



“A Different Kind of Healing” in Different Ways

Amid a Pandemic, Hole in the Wall is Keeping Camp Magic within Reach

The Hole in the Wall Gang Camp has always been guided by Founder Paul Newman’s spirit of innovation, with the staff constantly searching for new ways to provide hope and healing regardless of the situation or location. Starting as a summer program, the organization has grown to include fall and spring Family Weekends, Hospital Outreach programming in more than 40 locations, and Family Outreach home visits, parent and caregiver retreats and regional events.

So, in March, when the world changed in an instant and we found ourselves facing unprecedented challenges, the entire organization began to pivot with a purpose amid the COVID-19 pandemic. “Right when this all started, we knew it was our responsibility to continue our mission and provide ‘a different kind of healing’ in different ways,” said Camp’s Chief Program Officer Hilary Axtmayer. “We were hearing from our families that they were facing even more challenges and were feeling even more isolated, and we knew that they needed the magic of Camp now more than ever.”

Within days, the Hole in the Wall staff mobilized and began offering virtual story times, crafts and other activities across its social media channels, including daily programming on Facebook Live so that campers and families could interact with their friends from Hole in the Wall in real time. And while the content provided helpful distractions and meaningful connections for families, Hole in the Wall knew it needed to go further.

“Simultaneous with creating social media content, we began developing virtual and alternative programs to mirror

all of Camp’s in-person programming,” Hilary said. “And what we started seeing, once again, is that so much of the magic of Camp is in the connections and the opportunity to share experiences with others who just get it. It’s more than a physical space or place. It is a community, a spirit, a way of being.”

Family Weekends were the first program offerings to be hosted virtually via Zoom in mid-April. Over three weekends, 43 families were able to enjoy our traditional opening campfire, breakfast sing song, afternoon activities, Stage Night performances and more. For families, the opportunity to be silly and connect with others was just what they needed.

At the same time, the Hospital Outreach® program (HOP) began filming Camp-style games and activities to be streamed via closed circuit TV stations within our partner hospitals, and the staff also started hosting virtual play groups and bedside visits. “HOP’s faces and energy have been incredibly missed in the hospital during this time, but we sincerely appreciate all your efforts to continue to connect,” said Kendra Frederick, manager, Child Life Program at UMASS Memorial Medical Center. “We’ve been sharing your stories, crafts, games, cooking shows, etc. on our UMass Memorial Medical Center Facebook page as well as encouraging kids to watch from their hospital rooms!! It’s a bright light in this (sometimes) dark time!”

Family Outreach also began offering weekly Caregiver Cabin Chats to give parents the opportunity to connect as they share their stories and struggles during these changing times.

Amid the development of all these new programs, Camp was also very much focused on its 33rd summer and how to make sure that the 1,300 campers who had applied to attend a weeklong session would still be able to have a memorable Hole in the Wall experience. In May, these families received a special invitation to join in the magic with three different experiences to choose from – weeklong summer sessions filled with an interactive array of live and pre-recorded virtual Camp content; a mailing series delivering weekly projects and culminating with the creation of special Camp keepsakes; and an exciting variety of special interest clubs allowing those with similar passions to learn new things while sharing the experience with kindred spirits. And for those families looking to get in on the action, our staff will be providing virtual home visits, bringing Camp magic right into their home for the “hole” family to enjoy.”

Though this time has been challenging for all, everyone at Hole in the Wall remains grateful for the opportunity to continue bringing hope and healing to our children and families. And perhaps one silver lining from this period of programmatic pivoting is that many of these virtual and alternative offerings will very likely continue on and help to supplement in-person programming. “We have discovered that there is a real need for more of these Camp connections, and virtual platforms will provide us greater freedom, frequency and flexibility beyond COVID-19,” Hilary said. “We hope to continue offering caregiver cabin chats, home visits and other virtual activities well into the future.”



