

STAY IN THE LOOP WITH UPDATES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS!

## Announcements

### Upstate Golisano's Quarterly Forum

Our next UGCH Quarterly Forum will be held on Tuesday, April 28<sup>th</sup> at 9:00am. We recognize that this time will not work for everyone so we will distribute a recording of the meeting afterward. In this meeting, we will provide updates on Quarter 1 progress on the strategic plan and hear from Dr. Dewan, our Pediatric Transport team, and our Children's Surgery Verification Team. We hope to see you there!

### 2026 Pediatric Patient Experience Awards Nominations

We are excited to announce our upcoming Patient Experience Awards for our ambulatory and inpatient areas. All roles are eligible to be nominated. Please click this [link](#) to view the award categories and to nominate your colleagues that go above and beyond for our patients and families.

### 2026 Linda McAleer Award

In addition, we are seeking nominations for the Linda McAleer Award for Patient Safety. This award is named in honor of a leader who exemplified compassion, integrity, and an unwavering commitment to protecting our most vulnerable patients. This award recognizes an individual who has demonstrated extraordinary dedication to improving patient safety and enhancing the quality of care at Upstate Golisano Children's Hospital—someone whose commitment goes above and beyond to keep our children, families, and staff safe. Please send letters of nomination to Brenda Dano at [DanoB@upstate.edu](mailto:DanoB@upstate.edu).

**All nominations due on April 10th.** We'll share more information soon on when the awards ceremony will be.

## 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](http://www.upstate.edu/pera). Questions? Email contact Megan Chase.

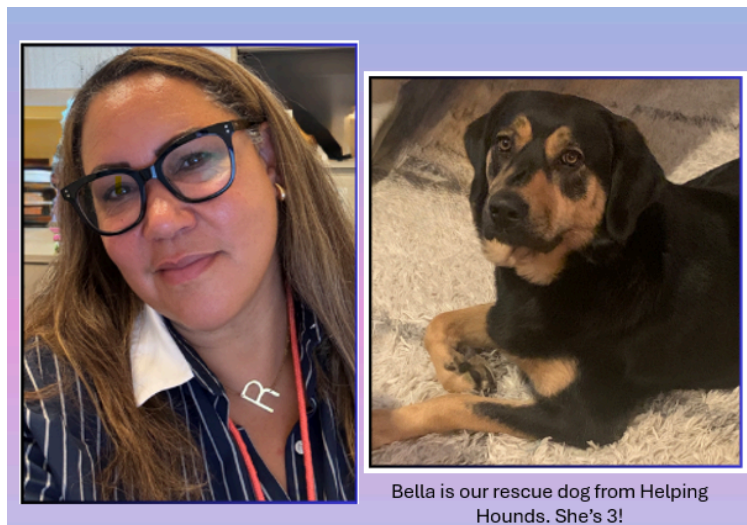
# Strategic Plan Updates

## Strategic Plan Quarter 1 Progress

Quarter 1 of our strategic plan initiative tracking ends on March 31<sup>st</sup>. Initiative owners will receive emails in early April to provide updates on progress. This progress will be presented at the April UGCH Quarterly Update.

## Getting to Know Our UGCH Team

My name is **Rochelle Ratliff**, MS, RN, NE-BC, and I am the Associate Director of Nursing for Upstate Golisano Children's Hospital. I am responsible for pediatric nursing in the Golisano Children's Hospital. I have a primary focus on the Pediatric Ambulatory Clinics located at Clay, Madison Irving, the POB, the Cancer Ctr, and Nappi.



**What attracted me to the role?** I was drawn to this role because it allows me to have a larger impact beyond individual patient care. I enjoy leading teams, developing nurses, and implementing practices that improve outcomes and patient experience. This role provides the opportunity to collaborate with hospital leadership while still staying closely connected to clinical operations.

**What do you enjoy most about leading this team?** What I enjoy most is the people. Everyone here truly cares about the kids and their families, and that kind of dedication is really special to be around every day.

**Fun fact about yourself:** I have a digital frame in my office and if I take your picture at an event or rounds, you are probably on my frame. Please feel free to ask me to take your picture and I will be happy to include you! Also, when I was much younger, I was a lifeguard at several Syracuse City pools and have competed in 3 triathlons.

## Upcoming Events

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Magnet Designation Celebration

Wednesday, April 29 1:00 – 2:30 PM

Downtown – NAB 4414 B/C Community – Room O256

Enjoy food, music, a photobooth, and more!

