

CENTRAL NEW YORK
LYME & TICK-BORNE
DISEASE ALLIANCE





A FOUNDATION FOR THE FUTURE

Letter From the Board Chair

Dear Friends and Supporters,

Six years ago, the Central New York Lyme & Tick-Borne Disease Alliance was born out of a critical need: to protect our community from a growing health crisis. We began as a grassroots collaborative, fueled by the belief that through education and scientific partnership, we could change the trajectory of tick-borne disease in Central New York.

As I look back on 2025, I am incredibly energized by the momentum we've built heading into our sixth year. We reached over 17,500 individuals and saw a record 91% of our Lyme Summit attendees commit to changing their clinical practices. But perhaps most significantly, we saw — and continue to see — our local mission meet a national moment. While Lyme disease finally enters the federal conversation, the “CNY Model” we've built together remains the gold standard for regional response.

This report is a celebration of that foundation and a bridge to our next chapter. In January 2026, we officially welcomed Melissa Carr Rowe as our new executive director. Melissa joins us at a time when our progress has never been stronger, bringing a wealth of experience in healthcare leadership to build upon the incredible operational foundation established by Royale Scuderi.

Thank you for six years of trust. Because of you, we aren't just raising awareness — we are raising the standard of care.

Danielle E. Cummings
Board Chair

PROGRESS: ANNUAL UPDATE 2025

13,000+

Engaged 13,000+ individuals through 125 community education events, raising awareness about Lyme disease prevention.



Educated 1,000+ summer youth campers on tick-borne disease identification and prevention, equipping them with the knowledge to protect themselves.



Reached 3,500 K-12 students through in-school presentations focused on tick-borne disease prevention.



Provided 14,000 individuals with tick kits, educational handouts and resources to promote proactive tick prevention and early Lyme disease detection.



Hosted our Fourth Annual Legs Against Lyme Walk, raising awareness and needed funds to support the fight against Lyme disease.



Our Fourth Annual Lyme Summit equipped providers with the latest knowledge on diagnosing and treating tick-borne illnesses, with 91% of attendees reporting **they intend to change their practice based on what they learned**.



Expanded our reach by over 1 million through strategic media outreach, including traditional and digital channels, generating increased public awareness of Lyme and tick-borne diseases.



We redesigned our website to improve access to resources! Our board, staff and volunteers are on track to provide education to 14,000 community members, 3,000 youth and 100,000 more via our website and social media!

SPOTLIGHT: ROOTED IN RESULTS, READY FOR SCALE

A PROVEN BLUEPRINT, A BOLD NEW CHAPTER

As the Alliance reaches its six-year milestone, we celebrate the strategic leadership that turned a grassroots vision into a regional authority. An organization's impact is determined by the integrity of its foundation, and we owe a debt of gratitude to Royale Scuderi for her exceptional work as our first executive director.

"When the Alliance was in its early stages, it was essential to have someone who could bring clarity, steadiness and strong operational leadership to a growing mission," said Anne Messenger, founder and former board chair. "Having these skills and being a Lyme survivor herself, Royale Scuderi was a natural choice. Royale helped turn vision into action and built the operational foundation that supported the organization's growth. As Alliance founder, I am deeply grateful for her leadership and lasting contributions."

With that blueprint in hand, the Alliance is prepared for an era of significant expansion. To lead our next chapter, we are proud to welcome Melissa Carr Rowe as executive director. A lifelong Central New Yorker and U.S. Army veteran, Melissa brings a sophisticated background in healthcare quality. However, her commitment to the Alliance is driven by more than professional credentials — it is deeply personal.



As a cancer survivor, Melissa understands the complexities of navigating a chronic illness and the persistence required to find a path toward healing. This lived experience gives her a profound understanding of the patient journey — the search for answers, the need for compassionate care and the importance of a support system that listens.

Under Melissa's leadership, the Alliance will continue to use its solid foundation to ensure that no patient in Central New York has to navigate the challenges of Lyme or tick-borne disease alone. Her vision combines rigorous operational standards with a heart for the patient experience, ensuring our "CNY Model" remains both scientifically sound and deeply human.