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In Their Own Words

A reflection on Camp from Camper Mom Sherry

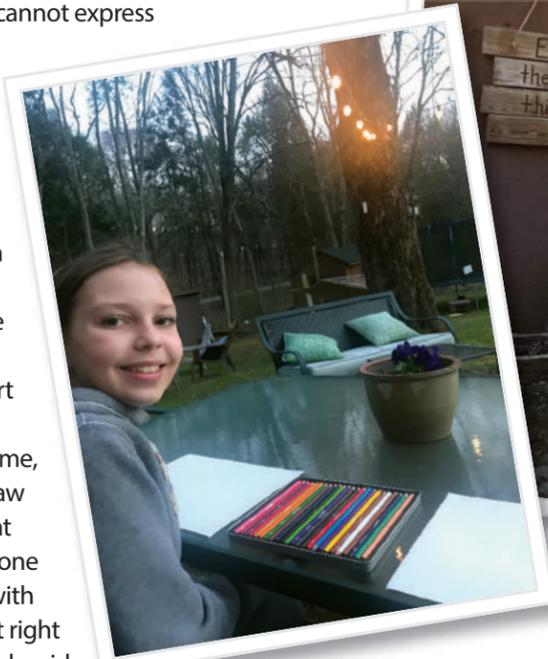
We all find ourselves living in a world with so many unknowns right now. Being quarantined to our homes, the kids being taught in a new way through eLearning and missing their peers and teachers, and not knowing when you'll get to see family and friends in person again. Many of the joys and events we were all looking forward to were canceled in an instant. It takes a toll on our hearts and minds.

A bright light for our hearts has been our Camp family. Hole in the Wall has been going live online with games, stories and activities. Taking part in these Camp activities and seeing familiar Camp faces has put joy and a sense of connection back into our lives. After the initial shock of this "new normal," our family has enjoyed this piece of virtual Camp from our home.

One week in particular, when life was very heavy on my shoulders, my daughter Danica and I saw that Camp was hosting "Relaxing Zendooning with Rebecca." Danica suggested that we set up outside, giving us the Camp feel. It was just what my heart and head needed. We put on our patio lights, set up the phone so we could see Rebecca live, and had our paper and colored

pencils ready to go. I cannot express how wonderful it was to have that moment with my daughter and Camp. I can honestly say for that half hour I was no longer a mom quarantined with my family, carrying all the worries that brings. I was at Camp. My heart and head were fully there for that entire time, nowhere else. I also saw my daughter with that spark in her eye - the one she gets when she's with Camp. That takes a lot right now; to be able to push aside the reality of life and how the world is at this moment.

We are so thankful for Camp giving us these moments to escape reality. Even when we're confined to our own home, we feel we have a little piece of time at Hole in the Wall. It also helps bring back Camp memories, which make for great family flashbacks.



Facebook Live sessions have brought so much joy and connection to the Bruening Family during these uncertain times.

Some of our other virtual camp favorites have been making mug cakes with Frankie, interacting live with her and custom choosing our favorite flavors-yummy, and all the amazing Chef Dan recipes that Camp is sharing with us! Everyone who has been to Camp knows how amazing the Dining Hall and Camp food is! I'm not kidding when I tell you our family was over the moon excited when the "Camp Brownie

Recipe" was posted! Yes, Danica made them right away and yes, our family of four ate the whole 9x13 pan in less than 24 hours!! No joke! Tasting Camp brownies brought us right back into the Dining Hall with all the Camp love we feel when we are there.

Oh, how we miss Camp dearly, but oh how grateful we are that Camp is continuing to spread Camp magic to all of us despite the physical distance.

Family Flats

Stories from current and former camper families.

It would be very easy for Bill Smith to focus on the negative. His son, Michael, has short bowel syndrome and an acquired brain injury. He requires constant care, has a nurse who accompanies him to school every day and has significant memory challenges that affect him constantly. But instead of lamenting over what happened to Michael, Bill looks at the positives that his family has found in their lives as a result.

At the top of the list is The Hole in the Wall Gang Camp. "Going to the Rare Disease Family Camp was well worth it," Bill said. "For Michael and his brother to be able to experience the joy and freedom they find at Camp is a nice thing. It's pretty rare they have these opportunities where my wife and I feel comfortable enough for them to do things without us."

Beyond the carefree fun afforded his boys, Bill has been grateful for the opportunities the family has found through resource sharing sessions at Family Camp and being surrounded by such a caring community of support. For instance, Michael has become involved with Team Impact after the family learned about it at Camp. And Matthew, Michael's older brother, has had the opportunity to learn about the importance of giving back.

"Camp has exposed Matthew to people who are giving to and caring about total strangers," Bill said. "It's allowed me to have conversations with him about giving back, and I hope that someday, he

will do something great with these experiences."

But the magic of Hole in the Wall doesn't end at the Camp gates, and that's something Bill knows very well. At Parent and Caregiver Retreats, he's not only found encouragement from the other parents in attendance, but he also has the opportunity to lift others up and help those who may be struggling. Though getting to the weekend wasn't easy - he and his wife, Lisa, had to go separately to ensure Michael would have proper care - it speaks to the family's commitment to seize all opportunities and not let Michael's diagnosis keep them from new experiences.

