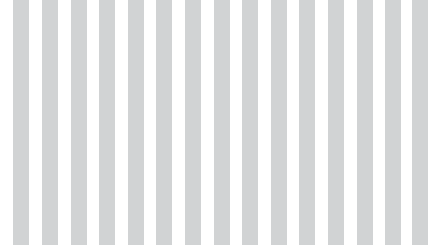
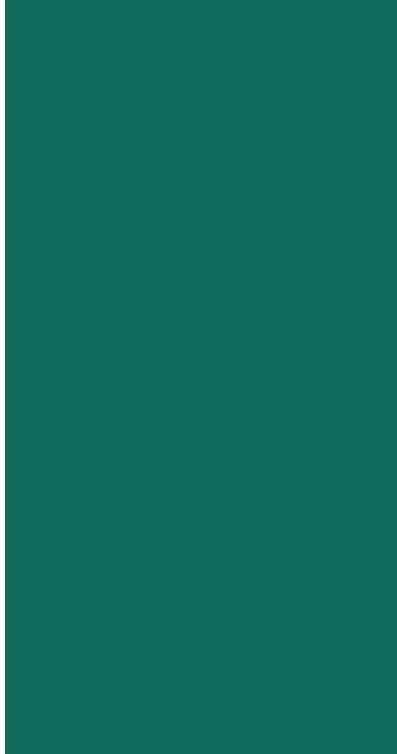
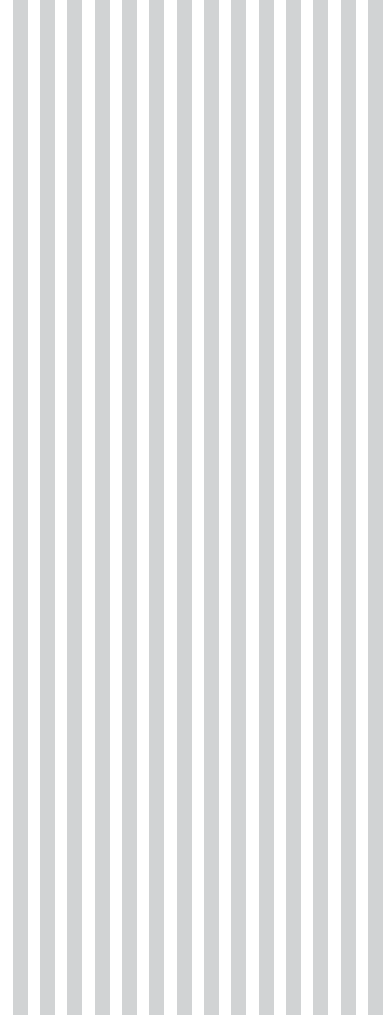


2024

ANNUAL REPORT





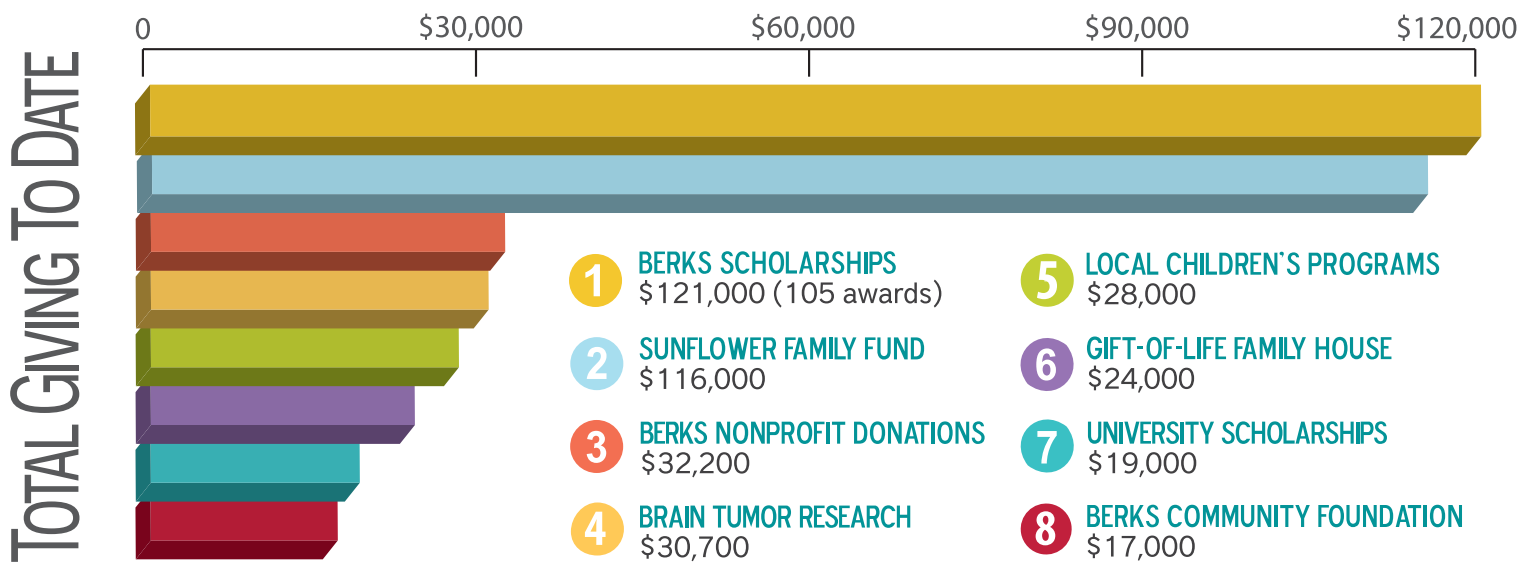
LAUREN'S FOUNDATION

Lauren's Foundation was created by the family of Lauren Fitzgerald, a life-long Berks County, PA resident who died in 2005 from complications related to a brain tumor, at the age of 20. The Foundation honors Lauren's memory by supporting local families through a variety of charitable funds that support high school seniors, families with seriously ill children, brain tumor research and organ donation awareness programs.

