VOLUME 45 // ISSUE 2

PATSA NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2026

PATSA 40TH ANNIVERSARY AWARDS

At our camp kickoff, we held a brief award ceremony to present awards for some deserving individuals!

- Mary Lou Reaver Advocacy Award, presented by Pam Bernet to Sherrie Wivell for outstanding advocacy for an individual with TS.
- Sid Newman Fundraising Award, presented by Dr. Judith Newman to Patty John, for excelling in fundraising for PATSA.
- Dr. Thomas Cadman Donor Award, presented by Nicole Wesner to Robert & Joan Dircks Foundation, for outstanding financial contributions to PATSA.
- Dr. Peter Meyer Medical Excellence Award, presented by Brandi Cooper to Dr. Robyn Filipink for exceptional medical service to those with TS.
- Senator Terry Punt Legislative Award, presented by: Sherrie Wivell to Jeff Mason for championing our cause in the legislative space.
- Most Accommodating School Award, presented Nolin & Bethany Hurley to Millcreek Township SD for extraordinary acceptance and willingness to accommodate a student with TS.
- Outstanding Volunteer Award, presented by Derick Valencik to Craig, Autumn, Lily and Hope Nunemaker for hours of faithful service to PATSA over the last 5 years.

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MISSION:
The PA Tourette Syndrome Alliance is a non-profit organization that advocates for those affected by Tourette syndrome. We are dedicated to increasing awareness, providing education, and fostering acceptance.

Disclaimer:
This newsletter is published two times per year. Opinions expressed in this publication reflect the views of its editor and contributors. They are not necessarily the views of the PA Tourette Syndrome Alliance (PATSA).

Volunteer Opportunities:

Volunteers are needed in a variety of positions! To start the process, complete a volunteer application online or request it by contacting derick@patsainc.org.

Committee Member – Join one of our active committees. Committees meet by zoom and have agendas and minutes to help you keep up with the activities. Our Public Relations, Fundraising, Legislative and Camp/ Retreat committees are all recruiting.

TS Family Camp and Retreat – A variety of volunteer positions are needed at Camp and Retreat, some of which receive free camp or retreat registration and a stipend.

Tic Connection Leaders - spearhead local meet up groups in your area. There is a need in our community to meet other families affected by TS in a relaxed setting. To get these started we need volunteers willing to step up and, along with help from PATSA, take the lead on organizing and scheduling a group in their area.

Community Speakers Program - This amazing new program will be announced soon! We plan to recruit volunteers and provide them with a video and talking points to share info on TS and our services to your local community organizations!

Why Invest in PATSA's SERVICES!

The amount of services we provide can only happen because of our donors, grant funders and corporate sponsors! During the 2025-2026 school year, donors provided a total of $119,052 to help us continue **all of our services and events** while we waited on our state grant. These services included **26 Educator Trainings, 12 Peer Trainings, 10 Nurse Trainings, 5 Community Trainings, 39 School meetings, TS Awareness Day at the Capital, TS Family Camp weekend, Virtual TS Family Retreat, numerous info booths/outreach and ability to respond to over 454 emails/phone calls for support during 2025-2026**.

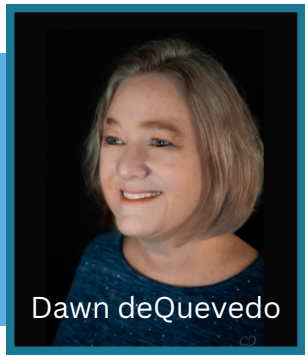
The State Budget year starts in July, but funding for grant agreements is often delayed for MONTHS! As this is written, **we just received reimbursement for our grant of $159,000 from the Department of Health and luckily, Tourette is included in the 2026-27 budget too!**

This makes grants and donations even more important in providing services. We will be able to recoup some of the funds when we are able to bill the state, but that does not help us provide the much needed services to families and schools while we wait.

