Carrying On the Dream
A Message from Maya Manley, Making Headway Foundation Founder and Secretary

Over thirty years ago, when I first began dreaming up the idea that would eventually become Making Headway, I was full of enthusiasm and empathy. I had just personally experienced what it was like for my own child to be diagnosed with a brain tumor and undergo treatment and its aftermath. I knew first-hand what families faced: how even the best healthcare facilities did not do enough to support anything beyond the child’s medical needs. I wanted to help other families going through what mine had endured.

I have to admit that I ran into some skepticism in those days. In fact, when I shared my dreams with someone in a hospital development office he laughed at me outright, commenting on how many mothers had come to him with similar ideas and given up after six months. I walked out of his office in tears, feeling dejected and disheartened, but determined. I knew in my heart that we could do it, and we did.

Making Headway started slowly but over time it grew and grew. Soon we had therapists, education specialists, a massage therapist, a clown, and a yoga teacher. We hired a child life specialist to supplement the one at Beth Israel Medical Center’s Institute for Neurology and Neurosurgery (INN), where Making Headway was based until 2004. We purchased some wonderful technology that made procedures like MRIs easier for the children, and we provided games, snacks and craft projects for the children’s playroom.

When the INN closed in 2004, we moved our work to the New York University Langone Medical Center’s Stephen D. Hassenfeld Children’s Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders. Gradually, something happened. As pediatric oncologist Dr. William Carroll puts it, Making Headway began to change the culture of the day hospital.

The excellent medical team at Hassenfeld began to see the importance of supporting families in non-medical ways and started adding psychologists and education specialists to their staff. These new team members worked directly with families, while continuing to refer families to Making Headway when needed. (Making Headway’s team also works with many families whose children are being treated at other hospitals.)

(continued on back page)

Above, Edward and Maya Manley.
Left: Amy Emmerman with her daughter Anna on the Family Yacht Cruise.
“Kia Ora” to an Indispensable Administrator

Making Headway is sad to announce the recent retirement of our incomparable office administrator, Linda Mudford-Lewis.

Linda, who hails originally from New Zealand, got to know the Manleys many years ago through the church both families attended. She and her husband, Burn, a research scientist at IBM (he works with the famous computer, Watson) became great admirers and supporters of Making Headway. The Manleys, in turn, became admirers of Linda. As a volunteer in the church office, she had gained a reputation for being a smart and organized worker, and often found herself fielding job offers. In fact, the first time the Manleys approached her about lending a hand in the Making Headway office, she turned them down; she was already booked with two or three other part-time jobs.

But it wasn’t long before Linda started having regrets about that decision, and when an opening arose again, she happily accepted. As she suspected, Making Headway turned out to be a great place to work.

“The Manleys are wonderful. The work they do is so important and they are amazing people to work for. It’s also been a privilege getting to know the children and their families,” said Linda.

Over the years, her duties expanded greatly, going from tracking and thanking donors to doing the bookkeeping, managing the scholarship program, organizing the annual yacht cruise and winter fundraiser, working with members of the Making Headway care teams, and more. Her intelligence, dedication and energy made us all more efficient, enhancing our ability to achieve our mission. Simply put, Linda became invaluable.

“It will be difficult for any successor to measure up to Linda. She makes it seem so easy—I only notice how seamlessly the office runs when she is on vacation and I have to clumsily fill in,” joked Edward Manley.

“She knew how to give her full attention and take care of things so beautifully. We will miss her more than words can,” Maya added.

Linda says she’s enjoyed every minute working for Making Headway, but now she’s ready to take it a little easy. However, her definition of “taking it easy” might not be everyone’s. She’s planning to continue all her volunteer efforts, which include working at the Mt. Kisco food pantry, visiting regularly with an inmate at the Bedford Hills Correctional Facility (through a program in another local church) and helping her own church with its monthly “midnight run” to feed the homeless in New York City. She’ll also shortly return to volunteering in the church office.

In addition, Linda is looking forward to spending time with her family. Her son, Andrew, a lawyer as well as a captain in the Marines, teaches at the Naval Academy in Annapolis, while her daughter, Heather, is an environmental lawyer working for a non-profit in Oakland, California. Then there are her hobbies: in addition to her daily trip to the gym, Linda hopes to make more time for sewing and knitting—and maybe even take up quilting.

