

14th ANNUAL

LONG ISLAND IMAGINE AWARDS

Recognizing *Innovation* & *Leadership* in the Nonprofit Sector



Tuesday, April 28, 2026
The Crest Hollow Country Club





For nearly a century, SterlingRisk has dreamed big, imagined a better world, and made support of nonprofits a core value.

It's who we are and why we're so proud to serve as Diamond Sponsor of the Long Island Imagine Awards.

We congratulate each of the extraordinary finalists and participants. Thank you for touching all our lives.



More information is available at SterlingRisk.com

NEW YORK NEW JERSEY CONNECTICUT FLORIDA CALIFORNIA INDIANA

IMAGINE

*a world without hope or compassion
a world without food and shelter
a world without arts and culture
a world without innovation and impact
a world where the nonprofit sector didn't exist*

The nonprofit sector on Long Island plays an essential role in the social, cultural, and economic fabric of our region. From human services and healthcare to arts, education, and community development, nonprofit organizations collectively serve hundreds of thousands of residents each year—often while navigating growing demand, workforce challenges, rising costs, and heightened expectations from funders and regulators.

Despite these pressures, Long Island's nonprofit community continues to demonstrate extraordinary resilience, creativity, and commitment. Strong governance, effective leadership, and collaboration remain critical as organizations adapt to meet evolving community needs. In this environment, opportunities to come together to share ideas, celebrate success, and learn from one another are not just valuable—they are essential.

The Imagine Awards

The Imagine Awards were created to celebrate excellence, spark collaboration, and shine a spotlight on the remarkable work being done by nonprofit organizations throughout Long Island. This year marks the **14th Annual Long Island Imagine Awards**—an evening dedicated to recognition, connection, and inspiration across our sector.

This evening, 24 outstanding nonprofit organizations are being honored across six award categories: **Arts and Culture**; **Innovation**; **Leadership Excellence**; **Rising Star**; **Social Impact**; ***New* Sustainability & Environmental**

Each finalist reflects the very best of our sector—mission-driven, community-focused, and deeply committed to improving lives. One organization in each category will receive the Imagine Award and a \$5,000 cash prize. In addition, thanks to the generous support of our **Diamond Sponsor, SterlingRisk Insurance**, each finalist will also receive a **\$1,000 award**, reinforcing the Imagine Awards' commitment to recognizing excellence across the board.

Gratitude to Our Sponsors and Partners

The Imagine Awards would not be possible without the extraordinary support of our sponsors, who understand the vital role nonprofits play in sustaining strong communities. We extend our sincere thanks to our **Platinum Sponsors: Cerini & Associates, LLP; Certilman Balin Adler & Hyman, LLP; Chase for Business; The Claire Friedlander Family Foundation; Nerds That Care; Paylocity; Vanguard Benefits**

We are also deeply grateful to our awards committee and judges for their time, expertise, and thoughtful consideration throughout the selection process.

To all of this year's finalists: congratulations, and thank you for your unwavering dedication to serving Long Island's communities. Tonight is a celebration of your impact, leadership, and vision for a stronger future.

Kenneth Cerini, CPA, CFP, FABFA
Managing Partner, Cerini & Associates, LLP



Evening Program

Welcome

Kenneth Cerini, CPA, CFP, FABFA, *Imagine Awards Chair*
Managing Partner, **Cerini & Associates, LLP**

Emcee

Jenn Seelig
Anchor, *News 12 Long Island*

The Claire Friedlander Family Foundation Arts & Culture Award
presented by:

Peter J. Klein CFA®, CRPS®, CAP®
President, *The Claire Friedlander Family Foundation*
Chief Investment Officer & Founder, **ALINE Wealth**

The Vanguard Benefits Rising Star Award
presented by:

Edward Probst, CLU ChFC ChHC RHU HCR REBC
President, **Vanguard Benefits**

The Certilman Balin Adler & Hyman, LLP Leadership Award
presented by:

David Goldstein, Esq.
Partner, **Certilman Balin Adler & Hyman, LLP**

The Sustainability & Environmental Award
Sponsored By Chase For Business
presented by:

Mahmud Siddiquee, Executive Director, Not-for-Profit Banking
JPMorgan Chase Bank

SterlingRisk Insurance Diamond Sponsor Check Presentation

David Sterling, Chief Executive Officer
Joanne Krush, Senior Vice President, Chief Financial Officer
SterlingRisk Insurance

Dinner & Networking

The Paylocity Innovation Award
presented by:
Jeff DeSantis

Director of Enterprise Sales, **Paylocity**

The Cerini & Associates, LLP Social Impact Award
presented by:

Mahnaz Cavalluzzi, CPA
Partner, **Cerini & Associates, LLP**

The Nerds That Care Fan Favorite Award
presented by:

James Rocker
President & CEO, **Nerds That Care**

Blooper Reel

Conclusion

Kenneth Cerini, CPA, CFP, FABFA, *Imagine Awards Founder*
Managing Partner, **Cerini & Associates, LLP**

*Winners to step and repeat immediately following
conclusion for press photo.*

Thanks to the Imagine Awards Committee

Founder

Kenneth R. Cerini, CPA, *Cerini & Associates, LLP*

Tommy DiMisa, *Vanguard Benefits & Philanthropy in Phocus*

Rachel A. Fernbach, *Moritt Hock & Hamroff LLP*

Amy Fleischer, *Harmony Healthcare Long Island &
Nonprofit Resource Hub*

Andrea Kantor, *Webster Bank*

Joanne Krush, *SterlingRisk Insurance*

Philip L Maltaghati, *United Public Adjusters & Appraisers, Inc.*

Lauren Marzo, *The Viscardi Center*

Annette Marinaccio, *Northwell Health*

Gina Migliore, *Priority Pension Services, Inc. &
The Pinnacle Financial Group*

Noel Raab, *Fivestar Advertising*

James Rocker, *Nerds That Care*

Ray Schwetz, *Jovia Financial*

Ryan Thiel, *The Pinnacle Financial Group*

Glenn Tyranski, *King's College*

Emcee

Jenn Seelig, *News 12*

Event Planner

Hillary Needle, *Hillary Needle Events, Inc.*

Marketing/Graphic Designers

Kelli-Anne Cerini, *Cerini & Associates, LLP*

Kristina Laino-Tortorice, *Cerini & Associates, LLP*

Special Thanks to the Imagine Awards Judging Panel

Gerard T. Dolan, *LUTCF NSSA, Helping Hands Risk Solutions*

Melissa Greenberger, *The New York Community Trust*

Regina Jankowski, *Long Island Business News*

Kimberly Kaye, *McBride Consulting and Business Development Group*

Joani Madarash, *accessLinx*

Meredith Michaels, *Big Brothers Big Sisters of Long Island*

Erika Oelkers, *JP Morgan Private Bank*

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Meet the Founder



Ken Cerini, CPA, CFP, FABFA
Managing Partner
Cerini & Associates, LLP

Ken Cerini is the founder and managing partner of Cerini & Associates, LLP. Like many of the nonprofits he serves, Ken is passionate about making a difference, believing that it is important to be deeply invested in every client relationship and providing real value to each of his clients. He is one of the top accountants/consultants in the State of New York working with special education providers, is well versed in nonprofit issues, and also is heavily involved in the healthcare industry. However, most of you already know that about Ken. Since this is the Imagine Awards, a

program more focused on passion than on technical skills, let's dive into who Ken really is:

