

STAY IN THE LOOP WITH UPDATES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS!

Announcements

UGCH OneUp Launched!

We've officially launched our new OneUp Community Page! Watch for more stories and please reach out if you would like to feature any of the great things happening in your areas! [OneUp Community - UGCH](#).

Radiothon—Breaking records! ★★★★★★★★★★

The Upstate Foundation's Radiothon for Kids raised a record \$285,318 in two days of fundraising, breaking last year's record by more than \$64,000. Thank you to the Upstate Foundation Team and all the volunteers who came together to make this happen!! [Story here](#).



Reminders

2026 President's Employee Recognition Awards by Apr 1

Nominations are sought for the 2026 President's Employee Recognition Awards now through April 1. Nominate an exceptional colleague or outstanding team whose dedication makes a difference. To learn more and honor someone who goes above and beyond, visit: www.upstate.edu/pera. Questions? Email contact Megan Chase.

Advocates for Upstate seek applicants for grants by Feb. 28

Advocates for Upstate is accepting applications for departmental grants now through Feb. 28 at noon. Awards on grant proposals submitted in the current cycle will be announced in late April or early May. Funds for grants awarded can be used between June 1, 2026 and May 31, 2027. All proposals should align with Advocates for Upstate's mission to improve patient care and satisfaction, support medical education, and enhance community health. Applications for grants are accepted from departments across the Upstate campuses and must be for items and/or services not funded through department budgets. For an application form and guidelines, email Jonathan Adler at AdlerJ@Upstate.edu.

T-Shirt Sale

The Child Abuse team is selling T-shirts to benefit The Child Abuse Fund at Upstate which helps support patient care, research and education. To order, visit: <https://upstate-child-advocacy.myshopify.com/>. Order deadline is March 13. Questions? Email Michelle Case or Christine VanDelinder.

Strategic Plan Updates

Upstate Golisano's First Quarterly Forum!

Our first UGCH Forum was on Thursday, January 29th. The UGCH leadership team reviewed our Upstate Golisano Strategic Plan ([here](#)) and Dr. Hank Roane presented on BBHU's first full year of patient care. You can find the [presentation here](#) and meeting recording here: [UGCH Open Forum Jan 29 2026.mp4](#).

The next meeting is scheduled for April 30th at 8am. Updates on the strategic plan will be provided and we will hear from our Pediatric Transport and Children's Surgery Verification teams.

Upcoming Events

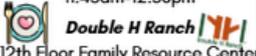
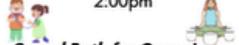
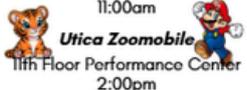
Child Life Presentation March 9th

Abby Loehrke, MA, CCLS, and Rachel Stinson, MD, CCLS, certified child life specialists at Upstate Golisano Children's Hospital, will present Supporting Children in Healthcare March 9 at noon via Zoom. Participants will learn creative methods child life specialists use to help young patients navigate health appointments with doctors, nurses, and a range of other health care providers—and what parents can do at home to help prepare children. Helping kids have positive experiences with providers impacts their lifelong health. To register, click [here](#). Questions? Email Amy Allen at AllenAm@Upstate.edu.

Child Life Calendar of Events:

[March Calendar](#)

February 2026				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
23  Family Lunch 12th Floor Family Resource Center 11:45am-12:30pm	24  Gaming Group 12th Floor Family Resource Center 11:00am  MOST Science Experiments 11th Floor Performance Center 2:00pm	25  BINGO 11th Floor Performance Center 2:30pm-3:30pm	26  Pet Therapy Short visit in your room Between 11am and 1pm  Art Group 12th Floor Family Resource Center 2:00pm	27  Music Group 12th Floor Family Resource Center 2:00pm