Special remarks from nursing & organizational leadership at 1:30 PM

# SUNY Upstate Pediatrics TeleECHO

Join SUNY Upstate Pediatrics TeleECHO on Tuesday, March 31, from 12 to 1 PM for a virtual session on pediatric appendicitis management, including operative vs. non-operative approaches. Presented by Dr. Tamer Ahmed, this CME-accredited session offers up to 1.0 AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™. More information [here](#).

## **How to connect:**

Zoom: [click here](#) PW: ECHO / By Phone: +1 646 558 8656, Meeting ID: 384 599 486

















## Chat with Patient Advocacy April 24<sup>th</sup> in the KPC!

Families and staff are invited to our Hot Cocoa and Chat with Patient Advocacy event on April 24<sup>th</sup> from 12:00 - 1:00 to discuss their experiences and feedback. Please [print this flyer](#) and post in your family common areas.



# Child Life Calendar of Events:

[April Calendar](#)

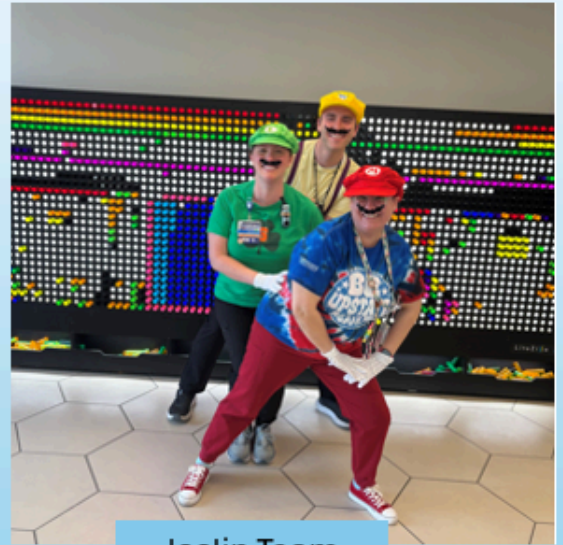
April 2026		Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
30		<b>Family Lunch</b> 12th Floor Family Resource Center 11:45am-12:30pm	31 <b>Gaming Group</b> 12th Floor Family Resource Center 11:00am <b>Lego Group</b> 12th Floor Family Resource Center 2:00pm	1 <b>Slime with Med Students</b> 12th Floor Family Resource Center 2:00pm <b>Sound Bath for Caregivers</b> 12th Floor Solarium 2:00pm	2  <b>Pet Therapy</b> Short visit in your room Between 11am and 1pm	3  <b>Music Group</b> 12th Floor Family Resource Center 2:00pm
6		<b>Family Lunch</b> 12th Floor Family Resource Center 11:45am-12:30pm	7  <b>Gaming Group</b> 12th Floor Family Resource Center 11:00am	8  <b>Slime with Med Students</b> 12th Floor Family Resource Center 2:00pm	9 <b>Pet Therapy</b> Short visit in your room Between 11am and 1pm <b>Art Group</b> 12th Floor Family Resource Center 2:00pm	10  <b>Movie on the Big Screen</b> 11th Floor Performance Center 1:00pm
13		<b>Family Lunch</b> 12th Floor Family Resource Center 11:45am-12:30pm	14 <b>Gaming Group</b> 12th Floor Family Resource Center 11:00am <b>Utica Zoomobile</b> 11th Floor Performance Center 2:00pm	15	16 <b>Pet Therapy</b> Between 11am and 1pm <b>Art Group</b> 12th Floor Family Resource Center 2:00pm	17  project sunshine <b>Project Sunshine</b> 12th Floor Family Resource Center 1:30pm
20		<b>Family Lunch</b> 12th Floor Family Resource Center 11:45am-12:30pm	21 <b>Gaming Group</b> 12th Floor Family Resource Center 11:00am <b>Lego Group</b> 12th Floor Family Resource Center 2:00pm	22  <b>Make Slime with SU Cheer</b> 12th Floor Family Resource Center 2:00pm	23 <b>Pet Therapy</b> Between 11am and 1pm <b>Art Group</b> 12th Floor Family Resource Center 2:00pm	24  <b>Music Group</b> 12th Floor Family Resource Center 2:00pm
27		<b>Family Lunch</b> 12th Floor Family Resource Center 11:45am-12:30pm	28 <b>Gaming Group</b> 12th Floor Family Resource Center 11:00am <b>MOST Science Experiments</b> 11th Floor Performance Center 2:00pm	29  <b>BINGO</b> 11th Floor Performance Center 2pm-5:30pm	30  <b>Art Group</b> 12th Floor Family Resource Center 2:00pm	1  <b>Music Group</b> 12th Floor Family Resource Center 2:00pm

**\*All events are subject to change and your/your child's ability to participate depends on everyone's health and safety. Please ask your nurse before attending any events.**



# Child Life Theme Day pictures!

11G "Wear your heart!"



