

**B A R B E R**

MARCH 2025

# SPIRIT

MARCH IS

# DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES AWARENESS MONTH

2025



MEET  
JEROME!



# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Barber Behavioral Health Mobile Therapist Chelsea Fitzpatrick works with Tyr Sulkowski on collaborating and sharing while building magnetic blocks.



Expanding Social Opportunities dance takes place at Gannon University in Erie.



Elizabeth Lee Black School Occupational Therapist Hannah Spiess uses a transition kit which includes materials and activities that help students develop essential life skills.



Direct Support Professional Ben Gilbert coaches Susie Bockes (shredding) as she works the Shred Express machine in Somerset.



Elizabeth Lee Black School students and faculty gather for a National School Choice Week photo.

Dear Friends,

March is Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month- a time to recognize and celebrate the contributions of individuals with developmental disabilities while also advocating for inclusion, respect and opportunity for all.

At Barber National Institute, we are committed to ensuring that every person, regardless of ability, has the chance to live a fulfilling and meaningful life.

This month is an opportunity to highlight the incredible strengths and talents of those we serve and to acknowledge the families, caregivers and professionals who dedicate themselves to providing support and encouragement.

It's also a call to action – reminding us to break down barriers, foster understanding and create communities where everyone is valued.

At the heart of our mission is our founder Dr. Gertrude Barber, whose visionary leadership and unwavering dedication to the field of developmental disabilities continues to inspire us today. Her commitment to providing hope and opportunity for all serves as a guiding light, reminding us that every person deserves dignity, respect and the chance to reach their full potential.

I invite you to join us in celebrating this important month. Take time to listen, learn and advocate.

Sincerely,

John J. Barber  
President & Chief Executive Officer

## OUR MISSION STATEMENT

We are “making dreams come true.” We provide children and adults with autism, intellectual disabilities and behavioral health challenges and their families the education, support and resources needed to be self-reliant, independent, and valued members of their community. In addition, we provide the professionals who serve them with world-class education and training.





## JOIN THE MOVEMENT: HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY AWARENESS

*The roots of Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month can be traced back to 1987 when President Ronald Reagan first declared March as a month to raise awareness about including people with developmental disabilities in all facets of community life. It also highlights the difficulties that people with disabilities still face in fitting into the communities in which they live.*

*“The general public can support disability awareness by fostering inclusion, educating themselves on disability rights and advocating for accessibility in their communities,” said Robert Barber, Barber National Institute senior vice president. “Simple actions such as using respectful language,*

*listening to the experiences of individuals with disabilities and challenging stereotypes can make a significant difference.”*

*Supporting businesses and organizations that prioritize accessibility, attending disability awareness events and promoting inclusive policies in workplaces and in schools also help create a more equitable society.*

*“By actively engaging in conversations and standing up for the rights of people with disabilities, everyone can contribute to a more inclusive and supportive world,” said Barber.*

*“Advocacy takes time and change doesn’t happen overnight. Keep pushing for progress even when challenges arise.”*

### TIPS FOR ADVOCACY

- **Educate yourself** – knowledge is the foundation of strong advocacy
- **Use your voice** – share personal stories and real-life examples
- **Engage with legislators** – contact state, local and national legislators to support policies that protect and enhance the rights of individuals with disabilities
- **Promote accessibility** – advocate for accessible spaces, transportation and technology
- **Be an ally** – listen and uplift the voices of individuals with disabilities



TO GET INVOLVED AS AN ADVOCATE IN YOUR STATE VISIT  
ADVOCATES – NACDD

# MILA'S JOURNEY

## STRENGTH IN EVERY STEP

Contributed Photo: Pictured Mila Starocci



From the moment that Mila Starocci came into the world, she was a fighter. Born with epilepsy, she has faced challenges that most children never will, but her spirit is unstoppable. Three separate brain surgeries have left their marks, not as signs of struggle, but as proof of her strength.

