

OUR IMPACT



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2025 - 2026 GRATITUDE REPORT

The Western Pennsylvania Bleeding Disorders Foundation strives to enrich the lives of those with bleeding disorders in Western Pennsylvania and respond to the needs of the community.

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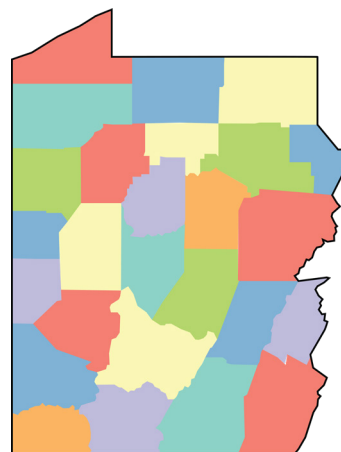
WHO WE ARE

OUR MISSION

WPBDF strives to enrich the lives of those with bleeding disorders in Western Pennsylvania and respond to the needs of the community.

OUR VISION

A future where everyone affected by bleeding disorders is empowered, supported, and understood through advocacy, education, and community impact.



Our Service Area

WPBDF serves 26 counties in Western Pennsylvania.

A MESSAGE FROM WPBDF'S EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



**DEAR FOUNDATION
MEMBERS AND FRIENDS,**

As I reflect on the past year, I am filled with an overwhelming sense of gratitude. Every achievement highlighted in this report represents the strength, generosity, and resilience of the bleeding disorders community we are privileged to serve. Together, we continue to build a community where no individual or family has to face the challenges of a bleeding disorder alone.

This year, we welcomed 54 new families to our Foundation, expanding our community and reinforcing the importance of connection, support, and belonging. With a total of 916 Foundation members participating in our programs throughout the year, it is clear that our community continues to grow stronger through shared experiences, education, and

advocacy.

One of the things that inspires me most is the commitment our community has to learning and supporting one another. This year, we hosted 38 educational programs designed to empower patients and families with the knowledge and resources they need to navigate life with a bleeding disorder. These programs provided opportunities to learn from experts, connect with peers, and gain confidence in managing their health and wellness.

Advocacy remained a central part of our work. Foundation staff, volunteers, and community members participated in 50 legislative meetings, ensuring that the voices of individuals living with bleeding disorders were heard by policymakers. We were also honored to receive 16 proclamations throughout Western Pennsylvania, including 13 recognizing Bleeding Disorders Awareness Month in March and three recognizing World Hemophilia Day on April 17. These recognitions help shine a light on the importance of awareness, early diagnosis, and access to care.

We continued expanding our Women, Girls, and People with the Potential to Menstruate with Bleeding Disorders Initiative, reaching 293 school districts and 44 libraries across Western Pennsylvania.

Through 22 community outreach events, we educated healthcare providers, educators, and community members about the signs and symptoms of bleeding disorders. These efforts help identify individuals who may otherwise remain undiagnosed and connect them with life-changing resources and care.

Meeting the immediate needs of our community remained a top priority. This year, we provided more than \$47,000 in patient assistance to over 375 individuals. This support included more than \$14,000 in grocery assistance for more than 35 families facing food insecurity and more than \$4,600 in holiday gifts that brought joy to 106 children. These programs exist because we believe every family deserves support during difficult times, and because of your generosity, we are able to help ease some of life's burdens.

The spirit of community was also evident in our fundraising and awareness efforts. Through five fundraising events, we raised nearly \$80,000 to support our mission and programs. More than 250 participants joined us for the Unite for Bleeding Disorders Walk, led by 27 dedicated team captains whose passion and leadership helped make the event a tremendous success.

Perhaps most importantly, none of this would be possible without the extraordinary

dedication of our volunteers. This year, volunteers contributed more than 750 hours of service, sharing their time, talents, and compassion to strengthen our community. Their commitment reflects the very heart of our Foundation and demonstrates the power of people coming together to support one another.

To our members, volunteers, board of directors, healthcare partners, donors, and supporters, thank you. Your belief in our mission makes every program, every outreach effort, every advocacy meeting, and every act of support possible. Because of you, families find connection, patients gain access to critical resources, and individuals living with bleeding disorders know they are not alone.

As we look toward the future, I am filled with hope and optimism. Together, we will continue to advocate, educate, support, and build a stronger community for everyone affected by bleeding disorders across Western Pennsylvania and beyond.

Thank you for being part of this journey and for helping us make a difference every day.

With heartfelt gratitude,



KARA DORNISH
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

OUR IMPACT

Welcomed **54 new families** as members of our Foundation.

916 Foundation members registered for programs.

Hosted **38 educational programs**, empowering patients & families

Trained **30 Advocacy Ambassadors**.

Attended **50 legislative meetings**.



Provided over **\$47,000** in patient assistance to over **375 individuals**.

This includes **over \$14,000** in grocery assistance to more than **35 families facing food insecurity** and **over \$4,600** in holiday gifts to **106 children**.

Attended **22 community outreach events** to educate about the signs and symptoms of bleeding disorders in women, girls, and people with the potential to menstruate.

