

The Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan leads the fight to overcome the challenges of living with epilepsy and to accelerate therapies to stop seizures, find cures, and save lives.



Left to Right: Allison Beers, Anna Beers, Congressman Jack Bergman Staffer - Ben Montichello, Elleanna Waid, and Shannon Waid

MISSION ACTIVITIES *(Indicating the Strategic Planning Objective it supports)*

- ❖ **Teens Speak Up!** Over March 16-18, the Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan participated in the national Teens Speak Up! & Public Policy Institute in Washington, D.C., a biennial advocacy event led by the Epilepsy Foundation of America. Michigan was represented by teen advocate Anna Beers and her mother, Allison Beers, a Foundation Board Member, as well as TSU alum Elleanna Waid, who returned as a mentor. Shannon Waid, Senior Manager of Education and Outreach, also attended to support the Michigan delegation. Together, they held five scheduled meetings and visited three additional Congressional offices, advocating for improved epilepsy care, disability rights, and increased research funding. Each TSU participant commits to a Year of Service, bringing their advocacy efforts back to communities across Michigan. *(Objective 2, 5)*
- ❖ The Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan extended a welcome to the West Michigan community at its **Open House** on March 6th, held at the Prince Conference Center in Grand Rapids. Eight individuals attended the event, engaging in an exploration of the Foundation's services and programming while interacting with team members. A free, in-person Seizure Recognition & First Aid Training was held in conjunction with the Open House and three people attended. The event was an intimate and impactful way to connect with our West Michigan community members. *(Objective 3)*
- ❖ The **Double the Impact Week of Giving - Matching Gift Campaign** launched on Purple Day® (March 26) and extended through Friday, April 4—two days longer than last year's seven-day campaign. Thanks to the generosity of a dedicated group of donors, every gift was matched dollar-for-dollar up to \$15,000. Now in its seventh year, this inspiring initiative raised a total of \$17,343. With the full match applied, the campaign generated \$32,343 to support the Foundation's mission. *(Objective 1)*
- ❖ In early January, the Foundation launched its **2025 Challenge of the Year: Transportation** - recognizing that reliable access to medical care, employment, and social connection is essential for individuals living with

epilepsy. This initiative will focus on advocacy, education, and resource-sharing throughout the year.

(Objective 2)