FOURTH ANNUAL LYME SUMMIT

2025 LYME & TICK-BORNE DISEASE SUMMIT

Our Fourth Annual Lyme Summit, held in Syracuse on September 18 and 19, was a resounding success! The Summit focused on new translational science around tick-borne diseases. The two-day event featured nationally recognized speakers providing invaluable healthcare provider education, sparking countless conversations and fostering a rich learning environment for all.

2025 LYME & TICK-BORNE DISEASE SUMMIT
September 18 & 19
SUNY Upstate Biotech Accelerator
TICKSUMMIT.ORG

SUMMIT SPEAKERS

- KATHRYN ANDERSON, MD, PhD, CT(EPIDEM)**
Associate Professor
Dartmouth College Health Department
- JOHN AUCOTT, MD**
Director, Lyme Disease
Clinical Research Chair
- DAN CUMMINGS**
Vice-Chair of Infectious Diseases
(Emerit)
- ROYALE SCUDERI**
Executive Director
CNY Lyme & Tick-Borne Disease Alliance
- ROBERTA L. DEBIASI, MD, MS**
Chief, Division of Pediatric Infectious
Disease Medicine of Pediatrics
Hospitality, Prevention and Practical
Medicine (Lyme Disease Management
Specialty)
- KES PAOLINO, MD, MPH**
Associate Professor
2023 Upstate Medical University
School of Medicine
- BRIAN FALLON, MD, MPH**
Director, Lyme & Tick-Borne Disease Research
Central Columbia University Irving
Medical Center
- BRIAN LEVETZ, PhD, MPH**
Associate Professor
2023 College of Environmental
Science and Forestry
- JENNIFER WHITE, MPH**
Director, Center for Disease Prevention
New York State Department of Health
- SARAVANAN THIRUBANGALI, PhD**
Professor and Associate
Chair of Infectious Diseases
- ELEANOR SAUNDERS, MD, MPH**
Clinical Lecturer, Division of
Infectious Diseases
University of North Carolina
- MICHAEL TAL, PhD**
Professor and Principal Scientist
Mansueti Institute of Technology
- EDUARDO VANNIER, PHARM.D, PhD**
Assistant Professor
Tufts University School of Medicine
- YUSEN KIM**
Clinical Research Specialist
Massachusetts Institute of
Technology

...and our patient panel!

- DAVID HART**
Member of the Advisory Panel
- MARIA BARRACLOUGH**
Lyme and Tick Disease Specialist, Connecticut Non-Profit
- MICHAEL SCUDERI**
Director of Lyme Disease

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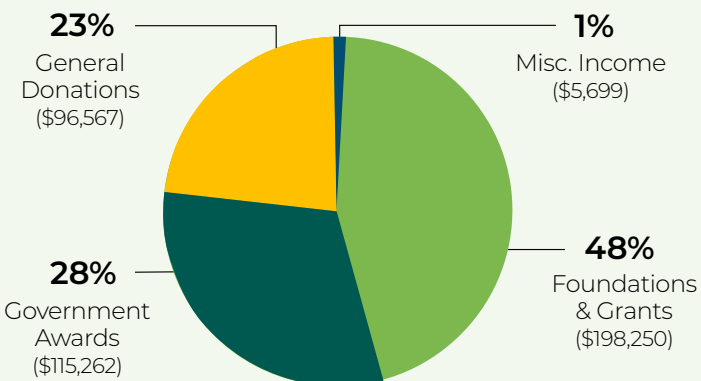
FOURTH ANNUAL LEGS AGAINST LYME WALK

The Fourth Annual Legs Against Lyme Walk was an incredible success! For four years, this event has been more than a fundraiser for the Alliance. It's a vital gathering for friends, families and community members in CNY to walk and unite in the FIGHT against the dangers, heartbreak and devastation caused by Lyme and tick-borne diseases. We promised the event would take place "rain or shine," and, despite the rain, our community truly shone. Cheers to everyone who attended!!!