YOUR DONATIONS HELP US CONTINUE OUR VITAL TOURETTE SERVICES. MAKE YOUR DONATION AT WWW.PATSAINC.ORG TODAY!

INTERVIEW WITH VOLUNTEER: DAWN DEQUEVEDO

Dawn deQuevedo has been a PATSA member since 2019 and is a school counselor in the Lakeland School District. Inspired by her son Callum's Tourette syndrome journey, she is a passionate advocate who volunteers with PATSA, speaks to educators and community groups, and works to connect families with support and resources. Dawn believes the support her family received has been life-changing and is committed to helping others find the same sense of hope and community.


Dawn deQuevedo

What inspired you to volunteer for PATSA?

Like most members of PATSA my life has been touched by Tourette Syndrome. Following my son Callum's diagnosis in November 2019, I found myself seeking resources to learn more about TS and to help support him in what became a life changing series of symptoms. Soon I also found myself needing assistance in dealing with the school. Nicole Wesner, one of the PATSA consultants, became a lifeline for our family.

Keep in mind, this was all occurring just before the Pandemic so we were just finding resources as the world shut down! So, this larger life changing event was happening for all of us! This meant that the school was learning to be virtual and hybrid and all the things... We were all reduced to our small household existences and PATSA, pivoting to virtual events, gave us a place to belong. As we were locked down with this new diagnosis and ever changing symptoms, PATSA was giving us an outlet and resources to survive.

As a school counselor I also realized that I was in a unique position to assist my own students who have TS and/or co-occurring conditions. I started using TS resources to support them and their families. This meant more reaching out to Nicole.

As I learned more about TS and became more comfortable with its existence in our life, it seemed only natural to start giving back to the organization that has given us so much.

What is your favorite PATSA activity or event?

I'm going to be honest, my favorite event was the virtual winter retreat for a couple of years during the pandemic. I think that is probably because we were so desperate to understand TS and see other kids who were living with TS. In kids you really see life! You see silliness and personality and passion. This gave us so much hope during such a desperate time.

I've also had the pleasure of joining some in person meet ups in our regional area and attended Jordan Galing's many fundraisers. A favorite for us was the day at the farm. I'm not a runner but enjoy seeing everyone at the fall Pumpkin Run too! Camp and virtual support groups have been wonderful ways to connect with other families on a similar journey. Finally, our board meetings are always so uplifting. It's exciting and satisfying to spend time with people who just "get" what TS is and are passionate about finding ways to help and connect with everyone in our community.

What do you find rewarding about volunteering for PATSA?

I think the "reward" is knowing that you are passing forward the kindness and generosity that was given to you. My family benefitted so much from PATSA at a time when we needed it. My son is a bit older now and figuring out his own way in the world but his TS continues to impact him and our family. I don't have to do as much to support him now but the memory of those early years with TS is ever present for me. Volunteering

INTERVIEW WITH VOLUNTEER: DAWN DEQUEVEDO (CONT.)

gives me the opportunity to show others how much PATSA can provide. I know that I can't cure TS or solve all of the struggles each person with TS may have but I also know that I can help support them to feel less alone on this ticcy journey. There is a personal reward in taking all of this accumulated knowledge and experience and using it to support those who are in the position I once was.

What else would you like to add?

In addition to PATSA, I've been involved with NJCTS and The Tourette Association of America. I'm glad that our relationships with these other organizations continue to grow and support all people with Tourette Syndrome. PATSA members might not realize just how lucky we are in Pennsylvania to have the legislative support that we have. We are one of the only states that receives state funding and provides statewide support to our state residents. PATSA is unique in its boots on the ground and grassroots approach to meeting people's needs. We have the ability and fortune to directly support our TS families in a way that is not occurring in many US states. I'm proud and grateful to be part of PATSA.

SPRING EVENT RECAP

Day at the Capital

PATSA got information to 39 legislators and held 13 with Senate and House decision makers during meetings in Harrisburg on Tuesday, March 24, 2026. We shared information on Tourette syndrome, PATSA & your stories!