The family also makes a point to regularly attend CampOut events, traveling from their home in New Hampshire to regional Campfires in Massachusetts. "Because of Michael's memory challenges, it's important to continually do things that reinforce his experiences," Bill said. "CampOut keeps the Camp connection going for Michael and keeps him excited about Camp."

And though the family wasn't able to attend their planned Family Weekend this spring, they were grateful for the opportunity to participate in Family Weekends virtually. "The boys enjoyed the songs and being able to show their talents in any form that they are comfortable with," Bill said. "And it gave us some respite as parents to have the boys so



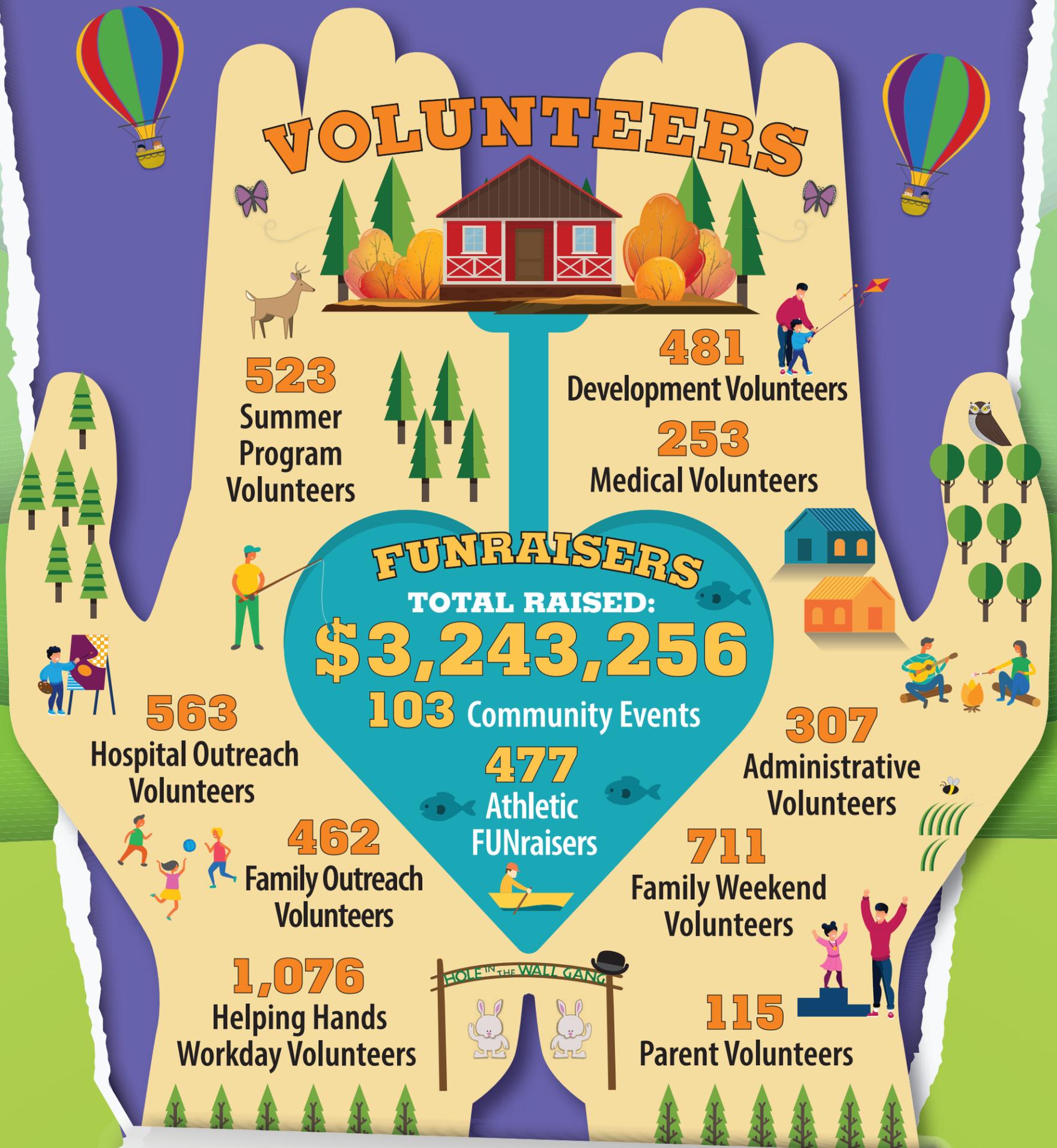
enthusied with seeing familiar people from Camp."

