2026 Gratitude Report

Fred's Footsteps



Photo courtesy of Nick Iadonisi / 6abc

Dear Friends,



Thank you for the many ways you showed up for Fred's Footsteps this year. Whether you have been part of this community for decades or joined us recently, I am grateful that you have chosen to make our mission part of your life.

For a parent caring for a seriously ill, injured, or disabled child, everyday expenses can become overwhelming. Your support gives us the ability to listen to each family and respond to what will make the greatest difference in their lives. That might mean keeping the mortgage paid, making a home more accessible, or helping a family travel together in a vehicle that meets their child's needs. Behind each grant is a parent with a little more room to focus on their child.

This report is our chance to thank the people who make that possible. You will see familiar faces from Party in the Yard and Golf Fun Day, celebrate the partners who help share our stories, and recognize the supporters bringing our Five in Five commitment to life. You will also meet Keishlyan through our Keys to Mobility feature and learn how former Fellow Regina Heffernan continues to shape our community as we prepare to welcome the Fellowship's next class.

Some contributions happen in a crowded room. Others happen quietly: a committee member's hours of preparation, a thoughtful introduction, a partner helping a family's story reach someone new. We see that care, and we are deeply thankful for it.

I carry tremendous gratitude for the people helping us take those next steps, and for the generosity that continues to fuel our organization.

Thank you for being part of this work, and for standing with the families at its heart.

With heartfelt gratitude,

Christine D. Lobley

Christine DiBona Lobley
Executive Director



Fred's Footsteps provides
a bridge of financial support for working families
in the greater Philadelphia region who find themselves
in crisis due to the costs associated with caring
for a seriously ill, injured, or disabled child.

Our Next Chapter

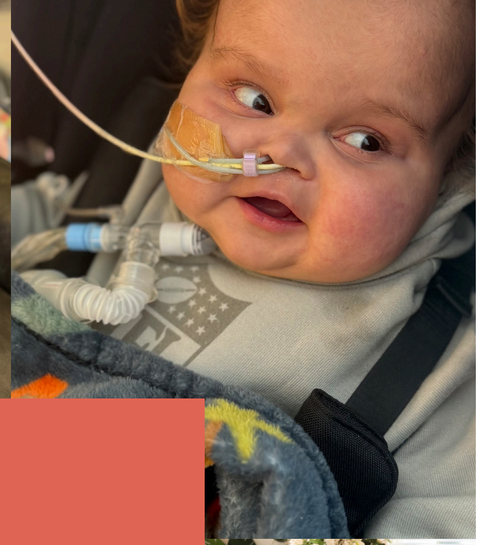


We've moved to **Conshohocken!** We're getting to know our new digs and are excited to become part of this vibrant community. Our new office gives us room to expand our team as we prepare to meet growing demand for support.

For more than two decades, Fred's Footsteps has stood beside families facing a child's medical crisis. Today, rising living costs, changes in healthcare coverage, and reductions in social supports are making those circumstances even harder to navigate. As we work to fulfill our **Five in Five commitment**, this move is one step toward strengthening our ability to respond.

Thank you for helping us grow with the needs of the families who count on us.










Thank you to our Board of Directors for their thoughtful leadership and unwavering support.

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Executive Director, Fred's Footsteps

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Michael R. Vennera
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Matt Webb
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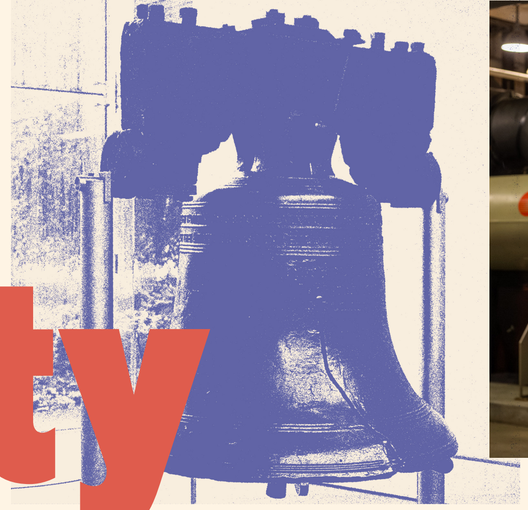
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Director of Oncology Support Services, Department of Medical Oncology, Thomas Jefferson University Hospital

Shane Janick
Executive Director, The Arc of Philadelphia

Mary Sammon, MD
Pediatrician, Nemours Children's Health System

Fred's PHILLY

Party in the YARD







Philly pride met heartfelt generosity at this year's Party in the Yard, raising **$348,000** for local families caring for a seriously ill, injured, or disabled child.