Local legislators heard directly from families about how Tourette affects them and they passed vital funding for our services to continue!

Join us next year for this annual event! Pictures here: https://eu.zonerama.com/TSFamilyCamp2022/Album/15901204

Light Your Town Teal

Buildings and landmarks Lit Up Teal on Tuesday, May 19, 2026!

Several new buildings and landmarks were added this year and many others lit up for TS again! Volunteers can get involved in the excitement during 2027. Review our Facebook page for pictures! Link: https://www.facebook.com/patsalliance/

Info for All Events here: https://patsainc.org/events/

TS Family Camp

A total of 137 people joined us on May 15-May 17, 2026 for this amazing event. Parents attend trainings and discussion groups while their children, with and without TS, attend fun camp activities! Pictures here: https://eu.zonerama.com/TSFamilyCamp2022/Album/15420185

Camp Hero:

Valley Grange #1360

Camp Legend:

MORE THAN A PHONE

WIRELESS ZONE gives

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Ultimate Hair Salon
Thomas R Hummel
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John & Carol Taylor
Eat n' Park

OUR GENEROUS DONORS From Jan 1, 2026 - July 20, 2026

Teal Visionary $15,000-30,000
Anonymous Donor

Teal Advocate $5,000-$9,999
Valley Grange #1360

Leader $2,500-$4,999
Executive Improvement Group/
Jordan Galing's Fundraiser

Steward $1,000-$2,499
Patty John
Froggy 104.3 (in-kind)
Pickle 92.1 (in-kind)
Johnson & Johnson
Baird South Hills Office
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Patty John & Jamie Roach Group

Patron $500-$999
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Philip Mcmullen

Donors $100-$499 Kimberly Babik, Mitchell & Nathalie Anolik, Janette Clark, Derick Valencik, Douglas Lowell Costco Wholesale #200, Giant Corporate, Danielle Jesensky, McSherrystown Moose Lodge 720, Wendy & Jim Meyer Charitable Fund, Barbara Ruschak, Fraternal Order of Eagles Scranton Aerie #314, Carnegie-Collier Rotary, Danielle Jesensky DMD, Empire Music, Push Fitness, UPMC New Kensington, James Boyle, Alex Clemence, Deron Donalson, UPMC Health Plan, Diane Parker Moore, AIBDT Psychological Services, Christopher & Trisha Archeval, Kenneth & Betty Miller, Hustontown Area Senior Center Inc, Larra Daniels, Jon & Marie Herschel, Hanover Kiwanis Foundation, Lesley Geyer, Deborah Giffin, Rachel Ezekiel-Fishbein, Stephanie Dissen, Sean Smith, Richard Morgan, Cheryl Walker, David Dietrich, Ann Ficke, Baird Foundation, Loyal Order Of Moose Windber Lodge #349, Marge McHenry, Larry Myers, Danielle Plucinski, Sharon Rubbo, Lisa Worman, Sanketh Proddutur, Stansbury's Barber Shop, Paige Myers, Sue Babik, Justine Bensur, Natalie Freund, Stacie Riley, David Stiles, Dan Richmond, Vicky Ozgun, and Benjamin Montgomery

Donors under $50-$99 Dave Kiefer, Graham A Harrison, Briheem Adger, Jeanie Beans, Jennifer Hale, Frank DiBella, Bradley Krut, Michael & Melanie Cole, George & Gail Counihan, Beverly Schechtman, Eugene R & Adeline Tompkins, Richard Meyer, Brian Babik, Judy Dressler, Lisa Lenihan, Joann Mitchell, Diane Morgan, Gloria Roman, Lisa Worman, Brian Crawford, and Andrea Jackson.

