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AT GILDA'S CLUB ROCHESTER



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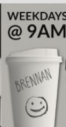
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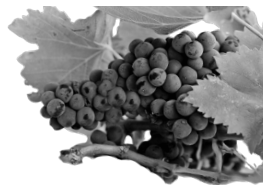
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PROGRAM

6:00 – 7:00 pm

Cocktail Reception

Check-in/Registration

Hors D'oeuvres

Cash Bar (*two drink tickets provided*)

Silent Auction (closes at 8:45 pm)

Have Photos Taken!

Questions about mobile bidding?

See any of our staff!

7:00 – 9:00 pm

Dinner Program

Emcee: Brennan Somers, News 8 WROC

Auctioneer: Joe Lomonaco, WHAM 1180

Dinner & Awards Program

Live Auction and Paddle Call

9:00 – 9:30 pm

Check-out

Please check-out by 9:30.

Item(s) not checked-out by 9:30 will need to be picked up at
Cancer Support Community's office by appointment.

9:00 – 11:00 pm

Afterparty

Entertainment - Live Music & Dancing
Rochester Rat Pack

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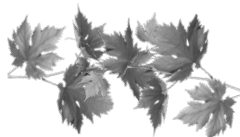
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Cancer Support Community at Gilda's Club Rochester Heroes Ball
Celebrating community heroes who have had a positive impact on the
lives of people living with cancer.



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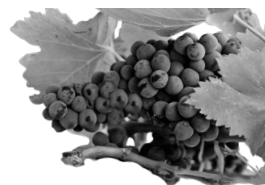
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HONOREE

Community Leader Award - *given to an individual or group of individuals demonstrating exceptional leadership and/or philanthropy through a commitment to health care and wellness in the cancer community.*



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Interlakes Oncology and Hematology, P.C. was founded in 1996 and our community-based mission continues; to provide state of the art, compassionate care to our patients, as close to their homes as possible, with access to the most modern medicine and care.

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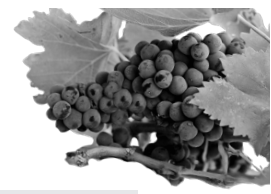
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HONOREE

HERO Award - *given to an individual or group demonstrating meritorious, outstanding or heroic distinctive personal involvement in the cancer arena by a local individual*



Steven Ognibene, MD

*Rochester Colon & Rectal Surgeons, PC
Rochester Regional Health
University of Rochester Medical Center*

Dr. Ognibene is a partner and Vice President at Rochester Colon & Rectal Surgeons, PC, a private practice based in Rochester, NY. Dr. Ognibene is also the Director, System Board Chief, Division of Colon & Rectal Surgery at Rochester Regional Health/Rochester General Hospital. Additionally, he is a Clinical Assistant Professor at the University of Rochester and an Adjunct Clinical Assistant Professor at the Lake Erie

College of Osteopathic Medicine (LECOM) and actively participates in medical student General Surgery resident education and training.

Dr. Ognibene earned a Bachelor of Arts with Honors in Biological Sciences from the State University of New York at Buffalo, and graduated Summa Cum Laude and Phi Beta Kappa in 1995 with a concentration in Radiation Biology.

His medical degree was conferred by the State University of New York Health Sciences Center at Syracuse in 1999. Dr. Ognibene completed his General Surgery internship and residency in 2004 at the University of Rochester, and then went on to complete a Colon & Rectal Surgery fellowship at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Beverly Hills, California in 2005.

In 2004, he and his family moved back to Rochester where he joined Rochester Colon & Rectal Surgeons.

Dr. Ognibene is board certified in both General Surgery and Colon & Rectal Surgery.

In 2008, he was one of the first two physicians in the country performing robotic colon and rectal surgery. He and his partners pioneered many of the techniques now in widespread use in robotic surgery.

Dr. Ognibene is Past President of the Monroe County Medical Society, which represents the interests of over 700 member physicians in our area.

In his free time he enjoys photography, reading history and relaxing with his wife and three sons.

