July - September 2026

Quarterly Report

Prepared by the Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan

The Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan improves the lives of people affected by epilepsy through education, advocacy, research, and connection.



Snagging the Winning Bid at the Toasting Hope Tasting Event

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

- The **18th Annual Toasting Hope Tasting Event** was truly a night to remember! On September 18, more than 250 guests came together at The Townsend Hotel in Birmingham for an inspiring evening of celebration, generosity, and hope, to raise $157,000 in support of the Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan. Emceed by WXYZ Channel 7 Anchor Alicia Smith, the event featured an array of delicious food and beverage tastings, incredible Live and Silent Auctions, a Live Drawing, a wine pull experience, and an energetic performance by the Killer Flamingos that kept guests dancing throughout the night. Beyond the excitement and festivities, the evening offered a meaningful opportunity to connect with the Foundation's mission and witness the life-changing impact of its programs and services. One of the night's most touching moments came through a special mission video that captured the magic of Camp, sharing the joy, friendships, and sense of belonging that make the experience so meaningful for children affected by epilepsy. The event was made possible by our sponsors, who contributed a total of $62,500. Additionally, the Live Auction raised $8,450, the Silent Auction generated $15,345, the live drawing sold 215 drawing tickets for a total of $5,590 and generous event donations totaled $39,193. ***(Objective 1, 4, 6)***
- This year, 50 campers and siblings with epilepsy attended **Kids Camp** for a week of adventure, friendship, and confidence-building in a safe, supportive environment. Campers enjoyed archery, boating, swimming, campfires, and so much more while connecting with others who understand their experiences. Camp was made possible by more than 30 dedicated volunteers, including our medical team, along with the generous support of our sponsors, grant partners, and staff. This year's new operational model with North Star Reach also provided valuable insights to strengthen future planning and communication. ***(Objective 2)***.
- The Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan launched its first **Region 1 Advertising Campaign** as part of an expanded outreach strategy to increase awareness and engagement across the Upper Peninsula. The first ad

in the *Marquette Monthly* was submitted on June 10th going live on July 1st. Each advertisement directs readers to a dedicated regional landing page on the Foundation's website, providing access to educational resources, support services, newsletter sign-up opportunities, helpline information, event updates, and regional mailing lists. This targeted approach allows the Foundation to better measure engagement and evaluate the effectiveness of outreach efforts while expanding awareness of epilepsy resources within local communities. ***(Objective 4)***.