March 2026				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
2 Family Lunch 12th Floor Family Resource Center 11:45am-12:30pm  Double H Ranch 12th Floor Family Resource Center 12:00pm-3:00pm	3  Gaming Group 12th Floor Family Resource Center 11:00am	4 Medical Play Group 12th Floor Family Resource Center 2:00pm  Sound Bath for Caregivers 12th Floor Solarium 2:00pm	5  Pet Therapy Short visit in your room Between 11am and 1pm	6  Movie on the Big Screen 11th Floor Performance Center 1:00pm
9  Family Lunch 12th Floor Family Resource Center 11:45am-12:30pm	10 Mario Day 12th Floor Family Resource Center 11:00am  Utica Zoomobile 11th Floor Performance Center 2:00pm	11  Slime with Med Students 12th Floor Family Resource Center 2:00pm	12  Pet Therapy Short visit in your room Between 11am and 1pm  Art Group 12th Floor Family Resource Center 2:00pm	13  Music Group 12th Floor Family Resource Center 2:00pm
16  Family Lunch 12th Floor Family Resource Center 11:45am-12:30pm	17 Gaming Group 12th Floor Family Resource Center 11:00am  Milkshakes Brought to patient rooms after lunch	18  Pinewood Derby 11th Floor Performance Center 1:00pm	19  Pet Therapy Short visit in your room Between 11am and 1pm  Art Group 12th Floor Family Resource Center 2:00pm	20  Music Group 12th Floor Family Resource Center 2:00pm
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Help celebrate Child Life Month with these [theme days](#)!:

CHILD LIFE THEME DAYS

**SHOW YOUR SUPPORT FOR
YOUR CHILD LIFE TEAM BY
DRESSING UP IN THEMED
CLOTHES IN MARCH DURING
CHILD LIFE MONTH!**

**MARCH
04**

KINDNESS DAY

Wear your kindness on your
sleeve!



MARIO

Wear your favorite
Mario, Disney, Marvel or
cartoon character attire!

**MARCH
10**

**MARCH
18**

SU/SPORTS DAY

Wear gear showcasing your
favorite sports team!



TIEDYE DAY

Wear your grooviest duds!

**MARCH
25**

Chat with Patient Advocacy March 13th in the KPC!

Families and staff are invited to our Hot Cocoa and Chat with Patient Advocacy event on March 13th from 12:30-1:30 where they can discuss their children's care at Upstate Golisano.



Cystic Fibrosis Teaching Day

All are welcome to attend on March 11th, 2:00pm-5:45pm in the Kinney Performance Center.

[RSVP here](#) by 2/23. Questions? Email Annette Borchert at MalecA@upstate.edu.

Joey's Wish fundraiser is Feb. 28

Joey's Wish fourth annual bowling fundraiser will be held Feb. 28 from 2 to 4 p.m. at Flamingo Bowl in Liverpool. Tickets are \$20 per person and include two hours of bowling, shoe rental, pizza, and soda. To purchase tickets, [visit: https://www.eventbrite.com/o/joey-wish-inc-55931820133](https://www.eventbrite.com/o/joey-wish-inc-55931820133) or contact Ann Morrell at morrella@upstate.edu. All proceeds support research to aid in ending the addiction crisis including a portion to Joey's Wish at the Upstate Foundation. Registration deadline is Feb. 20. Only 200 tickets will be sold.

Inpatient Updates

Pediatric Quality & Safety

The newsletter can be found here: [February PQS Newsletter](#).

Staffing Updates & Announcements

Patient Advocacy Awards! ★

🎉 11E RNs, **Kirstyn Devereaux** and **Nicole Ligoci!**



Perfect Attendance Awards!

Shoutout to **Robin Jodoin** and **Lisa Kozma**
at UPAC for their
Perfect Attendance Awards!



"These two are stars! Part of the backbone of clinic!" [Facebook post here](#)

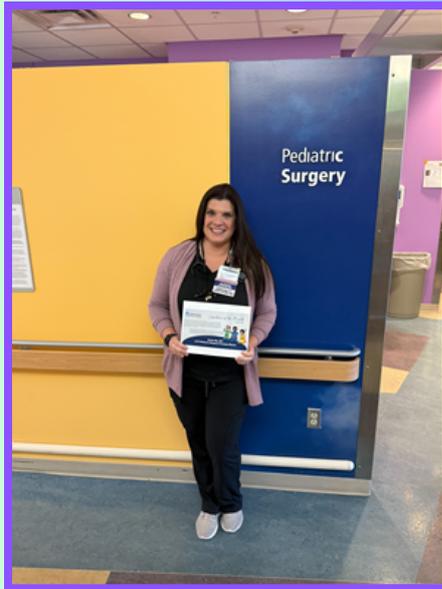
🎉 Shoutout to **Brenda Walser** at Upstate Peds in Clay for her **Perfect Attendance Award!**



"Thanks Brenda for always being a smiling, friendly face when we bring our boys in to the office!"
[Facebook post](#)



**Katie Oja, RN
11E Clinical
Training
Specialist is
February's
Superhero of
the Month!**



Katie consistently demonstrates going above and beyond! In between functioning as the Clinical Trainer and onboarding several new staff members, she dedicated time to getting 11E magnet ready and actively participating with the birthday planning for the children's hospital. She is committed to the quality and safety by providing teaching and resourcing while being positive. She takes on any challenge and boosts morale while doing it. She demonstrates being a superhero!

