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## **Peace on Earth**

ut your phone down, turn off your TV, close your computer screen. Just for an hour, let the wars rage without you. Let the images of suffering and violence ease away so you can take that breath deeply into your being, that one you have been holding. Instead, hold those you hold

Beth Broadway

dear, near and far, in this moment.

Believe me, I am no Pollyanna when it comes to facing hard things. We must face hard things directly: things like racism, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, and all the other ways that humans hurt humans. We just don't have to stare at these painful images non-stop, and in fact, doing so will render us frozen, maybe even useless.

Instead, reach for the sure knowledge that there are many places in the world where peace lives, right now. It is in our relationships and commitments to each other, right here. Over the years, and right now, in many places in Central New York, important conversations among faith leaders, civic influencers, and everyday people have been taking place about their experiences of war, and their pain about the wars in Ukraine, Congo, and now between Israel and Hamas. Their conversations have been deeply personal, respectful, honest, and healing. The conversations have been hard, and courageous, too.

This is what is needed in these times when violence and war erupt. As an interfaith organization committed to affirming dignity through brave dialogues, we have created a safe space for people of many different colors, ethnicities, and traditions, to find their humanness, together. For 47 years, every month, the Round Table of Faith Leaders has met. Made up of Imams, Rabbis, Pastors, Priests, Rev. Drs., Bishops, Presidents, and people whose faith has no honorific, this group has spent more than 50,000 hours building bridges of understanding among themselves. The Round Table continues to meet, unpacking their own and their families' past and present experiences of war, and identifying ways to strengthen our peace-making efforts here at home.

This body of leaders and our agency have done many amazing things in our life together. Christian pastors and Muslim imams exchanged their pulpits after the 9/11 bombings to address misperceptions about their faiths. Teams of faith leaders from Sikh, Muslim, Jewish, and Christian traditions met with teens in schools and houses of worship to talk about the roots of their faith and the similarities and differences of their beliefs. Intimate dinner dialogues have been held in private homes, with people from all different faith traditions sharing how their faith influences their culture and life. Teens visited each other's houses of worship, learned how people different from them pray, and got to ask all the questions about our differences that lead to finding our similarities. Together they then built and delivered flower boxes for each of the houses of worship involved. The Round Table has taken on many other bridge-building and justice issues over the year.

The Round Table has committed to continue to serve as a beacon for this community, and to stay in close relationship with one another, across all our differences. They are acutely aware that sometimes we all need to learn more about the past to stretch our own understanding of the historical contexts that lead to warfare. War requires us all to grow in our understanding of each other. While the Round Table does this as a body, we can all do this in our personal lives with those within our community.

Throughout it all, the goal is to stand for justice, for peace, for belonging and the dignity of all people. We cannot end a foreign war, but we can be for all humans on both sides of a conflict, while opposing all actions that harm humans. In fact, this is the only way forward. That, and some time to breathe.

Beth A. Broadway is the president and CEO of InterFaith Works of CNY.



SyracuseWomanMag.com contact@syracusewomanmag.com

> PUBLISHER David Tyler

dtyler@eaglenewsonline.com

DESIGN Andrea Reeves

PHOTOGRAPHERS

Edges Photography Nancy Miller Alice G. Patterson Rick Policastro Chef Eric Rose David Tyler

#### CONTRIBUTORS

Cheryl Abrams Beth Broadway Janelle Davis Alyssa Dearborn Kate Hanzalik Donna Knapp Chef Eric Rose David Tyler

Cover photo by Alice G. Patterson

#### ADVERTISING SALES

Renée Moonan Linda Jabbour 315.657.7690 315.657.0849 Rmoonan@eaglenewsonline.com Ljabbour@eaglenewsonline.com

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# JACQUIE KELLY KADEN

HOLIDAY/GIVING BAC

## **Carrying on the family legacy**

Alyssa Dearborn

acquie Kelly Kaden had spent a decade in education, working in administration, higher education, and then eventually becoming a teacher. So when circumstances lead her into becoming the president of the family business, Robert L. Kelly General Insurance Agency, she surprised both herself and her entire family.

"It was a series of unfortunate events. Honestly, it was very frustrating at the time." Jacquie said about how her out of country degree prevented her from teaching in the U.S. "I was teaching in Ithaca to work full-time while I was getting that certification, and it just wasn't happening. COVID happened. I was teaching on the private side and we were teaching online. My uncle was talking about retiring from our family business. And when I say I never, ever, even for a minute, thought of working at our family agency ever once, I cannot overstate that. And so when the family started to hear that my uncle's retiring, maybe we're going to sell to a bigger agency, my brother was like, 'someone's got to do this, take this on.' He was out of state, my sister was out of country, I loved teaching. I loved the kids, but the tortuous path that New York State was outlining for me was just not going to work."

So, Jacquie came up to Syracuse for the day and had an "interview" with her dad and her uncle. "And I worked with them for three months and I loved it," she said. "My first call was a claims call. It was a mix of my teacher instincts and my relationship skills, people skills that I have. Calming people down at the scene of an accident and just helping in a crisis. Being with people, partnering with people in some of their worst moments and in some of their best moments. So, I was like, this is amazing. I got chills. It's so dramatic to say it, because it's insurance... I always say that insurance is the opposite of boring. You really are on the ground partnering with people, sometimes at their worst moments and sometimes at their best and everything in between."

Robert L. Kelly General Insurance Agency was founded in 1964 by Jacquie's grandfather. Having been owned and operated now by three generations, the agency continues to provide a variety of insurance services.

What makes local agencies like her different from larger companies? "We know the community so well. Our family agency has been here since 1964 and we know the neighbors. Our clients are our friends and family," she said. "So, I think when we're on the ground, we actually know the faces and the people walking in and out of our business. We know what they need. The larger companies–yes, they have a presence here, of course–don't necessarily live and work and know the people that make up our community. My grandfather's first clients were literally his neighbors. ..So that legacy has that footprint in our community. The services we provide are a reflection of what we know they need because we live and work with them."

This community presence is a part of Jacquie's family legacy. But what makes the work the most fulfilling for Jacquie is being able to use that legacy to help people who live in Central New York.

"I'm the oldest of three children, and they would never peg me to be someone who would love the insurance industry." she said, "I'm a teacher by nature. But with my family legacy, with my grandfather, father, and my uncle and then the rest of my family, that just made the work I do so much more fulfilling. I'm looking at my grandfather's picture right here on the wall we have and that's my motivation every day. It's thrilling to surprise my family, that my quiet, very studious, type A personality has been actually the perfect fit for this role I have as the president of this agency."

When she was new to the world of business, Jacquie found support and community with the WBOC which has been very helpful to her in her business journey.

"A friend invited me to an event. We just met and she said 'I think you should come.' I don't say no to any of my first commitments. I said yes to everything when I first came into the business. Take every meeting. Go to every event. Go to every networking opportunity. Read every single thing you can about insurance. So of course I said yes to this friend. I hadn't done any real 'what's your tagline?' work or 'give your elevator pitch' and they asked us to do that the first day. They do it every meeting, but it was my first time. And I have to think in 30 seconds what is our tagline and what I do. That was the first understanding of what I do."

She emphasizes that a major benefit to her involvement with the WBOC is how it allows her to network and connect with other business women in the area.

"It's networking and meeting other people. And then hearing their stories of success, of struggle, of challenge and how they overcome it. I am inspired every single time I sit at one of those meetings... I love networking. I'm an obvious people-person. But the WBOC has been vital to my development. I came here fresh and new. I had zero business experience. And so, three years later, I can only credit my mentors and people I've met at networking events and the WBOC."