- The Stroll for Epilepsy™ is the Foundation's largest event of the year, uniting epilepsy warriors and the community that supports them from all across the state. This year, the Stroll was hosted in Midland, Metro Detroit, and Grand Rapids with virtual participation options available, ensuring accessibility for all. Newly added to this year was a self-care table in the activity area, with a focus on mindfulness and stress reduction. Finishing out the season was the Grand Rapids location raising a total of $55,055 with 23 teams, 401 participants, and $19,174 in sponsorships. It was wonderful to watch guests of all ages get excited over the interactive experiences that help with mental wellness. A huge thank you to all participants, volunteers, and sponsors. Their continued support makes this event possible and helps to ensure that no one in Michigan has to face epilepsy alone. ***(Objective 2, 4, 6)***
- In partnership with Michigan Youth with Epilepsy in Transition (MiYET), we offered the **Epilepsy Self-Management, Advocacy, and Resilience for Teens (E-SMART)** program from June 17th to July 22nd. Jessica McMahan facilitated the program with assistance from Vy Ai Le, Maanya Tarnal, and Katerina Tasevski. Twelve teens completed the program, resulting in a 100% completion rate. On the post-program survey, 100% of participants shared that the information on epilepsy and related issues was "excellent." In the open-ended questions, they also shared that, "I liked how we were like a family" and "I really liked that I got to meet others that were more like me than most folks I meet!", and that E-SMART gave them the "confidence and guts to share dark stuff over time." ***(Objective 1, 2)***
- During the quarter, Nicole Fitzpatrick co-facilitated the **Chronic Disease Self-Management Program (CDSMP)** with two new certified instructors, Board Member Stephanie Bayma and Professional Advisor Stephanie Maul, that brought their wisdom and experience to the program. Two participants completed the 6-week series, gaining practical tools to manage epilepsy and other health conditions more effectively. ***(Objective 1, 2)***
- On July 25th, the **Annual Rock N' Blues Rib Festival** returned to Saginaw, Michigan, bringing more than 1,500 community members together in memory of DeLeonce Williams Jr., who lived with epilepsy and tragically passed away in 2014 due to gun violence. Hosted annually by his father, DeLeonce Williams Sr., the festival provides an opportunity to honor his son while raising awareness of epilepsy and connecting attendees with valuable resources. This marked the third year of the event, and the first year the Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan was a featured partner, with more than $90 raised in support of its mission. ***(Objective 1, 4, 6)***
- On July 25th, **Cricket for a Cause**, was hosted by community member Maanav Majmudar. Combining his passion for cricket with his desire to make a difference, Maanav brought his community together for a friendly cricket match benefiting the Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan. The event raised more than $50 and helped create an opportunity for participants to learn more about epilepsy and support those impacted by it. (***Objective 1, 4, 6)***
- At the July Board Meeting held at the Meijer Headquarters in Grand Rapids, the Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan awarded three students with the **Dakota Pequeno Memorial Scholarship**. Three $1,000 scholarships were awarded this year due to the generous support of Kellie Jankowski (Dakota's mother), Jason & Brooke Geisz, and an anonymous donor. Congratulations to Taylor Caza, Stephen Mihos, Ella Van Wagner. Scholarship winners were provided with the opportunity to read their personal essays at the meeting. (***Objective 2)***
- On August 12th, Renee Roederer joined Mo Slotnick, Director of Programs and Partnerships for the Epilepsy Foundation of America, to present during a quarterly update call for the **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)**. Together, they highlighted the Behavioral Health Preferred Provider Network initiative and shared how mini-grant funding has helped EF Michigan expand our Seizure Smart Mental Health

Professional Network -- a referral network of trained mental health professionals who can support individuals living with epilepsy or functional seizures. ***(Objective 1, 3, 6)***

- On August 12th, Shannon Waid and Nicole Fitzpatrick facilitated a **Rural Health Focus Group** with four participants from Michigan's Upper Peninsula — two people living with epilepsy and two caregivers. Participants shared meaningful insights about gaps and challenges related to healthcare, transportation, and employment, while also highlighting the strengths and resilience of Upper Peninsula communities. Following the focus group, the Foundation compiled participants' responses into Key Findings documents to help inform future programs, outreach, and advocacy efforts in the region. ***(Objective 5)***
- During August, the first two **Community Day** events created meaningful connections and introduced new families to the Foundation. Purple Out at UWM Field in Utica welcomed at least 80 community members, including Dina and her husband, who discovered the event through the ballpark's website. They left feeling supported and hopeful, stayed connected with EFM, and purchased tickets to Toasting Hope. The Potter Park Zoo Event in Lansing welcomed 10 guests despite the rain, including two families new to the Foundation. Both events demonstrated the impact of outreach and the value of being present for those who need connection and support. ***(Objective 2, 4)***
- On August 18th, Hutchinson Automotive hosted a workplace **Charity BBQ** on behalf of the Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan. This was their second year raising awareness and funds through this event. It was an incredible success, welcoming team members across their whole office and raising over $400. ***(Objective 4, 6)***
- In partnership with Michigan Youth with Epilepsy in Transition (MiYET), the Foundation created an on-demand **Back to School Conference** which premiered on August 15. For the first time, the conference was offered as a YouTube playlist, allowing participants to easily access individual sessions on topics most relevant to them. Sessions included Key Transitions: Moving from Elementary to Middle, High School and College; IEPs, 504 Plans, and Seizure Action Plans, Making Them Work; and Building Your Future: Connecting Students to Career and Independence Supports, presented by Michigan Rehabilitation Services. To date, the conference has 126 views, which is 26% higher than this time in 2025. ***(Objective 1, 3)***
- On August 20th, Andrea Schotthoefer, Renee Roederer, and Nicole Fitzpatrick participated in an introductory meeting with **Uber Health** to learn more about its transportation services and explore how the platform could help address transportation barriers for members of the epilepsy community. ***(Objective 3)***
- On August 20th, Nicole Fitzpatrick facilitated a virtual **Book Club** conversation with author Rolando Ramirez about his book *Rising Above Epilepsy: Breaking Through Constant Fear and Uncertainty*. Three participants joined the discussion, sharing a meaningful conversation about the role of storytelling in their experiences with epilepsy and the ways sharing personal stories can foster connection, understanding, and community. ***(Objective 2, 4)***
- On August 22nd, the second annual **Riding for Laura, Smiling All the Way Poker Run** took place in Lapeer. Although the weather had cloudy skies and rain, it did not dampen the participant's energy. This event began last year in honor of Laura, a young adult who died due to epilepsy-related causes and has continued to have incredible community engagement with 8 motorcycles participating in the ride and attendees raising over $1,000 through donations! ***(Objective 4, 6)***
- Renee Roederer represented the Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan as an exhibitor at an event hosted by the **Michigan Chapter of the National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners (NAPNAP)** on August 21st. In preparation for the event, Shannon Waid worked with nurse practitioner Lexi Mott of C.S. Mott Children's Hospital, providing Foundation materials to support her presentation on the Seizure Safe Schools Act. Together, these efforts helped connect pediatric healthcare professionals with information and resources to better support children and youth living with epilepsy. ***(Objective 1, 4)***
- From August 25th – August 28th, Renee Roederer and Nicole Fitzpatrick attended the **Epilepsy Foundation of America's Public Health Institute** in Tulsa, joining colleagues from across the country for learning, collaboration, and shared strategy around epilepsy public health. Both represented Michigan as presenters: Nicole shared the Foundation's work providing seizure recognition and first aid training to law enforcement