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Dr. Mary Lou O'Neill
Dr. Asim Farid
Dr. Steven Ognibene
Dr. Bastian Domajnko



Dr. Claudia Hriesik
Dr. Brian Teng
Dr. Patrick Solan
Dr. Aaron Rickles

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Dr. Mary Lou O'Neill graduated Cum Laude from Williams College. She completed medical school and her General Surgery residency at the University of Rochester. Following this, Dr. O'Neill completed her Colon and Rectal Surgery fellowship at the University of Toronto, Canada in 1997.



Dr. Asim Farid is a native of Pakistan, where he went to medical school. After graduation in 1984 he went to England for surgical training, and obtained a fellowship in General Surgery from the Royal College of Surgeons in Edinburgh, Scotland. He then moved to the USA in 1991, where he completed General Surgery residency training at the Guthrie Clinic in Sayre, PA. In 1996 he moved to Kentucky where he was a General Surgeon and Chief of Surgery at Owen County Memorial Hospital. In 2001 he completed his fellowship in Colon and Rectal Surgery at Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit, Michigan.



Dr. Steven J. Ognibene graduated Summa Cum Laude from the State University of New York (SUNY) at Buffalo in 1995 with a B.A. in Biological Sciences and a concentration in Radiation Biology. In 1999 he graduated from medical school at the SUNY Health Science Center at Syracuse. He completed his General Surgery residency at the University of Rochester in 2004. He then completed a fellowship in Colon & Rectal Surgery at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in



Dr. Bastian Domajnko graduated Cum Laude from Tufts University in Boston, Massachusetts in 1998. He graduated from Tufts University School of Medicine in 2002. In 2007 he completed his residency in General Surgery at the University of Rochester. Following this Dr. Domajnko completed a fellowship in Colon & Rectal Surgery at Cook County Hospital, University of Illinois at Chicago in 2008.



Dr. Claudia Hriesik received her MD., Ph.D. from Hannover Medical Center, Germany in 1996. She volunteered for the German Red Cross and served as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Anatomy and Microbiology. She was awarded scholarships and grants for studies in the UK and the US. She performed research in Immunology at the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia. Dr. Hriesik completed her surgical residency at Drexel University College of Medicine in Philadelphia. She trained in Surgical Oncology at the University of Pittsburgh, and in Colon & Rectal Surgery at the Cleveland Clinic in Ohio.



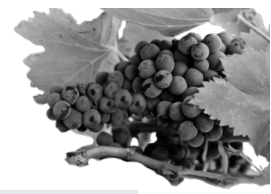
Dr. Brian Teng graduated with Honors in Biomedical Engineering with a concentration in Mechanical Engineering from the Johns Hopkins University. He received his medical degree in his home state at the University of Minnesota. He completed residency in General Surgery at the State University of New York (SUNY) at Buffalo and following this he completed his fellowship in Colon & Rectal Surgery at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Beverly Hills, California.



Dr. Patrick D. Solan graduated Summa Cum Laude with a degree in Biological Sciences from Cornell University. He graduated from the University of Buffalo School of Medicine and went on to complete his residency in General Surgery at the University of Cincinnati, Ohio. Following this, Dr. Solan went on to complete a fellowship in Colon & Rectal Surgery at the University of Minnesota.



Dr. Aaron S. Rickles graduated with Honors in Physics and a minor in Biochemistry from the University of California, Santa Barbara. He then received his medical degree from the Medical College of Wisconsin. He completed General Surgery residency training at the University of Rochester. Following this, he completed fellowship training in Colon & Rectal Surgery at the Cleveland Clinic Florida



HONOREE

Jacob Gitelman Award - *presented in recognition of outstanding meritorious service by a local medical professional working in the cancer arena.*



Kah Poh "Melissa" Loh, MD, MS, FACCC, FASCO

Associate Professor

Division of Hematology/Oncology, Dept. of Medicine

Director, Geriatric Hematology Research

Associate Director, PSTP

URMC/Wilms Cancer Center

Dr. Kah Poh Loh is a physician-scientist and geriatric hematologist/oncologist whose clinical expertise lies in the care of older adults with cancer, with a focus on blood cancers such as acute myeloid leukemia and myelodysplastic syndromes. As a practicing cancer physician, she is deeply committed to delivering evidence-based, person-centered care that honors the unique values, goals, and preferences of each patient.

