



Children's progress

William "Bill" Scala and Sally Scala

Couple establishes endowed chair
to support sports medicine program
at Akron Children's.



**Akron
Children's**



TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 4-5 New endowed chair to support sports medicine program at Akron Children's
- 6-7 Inspiring hope
- 8-9 Responding to an urgent need
- 10-11 A healing bond
- 12-13 Meet Richard and Julie Slone
- 14-15 Charitable planning for the future

FEATURED
4-5

NEW ENDOWED CHAIR TO SUPPORT SPORTS MEDICINE PROGRAM AT AKRON CHILDREN'S

The Scala family and Kenmore Construction continue tradition of giving

RESPONDING TO AN URGENT NEED

Foundations help expand mental health care access at Akron Children's Behavioral Health Centers in Canton and Mansfield

FEATURED
8-9



FOUNDATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OFFICERS

Chair

Mark W. Oelschlager

Founder and Chief Investment Officer
Oelschlager Investments

President

Christopher A. Gessner

President and CEO
Akron Children's

Executive Director

Michele (Shelly) E. Brown

Chief Development Officer
Executive Director, Foundation
Akron Children's

Treasurer

Gordon T. Edwards

Chief Financial Officer
Akron Children's

Vice Chair

Kevin J. Helmick

President and CEO
Farmers National Bank

Secretary

Beth R. Spain

Vice President, Associate General Counsel,
Litigation and Risk
Signet Jewelers

Assistant Treasurer

Alicia E. LaMancusa

Vice President, Finance
Akron Children's

DIRECTORS

Virginia C. Addicott

Chair
Hospital Board of Directors
Retired FedEx Custom Critical CEO

Louis (Lou) M. Altman

Managing Partner
A. Altman Company

Alexa Sweeney Blackann

Former President
Sweeney Chevrolet Buick GMC

Debra (Deb) A. Calevich

President
The MPB Charitable Foundation

Timothy B. Clepper

President and CEO
Kaulig Capital

Bruce H. Cohen, MD

Chair
NeuroDevelopmental Science Center
Philip H. Maynard Chair in
NeuroDevelopmental Science
Pediatric Neurologist
Akron Children's

Charles (Chuck) A. Crawford

Chief Innovation Officer
GOJO Industries

Thomas R. Crowley

Retired Chairman and President
Gasko Fabricated Products Co.

Robert (Bob) L. Davis

President
Aqua America

Gary J. Didado

Retired President
J.W. Didado Electric, Inc.
Owner
Briarwood Construction

Shefali Mahesh, MD

Dr. Noah Miller Endowed Chair,
Department of Pediatrics
President, Medical Staff
Director, Nephrology & Dialysis
Akron Children's

Marci M. Matthews

Founder
Grace Initiative Foundation Tree LLC
Chair
Distribution Committee of the Cynthia Parker
Family Foundation

Marshall C. Murdough

Manager of Ecommerce
Simplay3

Stephen (Steve) E. Myers

Trustee
The Louis S. and Mary Myers Foundation

Alexis N. Petito

President
Akron Children's Emerging Leaders
Finance Manager
The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company

Irene M. Prezelj

Vice President, Investor Relations
& Communications
FirstEnergy Service Company

William (Bill) A. Scala

Chairman and President
Kenmore Construction Co. Inc.

James (Jim) M. Schmidt

President
University Housing Solutions
Principal and Chief Executive Officer
MKC Architects

Paul N. Thomarios

President
Thomarios

David G. Tisch

Founder and CEO
LSV Advisors LLC

Marlene K. Toot

Nutrition and Wellness Speaker

Linda A. Venner

Vice President
Clampco Products

Brian C. Wagner

President
CCG Automation Inc.

William (Bill) C. Waldman Sr.