Connecting with people – whether it's with clients or with fellow business owners – is what makes Jacquie's work so rewarding. Being able to combine her natural people-person skills with everything she had learned about the insurance industry has allowed her to find fulfillment in an unexpected career change.

"From the good, the bad, the ugly, it's the clients that make this." she said, "I just had a meeting with someone from the WBOC actually and I said the hardest part of my day is not answering the phone because I know that's the buzz I want. I want to get on the phone and talk to the people. But that's the most rewarding part. You're serving clients and you're doing it well, and when you make a mistake you are right on top of it and acknowledging that. That's building the trust that we have and continuing the legacy that my grandfather and father and uncle built. The good will they have with our client base is just extraordinary. I'm very lucky." SWM

#### 10 **PAST EVENTS**

#### Future is Bright for United Way

United Way of Central New York celebrated its Annual Gala (presented by IBEW Local 43) with hundreds of community supporters at the Landmark Theatre on November 4, 2023. The dress code "black tie optional, pop of color encouraged" brought to life the gala theme of "The Future is Bright."















#### Crossett honored by Key4Women

KeyBank's Key4Women Syracuse Chapter held its annual awards breakfast in October. Susan Crossett, president and CEO of CPS Recruitment, a certified Women Owned Business, was the keynote speaker and recipient of the 2023 Key4Women Achieve Award. She shared stories from her career journey as an entrepreneur, board director, corporate executive, advocate, change management strategist and high-performance motivator.





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## Feeding the future of CNY

SHEILA DION FOUNDED ERIN'S ANGELS Cheryl Abrams

# SHEILA DION

hen Sheila Dion heard about the death of Erin Maxwell, she, like so many others, mourned the way the 11-year-old girl had lost her life. But moreover, Sheila lamented how Erin had been forced to live her life.

The year was 2008. According to multiple reports, Erin died Aug. 29, having been raped and strangled in her Palermo, NY, home. Her stepbrother was charged with her murder.

#### Mom and lunch lady

Sheila had taken a job that allowed her to be home when her three young children returned from classes each day. She served as a "lunch lady" in a school cafeteria in Phoenix, part of the Oswego County School District. Although she didn't know Erin, who attended Oswego County schools, Sheila had read the media articles that described the deplorable conditions in the Maxwell home. She'd also heard stories by reporters and from colleagues at school about Erin's not having enough food to eat at home.

While Erin's death was heartbreaking, Sheila fixated on the student's lack of plentiful, nutritious nourishment outside of school. She felt in her gut that she had to do something beyond what's become the

requisite "thoughts and prayers." She knew she had to act in a way that not merely honored Erin's memory but addressed the predicament many schoolchildren face day in and day out: food insecurity.

#### Founder of Erin's Angels

In 2017, Sheila became the founder and executive director of *Erin's Angels*, a grassroots non-profit organization to help students who leave school daily and over weekends and breaks without having enough healthy foods to consume at home.

"I wanted to create a way to turn Erin's tragic death into transformative action on behalf of so many other students who, like her, have gone and continue to go hungry," says Sheila. Under her leadership, *Erin's Angels* has grown into a well-respected and effective organization, with a team of dedicated volunteers and board of directors.

Sheila had heard stories of Erin having to rummage through trash to find food to eat. As the mother of three children, she couldn't fathom what it was like to not provide them with the basics of nutrition to sustain their growth and development. "The thought of this situation, especially for so many children, continues to break my heart," she says.

#### Food insecurity: Treating a symptom

Food insecurity is a widespread reality in the United States — and in our own Central New York communities. The United States Department of Agriculture defines food insecurity as the lack of access, at times, to enough food for an active, healthy life. Now considered a critical public health issue, food insecurity affects more than 34 million people, including 9 million children, according to *Feeding America*, a nationwide network of food banks, food pantries and local meal programs.

In June 2023, Syracuse.com reported that Oswego County has among the highest percentage in New York state having children with food insecurity, coming in at number <u>seven statewide with 18.9%</u> of its students considered food insecure.

*"Erin's Angels* is treating a symptom, not solving a problem," says Sheila, pointing to what Feeding America says are the major underlying causes of food insecurity: poverty, unemployment, low income; lack of affordable housing; chronic health conditions or lack of access to healthcare; and systemic racism and racial discrimination.

Although the organization Sheila founded treats merely, as she says, the symptoms of food insecurity, *Erin's Angels* activists have created an impressive array of programs for students in Phoenix that have expanded into West Genesee district schools. Examples of solutions include backpack programs and outreach programs, as well as those involving summer meals and ice cream.

Backpacks provide students with nourishment for the weekends when students aren't in school. Discretely distributed, each bag contains two kid-friendly breakfast items, two lunch items and two snacks, such as oatmeal, apple sauce, granola bars, mac and cheese, and ramen noodles. Most students love summer, but for food insecure students, this time of year can mean increased hunger. To address this dilemma, *Erin's Angels* has partnered with the United Way of Central New York's "Ride United," an innovative program that utilizes Door Dash to ensure vulnerable children have access to nutritious meals and snacks while school is out of session. Every Friday "dashers" pick up weekend food bags and deliver them directly to families who have opted into the program.

And what child doesn't love ice cream? *The Ice Cream program*, started by a SUNY Oswego Wellness Management Student, Kara Brown, provides a sweet frozen treat for participants during the school year. These and many other programs help address food insecurity in children in unique and creative ways.

#### Feeding the future of CNY

Sheila's inspiring vision led her to include in the organization's title "CNY." As she explains, *Erin's Angels* aspires to help schoolchildren in districts throughout the Central New York region. "Our description states, 'FEEDING the FUTURE of CNY," she proudly points out.

To achieve this goal, Sheila has been working closely with the *Erin's Angels* board of directors to create a long-term strategy for the organization. The treasurer of *Erin's Angels*, Barb Stone, a highly regarded entrepreneur and career/life

coach, explains that Sheila's do-good mission needs to move forward with succession planning and ongoing sustainability.

Recently, *Erin's Angels* and the *Upstate Foundation* became partners into perpetuity, ensuring that the important mission of *Erin's Angels* will serve generations of schoolchildren in the future through an endowment. This lifelong fund is invested permanently through the *Upstate Foundation* to generate market earnings that can be spent in support of the endowment's purpose.

G the FUTURE of

GIVE LOCA

*"The Upstate Foundation* is pleased to partner with *Erin's Angels,"* said development director Carolyn Hendrickson. *"Included in our fourfold mission is community and health and well-being. We look forward to growing this endowment to ensure the financial resources to fight childhood food insecurity will always be available for this organization."* 

With a strong, focused board and the establishment of the endowment fund, Sheila can begin to re-focus on her life and future plans. A Baldwinsville resident, Sheila holds an associate degree from Holyoke Community College in Massachusetts and has completed additional training and certifications from Leadership Oswego County and Dale Carnegie. Throughout her career, she has been recognized for her leadership and contributions to the community with numerous awards and honors, including *The Central New York Business Journal's* Non-Profit Award for Board Leadership; the Phoenix Central School District "Making a Difference Award"; and recognition by *Newschannel9* as one of Central New York's "Most Remarkable Women."