"Mila and I spent time in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit and Barber National Institute's team of early intervention therapists began working with Mila within a few months," said Camryn Londo, Mila's mother. Barber National Institute's Early Intervention program provides supportive services and therapies for children facing developmental challenges.

In addition to her epilepsy diagnosis, Mila also has hemiplegia, a condition that weakens one side of the body. This type of hemiplegia makes it difficult for Mila to do simple tasks such as picking up an object or walking.

"At six, Mila has made amazing progress. She walks with the help of a leg brace and is making big strides going up and down the stairs with the help of her physical therapist Savannah. We've been worried about her independence. I don't think she's completely there yet, but now we feel like we can let go of her," said Camryn.

Barber National Institute's occupational therapists also support Mila's fine motor skill development which leads to increased independence. "One of the big things we have worked on is developing her self-help skills using one-handed strategies for getting dressed and other daily tasks. In the classroom, we've worked with Mila's teachers to develop one-handed strategies using a clipboard to hold her papers while she draws or uses scissors," said Jessica Stanford, MS, OTR/L. "She's making great progress."

Mila's team also includes a Barber National Institute speech therapist. "Rachel has been working with Mila towards

two- and three-word phrases and annunciation. She's not speaking in full sentences yet, but now, she wants to talk, and she just keeps talking once she gets started," said Camryn.

Camryn credits Barber National Institute's early intervention team with innovation and perseverance. "The staff we've had are just truly amazing. If something doesn't work, they have a pocket full of ideas. They try things I would never even think of! It's so nice to have people that truly care about your child and want the best for them. They just want Mila to do the best that she can."

Though her steps are slower, and her words take time, each milestone, no matter how small, shows the world that progress isn't measured by speed but by Mila's spirit.

"I feel like it's sometimes easy to put a child with a disability in a box and assume they might not be able to do something. A big moment for me as a mom was when she started walking. You see other kids that are the same age and sometimes it's hard for a parent to not compare," said Camryn. "But then I take a step back. They don't go through anything that Mila goes through. Her story and her journey are so different from typical developing kids. It might take a little bit longer, but we are going to get there eventually."



LEARN MORE ABOUT BARBER  
NATIONAL  
INSTITUTE'S  
EARLY  
INTERVENTION  
PROGRAM





Lifesharing provider Chris Watkins grabs a cup of coffee with Alan at his favorite coffee shop, Tim Hortons.

# NAVIGATING RESOURCES:

## A GUIDE FOR FAMILIES & INDIVIDUALS

### THESE RECOMMENDATIONS CAN HELP FAMILIES MANAGE THIS PROCESS MORE EFFECTIVELY:

#### *Family-Centered Care*

Engaging families in the care process is crucial. Providing training and education to help caregivers understand the diagnosis, manage behaviors and access community resources is essential. As the child approaches adulthood, guidance on supporting employment, independent living skills and social inclusion is important. Transition planning should start in the elementary years, not at 21.

#### *Support Groups and Peer Networks*

Facilitating the creation of family support groups or peer networks can help families share experiences, reduce isolation and enhance their advocacy abilities.

#### *Respite Care and Mental Health Support:*

Families often experience high levels of stress. Identifying respite care services and mental health support for family members can help reduce caregiver burnout.

#### *Inclusive Safety Plans:*

Individuals with disabilities should be included in the safety plans. Promoting an inclusive environment fosters a sense of belonging and security.

#### *Holistic Family Support:*

Healthy family functioning is important. Practitioners need to support the needs of the entire family, not just the child with a disability. This includes addressing the added demands on time, emotional resources, and financial resources.

For families dealing with the challenges of intellectual and developmental disabilities, Pennsylvania provides a variety of services and resources. However, the availability, quality, and suitability of these services can differ significantly, making it difficult to find the perfect fit for each family's specific needs.