If you'd like to learn more about Camp's programming - virtual and otherwise - please contact Hilary Axtmayer, chief program officer, at hilary.axtmayer@holeinthewallgang.org

No one ever said you have to kiss your OWN fish at Camp. Michael thought it was more fun for his family pal, Michael Brogan, to give his fish a great big kiss.

Thank you to our 2019 Volunteers & FUNraisers!

We celebrate the thousands of volunteers, athletes and community-event organizers who helped make 2019 an outstanding year for Camp and our campers! Your impact is felt across the organization, and we are so grateful for all that you do!



"This was one of the most rewarding opportunities that I have been able to be a part of. I am grateful for the opportunity to be able to make a difference in someone's life. I cannot wait to be able to come back again."

– Hole in the Wall volunteer



"It's all about the kids, so you can't stop; you can't quit. It's been a journey that I hope I can keep doing. It's made me such a better person and makes me feel like I've made a difference in the world."

– Daisy Kosack, FUNraiser

2019 Weekend Programs were so much



As with all other Hole in the Wall programming, Weekend Programs extend the hope and healing of Camp to the entire family, as well as those who have aged out of our traditional programs. These weekends offer friendship, support and "a different kind of healing" to those most isolated and in need of Camp magic.



Our Events

Highlights of our latest benefit events and those to come...

For more than a quarter century, the Big Apple Bash and Beantown Bash have been raising significant funds to support the seriously ill children and families Camp serves, and in 2019, the two events brought in a combined \$3.5 million!

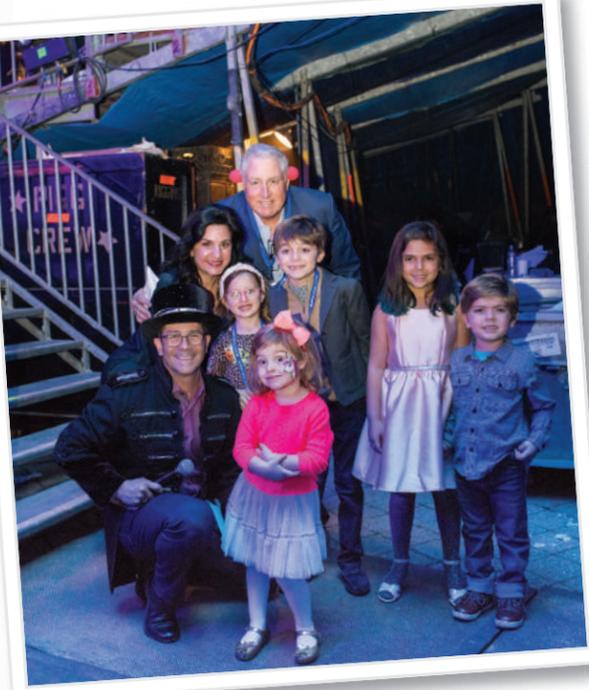
Championed by four longstanding friends of Camp, the two Bashes find their successes in a unique formula built upon community. In New York, Stefani LiDestri and Peter Schottland, along with their families and family companies – LiDestri Food and Drink and American Packaging Corporation – have joined forces to rally business associates, vendors and others in their network to support Camp at the Big Apple Bash, where attendees are treated to a private performance of the Big Apple Circus followed by a celebration at the iconic Tavern on the Green. Similarly, in Boston, Andy Crowley and his family along with their company Ken's Foods and event co-chair Billy Cotter inspire Camp support from

their networks, with attendees of the Beantown Bash treated to a fun-filled evening at Boston Children's Museum.

But the families' friendships with Camp go much deeper. Andy Crowley, Giovanni LiDestri and Peter Schottland are longstanding members of Camp's Board of Directors, while other family members like Stefani LiDestri have been active volunteers in Hole in the Wall programming. And LuLu's Lodge, which was built through the generosity of the Crowley family, is named in honor of matriarch Louise Crowley.

Over the years, a playful rivalry reminiscent of the Yankees and the Red Sox has developed between the two events, creating a growing community of support always working to raise the bar as they "raise a little hell" and a "hole" lot of money in support of our mission. But at the end of the day, it is Hole in the Wall's children and families that are the true winners, along with everyone who celebrates the Camp magic they help create while attending these two incredible events.