From golden Rocky and Benjamin Franklin statues, to a visit from Eagles mascot, Swoop, Philly-inspired food, décor, murals, and cocktails set the scene for a lively celebration. Guests embraced the fun while giving generously through the auctions, raffle, and paddle raise to support our mission.







Event Committee
Keri Aikey
Kathy Albanese
Janine Baschoff
Cathy Bell
Bridget Burns-Walsh
Teresa DiBona
Marie Gillespie
Erin Grobelny
Gokcen Gurk
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SB STERLING BENEFITS

SAVE THE DATE

Party in the Yard will return to Urban Outfitters, Inc. on March 6, 2027.

Golf Fun Day













Perfect fall weather welcomed longtime supporters and new friends to Philadelphia Country Club and Gulph Mills Golf Club this past October for our **22nd Annual Golf Fun Day**, raising more than **$425,000** for local families caring for a seriously ill, injured, or disabled child.

The evening brought everyone together with longtime Fred's Footsteps supporters, including Hall of Fame Coach, Dick Vermeil, and former Philadelphia Eagles player, Brent Celek

What began as a tribute to G. Fred DiBona, Jr. continues to carry forward his commitment to helping others. Thank you to every golfer, sponsor, donor, volunteer, and committee member who made this year's event possible. Your support honors Fred's legacy by helping families focus on what matters most: caring for their child.

Event Committee
Fred DiBona III
John Dougherty, Jr.
Patrick Gillespie, Jr.
Greg Kozlowski
Alan Krigstein
Brian Lobley
Brett Mayfield
Ted Piotrowicz
Tom Quirk
Christian Sauter
Michael Shulof
Jack Slye

SAVE THE DATE | The 23rd Annual Golf Fun Day
will take place on Sept. 20, 2027



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Where People & Opportunity Meet

Supporter Spotlight







Regina Heffernan

We're grateful for super supporters like Regina Heffernan. A proud member of the 2019 Fellowship class, Regina's experience was interrupted by COVID, but her commitment never missed a beat. She helped lead the Young Professionals Golf Classic, which grossed $68,000 over four years, and has gone on to serve on our Board, leading to a new professional chapter as Director of Strategic Partnerships at tango.

We sat down with Regina to hear how the Fellowship shaped her life, and why she continues to give her time and talent to Fred's.

Her story is especially meaningful as we prepare to welcome the 2027 Fellowship class, introducing a new generation of leaders to our mission and helping them discover the difference they can make.

Q: Looking back, what initially drew you to the Fred's Footsteps Fellowship?

A: When the last Fellowship program was getting started, I was already helping build out "Friends of Fred's," the young professional arm of the organization. When applications opened, I was drawn to the chance to connect with other mission-driven professionals from different industries right here in our local area. I wanted to find new ways to expand our efforts, be surrounded by people who cared about making a difference, and gain perspectives from outside my own field and work bubble. Little did any of us know that our class would be navigating one of the most unpredictable years we'd ever lived through [the COVID pandemic]!

Q: What stands out most about your Fellowship experience?

A: My class went through the Fellowship in 2020, a year no one saw coming. Because of COVID-19, we had to pivot from "the norm" and focus on what we needed in the moment. Our project shifted too. We originally set out to build a playbook for hosting events and deepening participation in the organization, and we ended up learning how to support the Fred's team in, *cue the word fatigue*, "unprecedented" times.

What stays with me is how a group of professionals from different backgrounds came together, thought outside the box, and made a tangible impact for families when it mattered most. Fred's Footsteps did the same! Through virtual events and creative fundraisers like the Heroes Campaign, we kept supporters and sponsors engaged and kept the mission moving.

Q: How has the Fellowship influenced your life or career since participating?

A: The biggest thing is knowing that being part of Fred's Footsteps goes far beyond what I get out of it personally. Years later, I'm still involved, helping support the next generation of Fellows and building long-term supporter engagement and recruitment for the program. It's a chance to make a lasting impact for the families we serve that goes beyond financial support, and that's incredibly rewarding.

That purpose has also given me some of my closest friendships. I'm still close with many people from the program, and those bonds have only gotten stronger. Some of them were even at my wedding!

Professionally, it was a **game-changer** too. The Fellowship put me in rooms with people I never would have met otherwise and gave me a chance to show my work ethic outside the office. That network has led to real job opportunities, and it keeps paying off.