- ▶ Ken is giving of his time, providing hundreds of hours a year of free advice, advocacy, and training to the nonprofit sector, a sector that means so much to him.
- ▶ Ken is an avid climber and hiker, believing that anything could be made better by just adding a mountain, a cliff, or a frozen waterfall. He enjoys the thrill of pushing himself, the mental relief it provides, and the views he gets once he arrives (*follow him on Instagram @totalcerini*). Over the years, Ken has channeled his passion for hanging off rocks and ice and traversing alpine terrains into fundraising opportunities for various nonprofits through the Cerini Challenge.
- ▶ Ken also enjoys family. He has been married to his wife Bonnie for more than 35 years and has three children he is very proud of: Kelli – the Marketing Manager at C&A; Arielle – who has her doctorate in communication design and is a UX designer for a company in Los Angeles; and Erik – a computer programmer working for an insurance company in Massachusetts. He is also a proud grandfather to Ember Rose (“Boo”) and a grandchild to be named later on the way! Ken has three dogs—Max (*an Old English Sheepdog*), Mickey (*a Pomeranian Husky mix*), and Gucci (*a Pomeranian*)—whom he walks every morning. He also has African Cichlids and South American Discus (*fish*), for whom he's still on the hunt for collars small enough so he can take them swimming.
- ▶ Ken, along with his family, started the Cerini Family Foundation in 2020 to further support the nonprofit sector.
- ▶ Ken loves to cook and bake... he feels it allows him to express the creative side of his personality. During last year's cookie weekend he and his family baked over 4,000 cookies.
- ▶ Ken is a head-banger (*loves heavy metal music for the energy it contains*), and as people tend to mellow out as they get older, that is not the case for Ken.
- ▶ Ken is into science fiction and science fantasy ... favorite books, the Hobbit/Lord of the Rings, Enders Game, Dune, and Dungeon Crawler Carl (*soooo obsessed*).
- ▶ Ken is the founder of the Imagine Awards, an impactful way of recognizing and celebrating the nonprofit sector, a sector that is often overlooked and taken for granted.

Meet the Emcee



Jenn Seelig
Anchor
News 12 Long Island

Jenn Seelig is a weekend morning anchor and reporter for New 12. She is the reporter for 'Made on Long Island.' Jenn was born and raised in Commack and loves to report on stories in her hometown. She graduated from SUNY New Paltz and studied Digital Media Production and Journalism. She began her career in 2018 as a multimedia journalist in Utica, NY. Two years later, she landed her second on-air job in Albany as a reporter. It was always her dream to report back home on Long Island. In 2022, Jenn started

freelance reporting with News 12 and has worked there since.

Imagine

"You may say I'm a dreamer but I'm not the only one, I hope someday you'll join us, and the whole world will live as one."

~John Lennon

Meet the Judges



Gerard T. Dolan, LUTCF NSSA
Agency Principal
Helping Hands Risk Solutions

Gerard T. Dolan, LUTCF, NSSA, is a nonprofit-focused leader and risk management professional with a long-standing commitment to strengthening mission-driven organizations across New York. With decades of experience spanning nonprofit development, community engagement, and business operations, Gerard brings a unique blend of strategic insight and practical leadership to the organizations he serves.

Gerard is the President of Helping Hands Risk Solutions, a consulting and insurance services organization dedicated to supporting nonprofits, community-based programs, and small businesses through customized risk management and asset protection strategies. His work centers on helping organizations operate sustainably, safeguard their resources, and remain focused on delivering impact in the communities they serve.

In addition to his insurance and advisory background, Gerard has held leadership roles in nonprofit development, including serving as Loaned Executive and later, Senior Vice President of Development for United Way of Long Island.

Throughout his career, Gerard has demonstrated repeated success in organizational growth, stakeholder engagement, volunteer stewardship, and collaborative leadership. He is known for his ability to communicate effectively with diverse constituencies, mentor professionals, and build sustainable systems that support long-term mission advancement.

Gerard holds a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from the New York Institute of Technology and is a Life Underwriter Training Council Fellow and a National Social Security Advisor. He is also a member of the Long Island Association of Fundraising Professionals.

Deeply committed to service, Gerard has supported numerous charitable and faith-based initiatives. He recently served a two year term as a Board Member of Dance Entropy Inc., volunteers with the Make-A-Wish Foundation as a Wish Granting Coach, and has participated in international mission work through People Loving People Inc. He is also active in his parish community at Saint Gertrude's Church and has contributed to United Way's community impact efforts through executive volunteer service.

As a judge for the LI Imagine Awards, Gerard brings a deep appreciation for the essential role nonprofits play in strengthening Long Island's communities, along with practical expertise in organizational sustainability, development strategy, and mission-centered leadership.

Meet the Judges



Melissa Greenberger
Program Director
The New York Community Trust

Melissa Greenberger is a program director at The New York Community Trust's Long Island office (*previously known as The Long Island Community Foundation*). In her role, she supports The Trust's competitive grantmaking, as well as special initiatives and collaborative funds. Her grants portfolio includes the issue areas of arts & culture, conservation and the environment, health, mental health, hunger, and technical assistance. She builds on The Trust's knowledge of Long Island's strengths, challenges, resources, and needs. Melissa enjoys connecting nonprofits to other nonprofits and

to resources so they can be more effective.

Prior to joining The Trust in 2021, Melissa was senior staff attorney at Pro Bono Partnership where she provided direct legal services to nonprofit organizations in New York (*Long Island office*), recruited and coordinated volunteer attorneys to assist clients, and presented legal workshops on topics relevant to nonprofit executives and board members.

Melissa previously served as a small claims arbitrator in the Suffolk County District Courts and as the Associate Village Justice in the Village of Lake Grove. She teaches law and ethics courses at Suffolk County Community College. Melissa is a graduate of Dickinson College and Touro Law Center and is admitted to the New York State Bar. She is a member of the Suffolk County Courts Women in the Courts Committee and serves on the advisory board of Career Day, Inc.

Meet the Judges



Regina Jankowski
Editor
Long Island Business News

Regina Jankowski joined Long Island Business News (LIBN) in October 2023 as Editor. As the only media organization on Long Island dedicated to local commerce in the five major sectors—finance, health care, law and government, real estate, small business and nonprofits—LIBN supports and informs business owners through its weekly print edition, website, daily e-alerts, live networking events and more.

As a former small business owner of C-R-Dello Communications, Regina has firsthand knowledge and best practices of the importance and value of information as it relates to the Long Island business community.

Prior to LIBN, Regina worked as a Senior Content Developer at Hypha HubSpot Development (*formerly Morey Creative Studios*), providing full digital content support for Long Island-based businesses. Much of her work at Hypha revolved around content strategy development based on keyword analysis, SEO and HubSpot best practices to maximize client growth strategies.

Regina also worked at Edgell Communications (*now EnsembleIQ*) as Editor of Vertical Systems Reseller, also known as VSR. While there, she was responsible for the B2B technology publication's day-to-day operations, as well as editorial for its Web site and accompanying e-newsletters, VAR Central and Real-Life Solutions. She also hosted an online monthly YouTube talk show known as VSR Channel Live.

Regina also served as Special Projects Editor of The Journal of Commerce, a weekly news magazine covering the trade and transportation industry. Prior to that, she was Managing Editor of Maritime Reporter & Engineering News, a monthly trade publication geared toward the commercial maritime industry.

She holds a B.A. degree in English and an M.A. degree in Strategic Communication and Leadership, both from Seton Hall University, as well a Certificate in Journalism from New York University's School of Continuing Education & Professional Studies.

Regina resides in Bayport with her husband, Michael, and their two sons: Henry and Charlie. She is an active participant within the community as a board member for the Long Island Association, Vision Long Island and the Bayport-Blue Point SEED Foundation.

Meet the Judges



Kimberly Kaye
Director of Grants & Fundraising Strategy
McBride Consulting and
Business Development Group

Kimberly Kaye is Director of Grants & Fundraising Strategy for McBride Consulting and Business Development Group. With 15 years in fundraising, development, and communications, she helps organizations navigate funding labyrinths as painlessly as possible. A career patient advocate and longtime professional musician, Kimberly is particularly passionate about public health, arts, and community development initiatives.

