



A Foundation Dedicated to the Care, Comfort and Cure of Children with Brain and Spinal Cord Tumors.

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**Making Headway Foundation, Inc.**  
115 King Street  
Chappaqua, NY  
10514-3460  
Tel: (914) 238-8384  
Fax: (914) 238-1693  
[www.makingheadway.org](http://www.makingheadway.org)

Making Headway is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit foundation.

Making Headway Foundation works closely with the Stephen D. Hassenfeld Children's Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders at NYU Langone Medical Center.

## Thinking Back, Thinking Ahead

*A Message from Maya Manley, Founder and Secretary*



*I recently celebrated my 70th birthday, and reaching this landmark started me thinking about Making Headway—its past, its future, and the role I have been privileged to play in it. My life has been immeasurably enriched by the opportunities this wonderful organization has given me to help so many people. It has been thrilling to see how it has grown from a few of us with an idea to a thriving foundation. One of the most exciting*

*aspects of this growth has been our ongoing partnership with the Hassenfeld Children's Center, which has made room for us and been so supportive of our work.*

*When we first brought Making Headway to Hassenfeld, children were receiving wonderful medical treatment but there were few services to support them and their families psychologically and emotionally, and little follow-up once treatment was over. Momentous as the completion of treatment is, it is just one step in a family's journey back to physical and emotional health. There are so many factors to consider: educational needs and concerns, social challenges, family stress and more. At Making Headway, under the leadership of Dr. Marcia Greenleaf, we began to address all of these needs, slowly building a team that now includes a psychiatrist, psychologists, psychotherapists, education specialists and advocates.*

*Even with this strong team, we have barely been able to keep up with the many families that come through our doors. So it was particularly gratifying when Dr. David Salsberg joined the Hassenfeld staff last year. A pediatric neuropsychologist, Dr. Salsberg's team of psychologists, social workers, child life specialists, and others is on the case full time, seeing every child that receives treatment at Hassenfeld. When families can be better served by Making Headway—perhaps because they live further away and need phone support, or because they have completed treatment and need help with such "outside" issues as educational advocacy, or any number of other reasons—Dr. Salsberg refers them to us.*  
*(continues on last page)*

*Top: Maya Manley with Alexandra Talbot.*

*Right: Dr. David Salsberg (on left) and Dr. Jeffrey Allen.*



## Gracious Giving

Throughout the year, Making Headway receives numerous gifts from individuals, families and friends, organizations and companies. These gifts help us fulfill our mission. No matter how great or small, we are honored by each contribution and sincerely thank you. Some examples of gracious giving include the following:

Children undergoing treatment at Hassenfeld Children's Center got an extra helping of security in the form of some very huggable handmade blankets. The blankets were donated by two separate groups of well-wishers:

- Members of the Plainview Reform Church Project Linus Group of Plainview, New Jersey, at the behest of **Jeanne Egan**, and
- A group of charity knitters organized by **Judith Rudnick Kane**. Kane owns "Yarns for Your Soul" in Manchester Center, Vermont.

When **Debra and James Farrelly** tied the knot recently, they thought beyond their own happy day. In lieu of favors, the couple donated \$1,000 to Making Headway, in memory of Debra's brother, **Kenneth Thompson**.

Once again, the youngest generation came through with fund-raising efforts, sacrifice and gifts of all kinds:

- Hard-working teenager **Jordan Levenstein** set aside a hefty percentage of her babysitting money, donating \$100.
- At his parents' suggestion, friends and family of **Owen Dodd** celebrated his birthday with gifts for Making Headway. Not only did the plan bring in \$600, but the five-year-old proudly delivered a heap of new games, toys and activity sets to the Playroom.
- Inspired by a breast cancer fundraising drive, **Ivana Schwartz** did some fundraising of her own. The sixth-grader lobbied classmates, teachers, friends and family members, raising \$641 for Making Headway.
- Young entrepreneurs **Esmé and Otto Fritton** made lemonade and cookies, offering passersby a chance to relax with their goodies in a sort of end-of-the-driveway café benefitting Making Headway. Proceeds totaled \$4.46, to which Esmé added \$18 she had saved from her allowance.
- Fifth graders at **Temple Israel of New Rochelle Religious School** remembered



Making Headway when distributing their tzedakah savings. The students, who collected the funds as part of the Jewish requirement of charity, donated \$545.19.

