



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

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

Top: Clint and Elisa Greenbaum with their children Jake and Augusta at the Arc de Triomphe in Paris, France.

Bottom: Magdalena Bielawski and her mother Elzbieta.

Getting from Scary to Triumphant

A Message from Clint Greenbaum, Founder and Treasurer, and Elisa Greenbaum, Board Member, Making Headway Foundation


Recent headlines regarding the stock market, home foreclosures and job losses are scary. But these concerns are nothing compared to the feeling parents get when they receive the news that their child has a brain or spinal cord tumor.

“Jake will remember none of this, but you guys are scarred for life,” one of his doctors said, and of course he was right. At the time, Jake was only three months old and now he is almost twenty. He is a survivor who, while not left untouched by his brain tumor, is happy and healthy. But while we are really thankful for Jake’s triumph, we cannot help but think of the parents of children currently battling brain or spinal cord tumors. Our involvement in Making Headway stems from our desire that soon others will not have to face the frightening diagnosis we faced.



One of Making Headway’s greatest goals is to make brain and spinal cord tumor treatments successful and as noninvasive as possible. Although brain and spinal cord tumors are the second most common form of childhood cancer, the bulk of research money is directed at adult brain tumors. Funding has become even more restricted in recent years, as the budget for the National Institutes of Health has been steadily reduced. To address this situation, Making Headway is in the midst of a \$580,000 research program at the NYU Langone Medical Center.

In order to ensure that the current high level of leadership and commitment within the NYU Langone Medical Center’s pediatric neuro-oncology program continues, the Otto and Marguerite Manley and Making Headway Foundation Professorship in Pediatric Neuro-Oncology—currently held by Dr. Jeffrey Allen—was established. Ultimately, Making Headway’s vision is to endow a pediatric neuro-oncology research laboratory at the NYU Cancer Institute, enabling more time to be devoted to clinical or basic research. We are proud that Ed and Maya Manley were honored at the NYU Cancer Institute gala last October, for their exemplary leadership in fighting pediatric brain and spinal cord tumors.

Our hope now is the same as it was almost twenty years ago, when we discovered that Jake had a brain tumor: that we can soon accomplish our goal to cure childhood brain and spinal cord tumors, and that along the way we can care and comfort the sick children and their families, making the experience a lot less scary and much more triumphant. 





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. Below are some examples of gracious giving.

Students of all ages get an A+ in generosity for a number of recent activities:

- Members of the Youth Against Cancer Club at **Herricks High School** in New Hyde Park, New York, found a way to take off some of the chill of winter. The enterprising teens held a Holiday Hot Chocolate sale for Making Headway, bringing in \$255.
- The **Hauppauge High School Girls Soccer Team** held a “Kicks for Cancer” fundraiser in honor of fellow student **Courtney Tomkin**, scoring a goal with \$25,000.
- Once again, members of the **Greeley Gridiron Club** took time off from playbooks and conditioning to raise money for Making Headway. The Chappaqua Varsity, Junior Varsity and Freshman teams’ second annual walk-a-thon raised \$11,760.
- **Lauren Epstein**, high school senior and niece of Making Headway founder, **Clint Greenbaum**, asked her school to donate the proceeds from an arts celebration to Making Headway. The Solomon Schechter Day School donated \$240.
- Together with Temple Shaaray Tefila Nursery School and preschool musical sensation “Rockin’ with Andy,” **Elyse and Michael Dub** held a sing-a-long to benefit Making Headway. Their daughter **Elaina** and her classmates sang and danced their way to \$781.

Teachers deserved top grades, too—especially those at the **Lanape Meadows Elementary School** in Mahway, New Jersey, who wore jeans to work one day in exchange for donations to Making Headway. Their comfortable clothing brought in \$200.

Kids of all ages rose to the occasion outside of school hours, as well:

- **Michael Schechter** chose Making Headway as the benefactor of his Bar Mitzvah project. The teen, who is close to long-time Making Headway friends, the Abramowitz family, raised \$750 in a Hebrew School bake sale.
- **Jared Cappello** was at it again recently, requesting that guests to his birthday party bring donations to Making Headway instead of presents. The six-year-old has fond memories of spending time in the playroom while his brother Josh was in treatment, and hopes the \$525 he raised will keep the playroom magical for other siblings.

Gracious Giving (continued)

- In memory of her dear friend, **Sara Chaikin**, 10-year-old **Alexandra Beran** asked for donations to Making Headway, in lieu of birthday gifts. Her generosity brought in \$125.
- **Jim and Kathleen Bowers**, whose son, **Patrick**, is a patient of Dr. Allen’s, raised \$880 for Making Headway when they thoughtfully asked for donations in lieu of gifts for his fourth birthday.

