

SUMMER 2024

# COMMUNITY CONNECTION

A MILLER-KEYSTONE BLOOD CENTER PUBLICATION

## MKBC HOSTS FIRST ANNUAL APPRECIATION SERIES EVENTS

In May 2024, MKBC hosted its first annual Spring Appreciation Series events at DeSales University in Center Valley and at the Doubletree by Hilton in Reading.

drive sponsors and coordinators, and other organizations who help us live out our lifesaving mission every day."

This year, the Spring Appreciation Series events highlighted the significant contributions of regional high schools, honored the 2023 Local Leader Award recipients, and acknowledged vital Corporate and Foundation support.

Continued on p. 2



"Our Appreciation Series events were created to say 'thank you' to all the members of our community," said Rami Nemeh, Chief Operating Officer, MKBC. "Events are held in the Spring and Fall to honor blood donors, volunteers, financial supporters, high schools and colleges, blood



▲ Half-Pint is a celebrity wherever he goes!

**"Our Appreciation Series events were created to say 'thank you' to all the members of our community."** —Rami Nemeh, COO, MKBC.



**SAVING LIVES JUST BECAME EASIER ...**  
Miller-Keystone's Mobile App Now Available  
for Apple and Android Devices!

Read the story on p. 2

### IN THIS ISSUE

First Annual  
Appreciation Series Events  
PAGE 1

MKBC Launches Mobile App  
PAGE 2

Tech Heroes Breakfast  
PAGE 2

Local Leader Award Recipients  
PAGE 3

New Donor Rewards Program  
PAGE 4

Easton Resident Meets Her Lifesavers  
PAGE 5

Congratulations Class of 2024!  
PAGE 5

Thank the Donor  
PAGE 5

Gallon Donor Honorees  
PAGE 5

2nd Annual Blood Advocacy Week  
PAGE 5

Out & About  
PAGE 6

Your Blood. Their Hope.<sup>®</sup>



**MILLER-KEYSTONE**  
BLOOD CENTER

**DONOR CENTER LOCATIONS:** 1255 S. Cedar Crest Boulevard, Suite 1300, Allentown, PA 18103 • Five City Center, 740 Hamilton Street, Suite 120, Allentown PA 18101 • 1465 Valley Center Parkway, Bethlehem, PA 18017 • 3765 Nicholas Street, Suite B, Palmer Township, PA 18045 • 2745A Leisch's Bridge Road, Reading, PA 19605 • 400 Main Boulevard East, Suite 601, Ewing, NJ 08638 • 400 Route 315, Suite E, Pittston, PA 18640

**SATELLITE LOCATIONS:** BSI Corporate Benefits, 205 Webster Street, Bethlehem, PA 18015 • Western Pocono Community Library, 131 Pilgrim Way, Brodheadsville, PA 18322 • Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, 102 N. Hellertown Avenue, Quakertown, PA 18951 • Plainfield Volunteer Fire Company, 6480 Sullivan Trail, Wind Gap, PA 18091 • St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 1105 E. Lincoln Highway, Exton, PA 19341

# COMMUNITY CONNECTION

A MILLER-KEYSTONE BLOOD CENTER PUBLICATION

A publication designed to inform our community about the programs and services of the Miller-Keystone Blood Center.

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*Readers are invited to  
send their comments  
and letters to us at:*

Miller-Keystone Blood Center  
Lehigh Valley Corporate Center  
1465 Valley Center Parkway  
Bethlehem, PA 18017



## FIRST ANNUAL EVENT Continued from p. 1



Special thanks to our Spring event sponsors, including premier sponsors East Penn Manufacturing, Highmark, and St. Luke's University Health Network.

"It is the financial support we receive that makes these celebrations possible and helps us continue our lifesaving work," noted Lina Barbieri, Chief Philanthropy Officer, MKBC.

Stay tuned for details on our Fall Appreciation Series events coming soon!

< Pictured at the Spring 2024 Appreciation Series are Mr. and Mrs. John Fitzpatrick, with MKBC's Nicole Teklits, Account Manager, and Rami Nemeh, Chief Operating Officer. John is a blood donor and long-time blood drive coordinator for St. Joseph the Worker Parish in Orefield.

