

# what's up

YOUR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT NEWS



**FOUR WHEELS, FOUR PAWS,  
FOR GOOD.**

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## **A Roll/Stroll to Help America's Kids**

COVID-19 had many repercussions for U.S. families, including, for some, their first experience with hunger. Mark Roberts, a dedicated environmentalist and one of the founders of Greenpeace USA, decided to do something about it. Here is his inspiring story.

“At the end of 2017,” Mark shares, “I developed a rare neurological disorder that has affected my mobility in myriad ways, including making walking difficult and painful. That means I use an electric wheelchair when my labradoodle Mocha and I roll/stroll around my hometown of Stowe, Massachusetts.”

This fall, Mark and Mocha will undertake a fundraising adventure that goes far beyond Stowe.

“On September 18,” he says, “I’m setting out on a 6-8 week journey across Massachusetts in my electric wheelchair accompanied by Mocha and my wife Susan. We’ll be rolling/strolling from West Stockbridge all the way to the Atlantic Ocean in Provincetown to raise awareness – and money – to fight hunger and keep children healthy and learning.”

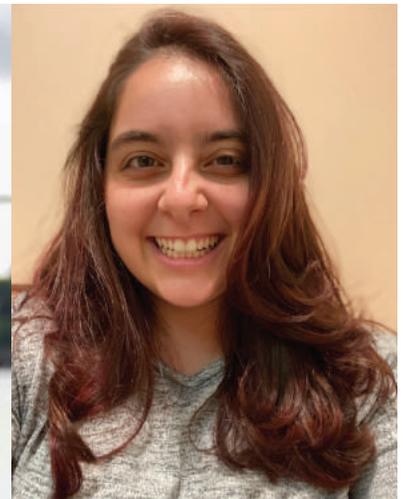
**Why hunger?** “Hunger has been an ongoing, silent crisis,” Mark says, “kids going to school hungry; homeless families searching for a shelter and a meal; elderly people, alone, depending on others for groceries; children around the world malnourished due to natural disasters, conflict and poverty. These problems have been magnified by the pandemic and climate change.

“More than 42 million people in the United States are now food insecure, including as many as 13 million children. The need to combat hunger is equally urgent abroad. In fact, about 690 million people worldwide go to bed hungry each night.”

**Why a roll/stroll?** “I’ve spent my life fighting for the environment, justice and a better world,” Mark explains. “In university, I worked with Greenpeace to end commercial sealing. Upon graduating, I successfully advocated for Canada to change its vote on the commercial whaling moratorium, then became the first Executive Director of Greenpeace USA. I later became an environmental lawyer, helping neighborhoods fight toxic waste polluters and working to clean up hazardous waste sites. Recently, I’ve focused on battling the world’s #1 existential threat, climate change.

**Click here to join the fight.** “I’m not usually someone who takes on challenges sitting down,” Mark smiles. “Well, this time, maybe I am going to have to sit, but I am certainly not going to sit still as I help kids in Massachusetts, the U.S., and across the world by raising money for Save the Children, the Greater Boston Food Bank and local community organizations along our route.”

Talk about heroes! Thank you Mark for your compassion and your courage. Roll strong.



Contributed photos

# THE BOSTON **YOUNG LEADERS** COUNCIL

In early 2020, just before the onset of COVID, Paige Hornor, a devoted supporter of the Boston Leadership Council, came together with Becky Oliver and Mari Giamo to launch the Boston Young Leaders Council (BYLC).

A long-time fan of Save the Children, Paige has lent her time and talent to programming and to editing video for fundraising events. Her most recent venture was a visit to Lebanon, where, says Paige, “I was able to combine my passion for storytelling and philanthropy by meeting refugee families and witnessing Save the Children’s programs in person, **documenting the experience** to bring back to the Boston community.

“I was inspired by the dedication and commitment of the Save the Children staff and volunteers working on the frontlines. Hearing firsthand about the children’s desire to learn has had a significant impact on my life. I know I will continue supporting Save the Children and their amazing work.”

Paige (top left), who graduated from the University of Missouri School of Journalism in 2014, is a news producer for NBC10 Boston where she was nominated for a regional Emmy award this year. Mari (top right), a graduate of Connecticut College looking to pursue a career in law, runs the social media platforms for the BYLC and enjoys coming up with creative ways to engage

community members in our mission. Becky (bottom right) a young finance professional at an investment management firm, attended St. Michael’s College in Vermont where she majored in business administration.

This past year, Paige organized multiple campaigns for Save the Children: a letter-writing campaign to Kentucky, a “Cutest Pet” fundraiser contest (\$1,000), and Miles!4EveryLastChild, (\$10,000) with the support of Becky and Mari.

The inspiration for Miles!4EveryLastChild came from Diane Bevan, who organized the Row!4EveryLastChild with the Boston Leadership Council. Intended to entice young professionals to get involved during the pandemic, the month-long virtual campaign helped raise both awareness and funds for Save the Children.

“Being part of Save the Children has broadened my understanding of the needs of children around the globe and helped me take action in areas I feel passionate about,” says Paige. “I’ve enjoyed meeting new people and inspiring them to join Save the Children through our Council.”

Many thanks to all of the young professionals in the Boston Young Leaders Council who are raising awareness and funds for Save the Children. We are truly grateful for your support!



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# KAISER'S AND DASHA'S **BAKE SALE**

In November 2020, when the COVID-19 public health emergency was in full effect in Ohio, Kaiser and Dasha, two 9-year-old children from a Cincinnati suburb, were dreaming about organizing a bake sale because they desperately wanted to raise some funds to help children in need.