Katie represents UGCH in a positive light. She is dedicated to the care of all patients in the hospital. Katie goes above and beyond in ensuring the needs of all patients are met. She always had a smile on her face and an uplifting attitude. Katie's dedication and drive inspires others to work hard to support our community. [Facebook post](#)

Don't forget to vote for the
Superhero for next month!



Retirement! 🌴

Sharon Schlueter, RN, will be retiring on February 25th.

Sharon worked on 11E from 2003-2019 and then in the Peds Outpatient Float Pool from 2020-2026. Thank you, Sharon, for your dedication to pediatric nursing. Caring for so many little warriors both inpatient and outpatient. We appreciate the caring spirit, energy, and knowledge you brought to work every day. ENJOY your retirement!!!

Anne Woodrow, RN, Case Manager, will be retiring on February 27th.

Anne Woodrow is retiring after 25 years of dedicated service to Upstate, including the past 15 years as a pediatric case manager. We are incredibly grateful for her commitment, compassion, and the positive impact she has made on so many patients and colleagues. Please join us in celebrating Anne and all she has contributed on Friday, February 27th, from 1:00-3:00 p.m. in the Kinney Performance Center. We hope you'll stop by to share your appreciation and wish her all the best in her next adventure. If you have any questions, please contact Christine VanDelinder at vandelic@upstate.edu.

New Staff!



Inpatient:

- BBHU: Maudlin Brown, RN
- 12E has Nina Grigorian, RN starting 2/19

Ambulatory:

- Rachel Brown, MHTA at BBHU
- Mallory Caza - promoted from Behavior Tech to Patient Activities Coordinator at BBHU
- Stefania Chamorro Gonzalez, RN -transfer from 11G to Peds Specialty Clinics
- Telah Ford-Dozier, MHTA at BBHU
- Takiem Knighton, MHTA at BBHU
- Deanna Moore, MHTA at BBHU
- Nadia Stokes - transfer from PICU to Peds Specialty Clinics
- Emily Vercelloni, LMSW at GCSN
- Lei Yang, MHTA at BBHU

Providers:

- Zeinab Hedroj - Post Doc at BBHU

Upstate Foundation

Happy 50th Anniversary! 🎉

As the Upstate Foundation marks its 50th anniversary, it celebrates five decades of advancing patient care, education, research, and community health at Upstate Medical University and across Central New York. Since its incorporation in 1976, the Foundation has grown into a vital philanthropic partner, helping to launch and sustain transformative initiatives such as Upstate Golisano Children's Hospital, the Upstate Cancer Center, expanded emergency and mental health services, and dozens of endowed professorships. From early investments in pediatric and oncology care to recent support for regional mental health and special needs services, the Foundation's impact reflects a longstanding commitment to improving lives and strengthening communities. To read more about the Upstate Foundation's 50 years of impact, visit [here](#).



Dollars at Work: Over 35 projects were approved for funding in allocations this year! Do you have donor dollars at work? E-mail BrightD@upstate.edu.

Social Media Highlights

Interested in being featured on our social media?

If you have something interesting that you think the community would love to see, we'd love to interview you! Please contact Mary Melice at melicem@upstate.edu.

Just some of our incredible stories on our social media platforms!

- [Upstate therapy dog Bodhi takes on Westminster! & He advances to the 2nd round!](#)
- [National CRNA Week!](#)
- [National Pharmacist Day!](#)
- [Amber Conley, BBHU Behavior Specialist interview!](#)
- [Syracuse Crunch!](#)
- [Brooke Fraser and Gail Nolan, Peds Cancer Center, in Kenya!](#)

Additional Highlights

★ Staff at BBHU received a wonderful letter of gratitude from a recently discharged family:

"To everyone who helped care for Rowan, thank you. Thank you for keeping him safe and happy. Thank you for helping us all, providing guidance and care in Rowan's treatment. We are so delighted to have our happy, loving, cuddle boy back. We are headed home tomorrow with hope and joy that we haven't had a long time. You all have truly made a tremendous change in our lives. From the bottom of our hearts, thank you."