officers and firefighters and presented a poster highlighting the impact of our Social Determinants of Health Mini-Grants. Renee presented on the impact of the Here for You Helpline, highlighting how the Helpline serves as an entry point to information, support, and deeper connection with the epilepsy community. ***(Objective 1, 3, 4)***

- In September, Jack Perrizo joined the Foundation's team as its **Marketing & Communications Intern**. A longtime volunteer and active participant in our camp programs, Jack brings a strong connection to the Foundation and our community. The three-month internship will provide Jack with hands-on experience in nonprofit marketing, content development, creative design, project management, and data organization. ***(Objective 4)***
- Beginning in September, Students for Epilepsy Advocacy and Mentorship (SEAM) launched at Northern Michigan University as a new **Synergy Support Circle**, led by NMU student Alex Hopper. The formation of SEAM was shaped through the new campus club toolkit created by Volunteer Coordinator Maanya Tarnal to help students develop epilepsy-awareness organizations on college and university campuses. SEAM creates a new opportunity for students to build awareness, connection, and mentorship around epilepsy while expanding the Foundation's presence in the Upper Peninsula. ***(Objective 2, 4)***
- On September 11th, Renee Roederer presented "Seizures and Brain Injury: Recognition, Response, and Community Care" at the **Brain Injury Association of Michigan Annual Conference**. Approximately 80 people attended the breakout session, which focused on seizure recognition and response in the context of brain injury and community care. Nicole Fitzpatrick also attended to represent the Foundation and connect with conference participants and partners. Approximately 800 people attended the conference overall. ***(Objective 1, 4)***
- In September, the Foundation hired **Cathexis Partners** to assess our CRM and technology systems following ongoing Salesforce challenges with usability, reporting, data quality, and outside support needs. The assessment will clarify our needs and evaluate whether Salesforce or another platform is the best long-term fit. (***Objective 6)***
- On September 17th, Andrea Schotthoefer and Renee Roederer visited the new **D. Dan and Betty Kahn Health Care Pavilion** at Michigan Medicine. Dr. Nicholas Beimer provided a tour of the facility, including the Epilepsy Monitoring Unit. Following the tour, Andrea and Renee presented an overview of the Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan's programs and services to medical team members from Michigan Medicine and C.S. Mott Children's Hospital, strengthening connections and opportunities for collaboration. ***(Objective 4)***
- Renee Roederer attended the virtual Henry Ford Comprehensive Epilepsy Center's **Epilepsy Support Group** on September 17th. Facilitated by Andrea Thomas, MA, LLP, she shared information about the mission, programs, and services of the Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan, as well as her personal journey living with epilepsy. ***(Objective 2, 4)***
- On September 23rd & 24th, the Foundation hosted a **Community Day** in partnership with the Northern Michigan University Center for Rural Health in Marquette. The events included an advanced screening of *Under the Lights* at NMU's Northern Center, co-sponsored by Meijer, UCB, and RESA. NMU student Alex Hopper also represented SEAM (Students for Epilepsy Advocacy and Mentorship), a new student organization on campus. On September 24, Nicole Fitzpatrick led a Seizure Recognition and First Aid training attended by 41 participants. The events also received coverage from TV6 & FOX UP, helping expand epilepsy awareness throughout the Upper Peninsula. ***(Objective 1, 2, 4)***
- On September 24th and September 25th, Renee Roederer traveled throughout the Keweenaw Peninsula for an **Outreach Tour** to strengthen relationships with healthcare providers, community organizations, and educational institutions. During the tour, she met with partners and delivered epilepsy outreach packets to 12 organizations, including Michigan Technological University, Copper Country Community Mental Health, the Western Upper Peninsula Health Department, and seven hospitals and health clinics. Supported by the Foundation's 2026 Social Determinants of Health Mini-grant, the outreach focused on expanding awareness of epilepsy resources, strengthening referral networks, and increasing access to support for people with epilepsy in rural Upper Peninsula communities. ***(Objective 1, 3, 4)***

