



Pathlight Newsletter

COMPASSION | EXPERTISE | INCLUSION

THE EAGLE HAS LANDED

With the generosity of the Eagle family, whose brother is served in one of our Franklin County homes, Pathlight ran a 3-month challenge campaign to boost our donor support, and we are excited to report it was a success on several levels. Mark and David Eagle **awarded us with a most generous gift of \$60,000** in recognition of how our community stepped up to show their love for Pathlight at a crucial time.


28

donors who gave for the first time

Donors we hadn't heard from in a while happily chose to reconnect with us during the campaign, accounting for 17% of gifts.

One of our goals was to reach new donors to strengthen our fundraising base in the long term. Many new members joined our community of donors; 15% of all gifts were first-time gifts.



33

donors who gave for the first time in several years

It was heartwarming to see people who had already made a gift recently once again demonstrate their commitment to our mission—27% of all gifts were the second gift a donor made in FY24.


52
gave a second gift during the challenge

We also saw a jump in our monthly donors—those who choose to make an automatic monthly gift—by 40 percent!

So many of you left a note with your gift that told us how much Pathlight and its programs have meant to you and your family, and we treasure those words. **Thank you so much to the Eagle family and to all of our supporters, now and throughout the year. We cannot do our work without you!**


of donations to the challenge:
190



Celebrating 20 years

We're gearing up for some unforgettable celebrations this fall as Whole Children and Milestones mark 20 years of changing lives for children, teens and adults with disabilities.

Indie rock band Yo La Tengo will be performing alongside our own Friendship Band at a party on October 23 at the Northampton Center for the Arts. This unique collaboration promises a night of raucous music, inclusion, and community spirit. Come join us for a night where the music is as diverse and vibrant as the people playing it.

Get early bird tickets for The Bash at [Pathlight.life/thebashtickets](https://pathlight.life/thebashtickets) and stay tuned for information on other events to celebrate two decades of inclusion and friendship.



Milestones Day jumps for joy at the Eagle family's gift



IT'S A BARBIE WORLD

The Whole Children and Milestones theater troupe, along with the Joyful Chorus, wowed two sold-out audiences this spring with *Barbie's Dream House of Horrors*, their original mashup of *Barbie* and *Little Shop of Horrors*. From the script, written by students and teachers, to the original choreography and the handcrafted costumes, their hard work paid off with 5-star performances. Relive the magic by watching the full video by scanning the QR code or going to Pathlight.life/theater2024performance

Summer time and the living is busy



TOP: Milestones Day blueberry picking.
MIDDLE: Family Empowerment picnic at Look Park.
BOTTOM: Anna, Gracie, caregiver Joy and Sunny.

Summer is rolling on and the people of Pathlight are savoring every minute of it!

The Milestones Day program has been **enjoying the sunny weather with outdoor excursions** such as picking blueberries, getting ice cream, and walking and swimming at DAR. Whole Children and Milestones summer classes are buzzing with activity, **featuring new classes this session:** Theater Games, Intro to Role-playing and Tabletop Games, and Jam Band.

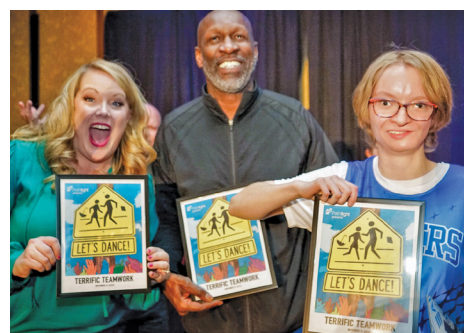
In June, Family Empowerment **picnics in Hampshire and Franklin Counties** saw kids of all ages dash to playgrounds and the splash park, while others enjoyed train rides and mini-golf at Look Park. Autism Connections threw another **hit dance and karaoke party, with a sensory-friendly area** for those who preferred a quieter evening of coloring, crafts, and games.

In our residential program, a group of three **adventure-seeking roommates took a vacation to Lake George with their caregiver, Joy Pearson**. After the roadtrip to their motel, they spent a day at a splash park and relaxed by the pool with a scenic view of the mountains. Anna, Gracie, Sunny and Joy also got some sand under their feet at the lake. Even a tornado one day was no problem—they just had a dance party indoors!

Let's Dance! takes break in 2024

After much deliberation, we've decided to pause Let's Dance! in 2024. **This tough decision reflects our commitment to exploring fresh, innovative fundraising strategies crucial for Pathlight's programs.**

Rising expenses are outstripping our state reimbursement rates, so we need to get creative. Our priority remains to celebrate the talents and contributions of those we serve.



Let's Dance! 2023 team, The Ballers

We have some exciting new fundraising opportunities on the horizon, promising to engage our community in novel ways. To support us now, consider making a donation today at Pathlightgroup.org/give or by scanning the QR code. Stay tuned for information on events this fall to celebrate Whole Children's 20th anniversary (see story page 1).