- ❖ Nicole Fitzpatrick led a **Seizure Recognition & First Aid Training** for 43 staff members at the WMU Center for Disability Services on January 3rd. The training equipped team members with essential skills to recognize and respond to seizures safely and effectively. *(Objective 2,5)*
- ❖ During the month of January, two interns joined the Foundation to further its programs, services, and mission. On January 7th, Nour Selmane, a student in her final semester at Eastern Michigan University, joined the team as **Public Health Intern** working on the Synergy Support Circles, Transportation Guides, and Seizure Recognition and First Aid Training. On January 13th, Selena Torrez, a senior at Oakland University, joined the team as the **Communications Intern** working on promotion for the Stroll for Epilepsy™ and assisting in maximizing the Foundation's social media reach and impact. Both will serve in their respective roles until April. *(Objective 6)*
- ❖ On January 10th, Shannon Waid led a **Seizure Recognition & First Aid Training** for 29 athletes, coaches, and administrators from the EMU Gymnastics Team, increasing awareness and preparedness within the athletic community. This training was held in conjunction with their Purple Meet, an awareness event that took place on January 26th. *(Objective 2,5)*
- ❖ On January 15th, Shannon Waid presented a **Seizure Recognition & First Aid Training** to the University of Michigan-Dearborn's Public Health Society, building relationships with 49 students and future healthcare leaders and training them in Seizure Recognition and First Aid. One student has since taken steps to become a Foundation volunteer, National Ambassador, and Research Ambassador. *(Objective 2,5)*
- ❖ On January 26th, a special day that honors 1 in 26 people who will be diagnosed with epilepsy, Eastern Michigan University invited the Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan to join them at their annual **Gymnastics Purple Meet**. Started for Ella, an honorary member of the team who is living with epilepsy, this event had a lot of special touches to celebrate epilepsy warriors and raise awareness including an interactive photo booth, purple ribbon tattoos for attendees, and the broadcasting of epilepsy facts and statistics on the big screen during events. *(Objective 2,5)*
- ❖ Starting during the quarter, **Devin's Epilepsy Awareness Fundraiser** is an ongoing project organized by a teen living with epilepsy. Devin utilized an online fundraising page created by the Foundation team to spread the word about services the Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan provides and raise funds to support our mission. Her page has raised \$1,256.24 to date! *(Objective 1,2, 5)*
- ❖ On January 30th, Shannon Waid and Renee Roederer provided a virtual presentation to 159 Michigan school nurses through the Michigan Association of School Nurses (MASN) during the **MASN Winter Institute**. The session offered a refresher on Seizure First Aid, use of devices and rescue medications, and an overview of Functional Seizures (PNES). *(Objective 2,5)*
- ❖ On February 10th, also known as International Epilepsy Day, the Foundation launched its TikTok account expanding its social media reach to five social media platforms. *(Objective 2,3, 5)*
- ❖ During the quarter, Nicole Fitzpatrick and volunteer Alex Hopper launched a new monthly **U.P. Virtual Call & Connect Network Group** specifically for people living with epilepsy in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. This virtual meetup fosters connection and support in a region where resources can be limited. *(Objective 3)*
- ❖ On February 13th, Nicole Fitzpatrick presented **Epilepsy in the Workplace** to approximately 30 City of Detroit employees as part of their Disability Awareness Employee Resource Group. The virtual session focused on epilepsy awareness and inclusion in the workplace. *(Objective 2,5)*
- ❖ On February 19th, Aubrey Manchester became the first trained **Epilepsy Awareness Ambassador** to lead a Seizure First Aid Training on behalf of the Foundation. Mentored by Shannon Waid, Aubrey delivered a successful session to her high school peers, training 380 people in Seizure Recognition and First Aid, marking a new chapter in youth-led advocacy. *(Objective 2,5)*