Joslin Team  
"Mario Day!"

UGCH Team!  
"SU/Sports Day!"



# March & April Theme Days—We need your pictures! [Printable flyer](#)

## **Upcoming Themes & Dates**

Please do not include patients in the pictures/videos or patient information in background.

Email pictures to [melicem@upstate.edu](mailto:melicem@upstate.edu) or text 315-885-1861 by the end of each date below:

### **3/25 – Child Life Theme Day**

Wear your grooviest duds and show off those retro vibes!

### **3/30 – National Doctors' Day**

Celebrating the doctors who make a difference every day! Snap a pic with your favorite doc or care team – or doctors - send a selfie of yourself!

### **3/31 – National Crayon Day**

Imagination encouraged! (You may need to dust off those old Halloween costumes 🤩)

### **4/15 – National Child Abuse Prevention Month**

Wear blue to raise awareness—send pics of you/your team dressed in blue!

### **4/9 – National Pets Day**

Show off your furry (or feathered!) friends—bonus points if you're in the pic too. Don't leave your "out of the ordinary" pets out either! 🐾 🐩 🐱

### **4/10 – National Siblings Day**

Do you and your sibling both work at Upstate? Let's see those sibling shoutouts!

### **4/20 – National Look-Alike Day**

Grab your work twin or real-life look-alike and snap a pic!

### **4/28 - National Superhero Day**

Suit up in your favorite superhero gear—we know you're already heroes!

## Inpatient Updates

Pediatric Quality & Safety The newsletter can be found here: [March PQ&S](#).

## Upstate Foundation Updates

**Events:** The Upstate Foundation GCH Team hosted a Community Champions Recognition Reception on Tuesday, March 10<sup>th</sup> honoring our Community Champions and the retail and business partners who make a difference for children and families at Upstate Golisano Children's Hospital. Dave Bartell, Assistant VP for Development, emceed and kept the laughs coming as we reflected on our collective impact in 2025, heard from a Miracle Family and Child Life, and learned how the Children's Miracle Network campaign & pediatric dollars will continue to change lives in the year ahead. It was a full house and an incredible morning! Pictured is a view of the room and our Miracle Child, Guinevere at the event.

**Donor Spotlight:** Shoutout to Metabolic Fitness locations in Camillus & Manlius for recently hosting charity classes to benefit Upstate Golisano Children's Hospital. Pictured is their check presentation from their recent visit to the hospital. Keep an eye out for an upcoming promotion from this group to try a class!

**Congratulations:** The Burger King campaign raised \$58,000 this year! Thank you to everyone who purchased a Valentine this year at one of the Carrols-owned locations throughout Central New York.

**Upcoming Campaigns:** Ace Hardware & Kinney Drugs will be happening in April. For a complete list of campaigns, visit our Shop & Give page: [Shop and give retail partner campaigns](#)



## Staffing Updates & Announcements

### Congratulations

#### To our DAISY Honoree for January 2026

Rebecca Walker, BSN, RN  
Patient Nomination

“

In the midst of fear,  
uncertainty, and  
exhaustion, Becca  
immediately became a  
steady source of comfort  
and strength.

UPSTATE  
Nursing

 The DAISY  
Award  
FOR EXTRAORDINARY NURSES  
IN MEMORY OF J. PATRICK BARNES



Please take a moment to read her nomination story:

"I am writing to enthusiastically nominate my son's oncology nurse, Rebecca Walker, for the DAISY Award in recognition of the extraordinary compassion, skill, and dedication she has shown our family during the most difficult times of our lives. When our son was diagnosed with lymphoma our world was turned upside down. In the midst of fear, uncertainty, and exhaustion, Becca immediately became a steady source of comfort and strength—not just for our son, but for our entire family. Her kindness went far beyond clinical care. Becca took the time to truly see our son as a person first, not just a patient. Becca was there for us with genuine kindness and compassion from the initial uncertainty of what we were dealing with through the end of the difficult treatments. She had a remarkable ability to know whether he needed lighthearted, fun conversation to keep him in a positive mindset or quiet reassurance when he was feeling overwhelmed by the process and needed to internalize. No matter the type of interaction, Becca's huge heart shined through. I did not realize until the end of the treatments how much Becca eased my own fears during the treatments. The combination of her top-notch nursing skills and compassion allowed me to concentrate on his emotional needs during treatment without having to ever worry about the medical part. There is no doubt in my heart that our family would not have been able to navigate this heartbreaking, difficult time as well without her. Most importantly, I know my son would not have responded as well to his treatments physically or emotionally without Becca's care and without him knowing that she genuinely cared about him. Our family will forever be grateful for her.