In addition to her work with *Erin's Angels* and her firm, Small Town Girl Marketing, Sheila is a passionate advocate for food insecurity and regularly speaks at events to raise awareness and inspire action. swm

#### PAST EVENTS

#### Go Red For Women 2023

Nearly 400 people decked out from head to toe in red gathered Tuesday at the Oncenter for Syracuse's annual Go Red for Women Luncheon to raise awareness and help fund the fight against heart disease and stroke, which claim the lives of more women than all forms of cancer combined. The event raised more than \$450,000. Photo credit: Edges Photography







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Susan Crossett, CEO

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#### Hope & Heels

The Hope & Heels Fashion Show and Brunch to raise ovarian cancer awareness and education across the community was held at the Syracuse Marriott Downtown on Nov. 12. The event featured shopping from local vendors and artists, raffles, a silent auction, cocktails, brunch and silent auction, cocktails, brunch and beautiful spring fashions modeled by community leaders and cancer survivors. All funds raised benefit Hope for Heather, a 501c3 non profit in memory of Heather Weeks. Hope for Heather's mission is to raise money for ovarian cancer research, promote awareness and education and patient support.

Photo credit: Nancy Miller and Rick Policastri

































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#### Oh yeah it's Ladies Night

Welch & Co. Jewelers hosted a Ladies Night on Nov. 19 for all ladies who are wishing and dreaming for that special moment. Ladies were encouraged to come in and make their wish list while enjoying some light refreshments. They then provided their partner's contact information so they could be notified what is on the wishlist.

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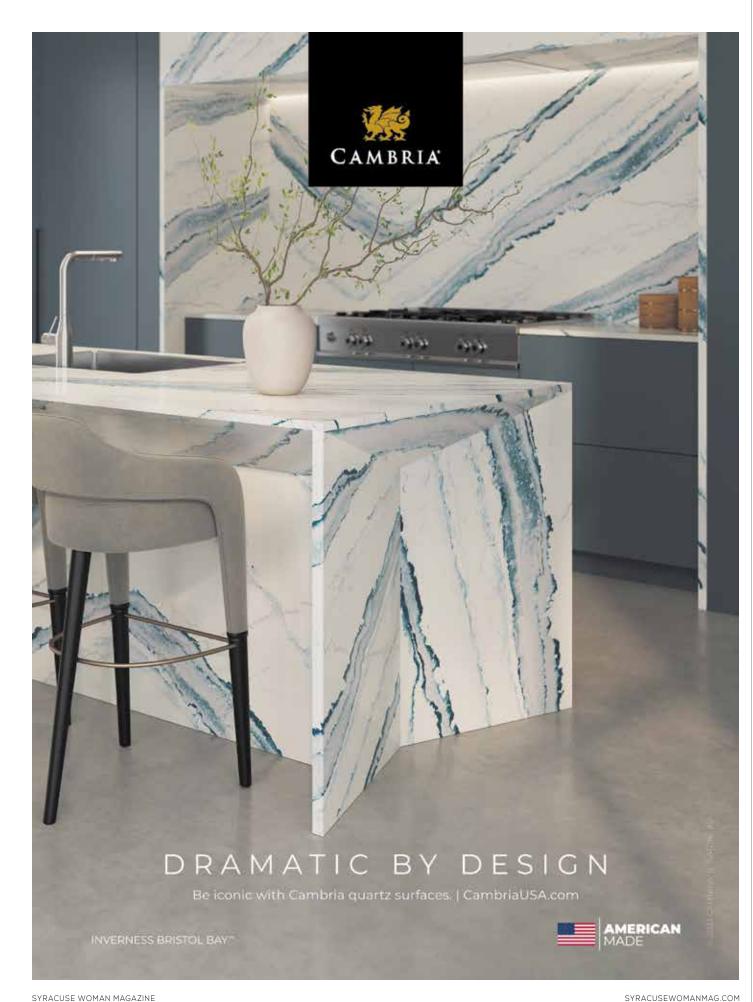




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# **LEGACY** GWEN WEBBER-MCLEOD

My parents decided when they had four girls that they were going to teach us to take the world by storm. They saw educating us — teaching us about philanthropy and community service as a way to fight racism and sexism.

I believe that the eye is the limit and I want to be known as a woman whose every step, every breath, left a gentle impression of good in the world. I am already being remembered the way I want to be. This is evidence my legacy is in action.

With strategic intent, I have designated my legacy gift to the Black Equity & Excellence Fund to ensure that the region remains an equitable place for my people. I hope my gift can be leveraged to give organizations serving Black children the opportunity to expose them to people, places and things beyond what could be limiting for them.



Read more of Gwen's story at cnycf.org/webbermcleod



CENTRAL NEW YORK COMMUNITY FOUNDATION 315.422.9538 | CNYCF.ORG

Gwen Webber-McLeod pays homage to Harriet Tubman

outside the NYS Equal Rights Heritage Center & Auburn NY Visitor Center. The bronze statue, sculpted by Brian P. Hanlon, is accompanied by a plaque featuring a quote from Harriet Tubman at an 1896 suffrage convention that reads: "I was the conductor of the Underground Railroad for eight years, and I can say what most

conductors can't say - I never ran my train off the track

and I never lost a passenger."

# EVELYN & CHINO INGRAM Bringing The Castle to life

he redevelopment of an historic church on the southside of Syracuse really started out as a love story. Although they were acquaintances from years ago, Evelyn and Chino Ingram reconnected seven years ago and formed a bond that is in the process of providing new life to the South Presbyterian Church at the corner of South Salina and Colvin streets.

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"We were drawn to each other, had a lot of the same value systems, a lot of the same thought processes and vision for life," said Evelyn of her romance with Chino. "We met each other at a point where we were both whole as a person ... it wasn't like he was filling voids or I was filling voids."

Fairly quickly the two began to discuss marriage, and as Evelyn was approaching her 50th birthday, they hatched an idea: A big birthday party where the surprise at the end would be a wedding ceremony.

Continued on page 24

#### Evelyn & Chino Ingram from page 23

"We made a pact, that if we're going to do this, we've got to really do it all the way out ... we didn't tell anyone, and I mean anyone." said Chino, who works as the general manager of the Mr. Shop men's clothing store at Turning Stone Casino. They even made sure to invite three ministers to the party to ensure that if two of them didn't come, they would still have someone there to perform the ceremony.

As their guests watched a video thanking them for participating in the party, Evelyn and Chino snuck away to change into a wedding dress and tuxedo. It was then that they pulled their families aside. Evelyn had previously told her son, Austin, that if she got married to Chino someday, she would like him to walk her down the aisle. So she looked at Austin and told him the time had arrived and gave him a tuxedo to change into. He looked at her wide eyed and said "Now?" "Right now," she replied.

As word spread through the party, the stunned guests were rushed down a set of stairs to an event space that was set up for the wedding. Austin escorted Evelyn down the aisle to Chino, and the rest is history.

Perhaps the biggest challenge – besides keeping the secret – was finding the right venue for the event.

"When we were looking for a venue to have this birthday-slash-wedding event, we couldn't find anything around here," said Chino. "That's kind of what led us to The Castle."

#### The Castle

The venue they finally selected for the party was a church in Canastota that a couple had purchased and renovated as an event space. The Ingrams are involved in their church and wanted to have a great space for a party that also had a religious feel for the wedding. The repurposed church was a good fit.

Fast forward a few months, and the newlyweds were on the couch watching a news report about South Presbyterian Church on Salina Street being put up for sale. "And we said, that's it. That's what we're going to do," Chino said. "And we've been digging and crawling and scratching and doing everything we can to make it happen."