Received **16 proclamations** in Western PA (13 recognizing March as Bleeding Disorders Awareness Month and 3 recognizing April 17 as World Hemophilia Day.)



Reached **293 school districts** and **44 libraries** in Western Pennsylvania through our Women, Girls, and People who have the Potential to Menstruate with Bleeding Disorders Initiative.

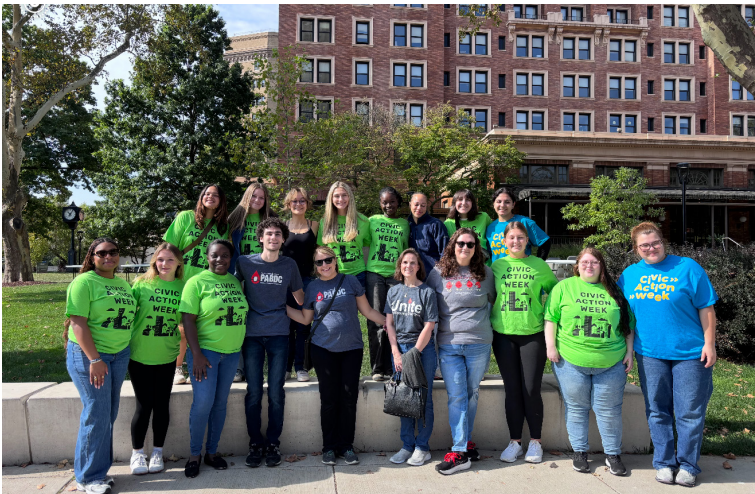
Hosted 5 fundraisers (which **raised nearly \$80,000** for the bleeding disorders community).

Welcomed **250+ walkers** to the Unite for Bleeding Disorders Walk, lead by **27 incredible team captains**.

115 volunteers shared their time and talents to strengthen the bleeding disorders community.

Dedicated volunteers provided over **750 service hours**.

MEASURING OUR IMPACT: WOMEN, GIRLS, AND PEOPLE WITH THE POTENTIAL TO MENSTRUATE WITH BLEEDING DISORDERS INITIATIVE



Through this initiative, WPBDF continues to expand awareness, improve access to educational resources, and help individuals recognize the signs and symptoms of bleeding disorders earlier.

Since launching this initiative in 2024, the Western PA Bleeding Disorders Foundation has partnered with 293 school districts across all 26 counties of Western Pennsylvania to increase awareness of bleeding disorders, improve access to educational resources, and support earlier recognition of symptoms.

To better understand the initiative's reach and impact, we conduct an annual evaluation of participating school nurses. Since 2024, 162 school nurses have provided valuable feedback about how these resources are being used in their schools and the outcomes they are observing among students and families..

Here's what we learned.

"TO YOUR KNOWLEDGE, IS ANYONE WHO HAD RECEIVED A **PERIOD PACK SEEKING **EVALUATION** OF A POTENTIAL BLEEDING DISORDER WITH A MEDICAL PROFESSIONAL, AS A RESULT?"**

13 ANSWERED YES.

"TO YOUR KNOWLEDGE, IS ANYONE WHO HAD RECEIVED A **NOSEBLEED KIT SEEKING **EVALUATION** OF A POTENTIAL BLEEDING DISORDER WITH A MEDICAL PROFESSIONAL, AS A RESULT?"**

20 ANSWERED YES.

"TO YOUR KNOWLEDGE, HAS ANYONE WHO HAD RECEIVED A **PERIOD PACK BEEN **DIAGNOSED** WITH A BLEEDING DISORDER, SINCE RECEIVING THE PERIOD PACK?"**

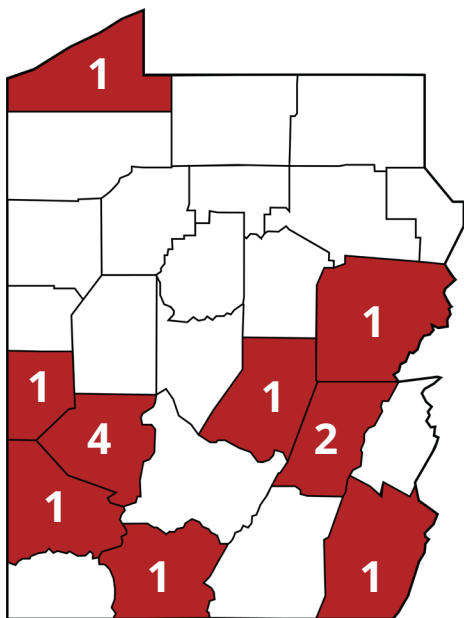
5 ANSWERED YES.