Fletcher Scholarship awarded to two colleagues

The Donald Fletcher Scholarship, aimed at supporting employees pursuing higher education, was awarded to two Pathlight employees for the first time since its inception in 2018. On June 5, the \$5,000 award was split between Ian Coyne and Adamaris Torres.

“Supporting Pathlight employees through this scholarship program is crucial for both their personal growth and our organization’s success,” said Pathlight Board President Denise Cogman. “This award not only helps employees achieve their academic and professional goals but also strengthens Pathlight by fostering a motivated and well-equipped workforce.”

Adamaris Torres, a direct support professional at Pathlight for over a year, has been helping individuals in their daily lives. After leaving nursing school and focusing on her mental health, she discovered her passion for psychology. She is now studying at American International College, aiming to become a therapist for children and young people. “I want to help people mentally,” said Adamaris.



Ian Coyne (left) and Adamaris Torres (right)

Ian Coyne has over eight years of experience in the human services industry and has been with Pathlight for three and a half years. Starting as residential staff, he is now a placement coordinator in Family Based Living. Ian works closely with individuals, offering support and inspiration. He is pursuing a Master’s Degree in Social Work at Westfield State University.

Ian is thankful to his colleagues at the Pittsfield office for giving him the courage to apply for the scholarship, and added that receiving the scholarship was a big deal to him personally.

“Those small things you do for your people may stick with them for years,” said Ian.

The scholarship was established in honor of former Pathlight executive director Donald Fletcher, who was a strong advocate for education and staff development.

“If anyone is debating about continuing their education or worrying if it’s the wrong thing, you have to do whatever your heart tells you. Throw caution to the wind,” Ian advised.



Family workshops at the ICC

Educational Advocate Alison Greene recently visited the Northampton Inclusive Community Center to present her insightful workshop, “What to Expect: Moving from Early Intervention to School.”

Alison covered IEPs and 504 plans offering a clear roadmap for a smooth transition from Early Intervention to preschool.

Whole Children and Milestones have more workshops planned for parents and caregivers of people of all ages: “Basic Rights in Education,”

scheduled for September and “Advocacy 101: Be the Best Advocate for Your Child” in October. These workshops are made possible thanks to the generous support of the Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts. Join us and empower your advocacy journey.

BUDDY WALK RETURNS

Don’t miss the Buddy Walk on October 5, 2024 at Stanley Park in Westfield. Hosted by the Down Syndrome Resource Group of Western Mass, the walk celebrates people with Down syndrome and raises funds for activities, from supporting parents of newborns to providing educational opportunities, social groups, scholarships, and more for individuals of all ages. Learn more at DownSyndromeWM.org/buddy-walk

Darren FUNd spreads happiness

The Darren FUNd has one goal—to honor the spirit of Darren Harrington by bringing happiness and fun to people served by Pathlight. **In May, caregivers connected to the Family Based Living program were each given a \$50 gift card in appreciation of the care they provide every day.** Recipients used funds for activities such as a mother and son outing, theater tickets, savings toward a trip to Nashville, and more.

In addition, the Darren FUNd supports fun activities all year long. **One recipient was Diego, who used funds for an amazing 3-day trip to New York City.** He enjoyed the sights of Manhattan, took a swim, and had a great time hanging out with his caregiver Alex, roommate Cody, and friend Nathan who is also served by Pathlight.

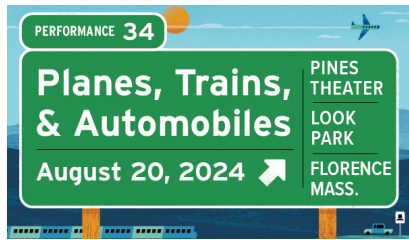


Diego, Nathan and Cody in NYC

Friendship Band taking to the big stage

Whole Children and Milestones' Friendship Band, along with other local favorites, will be rocking Northampton's annual tribute music benefit, "Performance," on **August 20 at the Pines Theater in Look Park, Florence.**

It's the Friendship Band's first time performing at this popular event, which benefits local arts enrichment programs in the Northampton schools.



This year's concert theme, Planes, Trains, and Automobiles, promises an exciting journey with music covers from the likes of The Cars, Journey, The B-52s and Fleetwood Mac.

The Friendship Band, which is celebrating 10 years together, will cover Joan Jett and the Blackhearts songs with hits like "I Love Rock and Roll" and "Bad Reputation." The band is hard at work practicing for their performance.

Singer Aidan O'Donoghue said, "I'm actually really happy and really nervous— but I'm really excited because I'm ready to sing three new songs!"

Tickets for this music benefit are available at State Street Fruit Store in Northampton, Cooper's Corner in Florence, or online at [FreshTix.com/events/performance](https://www.freshTix.com/events/performance).

We're social – Follow us!



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