Retired President
Meldrum-Fewsmith Advertising

Barbara (Barb) J. Varley

President
The Women's Board of Akron Children's

HONORARY DIRECTORS

William (Bill) H. Considine

Retired CEO
Akron Children's

Grace K. Wakulchik

Retired CEO
Akron Children's

President and CEO

Christopher A. Gessner

Chief Development Officer

Executive Director, Foundation

Michele (Shelly) E. Brown

Editors

Alissa Hazlett
Kathryn Mahon

Contributing Writers

Desidara
Alissa Hazlett
Kathryn Mahon

Contributing Photographers

Ted Stevens
Tiffany Swift

Graphic Design

Desidara

Printing

Star Printing Co. Inc.

Akron Children's realizes that individuals enjoy learning more about our services, programs and developments. We also fully respect the privacy of our patients. If you do not wish to receive fundraising materials from Akron Children's, you may make the request by sending an email to giving@akronchildrens.org. We will use our best efforts to honor such a request.



**Children's
Miracle Network
Hospitals**

Akron Children's embraces a philosophy of family-centered care. We believe that every child has the right to world-class medical care, regardless of a family's ability to pay.

Member, Children's Association (CHA)

Member, Children's Miracle Network Hospitals

**Children's progress is published
by the Akron Children's Foundation**

One Perkins Square
Akron, OH 44308-1062
330-543-8340

An Equal Opportunity Employer

©2024 Akron Children's
All rights reserved.

NEW ENDOWED CHAIR TO SUPPORT SPORTS MEDICINE PROGRAM AT AKRON CHILDREN'S

The Scala family and Kenmore Construction continue tradition of giving

In the 1960s, William Scala Sr., founder of Kenmore Construction in Akron, made the company's first gift to Akron Children's.

Six decades later, his family and the company he created carry on his legacy by continuing to support our hospital – from individual donations and annual gifts to our Paul and Carol David Foundation Burn Institute to employee contributions and participation on hospital and Foundation boards of directors. In recognition of a recent gift, Akron Children's orthopedic department named its new gymnasium the Michael G. Scala Sports Rehab Gymnasium in honor of William's son Michael, who passed away in 2018.

In May 2023, the Scala family and Kenmore Construction made a gift to establish the Scala Family Endowed Chair in Sports Medicine. The chair will be held by Joseph Congeni, MD, director of Sports Medicine and sports medicine physician at Akron Children's.

"It's something we're proud to do and glad to be a part of," said Bill Scala, chairman and president of Kenmore Construction and one of William's five children. "Akron Children's means a whole lot to our community. To have such quality of service through the whole spectrum of how they treat kids – right here in Akron – is a true gift."

○ Gift helps elevate renowned division

Endowed chairs provide funding sources that give our physicians and researchers the freedom to pursue new and innovative treatments. This work puts our hospital and our care on the cutting edge. An endowed chair also offers significant prestige for the hospital, helping to bring the brightest minds in medicine to our community.

As the chairholder of the Scala Family Endowed Chair in Sports Medicine, Dr. Congeni will have the resources to continue to elevate and grow the already well-respected and renowned division at our hospital.

"I'm so moved by the Scala family for having the confidence in us to help continue to build this center in sports medicine as what we think is one of the finest in the country," said Dr. Congeni. "I've known and worked closely with Bill Scala for a long time. He's a man that I've admired around this town for a long time because of his generosity."

"If you talk to anybody who's been treated by Dr. Congeni and his staff, they all have wonderful things to say," said Bill, who





The Scala family and Kenmore Construction have established a new endowed chair in Sports Medicine. Pictured (from left): Chris Gessner, president and CEO of Akron Children's, William "Bill" Scala and Sally Scala.

with his wife, Sally, has been a hospital donor since 1992. "They have very positive reactions to his knowledge and his demeanor in dealing with young athletes. He has a great way of communicating with the kids, which is a gift."

Dr. Congeni said that funding from the endowed chair will go toward a number of needs in the division. As the new official sports health provider for Akron Zips Athletics at The University of Akron, the division just opened a new sports health center on the university campus. Another investment area is research.