"TO YOUR KNOWLEDGE, HAS ANYONE WHO HAD RECEIVED A **NOSEBLEED KIT BEEN **DIAGNOSED** WITH A BLEEDING DISORDER, SINCE RECEIVING THE KIT?"**

3 ANSWERED YES.

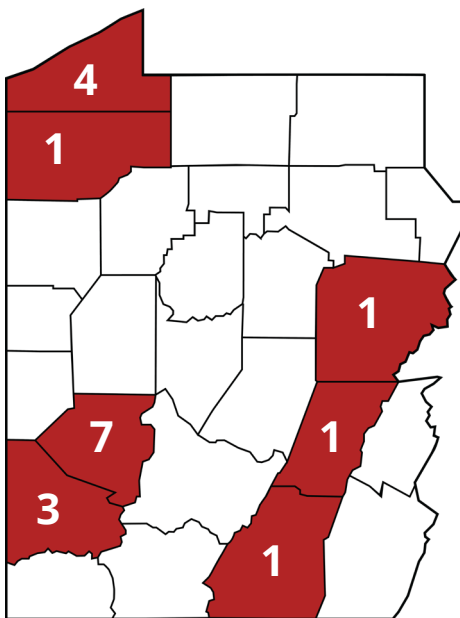
MEASURING OUR IMPACT: BY THE COUNTIES

Counties where school nurses reported individuals are seeking evaluation for a potential bleeding disorder after receiving a **period pack**.



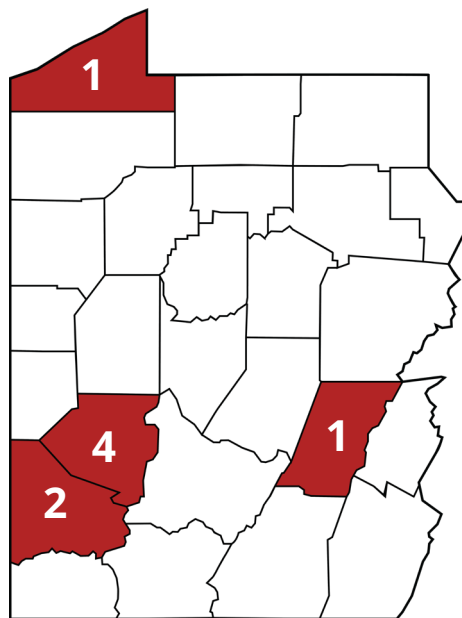
- 4 Allegheny County
- 1 Beaver County
- 1 Bedford County
- 2 Cambria County
- 1 Clearfield County
- 1 Erie County
- 1 Fayette County
- 1 Indiana County
- 1 Washington County

Counties where school nurses reported individuals are seeking evaluation for a potential bleeding disorder after receiving a **nosebleed kit**.



- 7 Allegheny County
- 3 Cambria County
- 1 Clearfield County
- 1 Crawford County
- 4 Erie County
- 1 Somerset
- 3 Washington County

Counties where school nurses reported individuals received a **bleeding disorder diagnosis**.



After Receiving a Period Pack:

- 4 Allegheny County
- 1 Washington County

After Receiving a Nosebleed Kit:

- 1 Cambria County
- 1 Erie County
- 1 Washington County



OUR COMMUNITY, OUR STORIES:

TAMARA'S JOURNEY

Tamara spent most of her childhood and teenage years feeling like something was wrong with her, even though no one believed her. From the time she was young, she struggled with extremely heavy periods that disrupted every part of her life. She would bleed through pads and tampons in less than an hour, often resorting to putting mattress protectors on her bed because the bleeding was so intense. As a teenager playing soccer and volleyball, even minor injuries left her bruised for weeks and took an unusually long time to heal.

Whenever she tried to speak up about her symptoms, she was dismissed. Doctors insisted her symptoms were “normal,” even though she knew something wasn’t right. “My doctors would tell me that some women just have heavy menstrual cycles,” Tamara said.

Growing up without answers left her embarrassed, isolated, and with low self-esteem. She couldn’t talk with her best friends, as they didn’t understand what she was going through. Tamara carried these feelings into adulthood, continuing to experience heavy bleeding issues, leading to multiple visits to the emergency room, a dilation and curettage (D&C) procedure, and a miscarriage.

“I had to keep track of future periods to gauge if I would be able

to participate in a day, weekend, or weeklong outing,” she added. “If it was a scout’s camping trip in the wilderness, a vacation away out of the country, sports, a movie night, or even dinner out, everything took preparedness. My menstrual cycles controlled my daily life.”

It wasn’t until she was in her mid-50s, after a frightening stomach bleed and two emergency blood transfusions, that someone finally asked the right questions.

A physician recognized that something deeper was going on and referred her to a hematologist. From there, she was connected with the Hemophilia Treatment Center of Western Pennsylvania (HCWP) and finally received the answers she had waited her whole life to hear. “I was happy to finally have someone listen to me and realize I wasn’t crazy for what I went through as a young woman,” she added.

At age 54, Tamara was diagnosed with Type 1C von Willebrand Disease. The news was both a relief and a shock. She knew her grandmother had some bleeding issues but was never formally diagnosed with a bleeding disorder. With her limited knowledge, and as an older adult already undergoing surgeries and medical procedures, she didn’t know what this diagnosis meant for her future.