South Presbyterian was built between 1901 and 1906. It was an active parish until 2008, when the small congregation could no longer support the building's costs. It was then purchased by a man from California who harvested the Tiffany stained glass windows. It had another short-lived period as a religious facility before the Syracuse Land Bank acquired the property in 2015. It was put on the National Register of Historic Places in 2017.

Awaiting its new life, the hulking stone structure is in significant disrepair. Most of the windows remain boarded up and there has been some water damage as the building has been left dormant for nearly a decade.

But as the Ingrams walk through the 30,000 square-foot building, broken glass crunching under their feet, they have a vision of South Presbyterian as The Castle – a facility that will provide the neighborhood and the city with an elegant social club, a sophisticated event space and a job training facility where young people in the city can learn the skills they need to find meaningful work. They envision the full-size pipe organ in the front of the sanctuary as a visual marvel that will add the wow factor to weddings, parties and live music events. They see a cornerstone for a renaissance on Syracuse's south side – an attraction people will want to visit. A destination.

The building will feature three separate enterprises. A social club, The Castle 603, will feature light fare and cocktails in an elegant speakeasy-type lounge. The event space for weddings and large gatherings will be in the main sanctuary of the church. And the expansive basement will host the Ingram Castle Foundation, a 501c3 not-for-profit which will provide job training and host community events like job fairs,

Continued on page 26

"Part of our vision for this is that we really feel that God kind of gave us this vision and God is helping guide us through the process."—Evelyn Ingram 25

#### Evelyn & Chino Ingram from page 25

health education events and other networking and educational opportunities for the residents of the neighborhood.

"We're going to turn what some people consider an eyesore into a destination. The destination is going to transcend to so many different generations, way past us. I grew up a couple doors down from The Castle – but we feel that once you get to a certain point in life, it's time to give to where you've come from," Chino said.

"We want to show the neighborhood, we want to show the businesses, you know – if you're thinking about putting a business somewhere, think about the southside, think about Salina Street. Think about being around The Castle – because we want to kick off businesses coming in, houses looking better, families getting together...We have that satisfying thought of everyone saying at some point, 'Look at it now, and it all started with the Castle.'

"There are a lot of jobs that are available and going to be available, but people need to be trained for these positions," Evelyn added. "Our goal is for the Ingram Castle Foundation to be the focal point for that training."

#### A labor of love

Both Chino, at Mr. Shop, and Evelyn, director of marketing and communications at Wegmans, have big full-time jobs that require the majority of their days. There are a lot of early meetings and a lot of late meetings to get The Castle from the vision stage to reality, but although the process of fundraising, planning, working with architects and getting approvals is long and daunting, their excitement for the finished product is their motivation. They also see it as a higher calling.

"Part of our vision for this is that we really feel that God kind of gave us this vision and God is helping guide us through the process," Evelyn said. "A lot of people are rooting for us and cheering for us as we embark on this venture ... We just feel there's no choice, we have to make it happen. The community needs this."

When they purchased the Castle from the Syracuse Land Bank, it was estimated that rehabilitating the building would cost in the neighborhood of \$7 million. Those estimates have risen to \$15 million of which the Ingrams have secured several million through grants, tax credits, contributions and their own personal investments.

Both admit that when they purchased The Castle three years ago, they weren't fully aware of the scope of the project and the challenges that lay ahead in financing and planning such a unique project. But they remain undaunted in their pursuit of completing the project.

When they talk to people in the neighborhood, they are always asked about when they're breaking ground, when they're going to open and they have to remind their well-wishers that converting a 120-year-old church into the sophisticated and elegant facility they envision is an endurance race, not a sprint.

"We want to give this to the community and the Syracuse community, but you have to go through the process," Chino said. "We just know that the process is going to make us appreciate it that much more."

Currently, The Castle is in the architectural design phase, and the Ingrams are working with a local architecture firm, InArchitects. This phase is expected to take about six months, and in the meantime, they are working with government agencies to ensure the changes they are proposing for the historic building will be met with approval.

"So far, based on the preliminary conversations we've had with the historic preservation office, they love our plans for the building and are willing to work with us to help us achieve our vision," Evelyn said. "People want to see this building happen. They want to see the project happen. They've really been working with us."

### "We're going to turn what some people consider an eyesore into a destination."—Chino Ingram

#### A Royal Met Gala

On New Year's Eve, the Ingrams will host a fund-raiser for The Ingram Castle Foundation entitled A Royal Met Gala, in which they hope to introduce the community to the flavor of what they envision taking place at The Castle on a regular basis. Participants are encouraged to come in their classiest Met-inspired formal wear to enjoy an evening of fine appetizers, curated cocktails and headlined by Trina Braxton, one of the stars of the Braxton Family Values show on the We Network and the sister of famed R&B musician Toni Braxton.

By the time party-goers leave, they will have an idea of what the Ingrams envision for The Castle, including what they refer to as The Castle Way.

The Castle Way is "an experience of customer service that they may not have experienced at other venues" from the moment they step out of their car to the moment they leave, Chino said. He envisions the high-end clubs in Las Vegas or Los Angeles. "We want to establish the type of reputation that when celebrities come to Syracuse, they know about The Castle."

But The Castle Way is also about bringing people together – people from all over the area and from all backgrounds. Through their professional lives, their church community, their neighborhood and their upbringing, the Ingrams have been blessed to know people from all walks of life. "We want to be a staple in the community and be a staple in bringing people together," Chino said.

As they continue down the path toward bringing The Castle to reality, Evelyn looks back on one of her experiences from the beginning of the process as one of her most satisfying moments. Shortly after they purchased the property, in the midst of the pandemic, they hosted a Zoom meeting for residents of the neighborhood where they shared their vision for The Castle. In particular, she focused on one young African American male on the Zoom, and how wide-eyed and excited he was to see this project come to his neighborhood. She hopes that the Ingrams – and The Castle – will help provide an example for residents to follow their passions. "Just recognizing the impact this will have on our youth and the influence it will have on them to recognize that you can realize your vision," she said. "You can do those things that you dreamed of." SWM



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## Savoring the spirit

A HEARTWARMING GUIDE TO HOLIDAY COOKING AND ENTERTAINING Chef Eric Rose

s the winter chill settles in and the scent of cinnamon and spices fills the air, the holiday season beckons us to come together with loved ones, celebrating the joy of love, family, and friendship. As we embark on this festive journey, the kitchen becomes the heart of our homes, a place where the magic of the season is woven into the very fabric of our traditions. As an award-winning chef and devoted health and wellness coach, I invite you to savor the true spirit of the holidays by embracing a stress-free approach to cooking and entertaining. Here are additional tips to complement those already shared.

#### Embrace the convenience of grocery delivery services

In the hustle and bustle of the holiday season, time is a precious commodity. Simplify your life by utilizing grocery delivery services. This not only saves you the hassle of navigating crowded stores but also allows you to spend more quality time with your loved ones. With a few clicks, you can have fresh, high-quality ingredients delivered to your doorstep, ensuring a seamless and stress-free holiday meal preparation.

#### Cultivate the joyful atmosphere of the season

Let the warmth of the holidays infuse your kitchen with a sense of joy and anticipation. Play your favorite festive tunes, light some scented candles, and involve your family in decorating the kitchen space. Creating a cozy and inviting environment enhances the overall experience of holiday cooking and fosters a deeper connection with the traditions that make this season so special.