Dr. Loh integrates geriatric principles into oncology practice, recognizing the complexities of aging-related conditions and their impact on treatment tolerance and outcomes. Her role extends well beyond clinical management—she is a champion of shared decision-making, serious illness communication, and high-quality, goal-concordant care, particularly for older adults who are often underrepresented in clinical trials and underserved in routine cancer care. In parallel with her clinical work, Dr. Loh leads an active research program focused on behavioral and supportive care interventions. She has developed and tested innovative programs, in partnership with patient partners, that promote physical activity, improve treatment decision-making, facilitate serious illness conversations, and enhance social support for older adults with cancer. Through her dual roles as clinician and scientist, Dr. Loh is committed to transforming cancer care delivery to better meet the needs of an aging population.

Dr. Loh has partnered with organizations, including the Cancer Support Community at Gilda's Club, American Cancer Society, and HealthTree AML, and delivered talks on how older adults and their caregivers can take an active role in managing their health, providing strategies and education on topics relevant to the older adult population. Dr. Loh also actively promotes the resources offered by the Cancer Support Community at Gilda's Club to her patients.

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Honoree

Richard McGlynn Award - *given to an individual who through their leadership, inspiration or own survivorship, have worked on behalf of people with cancer.*



Larry Yovanoff

Immediate Past Board Chair

Cancer Support Community at Gilda's Club Rochester

Larry Yovanoff has been an active member of Cancer Support Community at Gilda's Club Rochester since 2013, following his diagnosis with prostate cancer. A committed advocate for peer support, he regularly participates in the Men's Prostate Support Group, driven by a desire to give back and support others navigating similar journeys.

In 2014, Larry joined the organization's Board of Directors, contributing his expertise across multiple committees. He was named Board Secretary in 2019 and served as Board Chair beginning in 2021. After completing his most recent board term, he transitioned to the role of Chair of the Emeritus Board, where he continues to volunteer actively.

Larry retired from Paychex in October 2021 after 26 years, concluding a notable overall 43-year career spanning managing customer service, operations, process improvement organizations, IT project management, and technical client support management. His professional background reflects a strong foundation in leadership, strategic thinking, and organizational efficiency.

Beyond his work with Gilda's Club, Larry is deeply engaged in the Rochester community, volunteering with United Way, Lifespan, and the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Music Education from Nazareth University, an MBA from Rochester Institute of Technology, and is a former certified Dale Carnegie Trainer.



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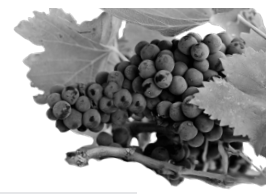
Congratulations to our Founder, Gary Mervis, on being named this year's recipient of the Christie Simonetti Award!

SCAN HERE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT
CAMP GOOD DAYS & SPECIAL TIMES





 www.CampGoodDays.org (585) 624-5555 info@CampGoodDays.org



Honoree

Christie Simonetti Award - *given to an individual(s) in recognition of their caring and concerned spirit shown to others. The award's namesake passed away at the age of 8 from leukemia. She brought out the best in anyone who met her.*



Gary Mervis

Founder, Camp Good Days & Special Times

Gary Mervis is the Founder of Camp Good Days and Special Times, established in 1979 following the diagnosis of his daughter, Elizabeth “Teddi” Mervis, with a malignant brain tumor at the age of nine. For the past 46 years, he has worked to provide free programs and services for children, families, and adults impacted by cancer, sickle cell anemia, and other life challenges.