- Folks buying cookies from The Chapin School's **Girl Scout Troop #3157** may not have realized it, but they were doing more than just satisfying the annual urge for a Thin Mint. The troop directed \$500 of their proceeds to Making Headway, in memory of their friend **Shruti Srinivasan**. **Adele Malle** saved her allowance to make an additional awe-inspiring donation of \$417, also in memory of **Shruti**. Both gifts were used to purchase craft supplies for the Playroom, where Shruti enjoyed spending time.
- Youngsters at Temple B'nai Abraham's Early School made a banner and danced the day away at a fundraising Dance-a-Thon organized by **Elyse Dub**, whose daughter, **Elaina**, is a student there. The lively event raised \$3,400.
- When **Rachael Kessler**'s school, Baylis Elementary, held a "Baylis Gives Back" show (modeled after American Idol's similarly-named event) the seven-year-old knew just what to do. She collected money from her relatives, designating the \$26 raised for use in research.
- Inspired by her own past treatment at Hassenfeld Children's Center, generous 13-year-old **Juliana LoPiccolo** organized a toy drive, personally delivering the proceeds to the Playroom.
- "The best gift we could ever get would be knowing that our friends and family considered giving to Making Headway instead of to us." With these words, twin sisters **Sarah and Hannah Baumgarten** invited friends and family to celebrate their becoming B'not Mitzvah—and raised \$21,688. 



*Top: Renee Smith.*

*Center: Sarah Baumgarten with her mother Jane Spielman.*

*Bottom: Esmé and Otto Fritton.*

*Left: Kim Tabatt and Chastity Gonzalez.*





## A Late Summer Sail

On Sunday, September 12, fifty families took a lovely sail on the Skyline Princess. The three-hour cruise left from Chelsea Piers, gliding past the Statue of Liberty, around the tip of Manhattan, and under the Brooklyn Bridge. Guests enjoyed lunch followed by tasty home-made desserts prepared by Maya Manley and Making Headway office administrator, Linda Mudford-Lewis. Children giggled at the antics of renowned silent clown, Chip Bryant, BFA (Bachelors in Fun Arts). The relaxing and entertaining trip is provided each year for Making Headway families by Richard and Marisa Stadtmauer, friends of the Greenbaum family.



## 2010 Scott J. Reisser Memorial Scholarships Go to Four Motivated Teens

We're pleased to announce the four talented young winners of this year's Scott J. Reisser Memorial Scholarships. Impressively, all four have plans to use their education as a means of giving back:

- **Lauren Chiaramonte** is beginning her second year at Mitchell College. A Liberal and Professional Studies major, her goal is to become a radiology technician. "I feel I will have come full circle, becoming a part of the field that has and continues to help me," Lauren explains.
- Exercise science is the career of choice for **Gabriella Feltre**, a freshman at Mercer County Community College. Gabriella plans to continue her education at a four year college and then work at a rehabilitation hospital, with children in situations similar to the one she once faced.
- **Christine Kiernan** has started pursuing a degree in special education at Caldwell College. "I would like to help kids that may have come into the world with Down syndrome or other disabilities so I can give them the same love and support that others have shown me throughout my entire life," she says.
- Already a sophomore at Susquehanna University, **Katherine Vallone** hopes to become a business manager in the biomedical field, helping to develop and market products for the wounded: "I want them to be able to live their lives with greater confidence and independence," Katherine says.

The Scott J. Reisser Memorial Scholarship Fund was established by Fritz and Joanne Reisser in memory of their son, who died just short of achieving his own dream of graduating college. Funds for this year's awardees were augmented by the Making Headway Foundation.

Congratulations to all the winners!

*Top left: George and Luriel Balaurea with Chip Bryant (mime) on the yacht cruise.*

*Bottom left: Emily Vidal and her mom Tyla on the yacht cruise.*



*From top:  
Lauren Chiaramonte  
Gabriella Feltre  
Christine Kiernan  
Katherine Vallone*

## You Know It's Springtime When . . .

- On Saturday, April 10, a warm spring day, about four hundred folks of all ages took part in the twelfth annual *Little Bit of a Walk and Fun Run*. Participants breathed in fresh sea air and took in the sights of charming Point Lookout, Long Island, then gathered for music and refreshments. It would have been a delightful day no matter what the outcome, but the \$26,250 it brought in for Making Headway tied it up with a bow.
- A couple of weeks later, on April 28, an unseasonable nip was in the air. But that didn't stop a throng of nearly two hundred from showing up to dine as well as stroll acres of colorful tulip beds at the thirteenth annual "*All-is-onE*" *Tulip Festival Dinner Dance*. As always, the event was hosted by Jeannie and Greg Trunz, who donated the spectacular facilities of the Swan Club. This year's event journal was dedicated to Making Headway co-founders Clint and Elisa Greenbaum and their children, Jake and Augusta. Silent and "Get Lucky" auctions helped boost the evening's proceeds to more than \$135,000.