Q: Your involvement with Fred's Footsteps has continued well beyond the Fellowship. What inspired you to stay connected?

A: I've gotten so much out of learning alongside great people across the Philadelphia region and seeing how a board works and how Fred's Footsteps operates behind the scenes. After every interaction, event, and meeting, I leave energized and motivated to find creative ways to get even more involved.

It's also been exciting to watch the organization, and the careers of people from our 2020 Fellowship class, grow. The Inaugural Golf Classic launched that October, in person, and over its four-year run raised nearly $70K for families. There's nothing more rewarding than helping build on something we started together and seeing it make a real difference for the families we serve.

But it really comes down to the families. Every meeting begins with a member story, which keeps all of us grounded in why we're here. Hearing directly from the families we support is a powerful reminder that this work changes lives, and it's what keeps me coming back.

Q: You're now helping reimagine the Fellowship for the next generation. What do you hope future Fellows will gain from the experience?

A: I hope future Fellows take full advantage of the chance to connect with others around a greater purpose. This isn't just another networking program. It's an opportunity to step outside your day-to-day routine and build meaningful, in-person relationships, something that can easily get lost as everyone moves **faster and faster** in a digital age. It's also part of a broader effort to grow and continue the magic Fred's Footsteps creates, and to build the next generation of supporters.

Sustainability is a big part of that. Our class's goal was to create a repeatable playbook so future Fellows and volunteers could plug in and plan exceptional events in service of the mission. I can't wait to see this next group build on that foundation and make it their own!

Q: What would you say to a busy young professional who is considering the Fellowship but isn't sure they can make the time?

A: I'll be honest, it's a tough question for me, because putting in the time was so worth it. If you want to broaden your network, your work experience, and your community impact, this is your chance to be part of something bigger than yourself.

You also don't have to give at the highest levels to make a difference here. One of our biggest lessons was that time and talent matter just as much. When we made events more accessible, with lower price points and virtual options, we drew in new participants and still raised meaningful support for Fred's.

You get out what you put in. The Fred's team gives it their all every day to help families in need, and the Fellowship lets you experience that firsthand, become an extension of their team, and grow yourself along the way.

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The **Fred's Footsteps Fellowship** is a 12-month program aimed at engaging emerging Philadelphia-area leaders to further their professional development and establish the next generation of nonprofit champions.

Know someone who could follow in Regina's footsteps? We'd love an introduction. Email Christine at **Christine@fredsfootsteps.org.**



TOP 5 THINGS

We're Grateful *for* This Year

1 Women in Philanthropy

Good conversation has a way of opening doors. We're grateful to **Trish Wellenbach and Gina Clark**, whose vision and leadership brought *Women in Philanthropy* to life. The series brings women together for meaningful conversation and connection, building a community grounded in shared purpose and a commitment to helping others.

Our first gathering in 2025 at **High Street Philadelphia** featured Christine DiBona Lobley in conversation with **Clare Graff, the NFL's Vice President of Social Responsibility**, exploring how women build legacy through leadership and shape the future of giving.

The series will continue with "**Navigating Your Next Step with Purpose**," co-hosted by **Rosemary Connors and Veronica McKee** at **Boyds Wayne** this December, bringing women together to explore change, purpose, and what comes next.

Thank you to our co-hosts, speakers, welcoming venues, and every attendee whose thoughtful questions and personal perspectives bring these conversations to life. Together, you're helping us explore how women's leadership can shape the future of philanthropy and inspire others to give back.









2

The People Sustaining the Promise

As Fred's Footsteps marked 20 years of serving families, we made a bold commitment: **investing $5 million in family support over five years**, doubling our pace of impact. We're deeply grateful to the supporters helping us turn that **Five in Five** promise into lasting support for families.

The commitment responds to the growing pressures we see every day. Rising living costs, gaps in insurance coverage, and limited in-home nursing can leave parents facing overwhelming expenses while caring for their child. Families need more help, and we need the capacity and financial strength to keep showing up for them.

Through the **Founders Fund** and **Footsteps into the Future Fund**, supporters are helping us meet those needs while strengthening our mission for the years ahead. Thank you for believing in this work and investing in the families who will count on us next.