### HERE ARE FIVE GOVERNMENT-BACKED RESOURCES THAT OFFER VALUABLE INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE:

#### *Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (DHS)*

Learn about state-supported programs for individuals with intellectual disabilities, including Medicaid Waivers and eligibility requirements.

#### *Office of Developmental Programs (ODP)*

Access training, policies, and other resources to understand the available services and supports in Pennsylvania.

#### *Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS)*

Explore federal programs that provide funding and guidance for in-home and community-based services.

#### *Disability Rights Pennsylvania (DRP)*

Gain support from a nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting and advocating for the rights of individuals with disabilities in Pennsylvania.

#### *Social Security Administration (SSA)*

Learn about Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) benefits for individuals with disabilities.

**BY WORKING AS A TEAM—FAMILIES, CAREGIVERS, PRACTITIONERS, AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS—WE CAN BUILD A SUPPORTIVE AND EFFECTIVE PROCESS THAT ENSURES SUCCESS FOR EVERYONE NAVIGATING THE SYSTEM. LET'S COLLABORATE, SHARE OUR EXPERIENCES, AND SUPPORT EACH OTHER TO CREATE A BRIGHTER FUTURE FOR CHILDREN & ADULTS WITH DISABILITIES AND THEIR FAMILIES.**



# UNCLE MARK



Mark Dailey in his home that he shares with his sister Carol.

At 77, Mark Dailey - Uncle Mark to all who know him - is still going strong, his energy and spirit a testament to a life well-lived. Born with an intellectual disability, he has spent nearly his entire life at home with his family, and that love, and support have made all the difference.

Surrounded by familiar faces and routines, he has stayed active, happy and young at heart. His family wouldn't have it any other way, knowing that being home is what keeps him thriving.

"Growing up, Uncle Mark lived with us. I knew he was special, not so different," said Kelly Elwell, Mark's niece and Agency with Choice staff. "Today, as my husband Jason and I raise five children, Uncle Mark is an active member of our family. He rides along with Jason when he's plowing or at a construction site - knows every tool - and has a special relationship with our kids. He doesn't miss a game!"

Caring for Mark at home has been a labor of love, but it hasn't come without sacrifice. His family has built their lives around his needs, often putting their own plans on hold to ensure he is safe, happy and healthy.

Mark was diagnosed with an intellectual disability in 1948 with a projected lifespan of 40 years. His sister Carol Dailey is his primary caregiver through Agency with Choice. "Mark and I have lived together for more than 50 years. There was a short span of time he lived in a group home while I traveled for work. During that time, it was very clear that Mark needed a traditional home environment, surrounded by his family to thrive," recalls Carol.

Living at home has meant a lifetime of laughter, love and simple joys for Mark. He always has someone to share meals with, celebrate birthdays and reminisce about old memories. Whether camping, fishing, bowling or playing horseshoes, every day brings Mark something to smile about.

Mark is known by friends and family for his witty one-liners, his love of cars and outdoor recreation. "Gotta stay fit as a fiddle," Mark says when asked about his daily routine. Once an avid bicycle rider, he now walks most places. "Mark is not lonely. He has access to the community and the ability to walk out of the house, in a safe neighborhood," said Carol. "Mark is less anxious in familiar settings."

Like Erie's U Pick 6 Pubs & Restaurants owned in partnership with John Melody and Mark's niece Katie Hanlin-Stachewicz and her husband Russ. A signature item on the menu is the "Uncle Mark Pub Club."



Contributed Photo: Pictured Mark Dailey

"We want to make Uncle Mark feel special. So, when he walks into one of our pubs, everyone knows who Uncle Mark is," said Katie. "A classic sandwich for a classic guy!"

When asked about living with his family, "I love it. I like to be around people. My favorite spot is to sit on the patio and watch the birds. We make campfires and listen to our favorite songs," said Mark.

"Where I have faults, he is my strength. We've come to rely on one another. His life is stress free - he knows he's safe and gets to do fun things. That makes every sacrifice worth it," said Carol.