Meet the Judges



Joani Madarash
Founder
accessLinx

Joani Madarash is Founder of accessLinx, a boutique media and communications firm. In business since 2002, accessLinx creates videos, distinctive events, and features production of accessible formats- e.g., braille transcription and Large Print. With clientele from small businesses to "Corporate America," accessLinx has assisted numerous NFP organizations with their fundraising and marketing initiatives.

Joani has been credited with reflecting the "heart and spirit" of the LI business community. A respected entrepreneur, she embraces "giving back" through involvement in several not-for-profit organizations as volunteer, board member, fundraiser, donor, sponsor, and provider of "pro bono" services. Joani's affiliations include national and local associations. She holds several leadership positions and is President of the Suffolk County Rehab Council, former Executive Director of SBPLI, as well as serving on multiple Boards of Directors. She is a member of Suffolk County's Disability Advisory Board, Help America Hear, and has been on the Board of NYS APSE since the early '90's. accessLinx sponsored the Braille Challenge several times- a program of the Braille Institute, as well as the National Braille Association's annual conference. Joani's passion is to make a difference in the life of others and has consistently been a fervent advocate for those whose "voices" may not always be heard.

Since 2004, Joani leads team Joani's Angels, to raise funds for the ACS's Making Strides Against Breast Cancer and has been a spokesperson at ACS events. Raising over \$2500. annually, she continuously achieves distinction of "Pacesetter." In 2005 and 2011, she was honored by the Waldbaum's/A&P Foundation as its Breast Cancer Survivor of the Year and designated Adelphi University's Breast Cancer Program as the recipient of a total of \$15,000. donated in her honor. Currently, Joani actively participates in Strength for Life, an innovative NFP enhancing the wellness of cancer patients and survivors and was one of their Gala Honorees in 2024.

Joani has emceed NFP events and has been guest speaker on multiple occasions. She served as Co-chair of the Foundation for Sight & Sound 's 10th annual "Blind" Wine Tasting Gala and Event Chair twice for SBPLI's Sixty Over Sixty Gala. Joani was recognized numerous times, including ExecuLeadership award for Community Service, HIA "Rookie of the Year" Business Award Finalist and was thrilled to be honored as recipient of the 2010 Humanitarian Award presented by Metro NY Chapter of the National Rehabilitation Association. A most cherished business tribute for Joani was named one of Fifty Most Influential Women of Long Island by the LI Business News in 2011. Honors recognizing her volunteering and philanthropy efforts were the 2017 Outstanding Volunteer of the Year of SBPLI and shortly thereafter, the 2017 Philanthropy Day Fundraising Volunteer of the Year by the AFP LI Chapter. Joani is thrilled to be involved with the Long Island Imagine Awards for many years in a variety of capacities- nominator, participant, sponsor and most exciting, as winner, when SBPLI was honored with the Innovation Award at the 2016 Imagine Awards! Joani is truly honored to be selected as a judge, once again, for this 14th Annual LI Imagine Awards Gala! Prior to realizing her "dream" as an entrepreneur, Joani's career had roots in the NFP world of human services, primarily in vocational rehab and employment of individuals with disabilities. Joani was Director of Voc. Rehab and Training Coordinator at the Long Island Developmental Center, then at The Viscardi Center where she was Professional Development/ Events Coordinator and Marketing Manager for its Research & Training Division, and ultimately the Co-Director of its Smeal Learning Center.

Joani and husband John recently celebrated their 50th anniversary and proclaims her outstanding finest accomplishments are her three children and the five precious little people who call her Grammy!

Meet the Judges



Meredith Michaels
Chief Development & Marketing Officer
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Long Island

Meredith is the Chief Development & Marketing Officer with Big Brothers Big Sisters of Long Island. With more than 18+ years of experience in the nonprofit industry, she has played a key role in the fundraising success, helping to grow revenue, leadership support, marketing outreach & awareness, corporate sponsorships, and create new innovative partnerships for many national nonprofit organizations.

After graduating SUNY Cortland with a BS in Sport Management, she went on to work for the Orlando Magic NBA in their Corporate Sponsorship Department, followed by 3 years with U.S Open Tennis Series event. She transitioned into the nonprofit sector as the Director of Development with the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation and spent time advancing her development knowledge by working as the Associate Executive Director for JDRF, American Heart Association's Regional Director for the Go Red for Women Luncheon and spent a year traveling abroad as the Executive Director of Admissions & Institutional Advancement with The Knox School, an independent boarding school on Long Island. The last 7 1/2 years she has called Big Brothers Big Sisters of Long Island home as their current Chief Development & Marketing Officer, growing all aspects of development and marketing.

Through her 18+ year tenure, she has been an active member of both her professional and personal communities. Chairing the Melville Chamber of Commerce Young Professional Board, sitting on the Association of Fundraising Professionals' Board, Girls Inc. Gala Committee member, and currently a Board Member with the Babylon Village Architectural Review Board, and Hauppauge Industrial Associations Social Responsibility Committee Co-Chair.

Meredith has been recognized by the Melville Chamber of Commerce as their 2016 Young Professional of Year, LIBN's 40 Under 40 in 2017, LIBN's Top 50 Power Women Honoree in 2018, 2019 LI Athena Award Finalist and a 2023 LI Power List Honoree.

Meredith's biggest passion is educating the community on corporate social responsibility (CSR) and speaks on the topic in a variety of settings both large and small. Sharing her experience and knowledge, helping others build out successful and well-run CSR programs, creating awareness through the amazing work of other non-profits, and offering her expertise to those interested in growing their CSR efforts. No matter how big or small the partnership is, being involved in the nonprofit community can enrich your lives in so many ways, and she makes it her mission to educate others on how to do that, in whatever format works best for them. She finds this to be incredibly rewarding and important for the growth of our philanthropic community.

She resides in Babylon Village with her husband Rick and three stepchildren, Ricky, Gracie & Lizzy and enjoys traveling, photographer, golf, art, comedy, and outdoor pursuits.

Meet the Judges



Erika Oelkers
Executive Director, Banker
J.P. Morgan Private Bank

Erika Oelkers is a Banker at J.P. Morgan and is responsible for delivering the resources of the Firm to private business owners, real estate professionals, corporate executives, and their families. Erika works alongside an integrated team of professionals who advise clients on banking, portfolio management, personal lending, trust & estate planning through tax-advantaged wealth transfer strategies, charitable giving and business succession planning.

Prior to joining J.P. Morgan Private Bank in 2015, Erika spent eight years at HSBC's Private Bank working with ultra high net worth clients in New York and Connecticut. Prior to HSBC, Erika spent ten years at Citigroup in various roles in the Private Bank and Global Markets. Erika began her career at Salomon Brothers as an Emerging Markets Fixed Income Institutional Salesperson and has over 25 years of financial services experience.

Erika is the Chair-Emeritus of the Tri State Chapter for Women on the Move, the Firm's Business Resource Group for Women. Erika is an active supporter of the FDNY Foundation and Tunnel to Towers Foundation. She leads and hosts mentorship circles, fundraisers and speaking engagements for the widows and children of 9/11 first responders. Erika has run two marathons in partnership with Tunnel to Towers and will be running her third NYC Marathon in November.

Erika earned her MBA in Financial Management and International Business from Fordham University, and holds a Bachelor of Science in Finance from St. John's University. Erika holds a Series 7, Series 63 and Series 65 licenses from the National Association of Securities Dealers.

Erika lives in Long Island with her three daughters.



Claire Friedlander Family Foundation Arts & Culture Award

The arts are an integral part of what makes us human. They nourish the roots of our culture and communities. This award is given to an organization that helps shape and inspire its community through the arts; not only taking us on a journey of enlightenment but also acting as an economic engine that helps build and shape the community around it.



Vanguard Benefits Rising Star Award

This award will recognize a nonprofit generating under \$2 million in revenue for its outstanding innovation, impact, and achievements in meeting its mission. The award will be given to an organization who demonstrates an outstanding record of sustained achievement, has successfully demonstrated successful financial performance and impact, and has built a reputation for excellence within the community.