It may seem like an ambitious list of activities for someone heading into retirement, but for those of us who have witnessed Linda at work, it hardly seems daunting. So, Linda, good-bye and good luck—or, as they say in New Zealand, “Kia ora!”
A Whole New Set of Deserving Young Scholars

The Scott J. Reisser Memorial Scholarship Fund was established by Fritz and Joanne Reisser to honor the memory of their 22-year-old son, who succumbed to a brain tumor just short of achieving his dream of college graduation. This year, thanks to the generosity of our donors, Making Headway was able to fund seven scholarships in addition to the two available through the Scott J. Reisser Fund. This enabled a total of nine deserving young people, all survivors of brain or spinal cord tumors, to continue their educations with a $5,000 grant apiece:

**Sarah Baumgarten** is taking a well-earned gap year to study in Israel, before returning to attend the University of Pennsylvania in the fall of 2017. One of Sarah’s first acts as a teenager was to request (along with her twin sister) that family and friends donate to Making Headway in lieu of Bat Mitzvah gifts. She continued this spirit of generosity throughout high school, serving as a child life volunteer at both North Shore-LIJ Health System and Hassenfeld Children’s Center, and spending two summers working at Sunrise Day Camp, a camp for children with cancer.

A 2014 high school graduate, **Lionel Chen** is currently attending Bergen County Community College with the goal of becoming a teacher. Lionel served on his class student council for three years in high school and was also active in the Red Cross Club. As a volunteer with the Brain Tumor Foundation (BTF), he took the initiative to organize a school toy drive for BTF’s annual holiday party.

**Logan Ippoliti** graduated high school in 2016, winning both the Student of Distinction in Photography and the Overcoming the Odds awards. After attending a pre-college summer program at the Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT), Logan—who’s ultimate goal is to attend FIT and pursue a career in the fashion industry—is now enrolled at Westchester Community College.

During her senior year of high school **Lauren Lam** served as president of the Key Club and won the Prudential Spirit of Community Award, which recognizes students for outstanding service to others at the local, state and national level. After graduating last June, she is attending Campbell University in Buies Creek, North Carolina. Lauren hasn’t yet decided on a major, but one thing she knows for sure is that her career will involve helping others.

The second time’s the charm for **Chantelle Lovett**, who was first offered a Scott J. Reisser Memorial Scholarship when she graduated high school in 2012. Chantelle turned down the opportunity, feeling she was not ready for college, but this time she’s accepted and is delighted to be enrolled at Suffolk County Community College. Her goal is to become a teaching assistant.

**Emily Ousoulisoglu**, who graduated high school in 2013, is currently majoring in social work at Misericordia University. Her goal is to work with children with special needs, ideally with organizations that focus specifically on brain tumors or cancer. Emily has mentored at Camp Mak-A-Dream, played a leadership role in American Cancer Society Relay for Life events at Misericordia and led a quilting project for survivors at the Children’s Brain Tumor Foundation.

As far back as middle school, **Noelle Sullivan** demonstrated her big heart by selling gray ribbons to benefit Making Headway during Brain Tumor Awareness Month. In high school, she served as President of the Make-A-Wish Club, organizing a volleyball marathon which raised $4,000 for that organization. She also served as Student Council Treasurer, and was honored with a Students in Action Jefferson Award for Service. The 2016 graduate is now attending Kean University, with plans to become a physical therapist.

When **Lucas Sundwall** graduated high school this past June, he left a trail of honors including four years on the quarterly honor roll, membership in the National Honor Society, and Scholastic Achievement Awards in English, history and Arabic. Lucas, who hopes to make a difference in how people with disabilities are treated in our society, is now attending Quinnipiac University as a legal studies major. His goal is to attend law school and focus on disability rights or advocacy.