Thanks to technology, they were communicating almost daily, discussing every detail of their plan. One day, Kaiser told his mom his “great news” – that he and Dasha would have a bake sale. Unfortunately, his mom did not approve of that idea at all because of the pandemic, and she explained to Kaiser that the Ohio government probably had strict rules regarding bake sales.

Several days later, Kaiser and Dasha had a letter to Ohio Governor Mike DeWine ready to go and only needed their parents’ help with mailing it to his office. In the letter, the children explained their intentions and promised they would follow COVID guidelines, including wearing masks while cooking and during the bake sale. Of course, their strongest argument was that the proceeds would go to a charity.

Kaiser and Dasha nurtured their plan over several months during which three more of their best friends: Michael, 9, Sophia 7, and Mila, 5 joined their planning team. That was a turning point for their parents. When they realized the children’s determination to help others was much stronger than they’d thought and that the five would not give up, “wheels” starting slowly turning.

One of the parents approached the local Health Department office and obtained verbal permission for the bake sale. (Luckily, most of the parents had received their COVID vaccines by that time.) In the meantime, the children were working very hard on their menu, the location for the sale, advertisements, and every other possible detail. The parents even held several Zoom meetings with the children – discussing all aspects of the enterprise and delegating assignments. The children advertised the event at their schools, in their neighborhoods, etc. The goal was set to raise \$100 to help feed children in need.

Finally, Bake Sale Day – Saturday, May 15, 2021, arrived! Some parents had a very short night’s sleep as they finalized their assignments. The children, however, looked confident and did not show any sign of worries. Kaiser, Dasha, Michael, Sophia and Mila took their big day very seriously – and the results exceeded all expectations: \$371 was raised for Save the Children, almost four times their goal!

Plus the five partners had the opportunity to educate the community, as some of their customers did not even know about the existence of an organization dedicated to helping children.

Needless to say, the children’s parents felt extremely proud of them, especially when the five announced that evening that the bake sale was just a “trial,” and they had another plan in place.



Victoria Zegler

# THERE'S A NEW LITTLE FREE LIBRARY™ IN TOWN

Leaders from Save the Children and the Rotary Club of Fairfield were in Bridgeport, Connecticut on Tuesday June 29 to cut the ribbon on a new Little Free Library™ installed outside the South End Community Center at the Bridgeport YMCA. Children who attend summer camps at the Bridgeport YMCA were on hand for the opening and were the first who had the chance to borrow a book from the new Little Free Library.

In 2019, Rotary and Save the Children created a national partnership called “Together, We Read” focused on promoting the importance of early childhood education and literacy. The new Little Free Library, which provides free, 24-7, year-round access to books for kids and families, is an outgrowth of that partnership and was made possible by a grant the Rotary Club of Fairfield made to Save the Children, whose headquarters is in their town.

Said Save the Children President & CEO Janti Soeripto, “Thank you to our friends from the Rotary Club of Fairfield, our friends from the Bridgeport YMCA and all those who donated books to the library. By coming together to make it possible for us to bring

this Little Free Library and the gift of reading to our local community, we’re helping inspire young readers right here in our own backyard.”

To find out how you can start a Save the Children Little Free Library™ in your community, email [volunteer@savechildren.org](mailto:volunteer@savechildren.org)



Victoria Zegler



Contributed photo

## IN GABRIELA'S WORDS: HELP FOR THE CHILDREN OF YEMEN

"Over the summer, many humanitarian issues surfaced in social media," writes Gabriela. "I would sign petitions and share the issues as requested, but that didn't seem like enough. When I started my senior year of high school, my school wanted us to pick an issue that would be our passion project. It's called the Change The World project. Our assignment was to write a 20-page paper AND find a way to help better the issue, whether by starting a fundraiser or hosting a panel.

"The first and only issue that came into my mind was Yemen. I had heard so many things about what is happening there but, as I researched the crisis, I noticed that it was much worse than described in the media. Yemen isn't talked about in the United States, so I chose to hold four panels to teach the students at my school how critical the situation is. The panels were great, so I decided to take things a step further by creating a GoFundMe page. I wanted to raise at least \$200, and I promoted the GoFundMe page after each panel.

"I chose Save the Children as the recipient of the money raised because, after reading about the organization, I came to the conclusion that it really does care for the Yemenis. I looked at the statistics on the website, and I was surprised by how much Save the Children has helped.

"I want to have an impact on the Yemen crisis, and I knew by supporting Save the Children I'd be doing that."



Contributed photo

## EMPTY BOWLS, FULL HEARTS

This April, Allendale Columbia School's Middle School Ceramics Class held the school's sixth annual Empty Bowls event. Empty Bowls is an international grassroots fundraising project that aims to address food insecurity, offering work personalized by artists and art organizations on a community level. Allendale Columbia's Empty Bowls is usually an in-person, silent auction and raffle. This year, due to COVID, the class moved the event online.

The 7th and 8th graders who took part began by researching charitable organizations, ultimately choosing Save the Children as the recipient of this year's donation. The students enjoyed their Zoom conversation with Ms. Niels, during which they had the opportunity to ask her questions about Save the Children and the impact their gift could have.

The next step was to contact local artists, alums, faculty and staff, and students from kindergarten through 12th grade at their school to ask them to be part of the event. The auction ended up featuring 110 handmade pieces in ceramic, paper, acrylic, plaster, confetti, fabric and wood. As the auction closed, the group hosted a virtual final celebration and raffle drawing.

On May 17, the 13 students who organized the event were delighted to donate \$2,307.95 to Save the Children!