Certilman Balin Adler & Hyman, LLP Leadership Excellence Award

This award recognizes an exemplary nonprofit leader (*who may be an Executive Director, board member, staff member, volunteer, etc.*) whose accomplishments have advanced his/her organization. The leader must work in and reside in either Nassau or Suffolk Counties. This is not about traditional volunteering, directors, or funding, but focuses on innovation in driving organizational change and social impact.



***NEW* Chase for Business Sustainability & Environmental Award**

This award honors a Long Island-based 501(c)(3) organization or program committed to environmental sustainability and environmental initiatives within their programs or services. The recipient demonstrates dedication through initiatives that protect local habitats, promote ecological responsibility, and support a greener future. Whether driven by an environmental mission or sustainable practices, this award recognizes those creating lasting impact for a healthier, more resilient Long Island.



Paylocity Innovation Award

This nonprofit has been innovative in adopting new platforms that have led to a significant increase in the organization's ability to meet its mission. This could include the implementation of technology that enables the organization to achieve cost savings and better communication; a strategic approach to fundraising; a unique and effective public relations campaign; etc.



Cerini & Associates, LLP Social Impact Award

This award will be given to a nonprofit generating over \$2 million in revenue per year that measures success not just by meeting its mission, but by affecting its surrounding community. The impact goes beyond the number of children served, shelters provided, and mouths fed. Impact looks at how lives and communities have been changed, and how an organization can measure that.



Nerds That Care Fan Favorite Award

Each finalist is automatically entered into the voting pool to win the \$3,000 Fan Favorite Award. Voting typically runs for 3 weeks in March/April. The public can vote daily via social media and each finalist is encouraged to share the link. The finalist with the most votes is declared the "Fan Favorite" and is announced LIVE at the event.

Congratulations Finalists



vanguard**benefits**
BECAUSE EMPLOYEES MATTER

Rising Star Award



CHASE for BUSINESS®

Sustainability & Environmental Award

PECONIC LAND TRUST



Quogue Wildlife Refuge

Save the Great South Bay



THE CLAIRE FRIEDLANDER
FAMILY FOUNDATION

Arts & Culture Award



LIARTS
WORLD CLASS SECOND TO NONE
LONG ISLAND ARTS ALLIANCE



USDAN
SUMMER CAMP FOR
THE ARTS



Fan Favorite Award

*Fan Favorite Winner will be
revealed at the end of the night!*

CERTILMANBALIN
ATTORNEYS

Leadership Excellence Award



girl scouts
of nassau county



CERINI ASSOCIATES
LLP
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS

Social Impact Award



paylocity
Forward Together.

Innovation Award



Smile
FARMS

MAURER FOUNDATION
breast health education

Jennifer Baxmeyer, Executive Director
Cradle of Aviation Museum
Charles Lindbergh Blvd., Garden City, NY 11530
(516) 572-4111 | www.cradleofaviation.org



The **Cradle of Aviation Museum** is Long Island's Air and Space Museum, dedicated to preserving the region's contributions to aviation, space exploration, and technology, while advancing science education and innovation.

The 150,000-square-foot Museum features more than 75 air and spacecraft—from early flight to the Apollo Lunar Module—across eight galleries, along with over 30 hands-on exhibits, historic cockpits, films, and a planetarium. Programs include school field trips, public events, and STEM-based educational experiences for students and families.

Each year, more than 350,000 visitors, including 70,000 students from over 200 schools, participate in Museum programs and exhibitions. Through education programs and workforce development initiatives, the Museum supports pathways to careers in science, technology, and aerospace. The Museum partners with schools, community organizations, and industry leaders to expand access to STEM learning and career exploration opportunities.

As a regional resource for education and culture, the Cradle of Aviation Museum serves Long Island through exhibitions, programs, and community engagement that reflect the past, present, and future of aerospace.

Erika Floreska, President
Long Island Children's Museum
11 Davis Avenue, Garden City, NY 11530
(516) 224-5813 | www.licm.org



The **Long Island Children's Museum (LICM)** is more than a museum—it is a modern-day town square where families come together to connect, create, and belong. Rooted in the belief that play is essential, LICM brings people of all backgrounds into a shared space where curiosity sparks conversation and imagination builds community.

Through hands-on exhibits, cultural programs, and inclusive experiences, LICM invites children and caregivers to step away from screens and into moments that matter. Here, play becomes a powerful connector—bridging generations, celebrating diverse cultures, and fostering empathy and understanding. Whether families are building, exploring, or performing, they are creating core memories that last a lifetime. In a fast-paced, digital world, LICM offers something rare: a place to slow down, engage fully, and connect deeply.

LICM is a place where every visitor is part of something bigger—where neighbors meet, friendships form, and communities grow stronger through shared experiences. Programs are designed not only to educate, but to unite, ensuring all families feel welcomed, represented, and inspired.

Founded in 1989, LICM is the most visited museum on Long Island, welcoming over 320,000 visitors annually. As one of only 16 children's museums in the U.S. accredited by the American Alliance of Museums, LICM stands as a recognized leader in excellence, innovation, and accessibility. With honors including the National Medal for Museum and Library Service and the Bank of America Neighborhood Builders Award, LICM continues to lead with purpose—building community, celebrating culture, and harnessing the power of play.

Lauren Wagner, Executive Director
Long Island Arts Alliance
PO Box 1472, Patchogue, NY 11772
www.longislandartsalliance.org



Long Island Arts Alliance (LIAA) is a regional arts service organization dedicated to strengthening and representing the arts and cultural sector across Nassau and Suffolk Counties. By connecting artists, educators, cultural organizations, and creative businesses, LIAA serves as a central resource and advocate for the field, supporting a more coordinated, visible, and resilient creative community.

Through initiatives including fiscal sponsorship and technical assistance, LIAA expands access to public funding and capacity-building resources for artists and organizations across the region. Its monthly Creative Community Huddles convene sector leaders to share challenges, exchange ideas, and support one another in real time, fostering collaboration and alignment across Long Island.

LIAA also equips the sector to communicate its value by gathering data, developing resources, and providing the tools organizations need to speak with a clear, unified voice. At the same time, it ensures the arts are represented in broader conversations about economic development, tourism, education, and community wellbeing.

A trusted convener and advocate, LIAA plays a critical role in strengthening the infrastructure that supports arts and culture across the region and advancing a more connected and sustainable creative sector.

Jessica Liss Feuer, Director of Development
Usdan Summer Camp for the Arts
185 Colonial Springs Road, Wheatley Heights, NY 11798
(631) 643-7900 | www.usdan.org



Each summer, **Usdan Summer Camp for the Arts** welcomes thousands of students grades K–12 from across Long Island and New York City to immerse themselves in a summer of high-quality arts education amid our 140-acre woodland campus. Guided by professional artists and educators in Music, Dance, Theater, Visual Art, Writing and more, young artists design a multidisciplinary arts experience that nurtures confidence, empathy, and a strong sense of belonging.

At Usdan, we believe society flourishes most when people create and connect with each other. From daily live performances that bring our entire community together to collaborative projects that reflect diverse perspectives and lived experiences, students learn the value of expression and shared creativity.

Our commitment to access is central to our mission. On average, more than half of our families receive scholarship or tuition assistance, ensuring that financial barriers never limit participation in transformative, high-quality arts education.

Rooted in Jewish values since 1968, Usdan works to make the world more just and beautiful, creating a welcoming space for our young artists at every stage of their creative journey. Across nearly six decades and a vibrant community of 50,000 alumni, Usdan empowers young people to discover who they are and who they can become. At Usdan, you will lose yourself for a summer and find yourself for a lifetime.

Mayhem, President

Bikers Against Child Abuse, Inc. (B.A.C.A.)