# UNCLE MARK-ISMS

*Climbing trees is good for you, but make sure you know your way down before you go up.*

*That'll flip your gourd!*

*It's in here, in my brain, and it's going to stay in here until I decide it can come out.*

*Whatever turns your boat around.*

*Rainy days are for the birds.*



*Bridget Rosati is busy at work tidying the dining room.*

# FULL COURT LIFE

**B**alancing a part-time job and an active sports schedule is no small feat, but for Bridget Rosati, it's just another day in a life filled with determination and commitment. Whether working hard at Celebration Villa of Lakefront Farms in Bridgeville, Pennsylvania or hitting the court for Special Olympics basketball, Bridget pours energy into everything she does. Her days may be busy, but she wouldn't have it any other way.

With just a couple of hours between working and basketball, Bridget finds joy in both her job and the game she loves. "I love my job as a dietary aide. The work I do reminds me of taking care of my grandma," said Bridget. "I've been playing basketball since I was 13. I'm one of the tallest players on the team and I love it!"

Laura Cygnarowicz is a team leader in the Supported Employment program at Barber National Institute and sees firsthand the impact Bridget has on the residents. "She's built a rapport with them. They razz each other, it's very cute." Laura goes on to say that Bridget is known for her reliability and demonstrates leadership when training other employees. "Bridget has been in the dietary department the longest. She trains the new people. She never calls off her shift. Her managers and co-workers love her."

It's important to Bridget that she is not defined by her disability, but instead by her strong work ethic. "When meeting someone for the first time, I want them to know that I am a hard worker, I am friendly and I am kind."

Laura says that Bridget has learned self-advocacy. "When Bridget first started working at Celebration Villa, if she needed to talk to her manager, she would first talk to me and then I would talk to the manager. But now, she's able to go and talk to her manager on her own."

Bridget celebrates her two-year work anniversary in March.



*Contributed Photo: Pictured Carol Dailey*

## About Agency with Choice

*Agency with Choice is a program that gives individuals a greater choice and control over where, when and how their services are delivered.*



*It gives families and individuals the power to choose and refer staff they would like to work with; often this is friends and family.*

**Learn more about Agency with Choice**



# SENSORY LIGHTS ENHANCE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT AT ELIZABETH LEE BLACK SCHOOL



Derick, an Elizabeth Lee Black School student, engages with a sensory LED light.

The Elizabeth Lee Black School recently purchased LED sensory lighting with corporate donations made through Pennsylvania's Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) program. This funding provides innovative educational instruction to eligible schools. In 2024, the Elizabeth Lee Black School received \$26,800 in EITC funding to enhance curriculum, advance technology and purchase adaptive learning tools such as LED sensory lighting. Funding from the EITC program has enabled the school to purchase state-of-the-art technology, which is integrated into all classrooms and programs.

"It is our role as educators to determine the learning style of each student and then teach him or her according to how they best learn," said Dr. Maureen Barber-Carey, Barber National Institute executive vice president.

Danielle Herman, an occupational therapist at the Elizabeth Lee Black School, has been collaborating with George and supporting the use of LED

**S**ensory integration therapy assists students with sensory processing issues. For some children, this therapy can reduce challenging behaviors caused by difficulties in processing sensory information.

However, this therapy isn't just about managing behaviors; it's about understanding and supporting how each child learns and experiences their environments. Through fun, sensory-rich activities, occupational therapists at Barber National Institute's Elizabeth Lee Black School help students make sense of the sensory information that can sometimes be overwhelming.

One exciting tool in this therapy is sensory LED lights. These special lights aren't just regular bulbs; they create a calming and engaging environment for children during therapy.

According to a research article published by the American Occupational Therapy Association, sensory integration intervention in the education setting can improve school performance and participation for children with sensory integration and processing challenges. This study offers an evidence-based model of service delivery for the school setting that is effective in improving the functional regulation and active participation of students.