A 2014 high school graduate, **Joshua Watabe** is now working his way through a sports management program at Bowling Green State University. In a note of thanks for his scholarship, Joshua wrote, “I’ve always wanted to represent and live for those who lost their fight, by honoring them with my pursuit of success.”
18 Holes and Much, Much More

About 95 eager sportsmen and women hit the links for the annual Nicky and Thomas Docu Memorial Golf Outing in early June. The event began at noon on a beautiful day at the Pelham Bay/Split Rock Golf Course and continued with a lovely outdoor buffet dinner after all the rounds had been played. Once the golfers had been joined by a few dozen family members and friends, bidding on the silent auction could begin; lucky guests came away with trips to Disney World and more. Host Tommy Docu, brother and son of the late Nicky and Tom Docu, respectively, played the role of MC, and was rewarded for his efforts with a friendly ribbing from the crowd. As he does each year, Tommy gave a shout-out to two people who’d worked especially hard to organize the event—this time it was co-workers Richard Erler and Keith Weiner. But this year also carried special significance: Tommy has decided to move upstate, so it was his last time as MC. (Fans of the outing need not worry, however, as long-time friend of the family, Jim O’Reilly, along with Tommy’s mother, Chris, and sister, Alexandra, have vowed to keep the tradition going.) In the meantime, golfing, food and fun added up to a hole in one for Making Headway, which was delighted to accept an $8,000 donation.

A Little N’Awlins in the Big Apple

Colorful baubles and beads marked the tenth annual Thomas Fitzgerald Memorial Fund Mardi Gras Bash this past April. An animated crowd of about 160 showed up to enjoy the lively event, feasting from a delicious buffet, dancing to the smooth sounds of DJ Big Al, and outbidding each other in a spirited auction led by the talented Mike Haase. Lucky bidders came away with Coach handbags, Ray-Bans, and Yankee tickets, among many other coveted items. The evening, which was organized by Lisa Fitzgerald and her daughters Kylie and Tauri in memory of their son and brother, Thomas Fitzgerald III, benefited Making Headway to the tune of $3,800.

Laughter and a Lot of Swing

About 300 people enjoyed a sumptuous dinner and evening of entertainment at the Westlake Country Club on August 21. The event, which was organized by long-time friend of Making Headway, Ralph Arbia, featured renowned swing band Louis Prima Jr and the Witnesses, as well as comedian John Pizzi, of “America’s Got Talent” fame. Everyone enjoyed oysters and clams on the half-shell, shrimp, chicken skewers and other cocktail appetizers before sitting down to a delicious meal of surf ‘n turf. As the night wore on, many diners took to the dance floor, and one lucky guest even won a weekend trip to Aruba. The evening, which brought in nearly $16,000, owed its success in part to the generosity of Carmine and Norma De Clerico, Thomas Field, Harry Kaminsky, Carl Panarella, Barbara Reale, Joe Samantano, and Thomas Tramueola, who arranged for the venue, food, entertainment and more.
Spinning Kindness Into Gold

Ninety-eight benevolent bikers spun their hearts out at the first annual Race for ACE, held at the NYC Fitness Center in Astor Place. Organized by more than a dozen friends along with cousins and siblings of Andrew Cooperman Ecker (“ACE”), who passed away from pediatric brain cancer at the age of 28 in 2015, the spin-a-thon drew so many participants that two sessions had to be held. The bikers sported customized t-shirts and were urged on with donated sports beverages and power bars, after which they retired—along with their many friends and fans—to Professor Thom’s, a favorite watering hole of Andy’s. There the party continued with food, drink, and plentiful prizes. Between the generous pledges and donations, as well as matching gifts from many of the participants’ employers, the day brought in $99,000 for Making Headway.

There’s Nothing Lax About These Young Athletes

Eighteen girls’ lacrosse teams from Long Island, Westchester, Connecticut and New Jersey gathered at Cold Spring Harbor High School on a dazzling spring day for the second annual Gains for Brains Lax Showcase. With hundreds of loyal fans to cheer them on, the teams battled it out in nine games played over the course of nearly ten hours. (So enthusiastic were the players that a group of Cold Spring Harbor team members even visited the Hasenfeld playroom after the event to do crafts projects with the children there.) Gains for Brains was organized by sports reporter Andrew Rappaport, who was inspired by Hauppauge High School student Courtney Tomkin. He had interviewed Courtney for a story in 2008, not long before she succumbed to brain cancer at age 17. Saying that in his 16 years of reporting, no story had touched him more, Rappaport founded this event last year in her memory. Nine teams won their games, but as always the true winner was Making Headway, which gratefully accepted $10,400 in proceeds.