#### Choose recipes with a story

Food has the power to evoke emotions and memories. Select recipes that have a personal connection or hold sentimental value. Perhaps it's a dish passed down through generations or a special treat that has become a holiday tradition. Sharing these stories with your family and friends adds an extra layer of meaning to the meal, creating a sense of continuity and connection.

#### Host a recipe exchange

Extend the spirit of sharing beyond the dinner table by hosting a recipe exchange with friends and family. Encourage each guest to bring their favorite holiday recipe, along with its backstory. This not only introduces new and exciting flavors to your celebration but also strengthens the bonds of community as everyone shares a piece of their culinary heritage.

#### Prioritize mindful eating

Amidst the festive indulgence, it's essential to practice mindful eating. Encourage your loved ones to savor each bite, appreciating the flavors and textures of the carefully crafted dishes. Eating mindfully not only enhances the culinary experience but also promotes gratitude for the abundance of love and warmth that surrounds the holiday table.

#### Incorporate symbolic ingredients

Consider incorporating symbolic ingredients that carry special significance for you and your family. Whether it's a particular spice that reminds you of cherished moments or a seasonal produce item that holds

#### Extend the celebration beyond the table

The holiday spirit isn't confined to the kitchen or dining room. Plan activities that extend the celebration beyond the table, such as a family movie night, game evening, or a leisurely stroll to enjoy the festive lights in your neighborhood. Building these moments of connection and joy into your holiday traditions ensures a well-rounded and memorable experience for everyone.

sentimental value, infusing these elements into your recipes adds a layer

#### Accept help gracefully

If your guests offer to bring something or even come a little early to set up — let them! As long as you have your plan in place, they can jump in and lend a hand. Allowing others to contribute not only saves you time but also creates a collaborative and communal atmosphere. It frees up mental space for you to handle other to-dos, ensuring that the holiday gathering is a shared effort and joy for all.

#### Prioritize your personal well-being

In the midst of the holiday hustle, it's easy to neglect your own wellbeing. Schedule moments of self-care, whether it's a brisk walk, a quiet cup of tea, or a few minutes of deep breathing. These small pauses will recharge your energy and allow you to approach your hosting duties with a refreshed mindset.

#### Create a realistic timeline

Develop a realistic timeline for your holiday preparations. Break down tasks into manageable steps and allocate specific times for each. This not only ensures that everything is ready on time but also prevents the overwhelming feeling of last-minute chaos. Stick to your schedule, and remember that not everything needs to be perfect — the joy lies in the process and the shared moments.

#### **Delegate responsibilities**

You don't have to carry the burden of holiday preparations alone. Delegate tasks to family members or friends. Whether it's setting the table, arranging decorations, or helping with simple meal prep, involving others not only lightens your load but also fosters a sense of togetherness.

#### Stay hydrated and nourished

Amidst the whirlwind of activities, it's crucial to stay hydrated and nourished. Dehydration and skipping meals can contribute to stress and fatigue. Keep a water bottle handy and have nutritious snacks available while you prepare meals. Ensuring that you maintain your personal health will enhance your ability to enjoy the festivities and create lasting memories with your loved ones.

As we immerse ourselves in the magic of the season, let the heart of your home, the kitchen, be a place where love, laughter, and cherished memories come to life. By incorporating convenience, fostering a joyful atmosphere, choosing recipes with a story, hosting a recipe exchange, practicing mindful eating, incorporating symbolic ingredients, extending the celebration beyond the table, accepting help gracefully, prioritizing personal well-being, creating a realistic timeline, delegating responsibilities, and staying hydrated and nourished, you'll create a holiday experience that goes beyond the culinary delights — a true celebration of the spirit of togetherness and the joy of the season. Here's to a holiday filled with love, warmth, and delicious moments shared with those who matter most.SWM

Eric Rose is an award-winning chef and renowned health and wellness coach.

#### THE PERFECT SHRIMP COCKTAIL

Serves: 5-10 By Eric Rose

#### INGREDIENTS

Shrimp2 qt Water1 oz Pickling spice2 Tbsp Kosher salt2 Lemons sliced2 Sprigs of Thyme1 Bay leaf2 ½ pounds of Jumbo Shrimp (peeled and deveined)

#### **COCKTAIL SAUCE**

2 c Ketchup2 Tbsp Lemon juice3 Tbsp Horseradish2 Tbsp Worcestershire2 tsp Hot sauce (your favorite)½ tsp Salt½ tsp Black pepper

#### DIRECTIONS

- 1. Prepare water on stove. Bring all ingredients to a rolling boil for about 10 minutes.
- 2. Add shrimp to water and stir. Leave on heat for about two minutes then turn off heat, cover pot and let sit 4-5 minutes or until shrimp are opaque and pink.
- 3. Strain and chill on sheet pans. Do not rinse them. You will rinse off the brine and flavor.
- 4. Add all ingredients for the cocktail sauce mix well and chill. This can be done well in advanced.
- 5. Plate shrimp in individually dish or platter and serve with cocktail sauce and fresh lemons wedges.

#### HOLIDAY BAKED BRIE

Serves: 5-10

#### By Eric Rose INGREDIENTS

1 Camembert wheel (medium 4 inch)

- 1/2 c Cranberry preserve (use your favorite)
- <sup>1</sup>/₃ c Mixed fruit, nut seed, blend (use your favorite) Crostini or Seasonal Crackers

#### DIRECTIONS

- 1. Preheat oven to 375°F.
- 2. Spray and oven safe dish with cooking spray.
- 3. Place wheel on dish and spread fruit preserve over the top and then top preserve with nut or seed mixture.

4. Bake for about 15-20 min.

5. Serve with crostini or seasonal crackers for a wonderful treat.





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## A season of joy, hope, light and stress...

Donna Knapp

love holidays! I enjoy the opportunities holidays present to spend time with family and friends, gather for a shared meal or simply relax. Most of us can recall fond memories of traditions, activities, or stories from years past from whichever holidays we celebrated. Over the years, I have attempted to include decorations for different holidays throughout the year. Sometimes it is something as simple has a seasonal napkin, and others, full on room decorations. These physical representations remind me to reflect on the meaning of each holiday.

However, the holidays often bring stress. Added obligations to attend events or activities can be overwhelming. Expectations around gift giving, spending, and entertaining are tiring and often hard to achieve. The pressure to just do more, sigh. Despite the stress, there is often joy and excitement that tempers the added responsibilities.

For others, the "holidays" might not be a joyous season. The lack of family or close friends can make holidays a lonely time of year. Mental health concerns and substance misuse can contribute to an already chaotic season and the short daylight hours can contribute to Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD), a form of depression. The coming weeks can elicit many emotions. At Prevention Network, throughout all we do, we emphasize the need for self-care and wellness. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) states that "Wellness has a personal meaning for each individual, so it can be defined in many ways. In general, wellness refers to overall well-being." We each need to think about how we are going to address our own, personal wellbeing during the upcoming holidays.

SAMHSA's *Eight Dimensions of Wellness* suggests that we have eight areas we need to pay attention to achieve overall wellbeing. These include our individual emotional, spiritual, intellectual, physical, environmental, financial, occupational, and social dimensions. It is extremely easy to have overflowing buckets in the social and emotional dimensions during the holidays, creating a deficit in our physical and/or financial areas. These deficits, and sometimes abundances, can be triggering for some individuals.

So how do we practice self-care in a season of giving and sharing? The National Association of Mental Illness (NAMI) offers the following suggestions for holiday self-care.