P.O. Box 606, Deer Park, NY 11729

(631) 408-8218 | www.bacaworld.org/newyork/long-island-chapter



Bikers Against Child Abuse, Inc. (B.A.C.A.) exists with the intent to create a safer environment for abused children. We exist as a body of Bikers to empower children to not feel afraid of the world in which they live. We stand ready to lend support to our wounded friends by involving them with an established, united organization. We work in conjunction with local and state officials who are already in place to protect children. We desire to send a clear message to all involved with the abused child that this child is part of our organization, and that we are prepared to lend our physical and emotional support to them by affiliation, and our physical presence. We stand at the ready to shield these children from further abuse. We do not condone the use of violence or physical force in any manner, however, if circumstances arise such that we are the only obstacle preventing a child from further abuse, we stand ready to be that obstacle.

Kayla Erb, Director of Philanthropy

Cooking for Long Island Veterans

development@cooking4livets.com

(631) 275-5142 | www.cooking4livets.com



Our Mission: At **Cooking for Long Island Veterans (CFLIV)**, we address food insecurity and social isolation among our local heroes by delivering healthy, prepared meals and groceries. Our mission is powered by a unique food rescue model and an inclusive workforce that creates meaningful career pathways for over 100 individuals with developmental disabilities.

The Problem: Long Island is home to more than 100,000 veterans, and roughly 50% of veterans report feeling deeply socially isolated or lonely after their service. Currently, 1 in 10 Long Islanders experience food insecurity, yet 40% of usable food in the U.S. is wasted annually.

Our Solutions:

- **Food Rescue:** We save thousands of pounds of food waste through our partnerships with grocery stores and restaurants.
- **Nourishment:** We deliver approximately 7,000 meals annually, ensuring our veterans receive consistent, high-quality nutrition.
- **Connection:** We support 350+ veterans monthly through direct home deliveries and community VFW events, providing the vital wellness checks and social interaction they deserve.

How to Help:

We cannot fulfill this mission alone. Here is how you can help our veterans:

- Sponsor a Veteran
- Refer a Veteran
- Volunteer Your Time
- Become a Food Partner
- Spread the Word!

Eileen Minogue, Executive Director

Book Fairies

220 Miller Place, Hicksville, NY 11801

(516) 557-6645 | www.bookfairies.org



Located in Hicksville, **Book Fairies** sources and redistributes books to under-resourced communities on Long Island, NYC and internationally to provide equitable opportunities for children to learn, grow, and thrive.

At Book Fairies, we believe access to books is the foundation for opportunity, equity, and lifelong success. While our work spans both Long Island and New York City, our roots—and the growing need—are deeply felt here on Long Island, where we partner with schools, shelters, and community organizations to ensure that every child and family has access to books and the opportunity to build a home library.

Yet, the need is not only urgent—it is growing. Across Long Island, significant disparities between school districts reveal a widening literacy gap, particularly in communities facing economic hardship. Thousands of children lack consistent access to age-appropriate books at home, putting them at a disadvantage before they even enter the classroom. At the same time, in New York City, only about 30% of third graders read at grade level—a critical milestone that shapes long-term academic success—underscoring the broader regional literacy crisis.

As these challenges deepen, demand for Book Fairies programs continues to rise. Requests from Long Island partners are increasing rapidly, while our work in NYC continues to expand to meet similar needs.

The impact of low literacy extends far beyond education, contributing to cycles of poverty, unemployment, and limited opportunity. Every book we distribute is more than a story—it's a pathway to empowerment and equity.

Doron Spleen, Executive Director

Morrison Mentors, Inc.

250 Fulton Ave, Ste M104, Hempstead, NY 11550

(516) 286-9014 | www.mmentors.org



Morrison Mentors, Inc., headquartered in Hempstead, NY, advances Long Island communities through the development and mobilization of dedicated mentors who provide transformative STEM education, academic enrichment, and workforce development training to support students and their families.

Across many of the communities we serve, students have limited access to hands-on STEM learning. These opportunities are critical to building confidence, curiosity, and pathways into today's fastest-growing careers. Since 2012, we have worked to close this gap by delivering engaging, real-world STEM experiences directly in schools and community spaces.

Our programs allow students to explore topics such as robotics, engineering, coding, renewable energy, computer building, digital fabrication, and much more. Every experience actively develops students' 21st century skillsets, including problem-solving, critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication. They are guided by youth mentors who share similar lived experiences and serve as relatable role models. This intergenerational approach creates a powerful cycle of growth, where students build confidence, develop leadership skills, and often return to mentor and teach the next generation.

Today, Morrison Mentors serves more than 5,000 students annually across Long Island. As we expand through the development of our STEM Innovation Hub in Hempstead, we are strengthening our ability to provide consistent, year-round access to technology, training, and workforce pathways.

By expanding access and opportunity, Morrison Mentors is helping young people discover their potential and take meaningful steps toward leading in a rapidly evolving world.

Fabiola Turner, Chief Program Officer
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Long Island
25 Carle Rd., Westbury, NY 11590
(516) 731-7880 | www.bbbsli.org



Big Brothers Big Sisters of Long Island (BBBSLI) is dedicated to igniting the power and promise of youth through one-to-one mentoring relationships. By connecting young people with caring adult mentors, BBBSLI helps build confidence, strengthen academic outcomes, and foster long term success. Through its evidence-based programs, the organization creates meaningful, lasting impact across Long Island communities, empowering youth to realize their full potential.

At the heart of this work is **Fabiola Turner**, BBBSLI's Chief Program Officer and a passionate leader in youth development. Fabiola brings a deep commitment to equity, mentorship, and program excellence, overseeing initiatives that shape the lives of hundreds of young people. Her leadership ensures that BBBSLI's programs remain innovative, responsive, and rooted in best practices. She holds a master's degree in psychology from Adelphi University and a Bachelor of Science in Psychology and Philosophy from Stony Brook University, grounding her work in both academic insight and real-world application.

Beyond her professional accomplishments, Fabiola is a devoted wife and mother of four, two boys and two girls, who inspire her commitment to strengthening families and creating opportunities for all youth. Her ability to balance leadership, family, and service reflects the same values of care, dedication, and resilience that define her work at BBBSLI.

Fabiola is recognized for her ability to inspire teams, build strong community partnerships, and champion the voices of the youth BBBSLI serves. Her dedication and vision make her an outstanding leadership nominee and a driving force behind BBBSLI's mission to create brighter futures for the next generation.

Michael Kilano, Director of Veteran Advocacy and Crisis Coordinator
Paws of War
127 Smithtown Blvd., Nesconset, NY 11767
(631) 406-6595 | www.pawsofwar.org



Paws of War is a nonprofit organization dedicated to saving lives on both ends of the leash. By rescuing animals and training them to become service and support dogs, the organization provides critical companionship and healing to veterans and first responders struggling with PTSD, traumatic brain injury, and other emotional challenges. Paws of War also reunites active-duty military members with animals they bonded with during overseas deployments, preserving powerful connections formed in times of hardship. Through this dual mission, the organization creates life-changing partnerships that offer hope, purpose, and second chances.

At the heart of this mission is Veteran Advocate **Michael Kilano**, a former U.S. Marine whose impact over the past five years has been transformative for the organization. Drawing from his own experiences, Michael connects deeply with veterans in need, offering both empathy and tangible support. He works one-on-one with individuals facing challenges such as housing instability, food insecurity, and emotional trauma, ensuring no one feels forgotten. Through more than 20 monthly outreach events and speaking engagements, he raises awareness and inspires action across the community.

Michael's leadership is defined by authenticity, compassion, and innovation. He identifies gaps in support, develops practical solutions, and tailors his outreach to reach diverse audiences. More than an advocate, he is a living example of resilience and healing. Through his dedication, Michael not only strengthens Paws of War's mission but also empowers countless veterans to seek help, rebuild their lives, and believe in the possibility of hope once again.