## Upping the Ante for Research

Over 100 guests answered Marc and Elizabeth Talbot's call to try their luck at a *Texas Hold 'Em Poker Tournament* on July 15. While only about half of them opted to join the card tables, others enjoyed Mah Jong and did their best to outbid each other in a silent auction. And everyone partook of delicious food and drink. Held at the beautiful Byrnwood Golf and Country Club in Armonk, New York, the event brought in \$60,000. The funds will be applied to the clinical trial of a new drug for juvenile pylocytic astrocytomas, which is to be conducted by Dr. Matthias Karajannis at NYU School of Medicine.

## Fore!

Balls have been sailing over the fairways once again, bringing with them not only the excitement of the game but the pleasures of good company and a good cause:

- The seventh annual *Nicky Docu Memorial Golf Outing* was held at the Van Cortlandt

Park Golf Course in the Bronx on June 11. Nearly twelve dozen golfers showed up this year—the event's highest-ever attendance—to enjoy not only the game but a tasty barbecue supper. Organized by Christine and Tom Docu in memory of their son, Nicky, the day's activities earned \$21,500 for Making Headway. The funds are earmarked for brain tumor research.

- Just ten days later, on June 21, about a hundred golf enthusiasts and friends headed to the Crab Meadow Golf Club on Long Island for the sixth annual *Kyle A. McKay Golf Classic*. The nearly all-day affair featured not only barbecue lunch but a putting contest and a round of scramble shotgun golf. An additional two dozen guests showed up in time for cocktails and dinner, followed by an awards ceremony and silent auction. In all, the event, organized by Lauren and Don McKay in honor of their son, Kyle, raised over \$29,000.
- Finally, come September, it was time for the ninth annual *Fore A Difference Golf Tournament*. 129 golfers arrived at the Cream Ridge Golf Course in Cream Ridge, New Jersey, for an early breakfast followed by a pleasant day on the links and a sumptuous lunch. In addition to perfecting their swings, feasting and socializing, guests laughed along with old-time comic, "Uncle Floyd." The event, hosted by Tracey and Stephen Casale and their friends, Ralph Arbia and his daughter, Kim Madsen, brought in \$46,400 for Making Headway.



*Top: Edward Manley with Christine and Tom Docu at the Nicky Docu Memorial Golf Outing.*

*Bottom: Maya and Edward Manley with the Conetta family at the Swing for a Cause whiffleball tournament.*

## Play It Again, Sam

Last year's *Swing for a Cause* Round Robin whiffleball tournament, the brainstorm of teenaged survivor Chris Conetta, was such a resounding success that the family decided to make it a tradition. Chris flew home to Connecticut from the University of San Diego, where he is now a freshman, to join his parents, Peter and Lynn, and siblings, Kevin and Kait, for the September 18 event. This year the number of teams had swelled from six to eight, with another several dozen spectators. Players and fans alike munched on delicious hamburgers, hot dogs and Italian sausages donated and cooked by Conetta family relatives, Peter, Joe, Scott and Marylee Gerardi. Fittingly, Chris's team took the championship, but Making Headway was also a winner, to the tune of \$8,400.





## Promoting Wellness through Play

by Jose Acevedo, MS Ed, CTRS

Recreation Therapist / Wellness Coordinator, Hassenfeld Children's Center

Recreation Therapy (also called Therapeutic Recreation) is a way of helping people attain physical, psychological, social and emotional goals through play. It is most commonly used among older people, for example, in nursing homes and long-term care facilities. But I've always enjoyed working with children, so for my senior internship during college, I requested a placement in pediatrics.

My journey in Pediatric Neuro-oncology began in January, 2000, when I embarked on a dual internship in Recreation Therapy and Child Life at the former Institute for Neurology and NeuroSurgery at Beth Israel Medical Center's Singer Division. There, under the direction of Honey Shields and with the inspiration of the late, great Dr. Fred Epstein, I learned how to balance the seriousness of our profession with the ability to be child-friendly and facilitate play.