Special Recognition for Dr. Teelin

Dr. Karen Teelin received the NYS Dept of Health Commissioner's Special Recognition Award for her commitment, contribution, and response to improve and promote the health and well-being of all New Yorkers. Dr. Teelin told the Crier, "I was nominated by peers for increasing access to adolescent sexual and reproductive health care. It was an incredible honor. It involved getting up at 4 am and driving to Albany and back in time for afternoon clinic, during a snowstorm, which was an adventure! But I enjoyed the conference and learned a lot, which I am excited to implement. Credit goes to Drs Steiniger and Kaul."

Dr. Blatt vs Winter (Coats)

CNY Central did an interview with Dr. Steve Blatt on the winter coat battle parents sometimes need to have with their kids. [Parents vs. kids: The winter coat battle.](#)

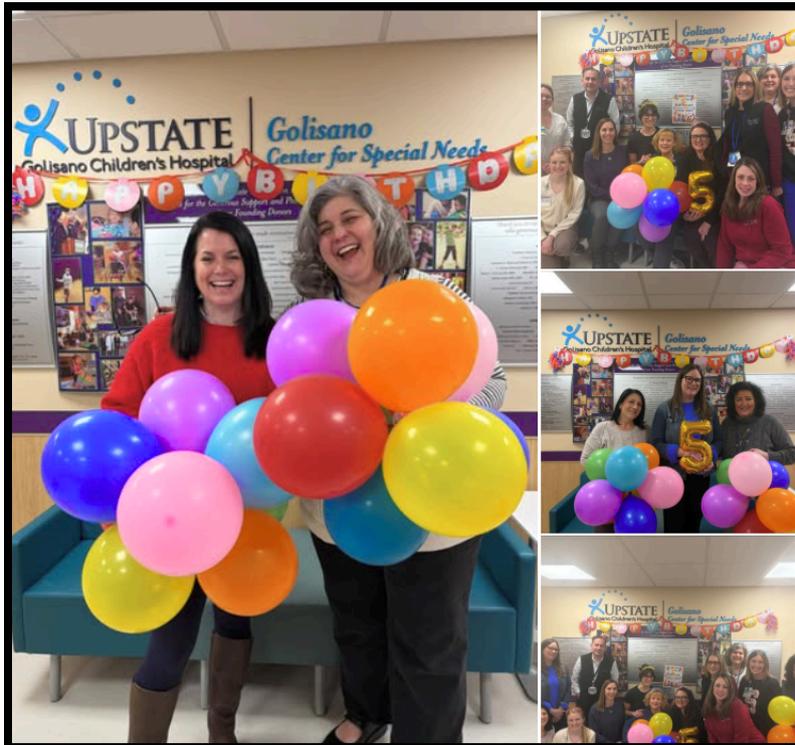
Upstate launches innovative pathway to detect pediatric stroke:

[Story here](#)



Golisano Center for Special Needs turns 5!

Happy [5th Birthday](#) to the Upstate Golisano Center for Special Needs! 🎂🎉 Five years of care, support and making a difference for patients and families. Thank you to this incredible team for all that you do ❤️



Winners of UPAC's Annual Bake Off!

1st place: Heather Widay

2nd place: Jennifer Frank

3rd place: Ingrid Rauk



Podcasts

[Advice on childhood vaccines from a longtime pediatrician, Dr. Steve Blatt](#)



January Question: True or False: It's safer for kids to keep their coats ON while buckled in a car seat during winter.

Answer: False — bulky coats can make the car seat less safe. Buckle first, then add a blanket!



February Question: February 14th is known for Valentine's Day, but it is also recognized in healthcare as what special day?

Answer will be shared in the next newsletter.



March is National Social Work Month, National Nutrition Month, National Child Life Month and National Women's History Month!



Good Things at Golisano!

Please feel free to share some good things that happened this week using this link:
<https://redcap.upstate.edu/surveys/?s=NDTP978CC3J9RCA7>.