"I am proud to teach in a multiple disabilities classroom in which the students have various cognitive, physical, sensory and communication needs," said Maura George, Elizabeth Lee Black School special education teacher. "I am always looking for new sensory ideas to incorporate into my lessons because sensory activities help to stimulate different areas of the brain and allow the students to engage in the environment and comprehend the world around them."

sensory lighting in the classroom. "We recently received LED sensory lighting items including a ceiling projector, a light-up cube, a light-up dome and an interactive LED sensory tile. The interactive and inclusive LED sensory tile can be activated by light touch, making this accessible for all students in the classroom," said Herman. "These sensory lights offer a flexible, interactive experience by providing a calming environment that helps our students to concentrate and relax. At the same time, these lights can support sensory-seeking individuals with brighter lights and vibrant colors. Touch-sensitive tiles promote awareness of cause and effect, encourage movement and exploration, making them perfect for learning environments."



Attorneys Jim Walczak and Russell Warner from MacDonald Illig Attorneys visit the Elizabeth Lee Black School to learn about investments made with Educational Improvement Tax Credits. Pictured left to right: Robert Barber, John Barber, Atty. Jim Walczak, Atty. Russell Warner, Dr. Maureen Barber-Carey and Patrick Barber.



Scan the QR code to learn more about Pennsylvania's Educational Improvement Tax Credit program and how local businesses can support the Elizabeth Lee Black School.





# Strengthening Foundations

## HOME RENOVATION CAMPAIGN



Lead Direct Support Professional Simone Stevens assists a visually impaired adult in washing her hands at a home in Philadelphia.

Imagine a place where love isn't defined by blood, but by the people who choose to stand by you. For so many individuals living with disabilities, home isn't a childhood house or a relative's embrace – it's the place they've built with caregivers and housemates who have become their family.

Across Barber National Institute's Pennsylvania footprint, 303 adults live in 93 community group homes – 55 homes in Erie, 32 homes in Philadelphia, and 6 homes in Pittsburgh. Residents range in age from 19 to 95. Of the 303 residents, dozens have only known institutional living before coming to live in a community-based setting with Barber National Institute. Many have complex medical and behavioral needs that require specialized care, consistency and a familiar environment to thrive.

"As the residents age, their needs become more complex – mobility declines, medical conditions advance, and behavioral challenges require greater support," said Thad Jackman, Barber National Institute senior director of residential services. "Aging in place means investing in accessible kitchens and bathrooms, lift systems, floor plan modifications and other physical adaptations to ensure they can remain safe and comfortable in their home."

But, as with any home, time brings the natural need for updates. Most of Barber National Institute's housing stock was purchased more than 25 years ago. "Many of our homes will require costly renovations to their living spaces," said Jackman. "Barber National Institute is committed to helping our adults age in place with dignity, but the reality is that public funding falls short of what's needed."

For the people with disabilities in Barber National Institute's care, staying in their home requires more than just routine maintenance; it demands essential renovations that directly



An exterior photograph of a community home in Pittsburgh.

impact their safety and quality of life. Widened doorways and accessible bathrooms aren't cosmetic upgrades – they are necessities for individuals who rely on wheelchairs and mobility aids. Lift systems and adaptive equipment aren't convenient – they are lifelines that prevent injury and ensure direct support professionals can provide the best possible support.

Jackman estimates the home modifications will cost over \$1 million. "These modifications are the key to helping our adults maintain their independence. This is an enormous financial burden, and we can't do it alone. Your generosity to **Barber National Institute's Strengthening Foundations: Home Renovation Campaign** can help ensure our adults age with dignity in the place they call home, surrounded by the people who love and care for them."