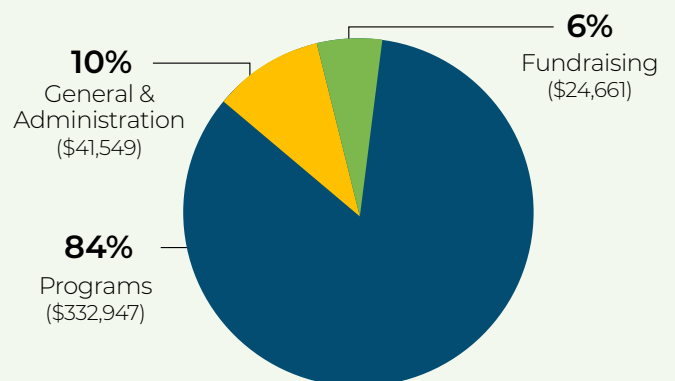
2025 FINANCIALS

WHERE THE MONEY COMES FROM



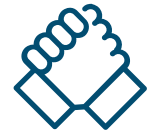
TOTAL: \$415,778

WHERE THE MONEY GOES



TOTAL: \$399,157

CONTRIBUTIONS IN 2025



Thank you to our
2025 donors for their
generous support!

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The Dorothy and Marshall M.
Reisman Foundation

Frank and Frances Revoir
Foundation

Kinney Drugs Foundation

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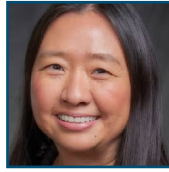
Martha Winterton

James Wright

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Emergency Medicine, SUNY
Upstate Medical University



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Family Medicine,
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Committee**
Chancellor/Director of
Communications, Roman
Catholic Diocese of Syracuse



**Lauren Eadline,
FNP-C, APHN-BC,
RH (AHG)**
Integrative Nurse
Practitioner, Clinical
Herbalist, Community
Educator, SUNY Upstate



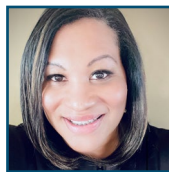
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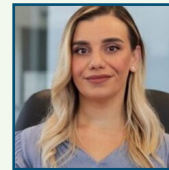
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Ecology, SUNY ESF



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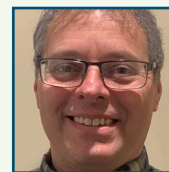
**Royale Scuderi
Executive Director,
CNY Lyme &
Tick-Borne
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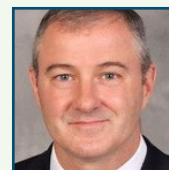
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Kathryn Ruscitto
Tick-Borne Disease Advocate



Stephen Thomas
Director, SUNY Upstate
Institute for Global Health
and Translational Sciences

WHAT'S NEXT?

We have a long to-do list for 2026. At the top:

1.

Community Engagement and Awareness: Expanding our reach across diverse and rural populations within our three-county region.

2.

Youth Education Program Expansion: Scale our K-12 youth education pilot program into more schools within Madison, Onondaga and Oswego Counties, recognizing that educating a child impacts a generation.

3.

Provider Education Enhancement: Expand our provider education initiatives beyond the annual Lyme Summit to offer year-round outreach, including programs for medical students and healthcare providers.

HOW TO BECOME INVOLVED

There are many ways to support the work of the CNY Lyme & Tick-Borne Disease Alliance. Visit cnylymealliance.org to find out how you can help today.

We're adapted for life
in a virtual world!

**Please follow us
on social media!**



@CNYLymeAlliance



@cnylymealliance



Central New
York Lyme

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS & PROFOUND THANKS

We extend our deepest gratitude to everyone who has supported us! We are continually thankful for our donors, community partners, legislators, media and volunteers. The groundswell of public support — through calls, questions, ideas, and, most importantly, stories — is a constant source of encouragement. These interactions remind us daily of the pressing challenges facing our community and the vital urgency of our mission.

Thank you!