The team at the HCWP quickly became an essential source of

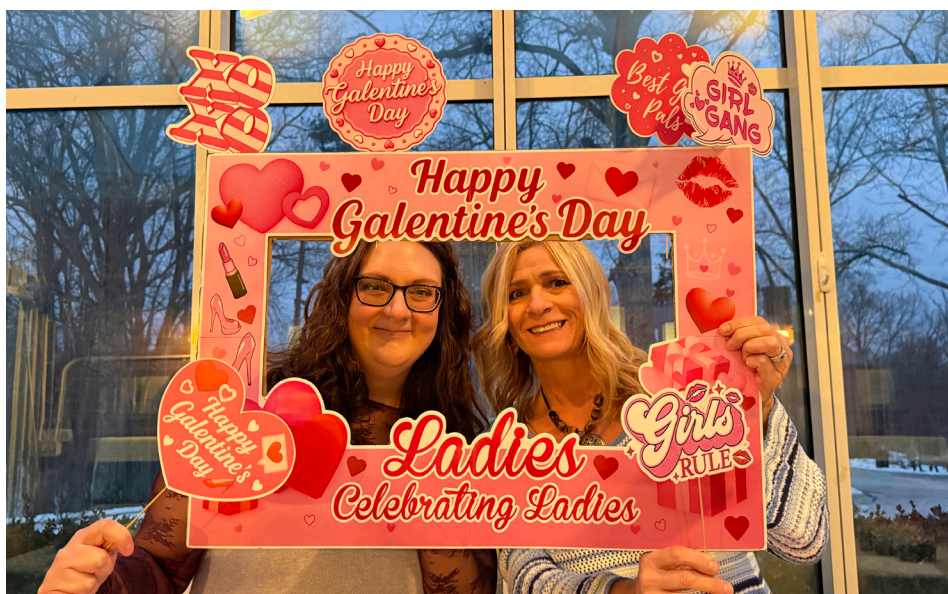


“I WISH I HAD THE KNOWLEDGE AND SUPPORT I HAVE TODAY FROM THE HCWP AND WPBDF WHEN I WAS YOUNGER. I WANT AND NEED FOR TODAY’S YOUNG WOMEN TO KNOW THERE ARE MANY RESOURCES AVAILABLE FOR YOU.”

TAMARA

support. They reassured her before surgeries, coordinated with her doctors, helped with insurance challenges, and guided her through medications and treatment plans. For the first time in her life, Tamara felt heard, supported, and safe. With their encouragement, she began to rebuild her confidence and learn how to advocate for her health.

Through the HCWP, Tamara was introduced to the Western Pennsylvania Bleeding Disorders Foundation (WPBDF). She attended her first Foundation event in 2022, an Education Weekend at Seven Springs Mountain Resort. This event is



Tamara serves as the co-coordinator for WPBDF's Women's Group. Above, she attends the 2026 Galentine's Day event, celebrating and empowering the women in our community!

attended by over 200 people, so she was definitely a little nervous and unsure what to expect.

From the moment she walked in, she felt welcomed by not only the WPBDF staff, but by the community. It was at this event that Tamara first learned about the Foundation's Women Group, and she felt incredible seeing there was a space for women to share their experiences with one another.

"Since it was my first time, I sat there and didn't really participate or say anything. I just listened to everyone around me and thought this was good," Tamara recalled. "I could be a part of this. I saw women older than me, younger than me, and my age, and it felt like a safe space to share my own stories. The happy stories, or my sad stories—I no longer felt like I was alone."

As she became more involved, Tamara found herself growing stronger, more empowered, and more eager to help others. She attended advocacy events, spoke up and shared her story

at meetings, and developed skills she never imagined having, like the confidence to speak out about her experiences with other adults, something she had always struggled with.

Through the education she received at Foundation events and at the HCWP, Tamara began openly discussing the signs, symptoms, and genetics of bleeding disorders with her family. As a result, her sister and niece have now been officially diagnosed, and Tamara is working to have her son and grandson tested to ensure they are prepared.

Now, Tamara is excited to step into a leadership role as co-chair of WPBDF's Women's Group. Her vision is to help women and girls find the support she wished she had when she was young. She wants the group to be a place where women can build confidence, learn from one another, and openly discuss issues that are often hard to share with men, doctors, or even family members.

WPBDF's Women's Group is open to all women who are diagnosed with a bleeding disorder as well as an adult family member or other person of support to someone with a bleeding disorder. This group is dedicated to learning together, building peer relationships, and engaging in educational opportunities to learn about a variety of topics related to living with a bleeding disorder. These topics include self-advocacy and general overall wellness and mental health.

"I think the women's group is so important because it's a place where women can share experiences, learn from each other, and support one another," Tamara said. "Whether it's managing health issues, giving medication to a child, or navigating challenges like school or bullying. Being part of this group allows us to learn together and help each other move forward, at every stage of life, from adolescence through adulthood."

For Tamara, being part of this community has been life changing. She hopes to use her experience, compassion, and newfound confidence to advocate for women, educate families, and guide others through the challenges she spent decades navigating alone.

Most of all, she wants other women to know what she learned later in life: you are not alone, your voice matters, and there is a community ready to support you. "I wish I had the knowledge and support I have today from the HCWP and WPBDF when I was younger. I want and need for today's young women to know there are many resources available for you."