"We've done a lot in the area of brain injury or sports-related concussion," said Dr. Congeni. "Some of the funding that we've been given will allow us to continue this work and bring in the best and brightest in the country to be a part of our team."

"We're excited for the long-term impact of this gift," said Bill. "We hope it allows Dr. Congeni – and the legacy he's established – to continue to affect our area for a long time."

More than 4,500 athletes receive treatment each year at Akron Children's. Help them **return to the activities they love** as quickly and safely as possible. Contact:

Matt Long
Director of Major Gifts
mlong2@akronchildrens.org
330-543-8978.



Akron Children's new Panda Cares Center of Hope serves as a place of peace and refuge for patients, families and staff.

6

As a **Children's Miracle Network Hospitals** supporter, your organization can make a difference at your local children's hospital – Akron Children's. To learn more, contact:

Brittany Costa

Children's Miracle Network Hospitals
Program Manager and Corporate
Alliance Officer

bcosta2@akronchildrens.org
330-543-0325

INSPIRING HOPE

Children's Miracle Network Hospitals partner Panda Express pledges \$589,000 to Akron Children's Chaplaincy Services

The mission of Panda Express is to inspire better lives, not only within its company, but within its communities.

Through its charitable arm, Panda Cares, the company strives to inspire hope in future generations by supporting the health and education needs of underserved youth. One of the key ways the company achieves this is through its 16-year partnership with Children's Miracle Network Hospitals.

"We believe that it is important to pay it forward to the communities that support Panda every day," said Nina Osorio, Panda Cares senior manager, Panda Cares, Panda Restaurant Group. "Our partnership with Children's Miracle Network Hospitals allows us to touch the lives of youth across the nation, including the patients at Akron Children's."

Through Children's Miracle Network Hospitals, Panda Express has donated nearly \$252,000 to Akron Children's. Recently, the company announced a \$589,000 pledge to support the Chaplaincy Services Department at our hospital.

○ Coming together to support the whole person

Panda Express will raise funds for this multi-year pledge through the generosity of its guests – and its associates' commitment to serving their communities. It will collect donations year-round in Panda Express locations. Associates can also give back through the Panda Associate Giving Campaign, where they can donate a portion of their paycheck to their local Children's Miracle Network Hospital.

The dollars will go toward the Panda Cares Center of Hope at Akron Children's, a new stand-alone spiritual care center on our Akron campus.

"The Center of Hope allows us to provide programs and services designed to give children the courage and strength to thrive by supporting the whole person including their mental, emotional, physical and spiritual needs," said Nina.

"Our space is intended to serve as a place of peace and refuge for patients, families and staff," said Matthew Tweddle, director of Chaplaincy Services at Akron Children's. "The sanctuary side of the center will include quiet spaces for private prayer, meditation and reflection. We will also use that space for small worship and ritual opportunities. The study side will include resources to support one's own spirituality and learn about others."

The Spiritual Care Center also includes a children's section with a library, table and chairs. A design team helped incorporate materials and artwork, including elements of nature, to help visitors feel like they have left the hospital and entered a separate space.

"We understand that hospital stays can be difficult, not only for patients, but also siblings and parents," said Nina. "We are happy to provide a space where patients can take a break from medical treatment to just be kids and enjoy moments with their loved ones."



The generosity of Panda Express is recognized with signage in the spiritual care center.

Scan the QR code to learn more about
Children's Miracle Network Hospitals.



RESPONDING TO AN URGENT NEED

Foundations help expand mental health care access at Akron Children's Behavioral Health Centers in Canton and Mansfield

Expanding behavioral health care remains a top priority for Akron Children's.

In 2021, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and the Children's Hospital Association declared a National State of Emergency in Children's Mental Health in response to rising rates of childhood mental health concerns, including suicide, a leading cause of death for youth ages 10 to 24.

To address this challenge, we're integrating behavioral health into our primary care network and expanding access through telehealth. We're also opening free-standing behavioral health centers in the region – bringing care closer to home for families.