- ❖ On February 20th, the Foundation hosted its first virtual **Book Club** of 2025, featuring *Brain Teasers: Living with Epilepsy and Multiple Sclerosis* by Jade Alexis. Thirteen participants, including the author herself, engaged in meaningful discussion and shared experiences. *(Objective 2,5)*
- ❖ On March 3rd, Nicole Fitzpatrick led the **Law Enforcement Seizure First Aid Training** for 29 cadets at the Lansing Community College Police and Fire Academy, equipping future first responders with vital skills to recognize and appropriately respond to seizures. *(Objective 2,5)*
- ❖ A **Health System Visit** took place during the quarter with Andrea Schotthoefer and Renee Roederer presenting to epileptologists at Corewell Health West in Grand Rapids to share about the Foundation's mission, vision, and programs, strengthening collaborative partnerships in epilepsy care. *(Objective 2, 5)*
- ❖ Nicole Fitzpatrick visited Hope Network's Transportation Department on March 6th for a **Transportation Services Meeting** to learn about their extensive services in Kent County. These include paratransit, non-emergency medical transport, employer-based options, and self-pay services—valuable insights that will inform our work around the 2025 Transportation Challenge. *(Objective 2)*
- ❖ The **4th Annual Flip for a Cure Pinball Fundraiser** was hosted on March 8th by the Krajcar Family, with support from Wild Side Brewing Company. This much-anticipated event has grown each year, and this year featured a brand-new element - custom merch to spread awareness! Through participation and donations, they raised \$4,507 to fuel the mission of the Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan! *(Objective 1,5)*
- ❖ On March 12-14th, Nicole Fitzpatrick and Renee Roederer attended the **Public Health Institute** of the Epilepsy Foundation of America on the campus of Howard University. The theme of this year's conference was "Building Inclusive Communities: Addressing Epilepsy & Educational Disparities." Nicole Fitzpatrick attended the pre-session which unveiled a new training course for students, titled "Epilepsy & Seizure Safe Classrooms." Renee Roederer served as the facilitator for the panel, "Engaging Youth and Young Adults to Address Epilepsy Disparities," which included Elizabeth Smart and Maanya Tarnal, both former interns at the Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan. Renee Roederer also served as a panelist for the closing panel, "Public Health Approaches to Address Epilepsy Disparities," in which she discussed the 2023 Epilepsy Needs Based Assessment. *(Objective 2, 5)*
- ❖ On March 15th, the Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan proudly showcased the **Big Brain** at the National Walk for Epilepsy on the National Mall in Washington, DC. This interactive display brought brain health to life and helped raise awareness about epilepsy through hands-on education. As thousands gathered to walk and advocate, the exhibit served as a powerful tool to foster understanding and promote inclusion for the 3.4 million people in the U.S. living with epilepsy. *(Objective 2, 5)*
- ❖ The City of Howell united on Purple Day® to host a **Purple Day in Howell** on March 23rd. Held in honor of Cooper, a young epilepsy warrior, the day featured a two-mile walk and gained support and participation from numerous local businesses. A grand total of \$1,245 was raised! *(Objective 1, 5)*
- ❖ A **Purple Day Fundraiser** was held in Claire on March 26 by Monica, the sister of a person with epilepsy. Monica sold baked goods and promoted epilepsy awareness at a local downtown sporting goods store. We are still awaiting a grand total raised from this endeavor and are so grateful for these outreach efforts in Northern Michigan. *(Objective 5)*
- ❖ A Dine-to-Donate at Pita Way in Dewitt was organized by Emily Romblom, who is a person living with epilepsy. She spread the word, and many folks came to join her at Pita Way on March 26 to recognize Purple Day®. Their participation raised \$300! *(Objective 1,5)*
- ❖ The **Individual Advocacy Program** assisted with 47 interactions made on behalf of 20 people with epilepsy and their family members. These statistics represent a 213% increase in interactions and a 43% increase in individuals served compared to the 2024 first quarter! *(Objective 2)*
- ❖ The **Call & Connect Network** included five different groups in the quarter. **Adults with Epilepsy**, which is phone-based, brought together 16 participants in this weekly discussion group. There were 13 calls with the average number of participants per call being 8. The **Young Adult Group**, which takes place via Zoom, brought together 10 participants in this bi-weekly group. There were 6 meetings with an average of 7

participants per meeting. The **Parent Group**, which takes place via Zoom, brought together 12 participants in this bi-weekly group. There were 12 meetings with an average of 3 participants per meeting. The **Older Adult & Caregiver Group**, which takes place via Zoom, brought together 11 participants in this weekly group. There were 12 meetings with an average of 7 participants per meeting. The Foundation's newest group, **UP Virtual Meetup Group**, which takes place via Zoom, brought together 7 participants in this monthly group. There were 3 meetings with an average of 3 participants per meeting. *(Objective 3)*

- ❖ During the quarter, in partnership with Andrea Thomas, MA, LLP, Psychologist at Henry Ford Comprehensive Epilepsy Center, the Foundation held two sessions of the **Mindfulness Moments initiative**. There were 14 people attending with an average of 12 participants per session. This is a monthly opportunity for epilepsy community members to meet one another and practice mindfulness and meditation together. *(Objective 3)*
- ❖ The **Here for You Helpline** assisted the epilepsy community with 393 interactions during the quarter. This is a 10% increase in contacts compared to the first quarter of 2024. Interactions during the quarter resulted in 113 hours of staff time being contributed with an average call time of 17 minutes per contact. This represents a 13% increase in time compared to last year's first quarter. *(Objective 2, 3, 4, 5)*
- ❖ During the quarter, there were 588 new contacts entered into **Salesforce**. Contacts represent Helpline communication, registrations, and donors. *(Objective 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)*
- ❖ **Seizure Recognition & First Aid Trainings (Objective 5):**
 - **MICHIGAN:** Seizure First Aid ⇒ 7 presentations to approximately 630 School Staff/Students/First Responders/Health & Human Professionals or Company Employees