Rebecca was celebrated on her unit with Nursing leadership, her team and manager! Way to go Rebecca!



Each month we celebrate a Superhero at UGCH! Please use the QR code below to nominate your team members. This is for all roles and all shifts. Congratulations Sanzida on being our February Superhero!



**Sanzida  
Khatun, HCT,  
11E is  
February's  
Superhero of  
the Month!**

[Facebook post:](#)

"So deserving!!! And  
the absolute best "



"Sanzida is always so sweet and kind. She goes above and beyond on the floor. She will always go the extra mile and help wherever needed. She is a rockstar and treats everyone with kindness and respect."

"Sanzida is an amazing HCT. She is always so willing to help and is such an asset to 11E."

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

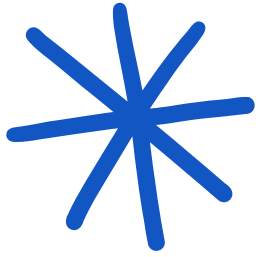


## Nurse Residency Graduate!

Congratulations to **Marcia Hill** at UPAC!  
(pictured with nurse manager, Heather  
Widay)

[Upstate Golisano Children's Hospital](#)





# WELCOME



## Administration:

- Connor McGough, Community Liaison for Physical Disabilities Program

## Ambulatory:

### Peds Hem/Onc:

- Noelle Toye, RN, 4/2

### UPAC:

- Andrea Chavarria, Peds Ambulatory Clinical Care Manager, 2/26
- Justice Kapp, OAS, 4/2
- Erinrose Silky, RN 4/9

## 3N:

- Jessica Brittain, RN, 3/26
- Michelle Tramonte, RN, 3/12
- Karli Wilcox, RN, Nurse Manager, 3/1

## Peds ED:

- Hannah Card, RN, 3/12
- Catherine Catapano, TN, 3/5
- Amanda Greenia, RN, 3/26
- Emma Haines-Burnham, RN, 3/5
- Katelyn Northup, RN, 3/5
- Alannah Stenta, RN, 2/26
- Ilham Thabet, RN, 2/26
- Laura Wozny, TN, 2/26
- Ryan Depaulis, RN, 4/23

## Inpatient:

### 11E:

- Clint Badman, RN, 3/5
- Emilia Gran, RN, 4/2
- Felicia Granger, HCT, 3/12
- Xyncere Syullivan HCT, 3/26

### 12F:

- Casey Clements, RN, 3/12
- Sydney Gilfus, RN (from 9G to 12F), 3/12
- Ian Hall, RN, 4/2
- Natalie Howse, TN, 3/26
- Courtney Wlad, RN (from 11E to 12F), 3/26

### BBHU:

- Meghan Broadbent, TN, 3/12
- Rachel Brown, Beh Tech, 3/26
- Chris Chandler, Beh Tech 3/12
- Christina O'Connor, MHTA, 3/12
- Randy Ramas, RN, 4/2
- Victoria Venton, MHTA, 3/12

### Peds Float Pool:

- Michelle Ezell-Brown, TN, 2/26
- Thomas Harris, TN, 3/12
- Sadiya Osman, UST, 3/5
- Fatima Sow, HCT, 4/2



# — HAPPY — Retirement

The **Center for Development, Behavior and Genetics** proudly announces the retirement of **Dr. Robert Roger Lebel** after 18 years at Upstate, including 14 years as Chief of Genetics. Dr. Lebel's passion for pediatric genetics, education, and mentorship has left a lasting impact on our patients, families, and learners across the Children's Hospital. Please join us in wishing Bob a joyful and well-deserved retirement as we celebrate his remarkable legacy.

## Upstate Foundation

**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](mailto:BrightD@upstate.edu).

## Patient and Family Advisory Council

### Pediatric Patient Family Advisory Council Seeks Members

Our Pediatric Patient Family Advisory Council is looking for new advisors to join our amazing team! Family Advisors provide input and feedback to help decision making at many levels of Upstate's hospital system. This diverse group of families work with children's hospital staff to promote and enhance patient safety and quality. If you or someone you know is interested, please apply [here](#).