Recently, local foundations came forward to help launch the efforts of two new centers – Akron Children's Behavioral Health, Canton and Akron Children's Behavioral Health, Mansfield. Grants from The Hoover Foundation and the S.N. and Ada Ford Fund established term chairs at each location, with funds supporting the work of staff as the centers grow.

"Helping individuals with mental health issues supports the patient, ultimately making a positive impact for the rest of their life," said Marc Miller, board chair of the S.N. and Ada Ford Fund. "It also has the potential to improve the day-to-day experience of all family members connected to the patient."

○ Enhancing pediatric behavioral health in their hometowns

The Hoover Foundation Chair for Akron Children's Behavioral Health, Canton will support the work of Leilani Mahi, MD, child and adolescent psychiatrist and regional director of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry.

In addition to its ongoing support of our hospital during the last several decades, The Hoover Foundation also awarded a grant in 2019 toward the opening of Akron Children's Health Center, North Canton.

The S.N. and Ada Ford Fund Chair for Akron Children's Behavioral Health, Mansfield will bolster the efforts of staff at the center, as well.

"We view one of the biggest impacts of our grant as providing funds to outreach to the mental health community locally, and to fund special projects and initiatives at the discretion of the chairholder," said Marc. "It also can help attract better talent to our local area. It can offer an incentive to someone who has the credentials to lead this facility to come to a smaller town."

"Philanthropy will be the backbone to transform behavioral care delivery to children and adolescents," said Eva Szigethy,





Akron Children's Behavioral Health, Mansfield opened in August.

director of Pediatric Psychiatry and Psychology and the Lois C. Orr Endowed Chair in Pediatric Psychiatry at Akron Children's. "We have a lot of change that needs to happen. Donor support will help us study and track our efforts. It will help us address social determinants of health and care equity. It will help us have focused strategies in building programs in specific areas like trauma, autism, eating disorders and addictions, to name a few."

A grant from The Hoover Foundation established a term chair at Akron Children's Behavioral Health, Canton. Pictured (from left): Chuck Hoover and Dr. Leilani Mahi.

You can support efforts at Akron Children's to expand behavioral and **mental health care for children, teens and families** in northern Ohio. To learn how you can help, contact:

giving@akronchildrens.org
330-543-8340



Over the years, Mark and Cathy Clark's generous support has helped Akron Children's Spine Center grow and flourish.

10

Your gift – of any amount – can make a big impact on the care delivered by Dr. Ritzman and the team at **Akron Children's Spine Center**. To learn more, contact:

Megan Hopper
Vice President of Principal Giving

mhopper@akronchildrens.org
330-543-5768

A HEALING BOND

Inspiring connection between donors and physician advances care for spinal patients at Akron Children's

The connections formed at Akron Children's have the power to make long-term impacts. Like the bond made between a physician and a patient. Or the ties that unite our hospital and the communities we serve.

There also are the relationships that our donors form with our providers. And the one between Mark and Cathy Clark and Todd Ritzman, MD, FAAOS, FAOA, pediatric orthopedic surgeon, chair of the Department of Orthopedics, and director of the Spine Center at Akron Children's, is helping to transform the care we deliver to patients at Akron Children's Spine Center.

○ Striking a chord

Mark and Cathy, who are longtime Akron Children's friends and donors, first met Dr. Ritzman four years ago at a donor event in Florida. Dr. Ritzman was there to speak about his vision for a Spine Center at Akron Children's, where he and his team would use innovative technologies and techniques to advance care for children and adolescents with abnormal curvature of the spine like scoliosis and kyphosis, as well as other spinal conditions.

"We were fascinated by the work he was doing," said Mark. "It was nice to see someone who found their niche and just let it explode."

In 2020, the Clarks made their first gift to support the Spine Center. Since then, they've made additional generous gifts, helping Dr. Ritzman and his team to grow the center and expand their work.

"We've seen them bring in more professional staff and introduce new technologies and treatments. The research that they're performing is so important, too," said Mark.

"The more parents learn of this, the more it will expand the hospital's ability to serve children from across the country and around the world."