WPBDF'S BOARD OF DIRECTORS

JULY 2025 - JUNE 2026

**Thank you WPBDF Board of
Directors for donating your
time and talents!**

The Board of Directors is the governing body of WPBDF. Board members meet periodically to discuss and vote on the affairs of the organization, to support the work of WPBDF, and to provide mission based leadership and strategic governance.



SAMANTHA SHORT
President



VICTORIA BAKER
Vice President



JASON MILLER
Secretary



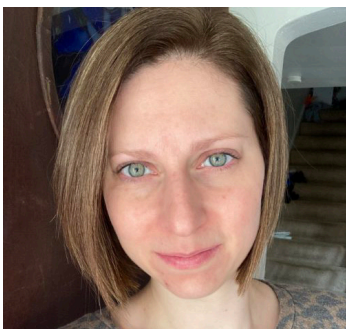
CHRISTINA MILLER
Treasurer



CASSANDRA MILLER



AUTUMN MOORE



**STEPHANIE
SHROPSHIRE**



KRISTEN SPEZIALETTI



DIANE STANDISH

TOP VOLUNTEERS

JULY 2025 - JUNE 2026

Thank You! We are truly appreciative of our dedicated and hardworking volunteers! Our volunteers improve the lives of those living with bleeding disorders in Western Pennsylvania by spreading community awareness, leading support groups, championing advocacy efforts, and assisting with fundraisers and educational programs. For more information about upcoming volunteer opportunities, contact Jessica Lee at jessica@wpbdf.org.

2025 - 2026 TOP VOLUNTEERS

Victoria Baker
Adam Boyle
James Cedeno
Joseph Ebersohl
Tamara Fenton
Justin Najimian
Melinda Perry
Larry Short
Samatha Short
Stephanie Shropshire
Kristen Spezialetti
Jerrad Zonna



ADVOCACY AMBASSADORS

This year, we trained 30 Advocacy Ambassadors from across Pennsylvania. We'd like to recognize our Western PA Advocacy Ambassadors that joined us at the Joey Smiles Advocacy Ambassador Education and Training.

COMMITTEE CHAIRS AND COORDINATORS

Victoria Baker, Governance Committee Chair

Nya Fennell, Teen Group Co-Coordinator

Tamara Fenton, Women's Group Co-Coordinator

Cassandra Miller, Advocacy Committee Chair

Christina Miller, Finance Committee Chair

Emily Nikithser, Youth Group Co-Coordinator and Purse Bingo Planning Committee

Mindy Perry, Youth Group Co-Coordinator, Purse Bingo Planning Committee, and 2025 Unite for Bleeding Disorders Walk Co-Chair

Cameron Cedeno
Angela Day
Tania Hanscom
Kyrie Holliday
Delores Johnson-Huber
David Macharola
Sandra Macharola
Jason Miller
Scarlett Miller
Seth Miller
Spencer Miller

Dexter Shoemaker, Teen Group Co-Coordinator

Maria Shoemaker, Purse Bingo Planning Committee

Samantha Short, Women's Group Co-Coordinator and Purse Bingo Planning Committee

Stephanie Shropshire, Scholarship Committee Chair

Kristen Spezialetti, Fundraising Committee Chair and Purse Bingo Planning Committee

Laureen Temple, Purse Bingo Planning Committee

Maria Steele Voms Stein, Purse Bingo Planning Committee

Morgan Woods, 2025 Unite for Bleeding Disorders Walk Co-Chair

Justin Najimian
Heather Raphael
Lauren Rhodes
Samantha Short
Ethan Webb
Beth Whitehouse

Advocacy Ambassadors are volunteers in a leadership position responsible for helping to establish and build a strong grassroots network of bleeding disorders advocates within Pennsylvania.



2026 SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE RECIPIENTS OF WPBDF'S 2026 ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIP!

\$2,500 SCHOLARSHIP WINNER

Sadie Polach

\$1,250 SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

Ava Bush
Raina Slater

\$1,000 SCHOLARSHIP WINNER

Analise Baker

The Foundation is delighted to support our community in this way. We wish all of our scholarship award winners the very best of luck as they pursue their education.



SADIE POLACH

My name is Sadie Polach, and I am a rising junior at Penn State University studying Aerospace Engineering. I also have a strong interest in astrophysics and plan to pursue a career in either telescope engineering or astrodynamics after graduation. In the future, I hope to earn my master's degree and Ph.D. and eventually transition from industry into academia as a professor. I look forward to applying my skills to meaningful work that expands our understanding of space and its technologies.



AVA BUSH

Ava Bush is in her 4th year of college at Gannon University, completing her degree in Physician Assistant Sciences in the accelerated 5-Year program. Along with her schooling, she holds a job as an ER Registration Clerk at Corry Memorial Hospital. When she is not studying or at work, she is on her family's farm raising her show cows and retired horses, or spending time with her friends and family. Ava is also a leader at her 4-H club and regularly volunteers to help with the variety of events in the county. Outside of her animals and family, she enjoys crocheting blankets and hats for family and friends.