- On September 26th, the Foundation hosted a **Community Day** in Traverse City. An advanced screening of *Under the Lights* at The Dennos Museum was enjoyed by community members attending. The greatest impact came from the meaningful conversations and connections that strengthened our epilepsy community in Northern Michigan. The survey completed indicated that 88.9 percent of those attending feel more comfortable reaching out to the Foundation for information or support following the event. ***(Objective 2, 4)***
- During the 3rd quarter, the Foundation continued building **Community Partnerships** in the Lansing area. Nicole Fitzpatrick attended the Cedar Creek behavioral health facility groundbreaking on July 15, where she connected with community leaders and reconnected with the Association for Children's Mental Health. This relationship led to the Foundation returning as an exhibitor at the Association for Children's Mental Health Annual Conference on September 29. The Foundation also continued developing its relationship with the Resolution Services Center, exploring opportunities for the two organizations to support each other's work. ***(Objective 3, 4)***
- The **Individual Advocacy Program** assisted with 24 interactions made on behalf of 21 people with epilepsy and their family members. ***(Objective 1)***
- The **Call & Connect Network** included six different groups in the quarter, all taking place via Zoom. The **Young Adult Group** brought together 19 participants in this bi-weekly group. There were 5 meetings with an average of 9 participants per meeting. The **Parent Group** brought together 8 participants in this bi-weekly group. There were 13 meetings with an average of 2 participants per meeting. The **Older Adult & Caregiver Group** brought together 13 participants in this weekly group. There were 13 meetings with an average of 7 participants per meeting. The **UP Virtual Meetup Group** brought together 3 participant in this monthly group. There were 3 meetings with an average of 1 participant per meeting. The **Adults – All Ages Group**, brought together 15 participants during the quarter. There were 5 meetings with an average of 7 participants per meeting. The **Adults – 30s & 40s Group**, brought together 12 participants during the quarter. There were 6 meetings with an average of 5 participants per meeting. ***(Objective 2)***
- During the quarter, in partnership with Andrea Thomas, MA, LLP, Psychologist at Henry Ford Comprehensive Epilepsy Center, the Foundation held three sessions of the **Mindfulness Moments** initiative. There were 17 people attending with an average of 10 participants per session. This is a monthly opportunity for epilepsy community members to meet one another and practice mindfulness and meditation together. ***(Objective 2)***
- The **Here for You Helpline** assisted the epilepsy community with 302 interactions during the quarter. Interactions during the quarter resulted in 76 hours of staff time being contributed. The average call time was 15 minutes per contact. ***(Objective 1, 2, 3, 4)***
- **Seizure Recognition & First Aid Trainings** ***(Objective 5)***:
    - **MICHIGAN:** Seizure First Aid ⇨ 8 presentations to approximately 544 School Staff/Students/First Responders/Health & Human Professionals or Company Employees