## MILLER-KEYSTONE'S MOBILE APP NOW AVAILABLE FOR APPLE AND ANDROID DEVICES!

MKBC is excited to announce that our new Miller-Keystone Blood Donor App is now available in both the Apple Store and Google Play! This user-friendly app enables the Blood Center to better engage with our donors by providing an additional and convenient avenue for feedback. The mobile app also simplifies a donor's journey, as it provides the user with a more personalized experience.

Features of our new mobile app include:

- Appointment scheduling
- Eligibility information
- Searching for a blood drive in your community

- A direct link to iScreen, to complete your confidential medical screening prior to arriving for an appointment
- Completing a post-donation survey directly from your mobile device
- Access to your previous donation history and test results, including blood pressure, pulse, cholesterol and hematocrit
- Donor rewards points tracking and access to MKBC's online store, and more!

Visit Google Play for the Apple Store to download our new mobile app today!





## 2023 LOCAL LEADER AWARD RECIPIENTS ANNOUNCED!

MKBC's Local Leader program is designed to honor and recognize businesses, schools, church groups, and other organizations that show extraordinary commitment to supporting our life-saving mission. By sponsoring bloodmobile drives, these groups play a crucial role in bolstering the health and well-being of the local community, ensuring a steady supply of blood for those in need. These groups are acknowledged for their dedication and significant contributions to the community by collecting a minimum of 200 units of blood in a single year.

Congratulations to our 2023 Local Leader Award recipients, including:

BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir .....	<b>718 Units</b>
East Penn Manufacturing .....	<b>706 Units</b>
Kempton Excavating .....	<b>392 Units</b>
Lehigh Valley Health Network – Cedar Crest.....	<b>370 Units</b>
St. Joseph the Worker Parish .....	<b>367 Units</b>
Daniel Boone High School /.....	<b>357 Units</b>
Angela Hohl Memorial Drives .....	
St. Luke's University Health Network – Bethlehem .....	<b>339 Units</b>
Pediatric Cancer Foundation of the.....	<b>339 Units</b>
Lehigh Valley Air Products.....	<b>297 Units</b>
St. Peter's United Church of Christ .....	<b>291 Units</b>
Fleetwood High School.....	<b>274 Units</b>
Governor Mifflin High School .....	<b>273 Units</b>
Reading Hospital/Tower Health.....	<b>248 Units</b>
Geisinger Medical Center .....	<b>245 Units</b>
Lehigh University.....	<b>224 Units</b>
In Memory of Allison Perno Drives.....	<b>213 Units</b>



MKBC recently honored our 2023 Local Leader Award recipients including the St. Luke's University Health Network (above) and East Penn Manufacturing.



## IMPACT BREAKFAST HELD FOR TECH HEROES FOUNDING MEMBERS

In 2023, the Blood Center launched the MKBC Tech Heroes program, an initiative aimed at maintaining and enhancing our technology and equipment capabilities. The program set a goal of identifying 15 dedicated financial supporters, each contributing \$1,000 annually to support the purchase of new equipment, software and upgrades, as well as covering operational needs.

"Technology and equipment are two high-cost purchasing areas for MKBC and are critically important," said Lina Barbieri, Chief Philanthropy Officer. "In fact, in order to maintain a ready and safe blood supply, there are a number of technology and equipment purchases that are made each year."

In June, MKBC held an impact breakfast to honor the 40 founding

members of our Tech Heroes Program. Thanks to their generosity, the Blood Center successfully acquired a new courier vehicle, two new centrifuges, and a standard pluggo decapper for the Laboratory.

"The Blood Center is extremely grateful for the tremendous response of our founding Tech Heroes," added Rami Nemeh, Chief Operating Officer, MKBC. "With their generous support, we are able to ensure a ready and safe blood supply for our community."

By joining MKBC's Tech Heroes Program, individuals play a crucial role in maintaining and advancing the technology that keeps our blood supply safe and reliable, helping to support the critical needs of our community.

To learn more, visit [GIVEaPIINT.org/tech-heroes](https://GIVEaPIINT.org/tech-heroes).

## MKBC LAUNCHES NEW DONOR REWARDS PROGRAM

On July 1, Miller-Keystone Blood Center launched its Frequent Lifesaver Club, a new and improved rewards program for our dedicated blood donors.