Thanks to fundraising events like these, Making Headway is able to provide:

• Staffing and activities that brighten the day for children and their families at the Hasenfeld Children’s Center playroom;
• Long-term, ongoing support and advocacy for families throughout the tri-state area; and
• Targeted, child-focused research that benefits children around the world.

Do you have an idea for an event or an activity in your community? We can help you make it happen! Call our office at (914) 238-8384, or email us at dan@makingheadway.org.

Do something wonderful! Give us a call.

Making Headway is a Great Nonprofits 2015 Top-Rated Nonprofit and a Guidestar Silver Participant.
What a Day for a Sail!

The forecast was for rain, but skies were already clearing on the morning of September 11, as nearly 200 Making Headway family members and friends boarded the Skyline Princess for the annual Family Yacht Cruise. It turned out to be a lovely day, affording magnificent views of the New York City skyline for all aboard. Maya Manley was recovering from surgery, so her daughter (and Making Headway board member) Audrey Manley, as well as grandchildren, Esmé and Otto Fritton, filled in expertly as hosts. As always, the highlight of the day was a spectacular fireboat water-jet show in front of the Statue of Liberty, courtesy of the NYC Fire Department. Lunch was served as the ship entered the East River, passing under the Brooklyn, Manhattan and Williamsburg bridges. Then came dessert, in the form of 150 decorated cupcakes (hand-made by Maya and Edward), and double that amount of chocolate chip cookies, baked by another Manley daughter, Catherine. The ship’s cook chipped in with a delicious sheet cake and—just in case the day’s sweetness quota hadn’t been met—Esmé, Otto and Edward walked the decks handing out candy to the children. For the final event of the day, children gathered on the top deck to view the marvelous magic of Looney Lenny the clown. Once again, this outing was generously sponsored by Richard and Marisa Stadtmauer.

Save the Dates!

November 6, 2016
Head out to the Horace Greeley High School competition field in Chappaqua, New York, to cheer on the hundreds of big-hearted students who’ve laced up their sneakers for the 3rd annual Horace Greeley All-Athlete Walkathon. The event, which benefits the Making Headway and Gardner Marks Foundations, will also feature food and music, and will run from 11 am to 1 pm.

December 8, 2016
Cross some of that holiday shopping off your list at ICD Contemporary Jewelry’s 3rd annual Shopping for a Cause event, where you can sip champagne and browse the Chappaqua boutique’s unique collection of fine jewelry by international designers; 20% of proceeds will be donated to Making Headway.

April 9, 2017
Sit back and enjoy the antics of Liberi Di, a troupe of seven skilled acrobats from Italy who fuse circus, dance, physical theater, and clowning into a captivating and exciting performance. It’s Making Headway’s annual winter/spring fundraiser, and the fun begins at noon at New York City’s New Victory Theater. In addition to helping Making Headway fund diverse support services, projects and research, your ticket purchase or contribution to this event will allow us to invite seriously ill children and their families to attend the performance free-of-charge. For more information or to purchase tickets, please visit: www.makingheadway.org/something.

April 22, 2017
Don’t miss the next exhilarating day of sport, as talented girls’ lacrosse teams from across the tri-state come together for another Gains for Brains Lax Showcase at Cold Spring Harbor High School, benefitting Making Headway.
Creating Fairyland
by Annie Hickman

I first learned about Making Headway about 25 years ago, when Maya and Edward Manley invited me to perform at the annual garden party they held for children and families from the Hassenfeld Children’s Center. It was a warm summer day, and as I walked through the magical world of cupcakes, lollipop trees, a pony, a petting zoo, and more, I felt right at home. For the next fifteen years, I performed at this lovely party. Then one cold winter day eleven years ago I got a call from Maya, asking me if I’d like to teach yoga at Hassenfeld.

What an opportunity! I’d been busy creating and teaching my own style of fairy tale yoga to children in schools and libraries, and I was eager to try this new endeavor with pediatric patients at the hospital. In no time I had turned the Wellness Room into a fairy wonderland with purple yoga mats, lavender dancing scarves and twinkly stars on the ceiling.

In fairy tale yoga, the children use yoga to tell a story. But at the hospital the yoga is much different. The issues are complex, and helping the family feel relaxed and content is the primary goal. I have discovered that children in the hospital setting do not want me to teach them yoga. They respond best when I ask them to teach me—then they delight in showing me whatever they think yoga is and I try my best to follow their lead—always the best approach!