"The Beantown and Big Apple Bashes have been an absolute smash in helping bring hope and healing to



A DIFFERENT KIND OF HEALING - A DIFFERENT KIND OF GALA

Hole in the Wall's Gala is Going Virtual

Camp Is Everywhere: A Hole in the Wall Celebration of Hope and Healing Sunday, September 13, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.

The show must go on, and it will! The successful Gala fundraising tradition Founder Paul Newman envisioned has evolved over time, but the touchstone of the festivities remains the same—the variety show with campers performing musical numbers, families sharing inspirational stories and celebrity friends joining them. Our community remains at the heart of Gala, no matter what shape the show takes.

This fall, we are bringing the magic of the Hole in the Wall Gala safely and directly into the homes of longtime supporters and new Camp friends, creating a virtual broadcast experience with new elements!

Stay tuned this summer as we unveil more exciting details on how you can join us!

the seriously ill children and family members in our care," said Camp CEO Jimmy Canton. "To find such generous support from friends in both New York and Boston is doubly humbling and heartwarming, and we could not be more grateful for these families and their friends who continue to open their hearts to Hole in the Wall."

"To find such generous support from friends in both New York and Boston is doubly humbling and heartwarming and we could not be more grateful for these families and friends..."

The Big Apple Bash and Beantown Bash leadership are key factors in the success of both events.

Sheriff's Spotlight

A shout-out to our dedicated corporate partners.

Jersey Mike's Subs is a company with a mission – and that mission is all about giving back. You may know them best as a sub shop, but from the very beginning, Jersey Mike's Subs has been committed to supporting the communities that support them.

Nowhere is this more apparent than during their Month of Giving, which is held every March. Started in 2011, Jersey Mike's Subs' Month of Giving invites customers, employees and others to make a donation to a charity selected by the franchisee. It culminates with a Day of Giving held on the last Wednesday of the month, where each store donates all sales to the selected charity.

"It all stems from our founder, Peter Cancro, who is maniacal about giving back," said Sean Sullivan, owner of four Jersey Mike's Subs stores in Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

"It's not about giving back to get something. It's about community, and it is great to see the staff and customers get behind the initiative."

Hole in the Wall is grateful to be the beneficiary of Sean's franchises during the Month and Day of Giving. Both Sean and his wife have a family connection to Camp and have long been excited about Hole in the Wall's mission.

"The work Camp does is very touching," Sean said. "As a local store, we love that Hole in the Wall is working with children's hospitals in the area. It's the right fit for us."

In 2019, the Month of Giving raised nearly \$15,000 for Camp. And though the day was cancelled in 2020 due to COVID-19, Sean expects it will be even more successful in the future, as he's brought several other new stores on board who are excited at the



Jersey Mike's Subs gives back to Camp during its annual Day of Giving.

prospect of supporting Hole in the Wall's programs.

"We have a great relationship with the other stores," Sean said. "We talk a lot, especially about the Day of Giving. I mentioned Camp, and with the great work you do and how easy you are to work with, it wasn't hard at all to get them on board too."

If you'd like to learn more about Camp's corporate partner program, contact Andrea Keefe, director, community and corporate partnerships, at andrea.keefe@holeinthewallgang.org or (203) 772-0522.

Saddle Up for Camp

Camp is at the epicenter of a caring community. Our gratitude goes out to all who host and organize fundraising events in support of Camp's mission.

For years, actress Mary Elizabeth Ellis and her husband, actor Charlie Day, have been staunch supporters of Hole in the Wall, even stopping by for a visit a couple of years ago. The duo is well-known for their comic creativity, with Charlie being a writer and executive producer of the popular show "It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia," and both he and Mary Elizabeth being part of the cast. Last spring, they came up with an awesome idea for raising funds and awareness for Camp. Partnering with Omaze, the online fundraising platform that generously supports non-profits, they offered fans of "It's Always Sunny" the chance to be an extra and share a drink at Paddy's Pub – the show's iconic bar. Camp would be the beneficiary of the campaign, which took place over the summer.

In an incredible show of support, the show's entire cast created multiple videos encouraging fans to participate and everyone helped to spread the word on social media. News stations

began picking up the story, and soon people started to spread buzz on Facebook and Twitter.