Donors under $49 Natasha Krut, Sharon Rubbo, Amanda Johnson, Sherrie Wivell, Sara Wasegeshik, Pauline Bettenissi, Debra Grimes, Amanda Knisely, Sophia Mendez, Diane Pedersen, Thomas Philbin, Joe Yurchak, Mike Buczkowski, Ellen Warner, Jen Ritorto, Jackie & George Stavropoulos, Colleen Bailey, Sally Chamberlin, Ann Dickson, Susan Roach, Janet Young, Lesley Geyer, Nancy & Murray de la Fuente, Rhyen Wilson, Collin Phillips, Gavin Doyle, CommunityAid, Inc, Lea Chidlow, Dr. Fabbro, Joann Tissue, Sean Dissen, Hari Neopaney, Sergiu Turcan, Janice Sedlak-Mewich, Hazel Ze, Annette Blackwell, Amanda Sheehan, Meghan Fitzgerald, Jody Wamsher, Jennifer Leonard, Kate, Tara Dailey, Reese Hale, Jill McNulty, Korbin Cooper, Lawrence Co POMO Grange #65, Pamela Bernet, Nathan Uselman, Emily Bailey, Seth Pidot, Heather Fitzgibbon, and Courtney Rikoric.

If we have missed your donation or sponsorship from Jan 1, 2026 - July 20, 2026 please let us know. We want to acknowledge ALL donors.

DONATIONS IN HONOR

Vicky Ozgun's Birthday Fundraiser by Janice Sedlak-Medwick, Hazel Ze, and Vicky Ozgun.

Maggie's Birthday Fundraiser by Annette Blackwell & Amanda Sheehan

Lexi's Instagram Birthday Fundraiser by Tara Dailey, Jennifer Leonard, Kate, Reese Hale, Briheem Adger, Jeanie Beans, Jill McNulty, Molly and Jennifer Hale. & Amanda Sheehan

Nicole Wesner by Sharon Rubbo

Jack Tyler Morgan by Richard Morgan

Mathew Worman by Lisa Worman

Adam Fishbein by Rachel Ezekiel-Fishbein

Hope Nunemaker by Valley Grange #1360

DONATIONS IN MEMORY

Robert Whitelaw by Mitchell & Nathalie Anolik

Roberta Kauffman by Mitchell & Nathalie Anolik

Diane Amster by Mitchell & Nathalie Anolik

David Richard Beck by Mitchell & Nathalie Anolik

George Weinbaum by Rachel Ezekiel-Fishbein

PATSA thanks all of our donors!
We can only serve people, because of YOU!

TOGETHER OVER $16,000 WAS RAISED!

Fundraisers

Stephanie Dissen
Patty John
Sherrie Wivell

Snack & In-Kind Donors

Animal Friends
Collier Twp. Parks & Rec
COSTCO
Fresh Thyme
Debbie Giffin
Giant Eagle
Home Depot
Pro Bike & Run

FALL 2026 EVENTS!

Run, Sponsor, or create a Fundraising Team!

Choose "FUNdraise" to register and get a $10 discount on registration.

PLUS: Raise $100 by Oct 12 and get your team name on the back of the T-shirt!

Sponsorship levels start at $100.00!

Get your name or business on the back of our T-shirt. See all the options on our website here: https://patsainc.org/events/pumpkin-run/

TIDAL WAVE DAY

Look for info to Join PATSA in South Hanover at the Tidal Wave Auto Spa!

We won't be washing cars, just talking with their customers!

Half of the proceeds from this site on this date will be donated directly to PATSA! This will be over $1,000!

Friday, Sept. 19, 2026

Each Tidal Wave site has a different partner nonprofit.

TS Family Retreat

Returns IN-PERSON this year!

Join us on Nov 7-8, 2026 for this amazing event. This event is for the whole family to relax, unwind, and join others who share their struggles.

Early Bird Price of $40 per person includes 1 night lodging, 3 meals, all materials & activities.

Price increases to $50 per person on Sept 15.

Read more and register here: https://patsainc.org/events/ts-family-retreat/

Save the Date for Camp in 2027:

June 11-13 at Black Rock Retreat, Quarryville, PA

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