Randell M. Bynum, Chief Executive Officer
Girl Scouts of Nassau County
110 Ring Road West, Garden City, NY 11530
(516) 741-2550 | www.gsnc.org



Girl Scouts of Nassau County (GSNC) is a premier leadership development organization dedicated to building girls of courage, confidence, and character who make the world a better place. Serving as a vital community pillar, GSNC provides girls with life-changing experiences in STEM, entrepreneurship, outdoor discovery, and life skills. By fostering an environment where girls take the lead, GSNC nurtures the next generation of innovative thinkers, empathetic leaders, and engaged citizens ready to tackle the challenges of tomorrow.

Now in her ninth year as CEO, **Rande Bynum** is a bold, results-driven leader whose journey with the organization spans from Brownie and Troop Leader to national staff member. Under her conviction-led leadership, GSNC is expanding its reach through strategic initiatives like the development of the Promise Center in Roosevelt—a \$3 million capital project designed to ensure every girl, regardless of zip code, has the space to discover her voice and define her future.

Rande's leadership is grounded in the "Power of Mattering," ensuring that volunteers and staff are empowered to equip girls with the skills to lead now, not later. A graduate of the Energeia Partnership and multiple honor recipient, her influence extends across Long Island's professional landscape. Through programs like VIP (Volunteers in Girl Scout Program) and START, Rande is not just leading an organization; she is cultivating the executives, entrepreneurs, and changemakers who will shape the future of our region and beyond.

John McGuigan, CEO
People's Arc of Suffolk
2900 Veterans Memorial Highway, Bohemia, NY 11716
(631) 585-0100 | www.peoplesarc.org



At **People's Arc of Suffolk** our mission is to create communities where people of all ages and abilities can enjoy life to its fullest. The organization operates on the belief that every person deserves dignity, respect, and the opportunity for meaningful community inclusion. Our vision focuses on building a society where people and our families are supported through every stage of life.

Our programs are designed to support people with intellectual and developmental disabilities across Suffolk County. From early childhood through adulthood, we provide personalized services that promote independence, dignity, and meaningful community inclusion. Whether someone is building daily living skills, exploring employment opportunities, or receiving support at home, our programs are centered on personal strengths, goals, and potential.

Chief Executive Officer of People's Arc of Suffolk, **John McGuigan**, began his journey in the field of intellectual and developmental disabilities as a Direct Support Professional. It was there he learned that true leadership is rooted in being present for people, an experience as a caregiver that continues to shape his vision today. With over 30 years of experience, John is dedicated to the mission that people of all ages and abilities deserve to enjoy life to its fullest.

John recognizes that behind every strategic plan and organizational goal is an authentic human story. By championing a culture of people-first leadership, he ensures that People's Arc of Suffolk is a space where all voices are heard and opportunity is created. Under John's leadership the organization had expanded our impact by rethinking traditional support models, prioritizing social inclusion, and supporting genuine relationship building.

John's leadership serves as a reminder of what is possible when we strive to create a more inclusive and joyful society.

John v.H. Halsey, Founder & President
Peconic Land Trust
 296 Hampton Road, Southampton, NY 11968
 (631) 283-3195 | www.peconiclandtrust.org

PECONIC LAND TRUST



Founded on August 1, 1983, by John v.H. Halsey and a dedicated group of local residents, the **Peconic Land Trust** was established with a bold and enduring mission: to conserve Long Island's working farms, natural lands, and heritage for our communities—now and into the future.

More than four decades later, that mission continues to guide the organization's work across the region. Through strong partnerships with landowners, farmers, donors, local governments, and community organizations, the Trust has permanently conserved over 14,000 acres of farmland, woodlands, wetlands, meadows, historic properties, and environmentally significant landscapes. The impact of this work extends far beyond the land itself. By protecting these vital resources, the Trust helps ensure access to fresh, locally grown food, safeguards clean drinking water, supports healthier bays and watersheds, and preserves open space for recreation and connection. At the same time, it protects the scenic and cultural character that defines Long Island and sustains its local economy.

Grounded in a practical, solutions-oriented approach, the Peconic Land Trust works collaboratively to address complex environmental challenges while honoring the needs of the communities it serves.

As it looks to the future, the Trust remains committed to protecting the places we know and love—ensuring a healthier, more resilient Long Island for generations to come.

Robyn Silvestri, Executive Director
Save the Great South Bay, Inc.
 PO Box 373, Babylon, NY 11702
 (631) 204-8175 | www.savethesouthbay.org



Save The Great South Bay is dedicated to restoring and protecting the water quality, habitats, and ecological resilience of Long Island's Great South Bay—one of the South Shore's most valuable environmental and economic resources. Our mission is rooted in the belief that a healthy bay is essential not only for marine life, but for stronger communities, public health, local jobs, tourism, and Long Island's coastal way of life.

Through science-driven restoration, advocacy, and community engagement, we are building sustainable solutions that address the Bay's most urgent challenges, including nitrogen pollution, habitat loss, marine debris, and declining water quality. Our signature programs include **Creek Defender**, which removes pollution at the source through creek cleanups and habitat restoration; the **Great South Bay Oyster Project**, which has returned more than 1.4 million oysters to local waters to naturally filter pollutants; and our **South Shore Bays Water Quality Monitoring & Report Card**, which is creating one of the region's most comprehensive science-based tools for tracking ecosystem health.

Sustainability is embedded in every aspect of our work—from restoring natural filtration systems and strengthening shoreline habitats to empowering thousands of volunteers, students, and community partners to take action where they live.

By combining environmental science, public education, and grassroots stewardship, Save The Great South Bay is helping create a cleaner, healthier, and more resilient future for Long Island.

Michael Nelson, Executive Director
Quogue Wildlife Refuge
 3 Old Country Rd, PO Box 492, Quogue, NY 11959
 (631) 653-4771 | www.QuogueWildlifeRefuge.org



The **Quogue Wildlife Refuge** is a 305-acre nonprofit nature preserve founded in 1934. Free to visit and open 365 days a year from sunrise to sunset, visitors can explore seven miles of trails through forests, ponds, and the ecologically rare Dwarf Pines of the Pine Barrens. The Refuge is also home to an Outdoor Wildlife Complex that houses permanently injured native animals like owls, hawks, vultures, falcons, and an opossum. It also features a Native Pollinator Garden and a Tortoise Greenhouse that is home to giant sulcata tortoises. The Refuge has a rich history. Prior to becoming a wildlife preserve, the Quogue Ice Company harvested ice on Old Ice Pond, and today the on-site Ice Harvesting Museum features authentic, century-old tools.

The Charles Banks Belt Nature Center is currently closed for a renovation and expansion. When it reopens in 2027, it will offer a warm and welcoming environment where visitors can observe wildlife through large windows overlooking Old Ice Pond. The Nature Center will feature a variety of interactive exhibits highlighting the Refuge's ecosystems, native species, and fascinating history, along with live animals, including turtles, snakes, and fish.

The Refuge offers year-round educational programs for all ages, and our popular Summer Ecology Program has been running for 57 years. Through camp scholarships and community programming, we work to ensure that everyone in our community and beyond can enjoy the beauty of the Refuge and feel a connection to nature. Come by and visit!

Jeff Smith, Director
Sisters of Saint Joseph of Brentwood NY
 1725 Brentwood Road, Brentwood, New York 11717
 (631) 273-1187 | www.brentwoodcsj.org



Empowered by God's love, rooted in the Gospel of Jesus, and faithful to the vision of one sacred Earth community, we live and work to bring all into union with God and one another. The Sisters of Saint Joseph have been your neighbors in Brentwood for 130 years. Like many others, we came to Suffolk County from New York City. In 1896, we purchased 211 acres for education and health care programs, and almost immediately, our sisters were also farming, raising animals, and cultivating fruit trees.

Today, we remain committed to stewarding creation through some innovative projects.