○ A first in pediatric spine care in northern Ohio

Mark and Cathy's latest gift supported the opening of our new \$3.5 million operating room dedicated to pediatric spine surgeries, as well as the purchase of the nView s1 navigation system. Akron Children's is the second hospital in the country with the nView system, which uses ultra-low dose radiation to generate 3D images of the spine in real time in the OR.

"Dr. Ritzman felt very strongly that this equipment could take what they were doing in the Spine Center to the next level," explained Cathy. "A piece of equipment can make such a difference in treating a child. How would you not want to support that? We're thrilled to be able to do this."

"We can't thank Mark and Cathy enough for their ongoing support," said Dr. Ritzman. "Their generosity over the years has allowed us to grow the Spine Center to where we are today. We now have a dedicated pediatric spine team here with a dedicated spine OR, built to perform safe and efficient pediatric spine surgeries. There really isn't technology that exists that we didn't put in this room. This is a first in northern Ohio."

"We admire Dr. Ritzman tremendously," said Cathy. "For his knowledge, his expertise, his dedication to his team and his work ethic. He's just a terrific guy. We're thrilled to be working with him and helping his dream for the Spine Center come true."

Scan the QR code to discover why
the Clarks continue to support
Akron Children's.



MEET RICHARD AND JULIE SLONE

Couple makes legacy gift to honor nephew and support pediatric cancer patients

When a child is diagnosed with cancer, it impacts an entire family.

Richard and Julie Slone know this all too well. In 2004, their 10-year-old nephew, Kevin M. Willis, was diagnosed with stage IV Ewing's sarcoma, a rare type of bone cancer. He received treatment at Akron Children's from the time he was diagnosed until, sadly, he passed away in April 2005.

To honor Kevin and help other children being treated for cancer at our hospital, the couple decided to make a legacy gift in the form of a bequest to support the Children's Cancer Fund at Akron Children's.

"We had never heard of Ewing's sarcoma before he was diagnosed," said Julie. "Once your family is affected by a child with cancer, it's shocking how many different types there are and how many children are diagnosed daily. It's our greatest hope that one day, there will be cures for them all and that no family goes through this again."

○ Simple gift giving that leaves a lasting impact

The Slones were first introduced to the idea of a legacy gift from a mailer they received from our hospital.

"The letter explained how you could choose to include the hospital in your last will and testament," said Julie. "We knew immediately that we needed to do this in memory of Kevin."

To make their gift, Richard and Julie worked with representatives from the Akron Children's Foundation, who helped make the gift-giving process as simple as possible. They supplied the couple with the verbiage they needed to give their attorney – and it was easy to make it part of their estate plan.

"We did not have children of our own," said Julie. "It was important to us when we were doing our last will and testament to help those organizations that perform research and offer support to children with cancer."

○ Help for pediatric cancer patients and their families

Through their gift, Richard and Julie hope to bring awareness about the number of families that have children being treated at Akron Children's for cancer.

"When you receive the news that a child in your family has cancer, it's devastating," said Julie. "We weren't aware that Akron Children's had such an extensive pediatric cancer center until Kevin was diagnosed. The hospital did its best





Richard and Julie Slone made a legacy gift in honor of their nephew, Kevin M. Willis, who passed away from a rare form of bone cancer in 2005. Kevin was a patient at Akron Children's Showers Family Center for Childhood Cancer and Blood Disorders.

not only with Kevin's treatment, but also to make my sister and her family as comfortable as they could be while staying with him – sometimes for weeks at a time."

These comforts included the play area in the Showers Family Center for Childhood Cancer and Blood Disorders, where Kevin's little sister would spend time while visiting him. Family-focused amenities and other support services can make a big difference

for families during some of the most difficult times in their lives.

"Our family misses Kevin daily," said Julie. "He was a funny, loving and adorable little boy. He and all of the children we met who were fighting cancer at Akron Children's were so strong and brave. Their courage will always remain with us. If there's anything we can do to help in their treatment and overall support of their families while at the hospital, that is our goal."

