Celebration of Service.

We are truly grateful for this multi-generational dedication to our collaborative mission. We offer our heartfelt thanks to the entire Mendick family for their continued generosity and volunteerism.

Considering your own transformational gift? Please contact Brenda Geglia at **585.442.4102 x2718** or **bgeglia@alsigl.org**.



Innovation and Collaboration

Last year, staff at the Golisano Autism Center (GAC) suggested an IdeaLab challenge, part of our ongoing access technology partnership with RIT. Their idea was to design a communication board for their playground where nonspeaking children could use the board to quickly communicate where they would like to play next, to ask a friend or staffer to join them. Previously, children and staff would flip through a series of image cards on a keychain together. After IdeaLab, the RIT student team continued to work on the design as part of an intensive summer session called Studio 930. At the end of the summer, the students delivered a prototype to the GAC along with designs to print additional boards so that they can be placed near different play areas. To suggest a project challenge idea, please contact Peggy Fortune at **pfortune@alsigl.org** or **585.442.4102 x8779**.