- A 7-acre community garden - the site of environmental education, organic gardening, community food distribution, and home to chickens, goats, bees, and rabbits.
- A 3,000-panel solar array providing electricity to 70% of our buildings.
- Electric vehicle charging stations.
- Rainwater management through 20 rain gardens, permeable pavers, porous asphalt, and 8 acres of native grass meadows.
- 28 acres of land rented to local organic farmers.
- 45 acres of preserved woodland managed through an easement with NYS Department of Environmental Conservation.
- Installation of a controlled wetland waste management system and an innovative alternative waste treatment system to improve local water quality.

These efforts are guided by The CSJ Land Ethic Statement, a 2015 document which commits us to preserve, protect, restore, and cherish the integrity, biodiversity, balance, and beauty of the land and all the species with whom we share it.

We warmly welcome our neighbors to the campus. Come visit, enjoy, and be inspired.

Beth Bucheister, Executive Director
Career Day Inc.
 PO Box 656 Oyster Bay, NY 11771
 (917) 548-0388 | www.careerdayinc.org



Career Day Inc. is dedicated to unlocking possibility and inspiring the next generation to dream big. Built on the belief that access creates opportunity, Career Day Inc. connects students across Long Island and New York with professionals from diverse industries, opening doors many never knew existed and illuminating the countless paths life can take.

In just a few short years, Career Day Inc. has reached over 27,000 students and engaged more than 650 professionals, delivering dynamic, real-world career experiences in 15 schools through 40 innovative programs. These are not ordinary career days—they are moments of discovery. Through hands-on learning, meaningful conversations, and genuine connections, students don't just hear about careers—they begin to see themselves in them.

Career Day Inc. is driven by a deep commitment to inclusion. Its programs are thoughtfully designed to support neurodiverse learners and students developing English language skills, ensuring every student has the opportunity to explore their future with confidence.

The organization's growing partnerships with schools—many spanning multiple years—reflect the lasting impact of its work. By highlighting in-demand fields like construction, skilled trades, and beyond, Career Day Inc. empowers students to recognize their strengths and pursue new possibilities.

Being nominated for the Innovation category at the Long Island Imagine Awards reflects a bold, forward-thinking approach to education. *Career Day Inc.—where connections spark confidence and opportunities become reality.*

Isabel Londono, Program Coordinator
Smile Farms
 Two Jericho Plaza, Suite 200, Jericho, NY 11753
 (516) 237-4748 | www.smilefarms.org



Smile Farms is dedicated to creating meaningful employment, training, and community engagement opportunities for individuals with developmental disabilities through sustainable agriculture. As the signature philanthropic partner of 1-800-FLOWERS.COM, Smile Farms operates 14 working farms and greenhouses across New York where 400 participants, known as Smile Farmers, grow produce, make food products, and develop transferable job skills that foster independence, confidence, and purpose.

Our innovative farm-to-table restaurant partnership model brings this mission to life by connecting Smile Farmers directly to the local food economy. Through collaborations with restaurants such as Rumba, AVO Taco, and Chopt Creative Salad co., produce by Smile Farmers are featured on menus in highly visible, community-facing settings. This initiative not only elevates awareness but demonstrates the value and capability of an often-overlooked workforce.

That same spirit of innovation is reflected in **Heat with Heart™ hot sauce**, a product made from peppers grown by Smile Farmers. Recently featured on Good Morning America ahead of the Super Bowl, the product brought national visibility to Smile Farms and the individuals it serves.

Building on these successes, Smile Farms is expanding its indoor Tower Garden program to address seasonality, supply consistency, and accessibility. This innovation enables year-round growing, improves quality control, and creates new opportunities for individuals with more significant physical disabilities to participate in meaningful work.

By combining sustainable agriculture, inclusive employment, and strategic partnerships, Smile Farms is redefining workforce development, proving that individuals with developmental disabilities are vital contributors to a more equitable and resilient local economy.

Suzanne Chimera & Dean Riskin, Co-Founders
Hair We Share
 350 Jericho Turnpike, Suite #3 Jericho, NY 11753
 (516) 484-8483 | www.hairweshare.org



Hair We Share is a national nonprofit dedicated to providing beautiful, high quality human hair wigs free of charge to children and adults experiencing medical hair loss. Since 2014, our mission has remained simple and unwavering: to help people feel like themselves again during some of the most difficult moments of their lives.

Every wig we gift is made possible through the generosity of hair donors, financial supporters, and the salon community. Their kindness fuels our work — and inspires us to continually improve how we serve both donors and recipients.

This year, we are honored to be named a Finalist in the Innovation Category for our expanded Ponytail Tracking Program, a system designed to bring greater transparency, dignity, and connection to the donation process. Through this program, each donated ponytail is carefully documented, photographed, and linked to the wig it helps create. Donors receive updates showing how their contribution moves through our workflow and receives a photo of the wig created from their hair donation.

This innovation strengthens trust, improves communication, and helps us honor every donor while supporting every recipient with care and respect. It also streamlines our internal processes, reduces backlog, and ensures that more wigs reach the people who need them most.

At Hair We Share, we believe that compassion is powerful — and when shared, it changes lives.

Thank you for supporting our mission and celebrating innovation that truly makes a difference.

Susan Samaroo, Executive Director
The Maurer Foundation for Breast Health Education, Inc.
 534 Broadhollow Road, Suite 330, Melville, New York 11747
 (631) 524-5151 | www.maurerfoundation.org



The Maurer Foundation's mission is to save lives through breast health education that focuses on prevention, healthy lifestyle choices, early detection, and risk reduction. We believe that knowledge is power, and when young people are equipped with the right information early, they are more likely to take lifelong, proactive steps toward their health.

Our innovative High School Breast Health Education Program brings this mission to life in a dynamic and impactful way. We are in 90% of Long Island high schools and reached 40,000 individuals last year alone. What sets our program apart is its hands-on approach. Using lifelike silicone breast models embedded with realistic lumps, students gain the unique opportunity to physically feel the difference between normal tissue and potential warning signs, building confidence and awareness in a way that traditional education cannot accomplish.

Beyond hands-on learning, students explore how everyday choices such as nutrition, exercise, and limiting alcohol can significantly reduce their risk. They also learn the importance of early detection, as breast cancer has a survival rate of up to 99% when detected early.

By combining education, tactile experience, and real-world application, we transform awareness into action. Students leave not only informed, but empowered, ready to take charge of their health and share this critical knowledge with their families and loved ones, extending our impact far beyond the classroom.

Roni DeKoning, Executive Director
Camp Pa-Qua-Tuck
2 Chet Swezey Road, Center Moriches, NY 11934
(631) 878-1070 | www.camppaquatuck.com



Camp Pa-Qua-Tuck was founded by the Rotary Club of the Moriches and welcomed its first group of 25 campers — all children with polio — in 1948. Today, Camp Pa-Qua-Tuck annually welcomes approximately 500 children and young adults ages 6-21, as well as alumni ages 21+, with a wide range of disabilities. We are proud to be a place where all are included, and we have been privileged to welcome campers with challenges that include autism spectrum disorder, Down syndrome, cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy, Rett syndrome, traumatic brain injuries, genetic disorders, learning disabilities, behavioral difficulties, or some combination of these. Campers come from across Long Island, the New York Metro Area, and beyond.

Camp Pa-Qua-Tuck has come a long way since its founding in the 1940s. The Camp's leadership and staff understand the challenges faced by individuals with disabilities, their families, and the organizations that strive to serve them. As a result, we are always seeking to do more. Many of our camper families have expressed a desire and need for additional services and programs that go beyond the Camp's summer programming. While summer camp will always be at the heart of what we do, we are exploring the transition of Camp Pa-Qua-Tuck into a year-round resource, with a variety of programs that support the social, emotional, and educational growth of people with disabilities. We are honored to be a finalist for the Imagine Awards' Social Impact Award.