Make a legacy gift to support the patients and families at **Akron Children's Showers Family Center for Childhood Cancer and Blood Disorders**. Contact:

Jason Sanders
Director of Planned Giving at Akron Children's

jsanders2@akronchildrens.org
330-543-8343

CHARITABLE PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

How you can leave a legacy at Akron Children's

What kind of legacy do you want to leave when you're gone?

When it comes to making your charitable plan, there are many tools at your disposal – from IRAs to wills and beneficiary options.

If you're considering giving through an IRA, you may be familiar with the following:

- Individuals over the age of 70½ who have an IRA can make direct payments from their IRA to charity up to \$100,000 a year. If the payment is the first money out of the IRA in that year, it counts as a required minimum distribution.
- These same individuals may now fund a charitable gift annuity or charitable remainder trust up to \$50,000 directly from an IRA.

But many, for various reasons, do not want to engage in irrevocable charitable planning during their lifetimes. For them, a simple bequest via a will, revocable trust or beneficiary form may fulfill their charitable goals.

You can add provisions that specify a purpose for which a gift can be used.

For example: I leave \$250,000 to Akron Children's, or its legal successor, to endow research in pediatric neurology.

The word "endow" means that the fund left is distributable over time. Normally 4% of the fund is used annually.

Will provisions may also refer to a fund that has already been established during the donor's lifetime.

For example: I leave \$50,000 to Akron Children's, or its legal successor, to be added to the John and Mary Doe Fund.

Of course, gifts may also be left for general purposes.

For example: I leave \$50,000 to Akron Children's, or its legal successor, for its general purposes.

More sophisticated opportunities are also available. Before 2020, IRA owners could leave their IRAs to a non-charitable beneficiary and have it "stretch" over the lifetime of that beneficiary. To accelerate income taxation on what are viewed as retirement vehicles, the Secure Act required most IRAs payable to a beneficiary other than the owner's spouse to be distributed within 10 years after the owner's death.

For the last several decades, it has been possible to leave an IRA at death to a charitable remainder trust. Under that technique, an amount is payable to one or more non-charitable beneficiaries for a term of years – or for life – with the remainder to charity at the end of the term. The distributions, and income tax on the distributions, flow through to the non-charitable beneficiary just as under





Roy Krall, attorney and shareholder at Cavitch Familo & Durkin, Co., L.P.A.

the old "stretch" IRA. So the planning technique allows an IRA owner to mimic the old stretch rules. It is not an exact fit, but the idea is comparable. And the designation of Akron Children's at the end of the non-charitable term can endow a specific purpose or add to an existing fund.

A donor facing a federal estate tax and wishing to reduce it with charitable gifts may want to establish a charitable lead trust in their will. Under that arrangement, amounts are paid to Akron Children's for a fixed term of years after the donor's death.

After the term of years ends, the remainder passes to one or more non-charitable beneficiaries. The donor receives an estate tax deduction equal to the present value of charitable interest. If the return exceeds the discount rate used to calculate the deduction, there is an estate tax savings for these non-charitable beneficiaries.

There are many requirements and nuances involved in establishing these types of estate plans that go beyond the scope of this article. Work with your financial advisor or the team at the Akron Children's Foundation to learn more about your options.

To learn how you can support Akron Children's through a **designated beneficiary gift**, contact:

Jason Sanders
Director of Planned Giving at Akron Children's

jsanders2@akronchildrens.org
330-543-8343



ONE PERKINS SQUARE AKRON, OHIO 44308-1062

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Akron, OH
Permit No. 202

CALENDAR OF EVENTS



Visit akronchildrens.org/pages/Fundraising-Events for the most up-to-date calendar listings.



Scan the code to view our latest ad for Akron Children's Sports Health.



JOIN THE CONVERSATION

Akron Children's Foundation invites you to connect with us.



Inside
Children's
Blog

@akronchildrensfoundation

akronchildrens.org/giving