- Know and respect your limits. How many commitments do you feel comfortable making, events you think you can comfortably attend and drinks you feel you should enjoy? Do you feel up to hosting and cooking or do you need to share that responsibility?
- Set reasonable expectations. What is your budget for spending and activities? Plan to avoid residual stress in the new year from overspending.
- Avoid known triggers. Do certain activities or traditions trigger sad memories or create opportunities to overindulge? Give yourself grace to skip certain events. If you are gifting to others, avoid giving alcohol and lottery tickets. These items, although thoughtful and fun, can be triggering to someone in recovery from a substance use or gambling disorder.
- Find ways to give back. "Giving back, or helping others out around the holidays, is an excellent way to make a positive contribution and provide a sense of purpose and meaning." At Prevention Network, we support the annual Angel Stocking project which provides basic needs and supplies to individuals in treatment and recovery from a substance use disorder.

- **Decorate for comfort.** Decorating should not create stress. All the trimmings bring you joy? Awesome! The thought of the additional work to decorate overwhelms you? That is ok too!
- Be extra giving to yourself. Do something for you! I save vacation time each year and take the week before Christmas off. This has become my time when the house is quiet before all our family activities begin.



I spend time reading, baking, and relaxing. What do you plan to do for yourself?

Take care and may the coming weeks be all you are hoping they will be. SWM

Donna Knapp is the executive director at Prevention Network In Syracuse.



## Entrepreneur who loves giving back

Kate Hanzalik

n 2011, Stephanie Vavonese called home an orphanage in India, where she taught during the day and slept every night on plywood, very slowly lulled to sleep by the sound of rats rasping their nails into the rafters. This experience was part of a trip around the world to 31 countries with her best friend, a trip that led her to an expanse of opportunities to put her privilege to work. "We made a commitment to each other: before we go to grad school, before we buy a house, before we have kids, let's quit our jobs and go around the world for a year. We didn't want to be completely self-absorbed. We wanted to volunteer for at least two months of that time," said the 40-year-old Vavonese, who started SMV Recruiting seven years ago, and now has a national reach.

Vavonese is altruistic and entrepreneurial. She loves Syracuse and believes in its bright future. Seeing the living conditions, she felt compelled to do something. She reached out to friends and family in Syracuse. "We raised over \$5,000 for this orphanage. We built them a kitchen, we got them a refrigerator, we had cubbies built for every single kid, we got them dressers, so they had a place for their clothes. We took every kid on their own personal shopping spree, so they owned something of their own. We ended up painting the entire school and got them new chalkboards. It was an amazing experience. We went back the next year and brought them computers from our work."

#### **Family Values**

"When I think about volunteering, I think about my grandmother. Grandmother Vavonese as I call her, she volunteered. [In her time,] she was one of the longest standing volunteers at St. Joseph's. She would volunteer multiple times a week. She did that for over 20 years . . . At Christmas time, [we] would make gifts [for people living at St. Joseph's]. We'd go and drop them off. Once you start giving back, it gives you a different perspective and appreciation. So it's become part of me." Today, she volunteers for ARISE and Ski, and she loves to donate. She created a donor-advised fund through the Upstate Foundation, sponsors events, donates to local charities, and "My goals is to put a quarter of a million back into our community." Yet she comes from humble beginnings. The son of Italian immigrants, her grandfather, Frank Vavonese, didn't have much growing up. After WWII, he worked at Big M Supermarket in Sedgwick, and later bought it, then opened another Big M in Bridgeport, setting an example for his family.

Their sons later opened their own law practices in Syracuse. "My grandparents were really proud of what they did. And I was like, alright, if they can do it, I can."

Education's key to her success. She's the 19th person in her family to graduate from CBA. She went to American University in Washington, D.C., assumed she'd eventually go to law school and become a lawyer just like her dad and uncle, but she changed her mind and went into recruiting. After 14 years in D.C., Vavonese moved home and continued to work in the industry, then the best thing happened: she got fired. "It was like the greatest blessing . . . I wanted to leave, I couldn't leave. I felt like I had golden handcuffs." The very next day, she started SMV Recruiting. "I put a website together. . . I didn't want another boss. I wanted to be my own boss. I was like, what's the worst that's going to happen? I could fail."

But she didn't fail. She signed up for the CSTEP program where she collected unemployment as she worked with a mentor from Onondaga Community College to build her business. She leveraged the skills she learned over the years, opened an office at Commonspace and networked with other women in business. Ironically the woman who walked her out the door at her last job is now a million-dollar client. "I believe everything happens for a reason... Because of her, I got into the manufacturing industry, and it is now our specialty. It's just amazing... I can't imagine a better place [than Syracuse] to start my own company. I love being a big fish in a small pond."

Vavonese's excited about the future. "We're looking at a new place [at Commonspace] that's bigger and has high ambitions to add five headcounts in 2024." I really want to grow a company, but I want to make sure I am a great leader encouraging people to become their best self."

If you want to start your own business, she says don't spend more than your means, but realize sometimes you need to spend money to make money. Join organizations like Women's United and Leadership Greater Syracuse. "Really get involved in the community. Even if you don't know anyone, just show up at the events. They're really welcoming."

More than anything, she's grateful. "I look around the community, and I'm like, why me? Why am I getting this and not someone else? ... It's walks of life, where you came from, your background, and so I do care a lot about really trying to leave a positive impact." SWM

For more information about Stephanie Vavonese and SMV Recruiting, visit smvrecruiting.com



# REBECCA LERMAN





## Time, talent and treasures

GIVING BACK TO THE COMMUNITY BOTH PERSONALLY AND PROFESSIONALLY Janelle Davis

ccording to foundationsource.com the three pillars of giving are time, talent, and treasures. This is the type of lifestyle Rebecca Lerman has been living her whole life. "Helping the community in any way you can is extremely important to me," she says.

Rebecca's philanthropic nature emanates from her experience growing up. "I'm from a small town in Kentucky where everybody knew my family because they gave back to the community in many different ways," she says. She reminisces about one specific time her mother gave back. "One of our neighbors had premature twins. Back then they didn't have shops that sold baby clothes that small. My mother, being a seamstress, made outfits for them while they were in the hospital."

Rebecca's father was a contractor and also no stranger to helping those in need. He, along with a local lumber company, would custom build and donate caskets for families who couldn't afford them.

Before setting the same inspirational example to her son and daughter, Rebecca started her own journey of philanthropy. When she first moved to Syracuse in the 1980s, Rebecca became a Girl Scout leader which cultivated the joy she felt from giving back. The joy she felt led to a future of giving.

When she started having kids, additional opportunities opened up for her. Rebecca learned how to help her community, while also being able to spend time with her kids. "Whatever my son and daughter got involved with, is what I got involved with," she said.

It started when they were in preschool at the Jewish Community Center. Rebecca went from baking three-layer cakes for fundraisers to serving on the committee for their gala, and finally to being on their board of directors. As her children entered grade school, Rebecca spent four years as the Parent-Teacher Group (PTG) board of director treasurer.



"As my kids have gotten older, they've started thinking outside the box." Rebecca has nurtured their awareness of philanthropy by continuing to set a positive example for them.

Her daughter plays softball at SUNY Cortland. Many of her teammates live out of state. The softball season makes it challenging for athletes to go home to visit their families, especially during holidays. Rebecca and her daughter invited the softball family, coaches and bus drivers included, for a sit-down dinner of 30 people for Easter Sunday. "It gave the team that holiday family feeling for the holiday," Rebecca says.

In addition to her family as an inspiration to give back, Rebecca explained that her community and Mother Earth are also inspirations.