RAINA SLATER

Hello everyone, my name is Raina Slater and I am an incoming senior at Penn State University - Main Campus. I am studying Architectural Engineering and plan to pursue an accelerated Master's Degree. After graduating college, my goal is to build a career in the construction industry where I can apply my knowledge and problem-solving skills to the design and construction of buildings. I am excited to contribute to projects that positively impact our community. Thank you!



ANALISE BAKER

Analise Paige Baker is a graduate of The Linsly School. She was a Linsly Prefect, member of the National Honor Society, French & Latin Honor Societies, French Club, and Linsly Line school newspaper. She was a 12-season letter award winner in Varsity Cheerleading for football and basketball, OVAC Competition Cheerleading, and Track. Analise was captain of the Linsly OVAC Competition team during her senior year. She will attend John Carroll University, majoring in Political Science on the Pre-Law track.

OUR YEAR IN REVIEW

JULY 2025 - JUNE 2026



Every milestone achieved this year reflects the power of a community coming together with a shared purpose. From advocating for policies that protect access to care, to providing education, fostering meaningful connections, and expanding awareness across Western Pennsylvania, WPBDF remained committed to empowering individuals and families affected by bleeding disorders.

As you explore this year's highlights, we invite you to celebrate the impact we made together and the lives changed through the dedication of our volunteers, advocates, healthcare partners, donors, and community members.

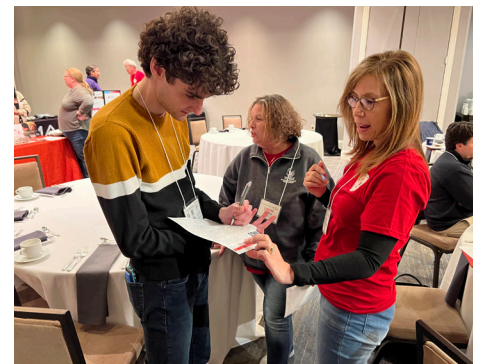
ADVOCACY: CREATING CHANGE

Advocacy remains at the heart of our mission and is one of the most powerful ways we create lasting change for individuals and families affected by bleeding disorders across Pennsylvania.

This year, advocates, community members, healthcare providers, and Foundation leaders came together to protect critical resources, advance patient protections, and elevate the voices of those living with bleeding disorders. Through these collective efforts, we successfully secured \$1,017,000 in Pennsylvania's 2025-2026 state budget for the Hemophilia Line Item, ensuring continued support for all seven comprehensive Hemophilia Treatment Centers (HTCs) across the Commonwealth.

Despite a challenging and unpredictable state budget season, advocates worked tirelessly to protect this vital funding and preserve the established distribution model that treatment centers rely on to provide specialized care. The successful passage of the state budget on November 12, 2025, marked a significant victory for the bleeding disorders community and demonstrated the impact of sustained grassroots advocacy.

That success was made possible by the dedication of our Advocacy Ambassadors, whose voices continue to shape policy decisions affecting patients and families throughout Pennsylvania. Their commitment not only secured critical funding this year but also laid the



ADVOCACY

CONTINUED...

groundwork for future advocacy efforts as we prepare for the challenges ahead.

Collaboration remained a cornerstone of our advocacy work. In December, the Western and Eastern Pennsylvania Bleeding Disorders Foundations joined representatives from all seven Pennsylvania HTC's, the National Bleeding Disorders Foundation, and the Hemophilia Alliance for a statewide Stakeholder Meeting in Harrisburg. Together, participants identified priorities, strengthened partnerships, and reaffirmed a shared commitment to expanding support, education, and outreach across Pennsylvania.

As advocacy efforts continued into 2026, we were encouraged to see Governor Shapiro's proposed budget once again included full funding for the Hemophilia Line Item at \$1,017,000. We also celebrated progress on patient protections through the introduction and advancement of copay accumulator legislation in Pennsylvania. Throughout the year, WPBDF worked alongside partners and advocates to support policies aimed at ensuring that financial assistance received by patients counts toward

deductibles and out-of-pocket costs, helping reduce barriers to accessing lifesaving care. While legislative discussions continue, the growing bipartisan attention to these issues reflects meaningful momentum toward stronger patient protections.

Advocates also brought the voices of Pennsylvania families to the national stage. Twenty-three community members traveled to Washington, D.C., to participate in the National Bleeding Disorders Foundation's Washington Days. Together, they met with federal lawmakers to advocate for continued funding of critical bleeding disorders programs, support for the HELP Copays Act, and advancement of the FED Up Act, legislation designed to address delays in diagnosis and treatment for women and girls with bleeding disorders.

This year, we were especially proud to honor the legacy of Joey Smiles by renaming our annual advocacy training program the *Joey Smiles Advocacy Education and Training*. Through this program, 30 advocates received hands-on advocacy training before participating in more than 40 meetings with Pennsylvania state legislators. Their efforts increased awareness of bleeding disorders, strengthened support for the Hemophilia Line Item, and helped build momentum

for copay accumulator legislation.