**WILL YOU HELP STRENGTHEN THE FOUNDATIONS THAT OUR INDIVIDUALS CALL HOME?**

# NEVER GIVE UP ON A DREAM



*Jerome Owens stands with Pennsylvania Governor Josh Shapiro at the 2024 PAR Awards.*



*Jerome Owens shakes hands with Pennsylvania Governor Josh Shapiro at the 2024 PAR Awards.*

*Employment Specialist Gale Williams worked with Jerome to find a job.*





**J**erome Owens was among hundreds of thousands of employees across the United States who lost their jobs throughout COVID-19. For more than 20 years, Jerome was a proud employee of the Franklin Mills Mall in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. But with storefront retail shuttered and consumers shopping online, the Mall laid off its workforce.

*“I loved working there. I enjoyed stocking the shelves, cleaning tables and chairs and keeping the restrooms clean and polished,”* said Jerome. *“I wanted a job and did not want to sit at home. I wanted to earn my own money.”*

Jerome used the months that followed to begin a new job search and complete an employment assessment with Barber National Institute’s Supported Employment program. He was determined to not let a worldwide pandemic get in the way of his dream. Barber National Institute’s job coaches worked alongside Jerome to assess his skills and find a new employment match.

When he landed a job with the United States Custom House through the AbilityOne Program, he was so proud. *“Miss Gale helped me with my interview and supported me,”* said Jerome, speaking about his job coach.

The AbilityOne Program is one of the largest sources of employment in the United States for people who have significant disabilities. More than 429 nonprofit organizations, like Barber National Institute, partner with AbilityOne to provide employment opportunities to adults with disabilities.

*“Jerome began employment with the United States Custom House in June 2022 and was the first adult with disabilities from Barber National Institute to be placed for employment,”* said Gale Williams, Barber National Institute employment specialist. *“Jerome is committed to doing his job well and makes it clear to job coaches that he can ‘do this by himself’. He is a testament to what can be achieved when you don’t give up a dream.”*

With a huge smile, Jerome says he feels included at his job and often eats lunch with his coworkers. He’s made many new friends and new connections through his job. *“My coworkers are friendly, and my boss tells me I do a good job cleaning, vacuuming, and dusting. I take care of floors six and seven,”* said Jerome.

Earlier this year, Jerome was named Self-Advocate of the Year by Pennsylvania Advocates and Resources for Autism and Intellectual Disabilities (PAR) and was honored during a ceremony in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. Jerome was nominated by Gale for consideration in the statewide recognition.

*“PAR receives hundreds of exceptional nominations across Pennsylvania,”* said Gale. *“This award honors an outstanding self-advocate employed at a community business who exemplifies drive and passion for their chosen work. Jerome demonstrates all the finest qualities of a top performing employee: positive attitude, integrity, initiative, dependability, strong work ethic, leadership, professionalism, customer service excellence, collaboration and being goal oriented.”*

*This award celebrates Jerome’s achievements and reinforces the impact of self-advocacy in creating a more inclusive world.*

**CONGRATULATIONS JEROME!**



## BEHIND THE SCENES: DEDICATED STAFF MAKING A DIFFERENCE

*Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month is an opportunity to highlight the incredible strengths and talents of those we serve and to acknowledge the families, caregivers and professionals who dedicate themselves to providing support and encouragement.*

*At Barber National Institute, our employees are committed to ensuring that every person, regardless of ability, has the chance to live a fulfilling and meaningful life.*

*Pictured above & below are a few of our employees recognized this year for making dreams come true!*





# BARBER HONORS 2023-2024 DONOR REPORT

Gifts received July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024

**We truly appreciate every contribution made to Barber National Institute.**

*Please note that every effort was made to ensure accuracy in the listing of our generous supporters. We apologize for any inadvertent errors or omissions. Please contact the Advancement Office at (814) 969-8027 if you have any questions or concerns.*