"Our Frequent Lifesaver Club recognizes and rewards our dedicated donors for saving lives through the generous act of voluntary blood donation," said Rami Nemeh, Chief Operating Officer, MKBC. "A donor earns points every time they donate. Simply put, the more often someone donates, the more points they will earn."

**There are TWO components to MKBC Frequent Lifesaver Club:**

### 1. REWARDS POINTS    2. CLUB LEVELS

Rewards points can be redeemed at any time in one's donor portal. These points can be exchanged for gifts such as t-shirts or a duffle bag, as well as wide variety of e-gift cards. Bonus point days will also be announced periodically.

Club Levels are based on the number of times someone donates over the course of 12 months. The more times one donates, the higher their club level will be. One's Club Level will determine the value of periodic drawings MKBC announces for valuable prizes, including gift cards, experiences, merchandise and more.

For additional details, visit [GIVEaPINT.org](https://www.GIVEaPINT.org).



**Our Frequent Lifesaver Club is an opt-in program. Donors are not automatically enrolled, they must voluntarily join by logging into their online donor portal.**



## EASTON RESIDENT MEETS HER LIFESAVERS



In May, MKBC hosted our latest "Celebrate Hope" event, bringing together a transfusion recipient with two of the blood donors whose selfless generosity helped save her life.

The emotional reunion took place in May at St. Luke's University Health Network's Anderson Campus. Maria Callanan, her lifesaving donors, Linda Swankoski and Emily Shelly, along with MKBC staff and other guests, gathered to witness this special event.

To view the emotional moments where Maria was able to meet and thank the women whose donations impacted her life, visit <https://www.GIVEaPINT.org/programs/celebrate-hope>.

## CONGRATULATIONS CLASS OF 2024!

MKBC is privileged to host blood drives with more than 75 high schools in Eastern PA and Western NJ. During the 2023-24 school year, these high school blood drive sponsors collected more than 4,600 units of blood, impacting more than 13,000 lives in our region.

Through our Community Blood Drive program, our regional high schools help bolster the regional blood supply and save lives in their community, while at the same time creating new opportunities for supporting students in their academic endeavors. By simply hosting one or more Blood Drives and collecting a minimum of 50 points during the school year, these schools automatically qualified for an **MKBC High School Hero Donor Recruitment Scholarship Award**.

Congratulations to the 40+ students and schools receiving scholarship awards in 2024. For the full list of this year's recipients, visit [GIVEaPINT.org/in\\_our\\_schools/recruitment-scholarship](https://www.GIVEaPINT.org/in_our_schools/recruitment-scholarship).

In addition to our scholarship program, MKBC is proud to partner with more than 70 high schools for our **Red Graduation Cord Program**. This program is designed to recognize seniors at their graduation ceremony for being life-saving blood donors and to honor them for making significant contributions to our community. Ideally, after graduation, these young adults will continue to contribute to our community by ensuring a safe and stable blood supply by becoming lifelong blood donors.

To qualify for a Red Graduation Cord, a student must either donate blood four or more times during their high school career or volunteer four or more times during their high school career. In 2024, MKBC distributed 228 Red Graduation Cords to regional high school students.

For additional information on MKBC's Red Cord Program, visit [GIVEaPINT.org/in\\_our\\_schools/hero-cord-program](https://www.GIVEaPINT.org/in_our_schools/hero-cord-program).



# Thank the Donor<sup>®</sup> WITH GRATITUDE

**"Thank the Donor<sup>®</sup>" is a program that allows transfusion recipients to anonymously connect with their blood donors via email, enabling the recipient to thank the donor(s) for their lifesaving generosity.**

*(Here are just a couple of the messages that were recently received.)*



"I want to thank you so much for the selfless act of donating your blood. I have a disease called MDS

which is a type of blood cancer. I get a blood transfusion every 1 to 2 weeks. Your blood donation is greatly appreciated, as it is helping to sustain me until I get a bone marrow transplant. Thank you so much!"

"Thank you so much for donating your precious blood! It just saved my wife after post partum."



## CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR LATEST GALLON DONOR HONOREES!

**Thomas Dombrowski, Allentown, PA (top, right)**

**60 gallons**

**Barry Sanders, Macungie, PA (bottom, right)**

**75 gallons**

**Jeffrey Dischinat, Allentown, PA (below)**

**75 gallons**



## 2ND ANNUAL VIRTUAL BLOOD ADVOCACY HELD IN JUNE

Blood centers nationwide virtually gathered from June 10-14 for the 2nd annual Blood Advocacy Week. This week is dedicated to advancing policies that enhance access to blood products and expand the donor base, ensuring all patients can receive the lifesaving transfusions they need, wherever and whenever they need them.

The priorities for Blood Advocacy Week in 2024 focused on four key areas:

- **Federal Funding for Education and Awareness:** Advocating for targeted federal funding to support local education and awareness initiatives by blood centers.
- **Pre-Hospital Blood Use Demonstration Program:** Proposing a demonstration program to evaluate the use of pre-hospital blood transfusions for traumatic injury patients.
- **Diverse and Younger Donor Pilot Program:** Encouraging Congress to establish a pilot program aimed at attracting a more diverse and younger donor base, and improving testing for better patient matches.
- **Reimbursement for Palliative Transfusions:** Establishing a demonstration program to allow reimbursement for palliative blood transfusions outside of the Medicare hospice benefit.

For more information on 2024 Blood Advocacy Week, visit <https://americasblood.org/advocacy/bloodadvocacyweek>.







# OUT&ABOUT



Thanks to iHeart Media and PA State Rep. Steve Samuelson for sponsoring blood drives on World Blood Donor Day in June!



Thank you to the Allentown Fire Department and Allentown Police Department for hosting the 2024 Boots & Badges Competition! Pictured (L-R) Allentown Fire Chief Agosto, MKBC's Dara Gonzalez, Allentown Mayor Matt Tuerk, and Allentown Police Chief Roca.



Half-Pint and MKBC staff had a great time talking in the Bethlehem St. Patrick's Day Parade in March.

Half-Pint was so excited to join other mascots from the region to visit the PPL Center and celebrate MelVin's birthday during a recent Lehigh Valley Phantoms game!







▲ Congratulations to the World Mission Society Church of God in USA (NY) for hosting a another very successful “Blood Drive to Give Life Through the Love of the Passover!”



▲ The 2024 Lehigh Valley Phantoms Bleed Orange  
▼ Blood Drive was another resounding success!





Lehigh Valley Corporate Center  
1465 Valley Center Parkway  
Bethlehem, PA 18017

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## MILLER-KEYSTONE BLOOD CENTER

### OUR HOSPITALS

Hospitals supported by the MKBC Blood Services Program:

#### IN PA:

##### St. Luke's University Health Network

- St. Luke's University Hospital – Bethlehem Campus
- St. Luke's Hospital – Allentown Campus
- St. Luke's Hospital – Anderson Campus
- St. Luke's Hospital – Carbon Campus
- St. Luke's Hospital – Easton Campus
- St. Luke's Hospital – Lehighton Campus
- St. Luke's Hospital – Miners Campus
- St. Luke's Hospital – Monroe Campus
- St. Luke's Hospital – Sacred Heart Campus
- St. Luke's Hospital – Upper Bucks Campus
- Geisinger St. Luke's Hospital

##### Geisinger

- Geisinger Bloomsburg Hospital
- Geisinger Community Medical Center
- Geisinger Jersey Shore Hospital
- Geisinger Lewistown Hospital
- Geisinger Medical Center
- Geisinger Medical Center – Muncy
- Geisinger Wyoming Valley Medical Center

##### Grand View Health

##### Temple Health

- Chestnut Hill Hospital

##### Tower Health

- Reading Hospital
- Pottstown Hospital
- Phoenixville Hospital

##### Lehigh Valley Health Network

- LVHN Carbon
- LVHN Cedar Crest
- LVHN Dickson City
- LVHN 17th Street
- LVHN Hazleton
- LVHN Hecktown Oaks
- LVHN Muhlenberg
- LVHN Schuylkill East Norwegian

#### IN NJ:

- Hunterdon Health
- St. Luke's Hospital – Warren Campus
- Summit Health – Florham Park
- Summit Health – Berkeley Heights

**THE ONLY COMMUNITY BLOOD CENTER SERVING YOUR LOCAL HOSPITALS.**