With heartfelt thanks to our Five in Five supporters:

Bob Distanislao
CapTech
Steve & Carol Udvarhelyi
Matt & Lisa Gillin
Jack & Mary Grace Tighe
Bill Sasso
Rosemarie & Anne Morrisey-Greco
Bill Sautter
Christine & Brian Lobley
Fred & Teresa DiBona
Yvette & Robert Bright
Matt & Pam Webb

5in5

3

Grant Gratitude

We're grateful to the foundations, businesses, and giving circles that see the needs of local families and choose to help us meet them. This year, that support included grants from **Legacy Foundation, Burlington Coat Factory, Nemours, Bank of America, Hunter Capuzzi Family Foundation, M&T Charitable Foundation, and Wawa**. Each grant represents confidence in our mission and makes more support possible for families facing a child's medical crisis.

One especially meaningful moment came from **Project W**, a women's giving circle dedicated to supporting women and families throughout Delaware County. We were honored to receive a **$17,000** grant and join their members for a celebration, complete with a giant check! While the check made for a great photo, the generosity behind it will make a difference in families' lives.

Thank you to every grant partner who chose to stand with Fred's Footsteps this year.







4

Family Movie Night

For families navigating a child's medical crisis, a simple night at the movies isn't always so simple. That made our July Family Movie Night at **Movie Tavern Flourtown** especially meaningful. With dinner, a private screening of Toy Story 5, and visits from Woody and Jessie, the evening gave children, siblings, and caregivers a chance to relax, laugh, and enjoy being together.

We're grateful to co-sponsors **101 Mobility** and **Elkins Park Family Medicine** for making this special night possible, and to Movie Tavern Flourtown for welcoming our families so warmly. Thank you also to **PHL17** for joining us and sharing the joy. The smiles were a wonderful reminder of how much these moments matter. We're already looking forward to the sequel!

101 Mobility | Elkins Park Family Medicine









5

Story Tellers



We're grateful to the people who help others understand why our work matters. This year, **Coach Phil Martelli** welcomed Christine DiBona Lobley to the **Make a Difference Podcast** to share Fred's Footsteps' mission and the deeply personal meaning of carrying forward her father's legacy.

Generocity, a Philadelphia publication focused on social impact, featured Christine's article, "More Than Medicine," giving her the opportunity to highlight the critical impact that social determinants of health (like housing, transportation, and food security) have on a child's recovery and a family's well-being. Thank you for giving these important conversations an audience.

Our gratitude also extends to **JTwo**, our production partner for more than a decade. Their team understands our work and approaches each family's story with the care it deserves, creating videos that help viewers see the people and experiences behind our mission.

And to our local media friends at **PHL17, FOX 29,** and **6ABC**: thank you for introducing new audiences to Fred's Footsteps, sharing our events, and shining a thoughtful spotlight on families in our community.

This year, we were especially honored to be recognized as a **6abc Hometown Hero**, featuring the story of Misty and her son, Brayven. Through Pat's Projects, a simple backyard fence brought greater safety, freedom, and peace of mind to their family. Our heartfelt thanks to reporter Nick Iadonisi for telling their story with such care and compassion, and to Misty and Brayven for allowing us to share a personal part of their journey. It's a beautiful example of the power of storytelling to bring our mission to life.



A World Within Reach



Helping Keishlyan's family purchase a wheelchair-accessible van through our **Keys to Mobility** program was a privilege made possible by this community. Her parents, Edwing and Sheila, sent us this letter of thanks. Their words capture what your support means better than we ever could, and their gratitude belongs to you, too.

Dear Fred's Footsteps Team,

There are no words that can fully express our gratitude for the incredible support you provided to our family.

Because of your generous $20,000 contribution, our daughter Keishlyan now has access to a wheelchair-accessible van that will change her daily life in ways that are difficult to describe.

Keishlyan is 15 years old and has cerebral palsy. For many years, transportation has been one of the greatest challenges for our family. Every medical appointment, therapy visit, school activity, family gathering, and community event required careful planning and physical effort.

Today, thanks to Fred's Footsteps, we have a vehicle that allows Keishlyan to travel safely, comfortably, and with dignity.

The first time we saw her enter the van using the wheelchair ramp, it was an emotional moment for our family. We realized that this was more than a vehicle. It was freedom, independence, accessibility, and opportunity.

Your generosity has lifted a tremendous burden from our shoulders and has given Keishlyan greater access to the world around her. You have not only helped purchase a van; you have improved her quality of life and given our family peace of mind.

Please accept our heartfelt thanks for believing in families like ours and for making a real difference in the lives of children with disabilities.

We will always remember your kindness and generosity.

With sincere gratitude,

Edwing & Sheila
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania



So a child's care can be a parent's only worry.

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fredsfootsteps.org