## FRIENDS

## 2023-2024 GIFTS

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Ms. Lorianne Feltz  
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Ms. Sandra Flanigan  
Mrs. Wilma Fleming  
Mr. Ethan Flood  
Mr. and Mrs. Brian Foley  
Ms. Kimberly Forrester  
Ms. Rebecca Forster  
Major Karen Foust





Robert Barber (left) and Patrick Barber (right) receive a check for over \$11,000 from Re/MAX and Every Single Street Erie

Mr. and Mrs. William Fowler  
 Mr. and Mrs. Michael Fox  
 Mr. and Mrs. Terence Foxe  
 Mr. and Mrs. Fred Freeman  
 Ms. Rachel Freeman  
 Mr. and Mrs. David Fresch  
 Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Fries

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**Parent Autism Support Group** – Parents connect on a variety of topics and community resources



**Artist In Residence** – Professional teaching artists work with adults in the day programs to create original artwork



**Camp Scholarships** – Fun, recreational experiences for children and adults



**Occupational Therapy Transition Kits** – materials and activities that help students develop essential life skills such as time management, self-advocacy and social skills



**Communication and Teaching Technology** – Incorporating state-of-the-art tools to enhance students' learning and help develop future-ready skills



**Adaptive Kitchen** – A modern kitchen will be equipped with wheelchair accessible countertops, a spacious floor plan, and a wealth of meal preparation equipment perfectly designed to help students gain hands-on experience preparing nutritious foods



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Mr. and Mrs. Steve Zoner

**In Honor of Jamie Martin Stewart**  
Mr. Douglas Smith

**In Honor of Beth White**  
Mr. and Mrs. Michael Reske  
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**In Honor of Kathleen Zyskowski**  
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2023-2024 GIFTS

# DONOR ADVISED & DESIGNATED

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2023-2024 FUNDS

# IN-KIND

2023-2024 GIFTS

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Lake Erie Traffic  
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Main Street Cakery Café  
Marquette Savings Bank  
Mary Beth & Jeff Pinto  
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MenajErie  
Mercyhurst Institute of Arts & Culture  
National Fuel & National Fuel Employees  
NuGo Nutrition  
PACA Theater  
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Rebecca Bureau  
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Multi-media artist Alex Anthes works with an adult to create an original art piece.

We truly appreciate every contribution made to Barber National Institute. Please note that every effort was made to ensure accuracy in the listing of our generous supporters. We apologize for any inadvertent errors or omissions. Please contact the Advancement Office at 814-969-8027 if you have any questions or concerns.

# CORPORATE, FOUNDATION & MATCHING

Accudyn	CH Reams & Associates	Fralo Industries, A Victor Group Company	MacDonald, Illig, Jones & Britton, LLP	Schwab Charitable Fund
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Arlington Heritage Group	Cyber Grants	iHeart Radio	MH Equipment	The Frances Lopus Charitable Fund
Association for Retarded Children Warren County	D.R. Zimmerman & Sons	Industrial Sales	Michelob Ultra/Erie Beer	The Goodall Family Designated Fund
Austin Real Estate, Inc.	Dahlkemper's Jewelry Connection	Insurance Management Company	National Fuel	The Murphy Advisory Group- UBS Financial Services, Inc.
AYCO Charitable Foundation	David Corry Chrysler Dodge Jeep & Ram	Interim Health	National Philanthropic Trust	The Plastek Group
Bank Of America Charitable Gift Fund	DeFrees Family Memorial Fund	J.P. Morgan	Networking Technologies	United Fund of Warren County
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## 2023-2024 GIFTS

## EITC

## EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT TAX CREDIT



Dr. Maureen Barber-Carey (center left) receives an Educational Improvement Tax Credit donation from Key Bank. Pictured also are Vic Laurenza (far left), Kellie Liston (center right) and Patrick Barber

A donation to the Educational Improvement Tax Credit Program is a commitment to the future. Businesses participating in the EITC Program funded scholarships for children to attend quality preschool programs, as well as provided technology and adaptive equipment for students in out school.

