



Leadership Change at the Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan

Current President Brianna Romines to join Epilepsy Foundation of America; former vice president to assume leadership of Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan

SOUTHFIELD, Mich., June 12, 2024 – The Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan today announced that President Brianna Romines will depart the Foundation the week of July 15, 2024. Romines has been with the Foundation for almost 20 years and has served as president since 2016.

Andrea Schotthoefler, former vice president for the Foundation, will succeed Romines as president. Schotthoefler served the Foundation for more than ten years in various roles and has extensive non-profit and leadership experience.

Romines will join the Epilepsy Foundation of America in the new role of vice president of affiliate strategy and will be responsible for building out a national affiliate network with the ultimate goal of providing epilepsy services through the affiliate-model to every zip code in the U.S. Her experience leading and advocating for the Michigan affiliate made her the ideal candidate. During Romines' tenure at the Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan, some of her accomplishments included:

- Securing the Foundation's financial footing generating more than \$10.3 million in revenue and growing investment reserves more than \$1.45 million since becoming president in 2016.
- Conceptualizing and launching highly successful fundraising events such as the Toasting Hope Tasting Event and the Paul Neu Memorial Golf Classic.
- Lobbying multiple times for epilepsy funding on Capitol Hill and playing a key role in passing legislation such as Michigan HB 412.
- Being recognized as the National Staff Person of the year by the Epilepsy Foundation of America and one of Oakland County's "Elite 40 Under 40."
- Leading the update of all Foundation digital properties which included an ADA-compliant website and building a digital platform for the Foundation's largest fundraiser, the Stroll for Epilepsy™ fundraising walks, in multiple Michigan cities.

“The real privilege for me has been walking alongside so many on the epilepsy journey. We have cheered together, we have fought together, we have cried together,” said Romines. “It has also been my privilege to work alongside Andrea Schotthoefer advocating for our beloved community. Andrea’s incredible leadership skills, passion, and experience make her the perfect fit at the right time to lead and evolve the Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan.”

For almost a decade, Schotthoefer passionately advocated on behalf of those with epilepsy in Michigan. In her role as vice president at the Foundation, she had a direct hand in generating vital funding which directly benefitted many mission activities aimed at serving the epilepsy community, allowing them to best manage the condition and live their best lives.

As president of the Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan, her responsibilities she will oversee all aspects of donor relations, general fundraising activities, budgets, leading the multi-year strategic plan, and supporting, leading, and coaching the Foundation team with a focus on innovation and inclusivity. You can [learn more about her here](#).

Romines added: “I am grateful beyond words for the front row seat I have been gifted by our beloved epilepsy community, right here in Michigan. It is my constant source of inspiration and will continue to be in my new role with the Epilepsy Foundation of America where I will get right to work. Epilepsy is still misunderstood, and this hurts our community in Michigan and throughout the country in real ways such as rampant discrimination, missed/delayed diagnoses, limited funding, lack of knowledge about first aid, and much more. I hold so much hope for the future and will do everything I can to move our collective mission forward.”

The Impact of Epilepsy in Michigan

Based on national data, the Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan estimates the following*:

- There are almost **110,00 people in the Michigan who currently have epilepsy** (approximately 14,000 of whom are children).
- At least 30,000 of these individuals continue to have seizures despite treatment. This is called drug resistant or refractory epilepsy – one-third of people with epilepsy struggle to get seizure control with the current available treatments.
- In Michigan alone, epilepsy accounts for almost **\$500 million in each year** in direct costs (medical) and indirect costs (lost or reduced earnings and productivity).

Facts About Epilepsy

- Epilepsy is the term for a variety of neurological conditions characterized by recurrent unprovoked seizures. A seizure is a brief disturbance in the electrical activity of the brain that causes temporary changes in movement, awareness, feelings, behavior, or other bodily functions.
- 1 in 26 Americans will develop epilepsy in their lifetime and 1 in 10 will have a seizure

- Epilepsy is greater in prevalence than cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis, and Parkinson’s disease **combined**.
- More than 3.4 million Americans and 65 million people worldwide have epilepsy.
- Epilepsy is deadly. Approximately 125,000 people die each year around the world due to epilepsy and the risk of premature death for those with epilepsy is three times higher than average.
- In 2019, the average annual health care spending for epilepsy and seizures alone was \$24.5 billion in the United States.

News Media

For additional information, please contact [Carla Boyd](#), Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan Board of Directors member, at 616-438-7838.

About the Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan

The Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan leads the fight to stop seizures, find a cure, and overcome challenges created by epilepsy. Established in 1948, the Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan is the only statewide nonprofit organization focusing on epilepsy. The Foundation strives to provide a number of important tools, resources, and necessary support that have proven to be valuable in helping individuals understand epilepsy and seizures. For more information, [please click here](#).

**Based on U.S. census data and [2021 National Health Interview Survey data](#)*

Photography

Andrea Schotthoefer



Brianna Romines