## 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](mailto:melicem@upstate.edu).

### UPAC getting into the green spirit!



## Kudos to Mitchell Root and 12E staff!

A grateful family recently shared a Facebook message highlighting the excellent care he provides on 12E nights.

"My child was admitted March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2026, and although we had an overall incredible experience with such a kind and supportive group of care providers, there is one individual who stuck out drastically, so I'd like to take a moment to give them the recognition they deserve. My son is 3 weeks old, getting admitted at any age is terrifying, but him being so young amplified the fear for me. I had an incredibly attentive, helpful, caring, kind nurse who made the experience so much easier and took a huge weight off my shoulders. The nurse Mitch at your establishment did an excellent job making sure everyone was well taken care of and didn't have to go through anything alone. He even went as far as to help me clean my son's clothes when he had a blowout. I was stressed and scared, and he relieved a lot of what I was feeling. I'm very thankful for my stay, and my son is now thriving! Thank you for taking such good care of your patients!"

## Some more of our incredible stories on our social media platforms!

- Celebrating Child Life Month! [f Upstate Golisano Children's Hospital](#)
  - "Thanks for all you do! We learned what a Child Life Specialist was during my son's spinal surgery. He was so impressed he thinks that may be a possible career choice!"
- National Social Work Month [f Upstate Golisano Children's Hospital](#)
  - "3 of my favorite social workers!! Happy SW month!"
- March is National Nutrition Month [f Upstate Golisano Children's Hospital](#)
  - "Two of the best dieticians around! They make the Peds GI clinic go round."
- Mario Kart day!
  - Check out this [Facebook post](#) of Brad Taylor's interview.
- National Hospitalist Day! [Facebook post](#)
  - "Thank you for taking excellent care of the children and families in our community!"
- Black History Month
  - [Interview](#) with Maisha Brown, Shamika Blyden-Mayo and Rochelle Ratliff
- Women's History Month
  - [Interview with Dr. Doreen Arinaitwe](#)
- Bleeding Disorders Awareness Month—Recognizing UGCH Pediatric Bleeding Disorders Center
  - "The most phenomenal team Thank you personally from me and my husband for all the care, compassion and worry you take off the shoulders of parents learning how wild the blood is."
- Upstate Golisano Center for Special Needs & our Early Intervention and Preschool Treatment Team.
  - [f Upstate Golisano Children's Hospital](#)
- National Caregivers Day, we're honored to share Erin Radley's story from the Pediatric Patient Family Advisory Council
  - [Interview here](#) "So inspired by this Erin!!! You and your husband are incredible."

## Additional Highlights

### Increasing HPV vaccine uptake pilot program

[Review](#) a recently published research article highlighting a study conducted at UPAC and Upstate Pediatrics focused on increasing HPV vaccination rates. Three of the five authors are Upstate pediatricians: Dr. Blatt, Dr. Sisskind, and Dr. Suryadevara.

# 11E Traveler Gives Back Through Global Service

We're proud to recognize one of our 11E travelers, Devon Burri, who recently returned from a mission trip to the Dominican Republic, serving communities in the Puerto Plata villages. Thank you for representing compassion and service beyond our hospital walls.



## Community Event

A big thank you to Brittany Mauzy and Emily Vercelloni from GCSN for tabling at the Advocates' Winter Party & Informational Fair on March 13, where they connected with families and shared resources on community supports and services for individuals with disabilities.



## Podcasts

- **Strokes are uncommon in children but need timely care when they do happen**, and nurse **Jennifer Murphy** describes how the Pediatric Resuscitation Program handles this condition at Upstate Golisano Children's Hospital. [Listen here](#) / [Upstate Story](#).
- **Drug for childhood leukemia shows positive results.** The most common childhood cancer is a type of leukemia, and doctors have been looking for ways to reduce its recurrence. A recent national study involved 26 children from the Upstate Cancer Center, and **Melanie Comito, MD**, explains the findings. She's a professor of pediatrics and the division chief of hematology and oncology at Upstate. [Listen here](#).



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

*Answer: National Donor Day*



**March Question:** The first recorded St. Patrick's Day parade in what is now the U.S. was held in which city? A) Boston B) New York City C) St. Augustine D) Chicago

*Answer will be shared in the next newsletter.*



April is National Volunteer Month, National Child Abuse Prevention Month, and National Donate Life 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>.