Advocacy takes many forms, and throughout Bleeding Disorders Awareness Month and World Hemophilia Day, community members continued to raise awareness at the local level. Counties and municipalities across Western Pennsylvania issued proclamations recognizing the bleeding disorders community and highlighting the importance of awareness, education, and access to care. Community advocates attended commissioner and city council meetings, shared their personal stories, and helped local leaders better understand the challenges and triumphs of those living with bleeding disorders.

Every meeting, every conversation, and every story shared strengthens our collective voice. Together, our advocates are creating meaningful change, protecting access to care, and building a stronger future for the bleeding disorders community.



FUNDRAISING AND OUTREACH: INSPIRING CONNECTION

Throughout the year, the Western Pennsylvania Bleeding Disorders Foundation brought communities together to raise awareness, strengthen connections, and generate critical funding that supports education, advocacy, and support programs for individuals and families affected by bleeding disorders.

One of the year's highlights was the 17th Annual Unite for Bleeding Disorders Walk and Run for Their Lives 5K. More than 250 walkers, nearly 100 runners, and 27 fundraising teams came together in support of the bleeding disorders community, raising nearly \$60,000 to further our mission.

The dedication of our fundraisers continues to inspire us. Our top fundraising team, Conor's Clan, led by Emily Nikithser, raised an incredible \$7,805, marking their fifth consecutive year as our top fundraising team. Tracy Sethman, of Team Red N' Plenty, was recognized as our Top Individual Fundraiser, raising more than \$2,000 during her 13th Walk in honor of herself and her family, who are affected by von Willebrand



disease. We also celebrated our Awesome John Eyrolles Top Youth Fundraiser, Blake R. of Blake's Bloodline, who raised an impressive \$1,550 while advocating for improved access to healthcare and educational resources for families like his own.

This year also marked an exciting period of growth as we launched two new fundraising events that introduced the Foundation to new audiences and strengthened community partnerships.

In November, our inaugural Purse Bingo sold out with 100



attendees and raised more than \$10,000 in support of our mission. The overwhelming support from both our bleeding disorders community and the Beaver community made the event an incredible success. We are excited to host this event again with the support of the Vanport Volunteer Fire Department.

In May, we partnered with the West Virginia Bleeding Disorders Foundation to host the first-ever Backyard Battle of the Bags Cornhole Tournament. Inspired by the friendly rivalry between Pittsburgh and West Virginia,

the event brought supporters together for a day of fun, fundraising, and awareness.

Thanks to an exciting partnership with Cobblehaus Brewing Company, a specialty beer, *Strawberry Droplets*, was created for the event, with a portion of every sale benefiting both Foundations. In total, we raised over \$6,000 and are already looking ahead for more ways to partner with our West Virginia neighbors.

Beyond fundraising, we remained committed to expanding awareness throughout Western Pennsylvania. Staff and volunteers participated in 22 outreach events, including community health fairs, Rotary Club meetings, and college events, connecting with communities from Pittsburgh to Valencia, Meadville, DuBois, Johnstown, State College, St. Marys, and Washington to increase awareness of bleeding disorders and the available resources.

Our partnerships with local colleges continued to grow throughout the year. We participated in health fairs at Penn State DuBois, Penn State Beaver, and the University of Pittsburgh, helping raise awareness of bleeding disorders among students and future healthcare professionals. In addition, students from the University of Pittsburgh and Penn State Beaver joined us in

assembling more than 2,500 period packs, which were distributed to rural community centers, high schools, and elementary schools throughout the region.

Finally, with the support of our dedicated volunteers and Board of Directors, we launched a new partnership with libraries across Western Pennsylvania. By providing period packs and educational resources to local libraries, we are expanding access

to information, increasing awareness of bleeding disorders, and helping more individuals recognize symptoms and seek the care they need.

Every event, every partnership, and every dollar raised reflects the incredible generosity of our community. Together, we are expanding awareness, strengthening support, and creating brighter futures for individuals and families living with bleeding disorders.



SUPPORT: BUILDING COMMUNITY

Living with a bleeding disorder can feel overwhelming, but no one should have to navigate that journey alone. Throughout the year, our support groups provided meaningful opportunities for individuals and families to build lasting relationships, learn from one another, and gain confidence in managing life with a bleeding disorder.



Whether participants were new parents, children, teens, or women, each program fostered connection, education, and a sense of belonging within our community.

New Parent Network

The New Parent Network, a collaborative program between the Western Pennsylvania Bleeding Disorders Foundation (WPBDF) and the Hemophilia Center of Western Pennsylvania (HCWP), supports families from the time of their child's diagnosis

through age seven. This year, parents gathered both in person and virtually to learn from healthcare professionals and one another while building a strong network of support.

Programs covered topics ranging from understanding bleeding disorders and treatment options to helping children cope with fear, pain, and medical procedures. Families also explored practical strategies for navigating emergency situations, communicating with healthcare providers, and creating confidence in everyday life. The year concluded with a family day at the Pittsburgh Zoo & Aquarium, giving parents and children the opportunity to strengthen friendships while simply enjoying time together.