She has translated her passion and talent for nature to help and educate others. An interest that also came from her mother.

"Growing up, we had a farm and gardens. My mother had a passion for flowers. It didn't mean as much to me as a kid, but as I got older I started to appreciate it," Rebecca said. "It was a very special time for me when I would spend time with my mother working in her flower gardens. The experience gave me the same passion and love of flowers."

While on the PTG board, Rebecca helped start a grounds committee for the school district to get the students involved. She shares how the students enjoyed getting their hands dirty planting and learning about flowers. This was beneficial because some kids had zero knowledge of planting, and some didn't spend much time outside. Getting the students involved and celebrating Earth Day was important to Rebecca.

At home, Rebecca has her own flourishing garden. It gives her great joy to donate something from her garden. "Whether it be for someone's birthday, if someone doesn't feel well, or as a holiday gift - to share Mother Earth with family, friends, and neighbors is so important to me," she explains.

Rebecca has offered her help in a variety of ways. Even during her 29-year career in office technology, Rebecca still found ways to volunteer including involvement in an annual golf outing that helped raise money for a major hospital in the area.

Her volunteering experience is flooded with years of giving back to companies big and small. To elaborate, she was on the auxiliary board at Crouse Hospital for seven years. She has also been a part of the American Heart Association's Go Red for Women for the last four years. Rebecca is also currently the Central New York Sales and Marketing Executives scholarship chairperson, where she helps advocate for students to be able to go to college. Rebecca has continued to help with the Central NY PCA since the eighties as social media chair and was recently elected vice president.

Rebecca is also proudly a part of a non-profit company in Syracuse that also gives back to the community. "I am blessed to be part of an organization with amazing leadership who helps patients in need," she says.

When asked what others can do if they want to donate their time, talent, or treasures, Rebecca offered some helpful advice, "Start with your community. It could be your church or temple. It could be what your kids are involved in. It could be a library. It could be the Salvation Army. I could go on and on. We have such an amazing group of nonprofits in Syracuse and they are always looking for volunteers." SWM

# KELLY QUINN SHETSKY

600600000

HOLIDAY/GIVING BACK EDITION

## **Remembering Regan through acts of kindness**

Alyssa Dearborn

hen Regan Elizabeth Shetsky was hit by a car at the age of three years old, her mother, Kelly Quinn Shetsky wanted to find a way to remember her daughter in a way that memorialized the young girl's fun and kind personality. Kelly found this mission in the creation of Regan's Acts of Kindness, a local nonprofit organization that aims to spread kindness in Regan's memory.

"Shortly after Regan was hit by a car and killed, a friend came up with the idea of Regan's Act of Kindness, playing off of the phrase 'random act of kindness." Kelly explained, "So that's what really got the ball rolling. It was actually established on her birthday. March 3, 2017 is the year we started it."

Now in its sixth year, the organization finds ways to spread hope and kindness throughout the community while inspiring individual community members to do the same. Regan's Acts of Kindness organizes annual ornament and book drives, but it also makes efforts to encourage people to spread small acts of kindness in their everyday lives.

"Regan loved Christmas." Kelly said when asked about the organization's activities, "She loved all things Christmas and did not understand why Christmas was not the entire winter. She thought that as soon as winter came, it meant that it was Christmas every day... Each year we collect more than a thousand ornaments and we give them to children at

St. Joseph's hospital, Upstate Golisano Children's Hospital, Upstate Cancer Center, McMahon Child Advocacy Center, Elmcrest Children's Center, and the Ronald McDonald House. So we do that through the month of December. Then in CENTRAL NEW February, we'll collect children's RONALD McDC books and we'll donate to those exact same organizations in March. What our goal is in the future is to build an interactive literacy garden called 'Regan's Reading Garden.' It would be an imaginative play space which would be centered around classic children's stories

like Peter Rabbit or Where the Wild Things are. So the ball is rolling. We've been fundraising for

that for a few years and we are hoping to accomplish our goal in the next couple of years. The next step is to determine where it'd be located."

Kelly describes a "Regan's act of kindness" as anything that helps to make someone else's day brighter.

"A Regan's act of kindness can be anything. It can be paying for the person behind you at the line in Dunkin Donuts-which is common-or leaving bubbles at area playgrounds. We also have a kindness challenge for school children to do. It's a 30-day calendar with a different kindness challenge each day. Things like open the door for someone, or compliment someone, or help your teacher with something. And schools get involved with that and teach

children kindness. So an act of kindness we consider anything that can be done to make someone's life a little bit better.

HOUSE

2012

We hear from people all the time on the receiving end of an act of kindness and they're overjoyed. They might just be having a bad day or need a little pick-me-up, and then someone buys their coffee for them and it really makes a big difference. So, our focus really is to inspire people to practice and spread kindness. And we do place emphasis on bringing children joy and teaching

children how to pay it forward by being empathetic and to have gratitude and love. That's really our focus."

Being able to turn a traumatic loss into action that inspires community-wide hope is not an easy feat. But the creation of Regan's Acts of Kindness combined with Kelly's strength not only helped the community. Kelly and her family also found hope and healing by creating the organization.

"One thing that's very common among

bereaved parents - which is apparently a club that I'm now in that no one ever wants to be in - is feeling like people are afraid to say your child's name, as if that's going to remind you that they're not here. But obviously we know that our child's not here any more. So we want people to say her name. We want people to remember her. We want her to live on and for her short life to have and impact. Doing these acts of kindness allows us that. It allows us the opportunity to spread the joy and kindness that she always did, and her happiness, and to bring smiles to faces. That's why we love doing it. It gives us something positive to focus on and it's having such a positive impact on the community.

"It's so important to say how grateful we are to the community," she added. The support that we've gotten the moment we lost Regan. My husband's a firefighter in Syracuse, so the firefighters rallied around us like a family. And I work at St. Joseph's Health and our school is Holy Cross in Dewitt and CBA. And all of those places have just been so supportive. And everytime we make a call publicly that we're collecting for a certain effort - like putting backpacks together for foster children and all of a sudden, we have a thousand dollars in two days - people just respond so amazingly. We really do appreciate it. We couldn't do what we do without the community's help."

It is important to remember other people's humanity, especially in divided and contentious times. The efforts that Kelly puts into spreading the message of Regan's Acts of Kindness is a reminder to the entire community that kindness can go a long way.

"I feel like right now more than ever kindness is needed in the world." Kelly said. "Since the pandemic in particular, people seem to be angrier, short-tempered, and stressed. I think we're all experiencing that, when you're driving or when you're running errands. And our organization really implores people to practice kindness. Just do one little

thing each day to make someone else's day brighter, even if it's as simple as opening a door or letting someone merge in front of you when you're driving on 690, which none of us want to do. It's just those little things that make the biggest impact. I think I feel that now more than ever kindness needs to be something that we remind people of." SWM

Photos: Left page: Regan and Gavin from Regan's last Christmas. Left column: Regan's little brother Grayson delivering

ornaments to Golisano Children's Hospital in 2021. Lower left: Regan and Gavin on an ornament ride in North Pole NY. Top right column: Kelly, Mark, Regan and her big brother Gavin. Bottom right: Kelly Quinn Shetsky 2023.



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#### 44 **MOVERS & SHAKERS**

#### Promoted at Loretto



Tonyal Robinson

Tonyal Robinson, has been promoted to manager of academic education and will now lead the LPN Apprentice Program. She currently serves as the nurse educator for the Certified Nurse Aide (CNA) Training Program at Loretto. Tonyal began her career at Loretto 18 years ago and has demonstrated exemplary clinical skills, compassionate bedside manner, inter-professional collaboration, dedication to quality of care, and an exceptional work ethic.