- Central Pennsylvania Scholarship Fund
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- UPMC Health Plan

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE EITC PROGRAM

CONTACT DR. MAUREEN BARBER-CAREY, (814) 878-5960 OR MAUREENBC@BARBERNI.ORG

2023-2024 PARTICIPANTS





# THE LEGACY SOCIETY

THE DR. GERTRUDE A. BARBER LEGACY SOCIETY RECOGNIZES THOSE GENEROUS DONORS WHO HAVE MADE A PLANNED GIFT, SUCH AS A BEQUEST IN A WILL OR TRUST.

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To learn more about becoming a member of the Legacy Society or planned giving options, call Tammy Roche, Director of Strategic Communication, at (814) 969-8027



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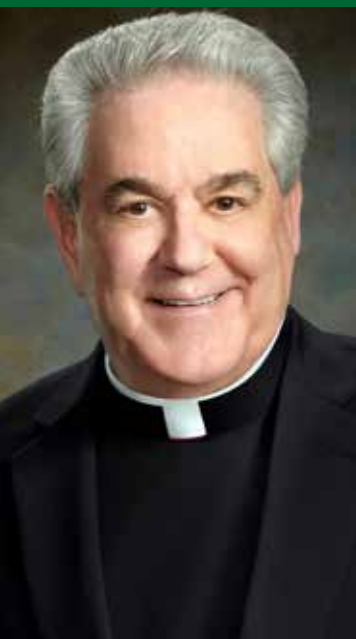
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## In Memory of Our Postulator

### Monsignor Tom McSweeney

We celebrate the life and legacy of our dedicated Postulator of the Cause for Gertrude Barber, While Monsignor Tom McSweeney passed from this life on Tuesday, Feb. 18, his spirit and service have made an indelible mark on all those who knew him.

An Erie native, he had a storied career that included serving as the national director for The Christophers and as a commentator on Church issues for NBC and MSNBC. In his retirement, he took on his role of Postulator with great enthusiasm. From the outset, Msgr. McSweeney was dedicated to opening and advancing the Cause for Gertrude Barber. He had great admiration for Dr. Barber and the work that she did to bring hope to children and adults with disabilities and embraced this canonization effort every step of the way. His help was invaluable in filing the extensive paperwork needed to begin the process, and he never doubted that she would one day achieve sainthood.

The early supporters of the Cause appreciated Msgr. McSweeney's contagious optimism and are forever grateful for his commitment to this effort. In memorializing Msgr. McSweeney's life of service to God and others, we join in this Irish blessing: "May flights of angels sing thee to thy rest."



\* Deceased

# BARBER SPIRIT

Barber Spirit is a quarterly publication for friends of the  
Dr. Gertrude A. Barber Center, Inc.  
100 Barber Place • Erie, PA 16507-1863  
814-453-7661 • FAX: 814-455-1132  
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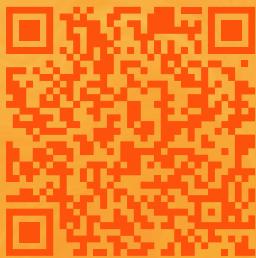
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BARBERINSTITUTE.ORG/  
EVENTS

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### 40TH ANNUAL SHILLELAGH GOLF TOURNAMENT

June 12, 2025, Whispering Woods Golf Course

### WARREN GIVES DAY

May 14, 2025

### ERIE GIVES DAY

August 12, 2025

### BARBER BEAST ON THE BAY & ADAPTED COURSE

September 6, 2025, Presque Isle Park/Waldameer & Water World

### LADIES ONLY LUNCHEON

November 22, 2025 Kahkwa Club

### BARBER CHRISTMAS BALL

Dec. 13, 2025, Bayfront Convention Center

### ADULT SERVICES CHRISTMAS DANCE

Dec. 14, 2025, Bayfront Convention Center



Barber National Institute