Today, as Wellness Coordinator for the Hassenfeld Children's Center, I work with children to make the work of healing fun. For example, these days I find myself playing a lot of "Nintendo Wii". Through Wii, young patients can get exercise, balance training, and other kinds of needed therapies while playing the games and sports they have always enjoyed, or discovering new sports and talents. Sometimes what's needed is work on emotional or social issues. Playing a game or working on a

project together can be a good way to address these issues. One of the important things we do for children undergoing treatment is to give them a way to have some control over their lives, by giving them as many choices as possible.

I take it as a compliment when I see children negotiating with their parents to stay at the outpatient clinic for five more minutes—after receiving chemotherapy or blood products for a couple of hours! We have come a long way from the days when children feared coming to the doctor's office.

Yet our psychosocial team (which includes doctors, nurse practitioners, psychologists, social workers and creative arts therapists) is constantly trying to set the bar higher, searching for innovative ways to help patients and their families throughout the cancer journey. For example, we recently introduced a survivor fitness program. Some teen-aged survivors had approached me to ask for help getting fit; while they originally seemed interested in finding trainers or joining gyms, it soon became clear that none of these more traditional approaches were ideal. Instead, we decided to address their need for exercise—and all the social and physical benefits that derive from it—through our own pilot fitness program. Three times a week the young people come together for activities ranging from kickboxing to games.

(continues on next page)

*Top: Jose Acevedo with Kevin Hernandez.*

*Below: Jose Acevedo with Gabriel Lipinski.*



## Promoting Wellness through Play

(continued from previous page)

I enjoy seeing or hearing about patients that have been off-treatment for several years, like the child I remember as a 10-year-old, who is now in college studying Recreation Therapy or Child Life. But I try not to look too far into the future, focusing instead on each day with every child or young adult. Everyone loves happy endings, but no matter how the story ends, there is always a silver lining somewhere. I see and hear from our families firsthand the difference Making Headway has meant to them and I am forever grateful to Making Headway Foundation for seeing a spark in me early in my career that has kept me involved to this day.



## Thinking Back, Thinking Ahead

(continued from first page)

With so many more caring professionals on hand, our Making Headway team can give more time and attention to each individual family.

Dr. Salsberg's arrival and his effect on our work is just one example of how Making Headway has been able to broaden its impact over the years. I look forward to many more years of nurturing and growing this organization I care so much about. Yet my recent birthday reminded me that there will inevitably come a time when Edward and I can no longer carry on working full time for Making Headway. I don't yet know who will succeed me, but look forward to finding someone who can find the same joy that I have in this work. That joy, as I can personally attest, is the key to a successful future for our organization.



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Making Headway thanks Linda Mudford-Lewis for her generous help with this newsletter. Special thanks to Jose Acevedo for his contribution.

This newsletter is dedicated to our donors and supporters, whom we celebrate every day.

*Managing Editors:*  
Robin Hardman  
Audrey Manley

*Photos:*  
Maya Manley  
Parallel Exit

*Design:*  
Cara Galowitz  
Design Associates

*Printing:*  
H & S Graphics

*Top: Parallel Exit.*

*Bottom: From left to right: Dr. Matthias Karajannis, Nurse Practitioner Erin Hartnett, Isam Moursy, Dr. Jeffrey Allen, Fatima Koweider, Soha Koweider, and Amina Koweider (seated).*

## Mark Your Calendars!

On February 6, 2011, get ready to shake off the winter doldrums and head out for an afternoon of high-stepping rhythm and comedy. The award-winning theatrical troupe, Parallel Exit, will tap and slap their way into your hearts with a show that combines the grace and style of Fred Astaire, the magic of Gene Kelly and the hilarity of vaudeville. You and your whole family may just find yourselves dancing in the aisles. Look for an invitation to this joyful event, arriving in your mailbox soon.

*And save the dates now for these perennial favorites:*

### 13th annual **A Little Bit of a Walk and Fun Run**

Point Lookout, Long Island  
Saturday, April 2, 2011

### 14th annual **"All-is-onE" Tulip Festival Dinner Dance**

Swan Club  
Glen Cove, New York  
Thursday, May 5, 2011

### 7th Annual **Kyle A. McKay Golf Classic**

Crab Meadow Golf Club  
Northport, New York  
June, 2011 (date to be announced)

### 8th annual **Nicky Docu Memorial Golf Outing**

Van Cortlandt Park Golf Course  
Bronx, New York  
June, 2011 (date to be announced)

### 10th annual **Fore A Difference Golf Tournament**

Cream Ridge Golf Course  
Cream Ridge, New Jersey  
September, 2011 (date to be announced)