Tonyal's versatile nursing experience across hospital systems, home care and primary care settings with a focus on

nursing education has enhanced her advanced critical thinking skills cultivated in diverse environments. Tonyal received her associates degree from St. Joseph's College of Nursing, baccalaureate of science and nursing from Grand Canyon University and master of science and nursing in nursing education from Grand Canyon University.

#### MOST announces new hires and promotions



Courtney Armbruster



Sierra Messina-Yauchzy



**Evelyn Fabian Crast** 

Courtney Armbruster joined the museum as the director of marketing and communications. She oversees all of the organization's direct communications and outreach with visitors and the community. Courtney has nearly 25 years of experience with marketing, design and writing in the engineering, architecture, and healthcare industries. She most recently served as the director of marketi-ng for a local nonprofit healthcare provider. Courtney has a bachelor's degree in communication from Cornell University. She resides in Cicero.

Sierra Messina-Yauchzy joined as the inclusions program coordinator for the museum's education department. She coordinates programs related to inclusion, diversity, and accessibility, with the goal of expanding the reach of the MOST to reach additional groups within the CNY community who have been historically underrepresented within STEM fields. She previously worked with a nonprofit where she taught 4th to 8th grade classes focused on coding, robotics, engineering, and music. Sierra is a graduate of Syracuse University, where she studied engineering and educational psychology. She lives in Syracuse.

Evelyn Fabian Crast was promoted to assistant director of finance, where she manages accounts payable, revenue recording and human resources responsibilities. She has worked at the MOST for 19 years, with the last six years in the finance department. Evelyn resides in Syracuse.



Samera Chapman was promoted to assistant director of education. She helps lead the design, development and execution of educational programs for learners of all ages who visit the museum. Her role includes hands-on educational opportunities for tens of thousands of local school children who participate in diverse activities at the museum annually. She has been at the MOST since 2022. She resides in Liverpool.

Samera Chapman

#### Solvay Bank announces new hire



Felecia Fox recently joined the Baldwinsville branch as an assistant branch manager. Felecia has four years of banking experience and worked as a retail banker III at Woodforest before joining Solvay Bank. Felecia is a graduate of Rome Free Academy and has previous volunteer experience at the Salvation Army.

Felecia Fox

#### Lupica joins Nephrology Associates



Nephrology Associates of Syracuse, P.C., has announced the expansion of its team. Maureen Lupica, has joined its kidney care specialist practice.

Maureen is a certified nurse practitioner with a master's degree in nursing from State University of New York Upstate Medical University and a minor certificate in nursing education. She has been practicing in nephrology for ten years and developed expertise for assessing, managing and treating various acute and chronic kidney conditions in the hospital, dialysis and

Maureen Lupica, NP

Maureen will see patients in the office and via telemedicine appointments. "We are extremely pleased to add Maureen to our provider team," said Anne E. Zaccheo, Nephrology Associates of Syracuse's Practice Director. "We are confident that she will provide superior patient care and education to patients and their families as they work to make lifestyle changes and take charge of their kidney health."

Providers from Nephrology Associates of Syracuse, P.C. currently see patients in their main office located at 1304 Buckley Road, Suite 200 in Syracuse and at satellite offices in Camillus, Fayetteville, Fulton and Vernon.

office settings.



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#### 46 UPCOMING EVENTS

#### **Every Tuesday in December Trivia Night**

What: Hosted by Syracuse Trivia. Free to play, prizes for 1st and 2nd place winning teams. Food and drink specials. Where: The Tasting Room

330 S Salina St, Syracuse, NY 13202 When: 7 to 9 p.m. Info: thetastingroomsyr.com

#### Sat., December 2 through Sat., December 16 **Festival of Trees and Light**

What: Experience a beloved CNY holiday tradition! Enjoy decorated trees and wreaths, seasonal items, an artisan market, and daily events. Where: The Everson Museum of Art



picuse

- 401 Harrison St, Syracuse, NY 13202
- When: Museum hours
- Info: www.everson.org

#### Fri., Sat. & Sun., December 8, 9 & 10 **Christmas Craft & Holiday Market**

- What: Shop from artisans and vendors selling gifts, décor, art, vintage, accessories, wine, goodies and more.
- Where: New York State Fairgrounds Horticulture Building 581 State Fair Blvd, Syracuse, NY 13209
- When: Friday: 5 p.m. to 9 p.m., Saturday: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Sunday: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- Adults: \$8. Ages 12 and under: free. Info:

#### Sat. December 9 **Snowmies Holiday Market**

- What: The Black Artist Collective hosts its third annual holiday market featuring crafters and creatives.
- Where: The Salt City Market 484 S Salina St, Syracuse, NY 13202 When: 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

#### Thurs., December 14 **Candlelight:**

#### A Tribute to Taylor Swift

What: Experience the music of Taylor Swift with a string quartet under the gentle glow of candlelight. Where: The Palace Theater

2384 James St, Syracuse, NY 13206 When: 9 p.m.

Info: Tickets: \$39 - \$64. www.feverup.com/m/133533.

#### Sat., December 16 Home for the Holidays Symphoria Concert

What: Bring family and friends to Symphoria's annual holiday concert. Where: The Oncenter 800 S State St, Syracuse, NY 13202 When: 1:30 p.m. Info: www.experiencesymphoria.org

## Symphor!a

RIBUTETO

#### Tues., December 26 The Great Salt City Blues Concert

- What: The area's best musicians will pay tribute to the music of Kim Simmonds & Savoy Brown, Ann Peebles, and Skip James.
- Where: Middle Ages Brewing Beer Hall 120 Wilkinson St., Syracuse, NY 13204
- When: 7:30 p.m.
- Info: \$30 advanced. \$40 at the door. Tickets available at www.ticketweb.com or in person at the Sound Garden and Middle Ages Brewing.

#### Sun., December 31

#### **Roaring 20s New Years Eve Party**

- What: Dress to impress and enjoy a lineup of bands, casino games, lobby entertainers, open bar and dinner.
- Where: Marriott Syracuse Downtown 100 E Onondaga St, Syracuse, NY 13202
- When: 7 p.m. to 12:30 a.m.
- Info: Tickets from \$215.78. Email lindsey.cole@marriott.com for general questions.

## Sun., December 31

#### **New Years Eve Bash**

- What: Enjoy a night of open bar, heavy hors d'oeuvres, desserts, a bubbly toast, dancing and revelry.
- Where: SKY Armory 351 S Clinton St, Syracuse, NY 13202
- When: 8:30 p.m. to 12:30 a.m.
- Info: Tickets: \$99. www.skyarmory.com or eventbrite.com.

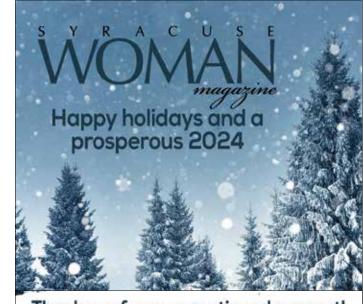
#### Sun., December 31 A Royal Met Gala

- What: Enjoy curated cocktails, delightful delectables, live music and dancing, all while raising funds for The Castle. Hosted by Trina Braxton. Where: The OnCenter, 800 S. State St., Syracuse





www.eventcreate.com/e/a-royal-met-gala Info:















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