Youth Group

Our Youth Group combined education with fun, creating opportunities for children to build confidence while connecting with peers who understand their experiences. During a day of learning and

laser tag, participants learned how to communicate honestly about symptoms, understand when it's important to speak up, and recognize the difference between being hurt and simply feeling nervous or uninterested.

Teen Group

Our annual Teen Retreat continues to be one of our most impactful programs, helping teens develop independence while preparing for adulthood. Throughout the weekend, participants strengthened practical life skills by learning about financial responsibility, responding to medical emergencies, and managing their bleeding disorder with greater confidence.

Hands-on activities, including an escape room, cooking together, a first aid training session, an outdoor scavenger hunt, and a spirited game of Bleeding Disorders Jeopardy, encouraged teamwork, problem-solving, and peer learning. A blind taste test comparing brand-name and generic products also introduced conversations

about budgeting and making informed financial decisions. Just as importantly, the retreat provided a space where teens could relax, laugh around the campfire, and build friendships with others who truly understand their experiences.

Women's Group

This year, our Women's Group gathered for a special Galentine's Day celebration focused on connection, creativity, and self-care. Through bracelet making, intention heart crafts, and meaningful conversations, participants celebrated the strength of women in the bleeding disorders community while building relationships that extend far beyond a single event.

Across every support group, one theme remained constant: community matters. By creating spaces where individuals and families feel seen, heard, and supported, we are helping people gain the confidence, knowledge, and connections they need to thrive throughout every stage of life.





EDUCATION: EMPOWERING THROUGH KNOWLEDGE

Education is one of the most powerful tools we can provide to the bleeding disorders community. Whether someone is newly diagnosed, preparing for adulthood, navigating pregnancy, or simply looking to better understand their condition, access to reliable information empowers individuals and families to make informed decisions, advocate for themselves, and live healthier lives.

Throughout the year, WPBDF offered educational opportunities designed to meet community members wherever they are on their journey. Through educational weekends, dinner programs, and seasonal events, attendees learned from healthcare professionals and community experts



about treatment advances, self-advocacy, wellness, and the latest developments in bleeding disorders care.

This year, we continued our commitment to improving education and awareness for women and girls with bleeding disorders. We were honored to host a community screening of *Dismissed*, Believe Limited's 2025 documentary highlighting the challenges women and girls often face in receiving timely diagnosis, recognition, and appropriate care.

The screening sparked meaningful conversations among community members, who openly shared their experiences and participated in service activities that fostered connection and support. The day served as a powerful reminder of the importance of creating spaces where women and girls feel seen, heard, and believed.

Innovation in education was another highlight of the year with the launch of our Stay In Motion Education Weekend at Seven Springs Mountain



Resort. More than 130 adults and children participated in this exciting new program, which encouraged individuals and families to embrace movement as an essential part of living well with a bleeding disorder. Through educational sessions and interactive activities, participants learned how safe, consistent physical activity can strengthen joints, improve mobility, reduce stiffness, and support lifelong physical and emotional well-being.

Education is more than sharing information. It's about building confidence, encouraging self-advocacy, and empowering individuals and families to make informed decisions throughout every stage of life. As treatments continue to evolve and new research emerges, WPBDF remains committed to ensuring that every member of our community has access to the knowledge, resources, and support they need to thrive.

WAYS TO GIVE

Every act of generosity helps strengthen the bleeding disorders community. Whether you give your time, make a financial contribution, or rally others to support our mission, your involvement creates lasting impact for individuals and families across Western Pennsylvania.



MONTHLY GIVING

Join our community of sustaining supporters by making a monthly gift. Recurring donations provide reliable funding that allows us to plan ahead and continue offering education, advocacy, support programs, and outreach throughout the year.



LEGACY GIVING

Create a lasting impact through planned giving. By including WPBDF in your estate plans, you help ensure that future generations of individuals living with bleeding disorders continue to receive the care, education, and advocacy they need.



UNITE FOR BLEEDING DISORDERS WALK

Register, create a team, or support a participant at our annual Unite for Bleeding Disorders Walk. Every step taken and every dollar raised helps ensure individuals and families have access to the resources, education, and support they deserve.



VOLUNTEER

From community events and educational programs to advocacy initiatives and fundraising activities, volunteers are at the heart of everything we do. Share your time and talents while making a meaningful difference in the lives of others.

To learn more, contact Jessica, WPBDF Development Director, at jessica@wpbdf.org.

WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA BLEEDING DISORDERS FOUNDATION



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The Western Pennsylvania Bleeding Disorders Foundation is a nonprofit consumer advocacy and service organization founded in 1954 and incorporated as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization in 1976. We were founded to help meet the vast education and support needs of the bleeding disorders community in Western Pennsylvania.

The Western Pennsylvania Bleeding Disorders Foundation serves individuals and families affected by bleeding disorders throughout 26 counties in Western Pennsylvania. Membership is free, ensuring that anyone in our community can access the support, education, and resources they need. Through patient assistance programs, educational events, advocacy efforts, and opportunities to connect with others, we help individuals and families navigate the many challenges that can accompany a bleeding disorder. From treatment and joint health to parenting, financial concerns, and emotional well-being, we are committed to supporting our community every step of the way.