Yoga works wonderfully with children. They generally love to explore playful movement with their bodies, as long as play comes first. Running in circles, dancing with silk butterfly wings, playing yoga games, making music with Tibetan singing bowls—I follow the child in creating a playful and rewarding yoga experience, one that includes parents, siblings and friends.

Any movement is a great thing for kids. If their chemo pole restricts what they can do, we do seated stretches. A ball can work wonders. Sometimes singing a song is most helpful to calm an upset child. It’s amazing how “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star” can ease a child’s fears.

Once in a while I’ll have a few kids doing yoga at the same time and they all want my complete attention. That’s when I’m glad that I’ve been working with children for a lifetime. One way to approach this is to play a game. We take turns, with our eyes closed, reaching into my magic bag that is filled with toys all relating to yoga poses. Then I ask the child (or parent) what pose would go with that toy. Another thing we can do is juggle scarves, or have a dance party. Many times, children create their own dance shows for their parents.

One two-year-old, Alexandra, would come with her twin sister and Mom. She had an unusual ritual in the yoga room. She liked to build a teepee out of sticks and yarn, then she’d make up food-based yoga poses, demonstrating her strawberry and her broccoli poses. Another friend was a four-year-old named Christian. He had little patience for yoga but he liked to dance, especially to his favorite song, Gangnam Style. I brought in the music and we danced to it over and over again, with him teaching me the precise hand gestures.

I also fell in love with Maya’s inspired creativity and warmth in the playroom. She would show up twice a week with mouthwatering and nourishing treats, armed with buttons and bows, colored pencils and stickers, and captivate the little children of all ages with her charming projects. Along with teaching yoga, pretty soon I found a place for myself in the playroom, too, bringing in my own craft projects that I would share with the

(continued on back page)
Welcome to our New Board Member

Making Headway extends a warm welcome to our newest board member, Susan Rubin. The owner of Sage Yoga, in Armonk, for eighteen years, Susan sold her business and moved to New York City when her son, a young adult living in Manhattan, was diagnosed with pediatric brain cancer. Over the course of Andy’s treatment at NYU Langone Medical Center, both he and Susan were deeply grateful for the services provided to them by Making Headway, which helped them through a most difficult time. Susan started advocating for the cause with Andy’s friends, who, along with his generous employer, McQuarie Capital, pitched in with many donations. Sadly, Andy passed away in July of 2015. A short while later, Susan began taking on a larger role for Making Headway. She has done a wonderful job helping us expand our social media profile and has continued to help organize and connect the many friends of Andy’s who are eager to help out (see a description of their recent fundraiser, Race for ACE, on our Fundraising and Events page). Today, in addition to continuing to support Making Headway, Susan has returned to work as an associate real estate broker at Brown Harris Stevens. We are delighted that she has agreed to join our board.

Carrying On the Dream
(continued from page 1)

When Making Headway was founded, our mission was to provide “care, comfort and a cure.” But the emphasis in those early days was, of necessity, on the first two “c’s”: care and comfort. Our first fundraising efforts went to providing services that would make treatment easier on the children and their families, and then hiring the various specialists to work with families during and after treatment.

But now that Hassenfeld Children’s Center has a staff of its own to support families in so many ways, and now that we have so many wonderful people helping our cause with events and fundraisers, we can put more funds into that final “c” of our mission—finding a cure. We have funded the management of clinical trials, the bio-repository center that provides tissue samples to researchers around the world, and specific research projects, themselves. We’re excited that since 2005, Making Headway has put $2 million into research.

Back when we got started, I knew we could do it. But I had no way of knowing how far we could take our dream.

Creating Fairyland
(continued from page 7)

children. I have a degree in fine arts and a real passion for sharing creativity with kids and their parents. I am always on the lookout for fun projects. Together with the children I’ve made fairies out of vintage clothes pins, woven baskets, and so much more. I especially like it when parents get involved. I had one mom spend a whole afternoon working on a painting/collage project with me. Afterwards she said to me, “That was so relaxing! I haven’t been able to breathe in a long time!” It was the ultimate compliment.

I thank my lucky stars that I met Maya long ago, and she offered me the opportunity to work for Making Headway. It has been more rewarding than I ever could have imagined.