Finally, the Hassenfeld Children’s Center playroom was replenished with gifts of toys from **Anthony Caputo and the employees of Central National-Gottesman**, as well as from **Jeanne Egan and her family**. Egan, a long-time friend and supporter of Making Headway, also organized a Night at the Theatre with the North Shore Kiwanis Club of Long Island. Nearly three dozen people showed up to see “The Tafettas,” swinging to 50’s music and raising \$400 for Making Headway.



Maralda Johnson (on left) with son Marcel and family members at the Russian American Kids Circus.

Those Daring Young Folks on the Flying Trapeze

From soaring acrobatics to old-fashioned clowning around, magical was the only word for the Russian American Kids Circus, which performed at the Kaye Playhouse on February 1. The professional circus troupe was especially spectacular because it starred children ages six to sixteen. An audience of all ages watched with amazement as these highly skilled young people unicycled, juggled, and flew through the air. Among those enthralled by the performance were many hundreds of Making Headway children and their families, who received free tickets thanks to the generosity of others. As an added bonus, the two sold-out shows raised a dazzling \$390,000 for Making Headway.

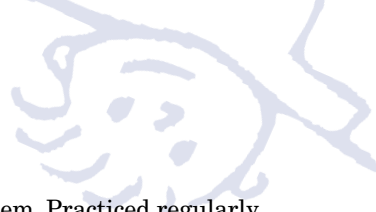
Families Who Have Not Forgotten

The fifth annual **Thomas D. Fitzgerald III Memorial Walk** was held on a scorching day in July, but that didn’t stop Thomas’s family, friends, classmates and neighbors from gathering to remember him. In addition to walking, they sang, shared stories and feasted on barbecue. Balloons and face-painting gave added color to the special day, which raised \$3,000 for Making Headway.

The fabulous fashions of designer Toyin Okoro were on display at the second annual Weston Boutique fashion show/fundraiser in Weston, Connecticut, last November. **Looking Fabulous to Save Lives** was sponsored by Mark and Teri Gaberman. In addition to viewing Okoro’s fall couture collection, attendees enjoyed a wine-tasting, sampled African and Caribbean foods, tapped their feet to live music and outbid each other in a silent auction. The event, which was held to support a number of child-related causes, brought in \$1,600 for Dr. Allen’s clinical research program.

About 200 festive souls attended a December 5 **Night of Giving** at the Westlake Men’s Golf Club in Jackson, New Jersey, enjoying a delicious dinner and cocktails, live music and comedy, dancing and an auction. The event was organized by Ralph Arbia, his daughter Kim Madsen, and Steve Casale, and sponsored by the golf club and the Westlake Italian American Club. Not only did participants bring in \$19,900 for Making Headway, but they arrived armed with donations of toys and a total of \$1,000 in gift cards, which were distributed to children at the Hassenfeld Children’s Center.





Opening Doors

*By Annie Hickman, Yoga Teacher,
Making Headway Hospital Care Team*

I feel truly blessed to be teaching yoga at the Hassenfeld Children’s Center. Every Thursday I turn the wellness room into a magical yoga studio with mats, pillows, soft music and twinkle lights. For little ones, my goal is to create a land of enchantment with fairy tale yoga where we act out a story with yoga poses and enjoy fanciful and imaginative play. For teens and adults, I offer personal classes in Hatha Yoga, breathing techniques and meditation.

My yoga practice began almost forty years ago and for more than ten years I have enjoyed teaching in various settings including yoga centers, schools and gyms. When Maya Manley asked me to teach yoga at Hassenfeld it opened a door to an experience that has been rich beyond compare.

On my first day I experienced the feeling of grace that enriched the atmosphere of the playroom reception area of the hospital. At the same time I was humbly aware of the gravity of the medical situations the parents and children were dealing with and the courage and compassion they brought to the process. I watched with awe the warmth and caring of the doctors and nurses and I felt honored to be a part of the support team. As I begin my third year, my respect for what Hassenfeld represents continues to grow.

The health benefits of yoga are vast. It strengthens the bones, ligaments, tendons

and immune system. Practiced regularly, it has a rejuvenating effect on the entire body as it detoxifies, nourishes the organs, tones the hormones, calms the nervous system and enhances mood and general wellbeing. It is so rewarding to see families doing yoga together—the children, parents and grandparents, as well. Some are new to yoga and some are inspired to carry it into their regular lives. I have a lovely teenage student who fell in love with yoga here. Even though her condition is cured, she plans to visit me at Hassenfeld to continue her yoga practice.