Through his leadership, Camp Good Days has grown from a summer program into a year-round organization offering camping programs, support groups, and community initiatives that have served over 56,000 campers from 22 states and 36 foreign countries. His vision and dedication have inspired volunteers, donors, and partners to join together in bringing hope and joy to those facing life’s most difficult challenges. As only the fourth program of its kind in the United States at its founding in 1979, Gary has gone on to inspire and assist with the creation of similar programs across the country and around the world. In recognition of his work, he received the Rochester Business Journal’s Icon Award in 2019.

After working for 20 years for the New York State Assembly, Gary continues to serve the community as Chairman of the Project Exile Advisory Board, a nationally recognized violence-reduction initiative he has led for over the past 25 years. His leadership has earned him national recognition, including the FBI Director’s Community Leadership Award, the Ellis Island Medal of Honor, and the New York State Senate Liberty Medal. Locally, his contributions have been honored most recently through the creation of the Gary Mervis Youth Team Achievement Award and presentation of the Key to Monroe County, both by Monroe County Executive Adam Bello.

In addition to his public leadership, Gary dedicated 29 years as an assistant football coach at St. John Fisher University and was inducted into the St. John Fisher University Athletics Hall of Fame. He has also been honored with induction into the Monroe Community College Alumni Hall of Fame and awarded the SUNY Brockport Hall of Heritage. He holds an Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters from SUNY Brockport and an Honorary Doctor of Laws from St. John Fisher University. A lifelong advocate for public service, the community, and those impacted by life’s toughest challenges, Gary has devoted his life to creating opportunities for hope, healing, and connection. He resides in Pittsford with his wife, Wendy, and together they continue to inspire and lead the mission of Camp Good Days.



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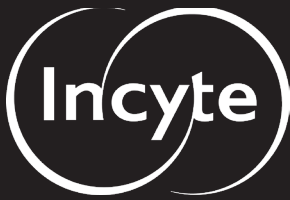
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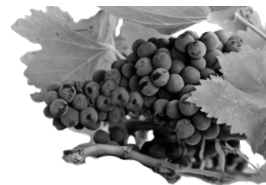
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Michael Daniels, MD

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Kathryn Assini

Matt Crowley

Dan D'Angelantonio

Miranda Grazioplene

Bri Inclema

KC Kavanaugh

Chris Keyes

Clyde Miller

Katie Nedrow

Nichole Waldron

Community Driven
Locally Owned

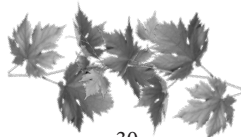


IDE
FAMILY OF DEALERSHIPS



Congratulations to each of the
2025 Heroes Ball Honorees
for being a driving force for good
in the lives of cancer patients.

Proud supporter of
Cancer Support Community
at Gilda's Club.





Our Mission

We uplift and strengthen people impacted by cancer by providing support, fostering compassionate communities, and breaking down barriers to care. We create welcoming communities of no-cost support for everyone living with cancer – men, women, teens and children – along with their families and friends.

Our Staff

James Love, Chief Executive Officer

Carolyn Murray, Chief Operating Officer

Hannah Bardeen, Mental Health Counseling Intern

Lorraine Clements, Director of Development

Jacquelyn Cuyler, Program Manager

Kate Gruenfelder, Administrative Assistant

Amanda Miller, LMHC, Dir., Programs & Support Services

Shivani Patel, Youth & Volunteer Engagement Manager

Mary Ellen Smith, Director of Communications & Events

Our Program Areas



MAPPING *my* JOURNEY®

Mapping My Journey is our customized, personalized support system for those at any stage of their cancer journey. We offer more than 1,000 program sessions each year that aim to restore, support, and teach, from health and wellness, to expressive arts, social, educational, and youth classes.



Support Groups



Social Connections



Health & Wellness



Expressive Arts



Educational



Youth & Family



Veterans with Cancer



Program Resources



585.423.9700
CSCROCHESTER.ORG

Congratulations

Dr. Melissa Loh, MD

for winning the
Jacob Gitelman Award

Interlakes Oncology
and Hematology for
winning the *Community
Impact Award*