A quote from American poet Maya Angelou, adopted by Lauren following her diagnosis, serves as a guiding principle for much of the Foundation's work. That quote reads *"I can be changed by what happens to me. I refuse to be reduced by it."* The Foundation recognizes, supports and celebrates individuals and families that persevere despite significant, adverse life circumstances. Lauren's Foundation is an IRS 501(c)(3) nonprofit and is registered with the Pennsylvania Bureau of Charities.

1. Support families that are caring for loved ones afflicted with a brain tumor or other serious illness by providing financial assistance with living expenses.
2. Provide scholarships and recognition for students that have faced adverse life circumstances, yet persevered in the face of their adversity to excel academically and personally.
3. Support recreational and educational programs that serve families, children and adults in the Berks community.
4. Promote brain tumor research and awareness with the American Brain Tumor Association (ABTA).
5. Raise awareness of the organ donation process and encourage organ donation enrollment.

OUR MISSION



OUR 2024 GIVING

- \$ 9,000 BERKS HS SCHOLARSHIPS
- \$ 8,845 SUNFLOWER FAMILY FUND
- \$ 4,000 COMMUNITY PROGRAMS
- \$ 2,220 OPP. HOUSE, JP II CENTER
- \$ 3,000 GIFT-OF-LIFE FAMILY HOUSE
- \$ 700 ABTA BRAIN TUMOR RESEARCH

GIFT-OF-LIFE FAMILY HOUSE

In 2018, Lauren's Foundation began supporting the Gift-of-Life Family House in Philadelphia, PA. Their mission is to serve as a "home away from home for transplant patients and families by providing temporary lodging and support services to those who travel to Philadelphia for transplant-related care."



GIFT of LIFE
Family House

Lauren's Foundation is a committed advocate for Gift-of-Life. Lauren chose to donate her organs and, as a result, gave five (5) people the Gift-of-Life. Her heart, lungs, liver and kidneys were used to serve those in need. Become a donor! Enroll at www.donors1.org.



Mia at Fitzy's Run 2024 Event

A parent's worst nightmare... Your normally healthy, vibrant 9 year old is rushed to the hospital with unexplained symptoms. The diagnoses that follow in the days ahead are unimaginable - flu, strep, pneumonia, sepsis, cardiac arrest, stroke, brain hemorrhaging, multiple organ failure, necrosis in the feet and lungs, salmonella... A battle between life and death that requires immediate attention and heart-wrenching decisions. A host of surgeries, procedures and interventions that will alter your child in irreversible ways for the rest of their life- including a tracheostomy, amputation of toes, a G-tube for feeding...

This was (and remains) the experience of a Reading/Spring Twp. family and their daughter Mia. Mia's mother had to stop working to

provide the critical care her daughter needed - resulting in unexpected financial hardships. Lauren's Foundation was able to lessen that burden by taking over the family's rent expense for 9 months in 2024 - none of which would have been possible without the help of our sponsors and supporters!



Mia and her family at CHOP

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



Lauren's Foundation believes in giving back to the community in ways that create and cultivate civic engagement. We are proud to support other local organizations, schools, and nonprofits, such as the Opportunity

House, the John Paul II Center for Special Learning, and Wyomissing and West Reading Recreation Depts.

Lauren's Foundation enjoys a special relationship with Drexel University, where Lauren's attended as an Interior Design major.



Drexel DPhiE sorority members volunteer for our annual Fitzy's Halloween 5K Run and Drexel Medical School students from the Cutting Edge Anatomy Club and Health Outreach Projects provide community awareness programs at our fall Fitzy's Run event.

HIGH SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIPS

The scholarship program began in 2006, initially at Wyomissing and Wilson High schools, and was later expanded to include all Berks County schools. In 2024, the Foundation received 38 applications, from which 9 students were selected to be recipients. The scholarship is available to graduating Berks County high school seniors who have overcome adversity in their lives to successfully complete high school, and who will be continuing their education at an accredited university, college or trade school. Award winners must meet the following criteria:

- Demonstrate a strong commitment to academics throughout their high school career.
- Demonstrate perseverance in overcoming challenging life circumstances to better themselves.
- Exhibit a strong desire for personal growth and success.

An essay based on a quote attributed to the late American author and poet Maya Angelou is required. The quote reads "I can be changed by what happens to me. I refuse to be reduced by it." Students can apply annually from Jan. 1st to Mar. 31st at www.laurensfoundation.org.



Our 2024 scholarship recipients, representing Conrad Weiser, Daniel Boone, Exeter, Oley Valley, Schuylkill Valley & Wilson High Schools

"We know only too well that what we are doing is nothing more than a drop in the ocean. But if the drop were not there, the ocean would be missing something."

Mother Teresa

Thank You to Our 2024 Sponsors!

Helping Us to Build Community in Berks County



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BOROUGH OF WEST READING**

They care about the Berks community - and their support allows us to fulfill our mission to help those in need. Email us at sponsors@laurensfoundation.org to learn how you can get involved by becoming a sponsor!

Thank you runners, participants, volunteers, Wyomissing Boro & Police Dept., the sisters of Delta Phi Epsilon, Drexel Medical School students and the Fleet Feet West Reading staff for your support!

WWW.LAURENSFOUNDATION.ORG