Some would rather learn to meditate than do yoga. Meditation strengthens the immune system as it lowers blood pressure and calms the nervous system. One young lady ventured hesitantly into the yoga room. We began our meditation sitting tall and proud, focusing on the breath and witnessing our thoughts. The peacefulness of silence fell over us. I encouraged her to sit in silence every day and to visualize herself completely healed and full of vibrant energy.

For some children I am their yoga playmate and we share joyous hours of imaginative play, yoga, dance and relaxation. I hope when a visit to Hassenfeld comes to mind they recall the good times and fear is left far behind. Often, at the end of my day, I experience the great satisfaction of having parents thank me as their children, who have been there for treatment all day (and have played with me for a good portion of this time), ask “Can’t we stay longer?”

Maya, thank you for opening this door for me. 🌱

Top: Yoga teacher Annie Hickman with Lily Langbein.

Below:

Jonah Shainberg and Bennett Orenstein, patients at Hassenfeld Children’s Center.

Christine Douglas with social worker Pat Ryan at Hassenfeld Children’s Center.



Dr. Matthias Karajannis and Lily Taubin.



When Teamwork Takes on New Meaning

Ben Green likes joining the children in art projects and video games. Jordan Elkin says he loves to see a sad-looking child smile. Eric Cooney mentions it's nice to be able to give stressed parents some time off, too.

These are just some of the reasons the teenage members of Chappaqua's Greeley Gridiron Club have started making regular visits to the Hassenfeld Children's Center. The young linebackers, tackles and guards have been spending days off from school at Hassenfeld for more than a year now, to play in the playroom and visit with children who don't feel up to leaving their beds.

The trips are the brainchild of Steffi Green, the Chappaqua "football mom" who was instrumental in founding the Greeley Gridiron Club four years ago. The club's original goal was to bring together members of the greater Chappaqua football community for internal fundraising and camaraderie. But participants soon began wondering what more they could do.

"These boys have so much. They need to give back," Green remembers thinking. The first step was to organize a walk-a-thon and Green, who had been donating her time to Making Headway for years, immediately realized what a perfect fundraising target it was. "It's such a good organization. And the walk-a-thon would be children raising money for children." With fifty boys on the various teams, it was hoped the walk-a-thon would raise about \$5,000. To everyone's amazement, it brought in more than double that, and another was held this year. In fact, the event was so successful that Green was inspired to raise the ante. She approached Maya Manley with the idea that a group of boys could volunteer at the Hassenfeld Children's Center.



From Nerves to Nonchalance

One day in the fall of 2007, four boys climbed into Green's car and headed for Manhattan. While they were drawn to the idea of volunteering, Green admits that they had also probably been given an extra push by their parents. But whatever their motivation, the teens didn't know quite what to expect, and the ride down was remarkably quiet. Arriving at the hospital, they plunged into activities. The children at Hassenfeld were enchanted with these energetic teenagers in their Greeley football t-shirts. They played games, did art projects and just chatted and laughed together. During the ride home, the atmosphere was completely different. "They couldn't stop talking. They felt so good about what they had done," Green says.

Members of the Gridiron Club returned four more times that year and two times so far this past year—with another trip planned over spring break. They'd go more often, but visits must coincide with early dismissal or vacation days, and scheduling is tricky. Nonetheless, these days about ten boys go at a time, and many are turned away. Apparently, they have no problem giving up their time off from school to make these visits.

"It makes you feel good," explains Jason Bressler. Others agree, and some even say the experience has changed them. "It's humbled me. I've learned to respect the privilege I have, and understand what some others have to go through," says Eric Cooney. In the case of one team member, Ben Berkey, a few days during the school year aren't enough. He interned at Hassenfeld last summer, and may do the same again this year. He's also made some career decisions. "I used to want to go into business. Now I want to go into business and medicine and become a hospital administrator," Berkey reports. 🌱

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Making Headway thanks Linda Mudford-Lewis for her generous help with this newsletter. Special thanks to Clint and Elisa Greenbaum and Annie Hickman for their contributions.

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

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Top: The Horace Greeley Football team.

Bottom left: Members of the Greeley Gridiron Club with Caitlin Stokes and Dr. Jeffrey Allen at Hassenfeld Children's Center playroom.

Below: Dr. Jeffrey Allen with Adrianna Oliva.

