

# Independent Health Foundation 2023 Annual Report

**KIDS  
RUN**


**first  
night**  
buffalo®

Healthy Options.

Good for the  
Neighborhood.

**Fitness  
for Kids**  
CHALLENGE

**SOCCER FOR  
SUCCESS**  
U.S. SOCCER FOUNDATION

  
**STUDENT PEER  
ADVOCATE PROGRAM**

**growing  
up strong**



Independent  
 **Health**  
FOUNDATION

## WHO WE ARE

# Our Mission

To improve the health and well-being of Western New York residents through awareness, prevention and education programs focused on community health priorities.

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# Our Vision

To promote health equity and build resiliency through our free signature programs, ensuring a healthier future for our community.

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## Independent Health Foundation Team

Raby Ba  
Kiara Barlow  
April Gampp  
Kelsey Garvelli  
Melanie Goehle  
Tahmina Haider  
Emma Hartman  
Alana Humphrey  
Kelsi Maciejewski  
Carrie Meyer  
Jen Mitri  
Carri Nutty  
Mai Pa Kue Yang  
Jessica Robins  
Anastasia Royal  
Megan Ruszczyk  
Veronica Twumasi  
Brianna Wallenhorst

## Board of Directors

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Stephen Tucker  
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**We are grateful for the service of our dedicated volunteer board.**



# Thank You to Our Volunteers



**19** Community Members

**136** Independent Health RedShirts<sup>SM</sup>

**7** Youth Students

Offered **99** volunteer opportunities across WNY through our programs.



**162** volunteers dedicated their time to give back to our community in 2023.



## What our volunteers are saying...

"This program is so meaningful to the communities that are served. It is amazing to watch the participants and families and know how much this program means in their lives!"

- RedShirt® Volunteer

"Love this event and the great services that are offered to the community."

- Kim Marino

"I love the work the Foundation does in the community."

- Bernie Esposito

# KIDS RUN

Encourages families to be physically active and lead healthy lives together by participating in a walk/run.



**95%** of survey respondents were likely to recommend the event and participate again.



Partnered with Gigi's Playhouse to offer a quiet space **sensory tent** for families who needed it.



**Collected 758 lbs.** of donations from attendees for FeedMore WNY food drive.



**25** community partners hosted tables and offered resources to participants.



*"Such a great event for the children in the Buffalo community. Well done! Kudos to the Foundation."*

- Luci Ann

**11,288** participated with **4,911** people at Delaware Park and **6,377** students from **21** schools.



**93%** of survey respondents were satisfied with the event and **89%** were likely to recommend it to others.

Provides a family-friendly New Year's Eve celebration filled with healthy and fun activities.



Provided a **free** online show with **over 2 hours** of interactive activities and original performances.



Reached a **First Night record** number of over **132,000** online views!



**2,200** First Night Party Packs were distributed throughout the community - including **365 donated** to those in need.

*"Thanks Independent Health Foundation for another amazing party box and all the family fun we had bringing in the New Year."*

- Lauren Buono





## Educates community members on how to eat healthier when dining out and cooking at home.



- ★ **510 families** across rural and urban areas of WNY were served by Healthy Options at Home.
- ★ **57%** of Healthy Options at Home participants felt more confident cooking healthy meals on a budget.
- ★ **22 restaurants** served **44 different menu items** for the inaugural Healthy Options Restaurant Week.
- ★ **16 Tower Gardens** were provided and installed in Buffalo Public Schools.

*"Loved spending time preparing meals with the kids. They were so proud of the meals they made! My daughter even did a report at school about healthy eating."*  
- Healthy Options at Home Participant



Provided **8,160 healthy meals** for families to learn new skills and cook together at home.

## Good for the Neighborhood.

## Connects families to resources that address social determinants of health and gaps in health care.

- ★ **2,589 people** participated in the program to improve their health.
- ★ **26 programs** were hosted in **9 different sites** across Erie and Niagara counties.
- ★ **653** participants were provided with free health screenings.
- ★ **3,900 people** received a free, fresh produce bag with a recipe card.



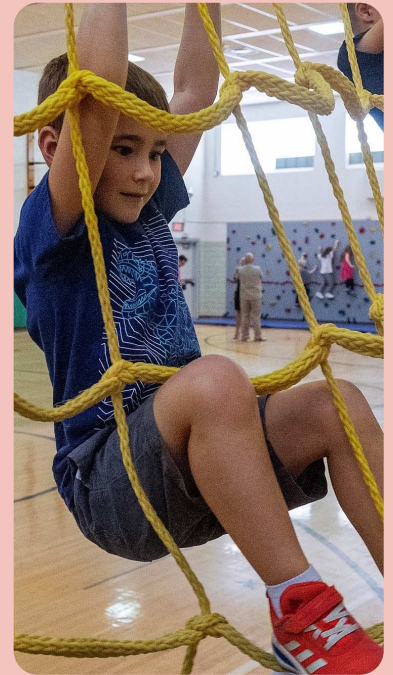
*"I love seeing people come back to get their health checked and to see how they are doing. We've really tried to deepen that trust for our neighbors to be healthy and well."*  
- Crystal Selk, West Side Community Services

**2,000 kids** received a free backpack filled with school supplies.





Educates children on the importance of healthy habits using 95210+YOU goals.