"This campaign had the perfect mix of everything needed to engage fans of 'It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia,'" said Emily Reinstein, senior partnerships manager at Omaze. "Their dedication to making the most of this fundraiser was really incredible. We had fantastic content with the full cast and a once-in-a-lifetime experience that resonated with a highly engaged fanbase. But what stood out to us the most in this campaign was the passion that the cast had for The Hole in the Wall Gang Camp."

The results were nothing short of astounding. Within 48 hours of opening, the campaign raised more

than \$100,000 for Hole in the Wall, exceeding the initial goal for the entire two weeks it was scheduled to run. When the campaign concluded, Camp was astonished to learn the campaign raised nearly \$280,000 for its programs, blowing away all expectations and outperforming similar Omaze campaigns.

"We are so grateful to the cast of 'It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia' and everyone at Omaze for the incredible

"But what stood out to us the most in this campaign was the passion that the cast had for The Hole in the Wall Gang Camp."



The cast of "It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia" put their full efforts behind their Omaze Campaign with Hole in the Wall.

efforts that made this campaign such an unbelievable success," said Ryan Thompson, Hole in the Wall's chief development and communications officer. "Because of their tremendous passion and partnership as well as the amazing friendship of Charlie Day and Mary Elizabeth Ellis, we can now say – with very full hearts and without hesitation – that it's always sunny at Hole in the Wall."

Pardner Profile

A place to shout about a few of the people who make Camp the remarkable place it is.

There's a new gang in town, and they're fixin' to wrangle up some new supporters for Hole in the Wall. The Wild Bunch, Camp's regional volunteer leadership group, represents a new approach for Hole in the Wall to expand its community of major donors. Currently, there are three groups – Boston, New York City/Fairfield, Conn. and mid-Atlantic – that share their fundraising ideas while actively giving

and securing essential philanthropic support for Camp.

"As we strive to reach even more children and family members most isolated and affected by serious illness, our operating budget continues to increase each year," said Camp CEO Jimmy Canton. "To meet this growing need, we have to be innovative in

how we find and sustain new revenue sources of Camp. The Wild Bunch is a big part of the answer by mobilizing members of our own donor community who are willing to help wave the Camp flag within their networks."

Working hand-in-hand with Hole in the Wall's development team, each group meets regionally three times a year to share ideas and brainstorm ways to help maximize Camp's efforts in securing significant support for Camp's programming and other development initiatives.

"After being involved with Camp for 15 years as both a summer volunteer and athletic fundraiser, it is wonderful to be part of a new team of donor-volunteers who are helping the professional staff design and execute important fundraising initiatives," said Wild Bunch member Matt Ballard.

"Together, we are creating more effective ways to engage and build our donor community, and it's exciting to be surrounded by such a great group

of people who feel the way I do as we work towards the same goal."

In addition to providing counsel on Camp fundraising strategies and messaging, Wild Bunch members are also giving generously themselves to fund key programmatic initiatives and engaging their personal networks to support Hole in the Wall. In fact, the Wild Bunch and its network have already provided \$725,000 in new funding since the initiative launched in September 2019.

"Camp is blessed to have this caring community of friends who have shared their commitment to carrying the torch our founder left behind," said Jimmy. "We are so grateful for their gifts of time, ideas, compassion and financial support."

If you'd like to learn more about the Wild Bunch, please contact Christopher Pates, senior director of development, at christopher.pates@holeinthewallgang.org.



Wild Bunch members gathered via Zoom to brainstorm how Camp can compassionately fundraise during the uncertainty of COVID-19.



Founded in 1988 by Paul Newman, The Hole in the Wall Gang Camp is a community dedicated to providing "a different kind of healing" to seriously ill children and their families through a variety of year-round programs. The Camp delivers fun, friendship and a healthy dose of mischief through its signature summer program and weekend sessions at the Camp facility in Ashford, Conn. as well as outreach to hospitals, clinics and communities across the Northeast. All services are free of charge. In keeping with Camp's core value of Camaraderie, Hole in the Wall fosters a community of purposeful inclusion through a commitment to diversity and equity.

The Hole in the Wall Gang Camp never sells or shares its donor names and addresses. This policy reflects our commitment as a charity to maintain the highest integrity in order to protect and ensure privacy, while building a personal relationship with each donor.

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We all can't wait to get back to the place we love so much. But in the meantime, Hole in the Wall is providing "a different kind of healing" in different ways to ensure our children and families find joy, hope and some Camp magic when they need it the most.



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**Look inside to see
how Hole in the Wall
is providing
"a different kind
of healing"
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