Dana N. Lopez, Director of Marketing & Communications
The INN (Interfaith Nutrition Network)
211 Fulton Ave., Hempstead, NY 11550
(516) 486-8506 | www.the-inn.org



The INN was founded in 1983 as a single soup kitchen run by a small group of concerned volunteers. Working at a church in Hempstead, the volunteers discovered that not only were there large numbers of hungry people on Long Island, but that individuals working together could make a difference in their lives. 43 years and over 16 million meals later, The INN has transformed countless lives with a dedication to serving hungry and homeless Long Islanders with dignity, respect and love.

From this simple start and through the vision and determination of a small group of dedicated volunteers, The INN has grown to become the largest private social service agency of its kind on Long Island. The Hempstead soup kitchen has grown into a multifaceted effort that remains grounded on a single principle — that everyone would be treated with dignity and respect. Anyone who comes to The INN's soup kitchen receives a hot, nutritious meal, a warm welcome and access to whatever additional support services are available.

After The INN responded to this problem of homelessness by opening its first emergency shelter in 1984, the organization began to plan and institute a series of wide-ranging programs to help people from all over Long Island who were plagued by hunger and homelessness. The story continues today, with the largest soup kitchen on Long Island, emergency shelters, a social service resource center and a free clothing and housewares boutique.

The INN is a working model of how to unite the community to overcome the challenge of hunger and homelessness, here on Long Island.

Jennifer Hernandez, Executive Director
ECLI-VIBES
1707 Veterans Memorial Highway, Suite 2, Islandia NY 11749
(631) 360-3730 | www.eclivibes.org



ECLI-VIBES, based in Islandia, NY, provides support, guidance, resources, and hope to survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, human trafficking, abuse, and food insecurity on Long Island. The organization offers free, compassionate, and confidential services, including crisis intervention, legal advocacy, counseling, a food pantry, anti-human trafficking programs, and more.

Every month, ECLI-VIBES serves more than 2,500 people, helping them build futures rooted in safety and empowerment. Our highly-trained professionals and volunteers provide immediate support to those in need. ECLI-VIBES is a grassroots, 501(c)(3) not-for-profit human service agency. ECLI-VIBES empowers survivors to break cycles of violence in families and communities through real time response.

For more information, visit www.ECLIVIBES.org or call 631-360-3730.

Adrienne LoPresti, LCSW R, Executive Director
YES Community Counseling Center
75 Grand Avenue, Massapequa, New York 11758
(516) 799-3203 | www.yesccc.org



For nearly 50 years, **YES Community Counseling Center** has served youth and families across Nassau County, strengthening individuals, supporting families, and building healthier communities. At the heart of YES is the belief that potential, healing, and growth begin with connection. Through innovative programming and community partnerships, YES works to fill critical gaps in accessible, affordable, and high-quality care.

YES provides vital support to individuals facing challenges such as addiction, family conflict, domestic violence, trauma, mental health concerns, and loss. Core services include community and school-based prevention programs, counseling and treatment, and youth development initiatives that promote long-term stability and resilience.

Through its signature program, Commerce Plaza, YES extends its mission by empowering students with hands-on financial literacy and career exploration experiences. In this immersive, simulated community, students take on real-world roles such as bankers, healthcare professionals, scientists, and media producers. They earn paychecks, manage bank accounts, and collaborate as a workforce, gaining a meaningful understanding of both business and community impact.

In partnership with local school districts, and in collaboration with organizations such as Girl Scouts and life skills groups, Commerce Plaza is committed to equitable access for all students. Regardless of background or ability, every child is given the opportunity to build the knowledge, confidence, and skills needed for lifelong financial independence and success.

Long Island Imagine Awards Hall of Fame

Hall of Fame
2025

Award Recipient
**NY LGBT
NETWORK**
Twins Together

jovia
Financial Credit Union
2025 Hall of Fame Award

*NY LGBT Network
was our fourth Hall of Fame Winner!*

As a two-time winner and seven-time finalist of the Long Island Imagine Awards, the NY LGBT Network has continuously demonstrated excellence in leadership, innovation, impact, and operations. The NY LGBT Network is a non-profit organization that serves as a home and a voice for LGBT people, their families, and support systems across Long Island and Queens. Through its community centers, advocacy efforts, and social change initiatives, the NY LGBT Network creates safe spaces where LGBT people can LIVE, LEARN, WORK, PLAY, and PRAY.



Hall of Fame
2021

Award Recipient
cerebralpalsy
ASSOCIATION OF NASSAU COUNTY
Moving Forward With You

Nonprofit
Resource Hub
2021 Hall of Fame Award

*Cerebral Palsy Association of Nassau County
was our second Hall of Fame Winner!*

As a two-time Imagine Awards winner and four-time finalist, CP Nassau has consistently excelled in the areas of leadership, impact, and operations. CP Nassau is an incredible nonprofit organization that serves over 1,800 children and adults with Cerebral Palsy, developmental and other disabilities.



Hall of Fame
2024

Award Recipient
The Viscardi Center
Supporting the lives of people with disabilities

jovia
Financial Credit Union
2024 Hall of Fame Award

*The Viscardi Center
was our third Hall of Fame Winner!*

As a three-time winner and five-time finalist of the Long Island Imagine Awards, The Viscardi Center has consistently excelled in the areas of leadership, innovation, impact, and operations. The Viscardi Center is dedicated to educating, employing, and empowering individuals with disabilities or similar needs, fostering a love of learning, the power of work, and the freedom of independent living.



Hall of Fame
2020

Award Recipient
**ISLAND
HARVEST**
Nourishing Long Island's Future

Nonprofit
Resource Hub
2020 Hall of Fame Award

*Island Harvest
was our first-ever Hall of Fame Winner!*

Island Harvest has consistently excelled in the areas of leadership, impact, and operations. Island Harvest has operated at the highest level and has won the Imagine Awards 3 times. We applaud them in their mission to end hunger and reduce food waste on Long Island.





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~Pablo Picasso

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3340 Veterans Memorial Hwy., Bohemia, NY 11716 | (631) 582-1600 | www.CeriniCPAs.com

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"Creativity takes courage." – Henri Matisse

**We are very proud to support
The 14th Annual Long Island Imagine Awards
Arts & Culture Category**

**To give - in a professional and serious manner - is
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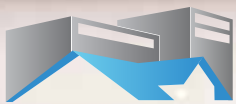
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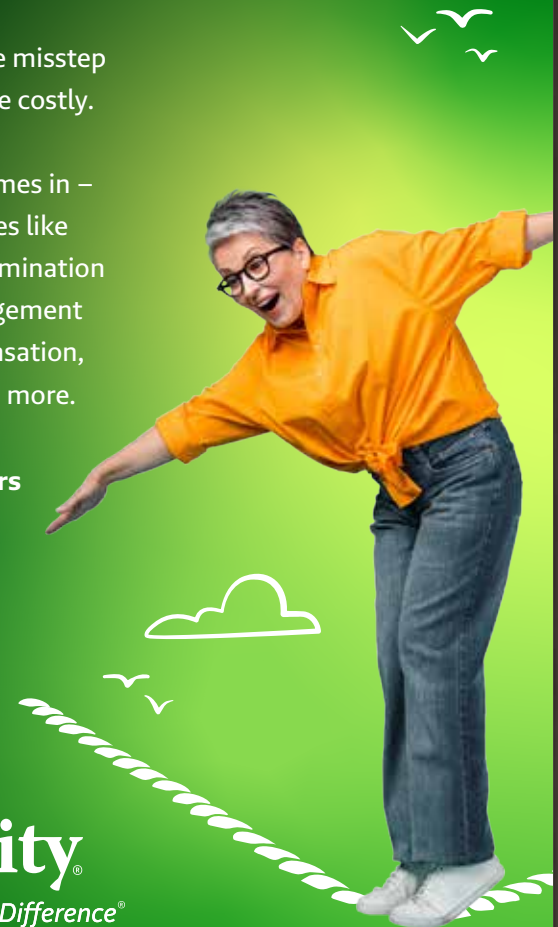
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