★ Expanded program into **7 new schools** across **5 WNY counties**.

★ Hosted classroom fruit and vegetable tastings where **3,385** students tried new healthy foods.

★ Awarded monthly student prizes, assemblies, and **over \$28,000** to schools based on their participation in the program.

★ **3,241** classroom challenges were completed.



*"My student was always telling me about the challenges and all the times their family was playing sports and working out together. They gained a lot of confidence and felt very proud."*  
- Julie Palmeri, John A. Sciole Elementary School

**10,729** students from **575** classrooms participated across **44** WNY schools.

Provides mentorship to children in underserved areas, focusing on healthy habits and social-emotional skills through soccer.



★ **1,800** healthy meal bags were distributed to families over long weekends when free school meals are unavailable.

★ **92%** of participants felt safe and supported by one another at Soccer for Success.

★ **100%** of participants felt encouraged to work through difficult problems.

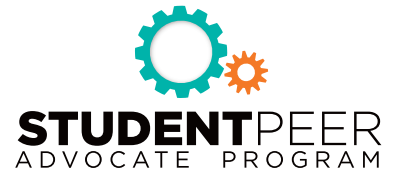
★ **77%** of participants succeeded in improving their social and emotional learning competencies.

*"My son is very shy. After day 1, he never wanted to miss a day of practice. I then saw he had made friendships with several other students. This is new for him because he typically stays to himself."*  
- Soccer for Success Parent



**2,446** kids participated at **31** sites across Erie, Niagara, Genesee and Cattaraugus counties.

## Builds skills for students to become leaders and make a positive impact on the health of their community.



- ★ Coordinated **9** monthly workforce development workshops, including resume writing and interview preparation.
- ★ Experienced healthy activities firsthand through participation in **cooking classes** and **3 field trips**.
- ★ In 2023, every participating graduating senior was heading to **college**.
- ★ Students **created and met goals** surrounding improved grades, study habits, sleep and physical activity.



**93%** of eligible students received **\$500 Independent Health Foundation scholarships** for college or other post-graduation paths.



*"The program helped me throughout high school and will continue to help me as I transition out of it. It taught me many life skills and has created a support system I will have throughout my life."*  
- Jordan M., Student Participant



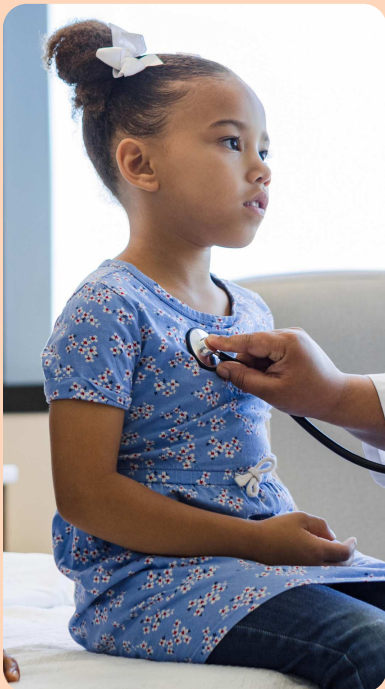
## Supports families and pediatricians in meeting the developmental needs of children ages 0-3 through a collaborative approach.

- ★ All 5 participating provider offices **completed training** to become official **HealthySteps** practices.
- ★ **Over 600** families received a "Family Needs Assessment" and were referred to additional services, if needed.
- ★ **Over 400** participating mothers received a maternal depression screening, appropriate referrals and in-office services.

*"Patients and families are being better connected to needed medical and social care services – and we're seeing great progress in the area of maternal depression."*  
- HealthySteps Specialist



**Over 1,600 children** were served as participation grew to **5 provider offices** at community health centers and care clinics in Buffalo and Blasdell.



# Financials

As a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit, tax-exempt, charitable organization, all administrative and operational expenses are supported by our parent company, Independent Health Association (IHA). The administrative grant provided by IHA ensures that all other contributions directly support those we serve.

## STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES AND CHANGES IN NET ASSETS FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2022 *(in thousands)*

### SUPPORT AND REVENUE:

Contributions	\$460
Admission & Ticket Sales	\$34
In-Kind Services	\$527
<b>Total Support and Revenue</b>	<b>\$1,021</b>

### EXPENSES - Program Services:

Public Health Programs	\$2,600
In-Kind Expenses	\$637
Support Services:	
Program Management & Administration	\$212
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$3,449</b>

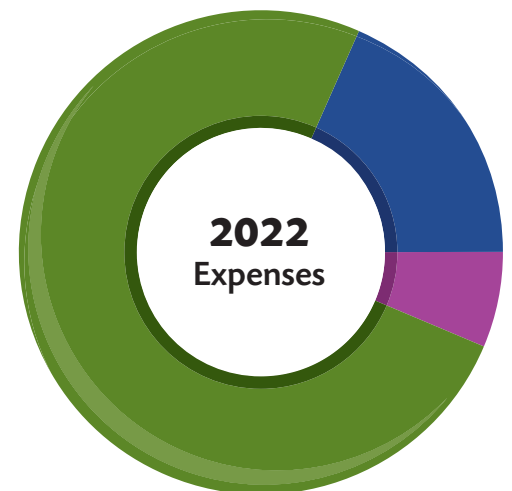
CHANGES IN NET ASSETS FROM OPERATIONS (\$2,428)

INVESTMENT AND OTHER EXPENSE - NET (\$166)

**DECREASE IN NET ASSETS (\$2,594)**

**NET ASSETS - Beginning of year \$4,227**

**NET ASSETS - End of year \$1,633**



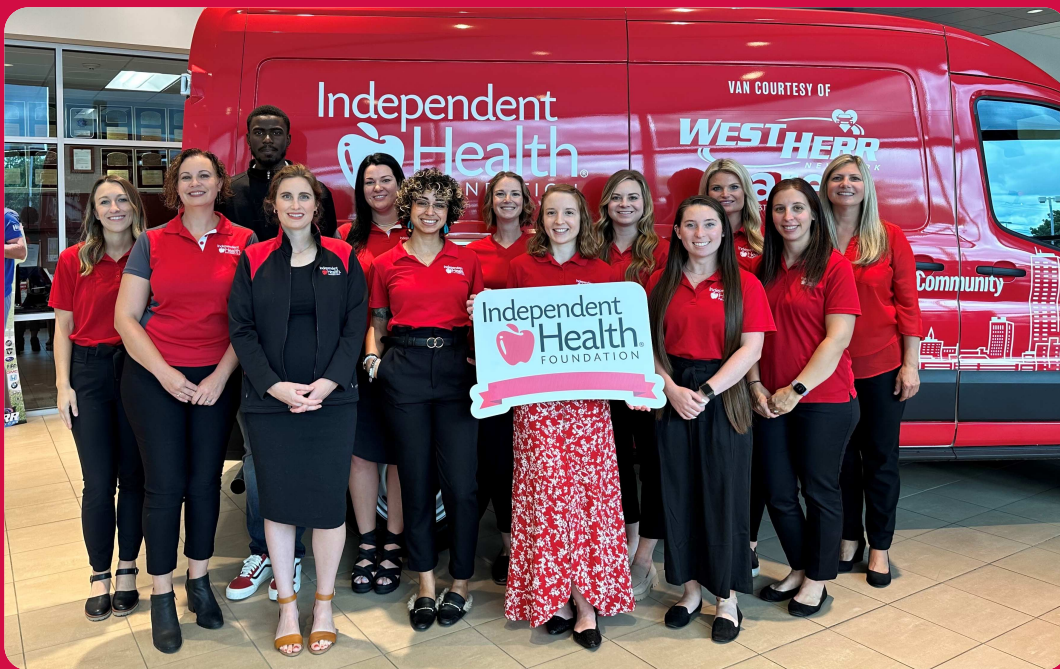




## Thank You West Herr!

Transporting equipment and healthy food to neighborhood programs got a little easier thanks to a partnership with West Herr Auto Group.

The van, which was custom wrapped, made its debut in June and has proven to be an invaluable asset to all of Independent Health Foundation's numerous programs.



"Our goal is to meet people where they are, and that translates into many trips across Western New York," said Carrie Meyer, Executive Director of Independent Health Foundation.

"We're bringing fitness and sports equipment to neighborhood parks and schools with **Soccer for Success** and the **Fitness For Kids Challenge**, as well as health screenings and fresh fruits and vegetables to communities through **Good for the Neighborhood** and **Healthy Options**. This van from West Herr will make all these deliveries much easier for our dedicated team. We are beyond grateful for their support."

# Thank You to Our Valued Partners

Thanks to the following corporate partners, organizations, and individuals, whose generous contributions directly support our community programs.

## DONORS

Alliance of Community Health Plans  
The Joyce & Stuart Angert Fund at the  
Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo  
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Amy Yurko

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Thelma L. & Milfred R. Beck Fund at  
Niagara Area Foundation  
U.S. Soccer Foundation  
United Way of Buffalo & Erie County

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The Buffalo Zoo  
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G&G Fitness  
GiGi's Playhouse  
Lemur Studio  
NFTA  
Rolly Pollies  
Tops Friendly Markets

# A Strong Community Is Our Foundation

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Join us and help us do more.

Contact the Foundation today to give your time, talent, or treasure.

Volunteer – Become a Community Partner – Make a Donation.



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