

2022 FUNDRAISING EVENTS

Various sponsorship levels and tickets are available

Tee Up for UCP Golf Outing

Monday, June 6, 2022 | 9:00 am to 3:00 pm
Canterbury Golf Club

Christmas in July Event

July 2022
Details to come soon!

The Magic of UCP

Saturday, October 1, 2022 | 6:00 to 11:00 pm
InterContinental Hotel Cleveland

Scan this
QR code for more
information!



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UCP 2022 SPRING NEWSLETTER

MEET ELIJAH

Elijah is a delightful 11-year-old boy who is always happy to see you! He was born premature and was soon after diagnosed with cerebral palsy, which affects his muscle strength and speech, so he relies on assistive technology devices to help him move around and speak.

When Elijah started receiving UCP therapy services at 17 months old, he communicated using only his facial expressions. There were so many things Elijah wanted to say, and the UCP team tried out many different speech devices to see which would work best for Elijah. They finally found one that he excelled at that uses eye gaze technology. This would make it possible for him to interact with the world using a mouse that is controlled with his eyes. To make this work, Elijah needed a new wheelchair that allows his body and head to be positioned in the right way.

The process of finding the perfect seating system for Elijah was long and complicated. This included selecting the proper equipment, receiving insurance approval, not to mention locating ALL the different pieces and parts needed. Even after everything arrived, the UCP team had to work with an outside company, Miller's, to build the perfect wheelchair customized for Elijah.

On October 5, 2021, Elijah arrived at UCP in his old, adapted stroller. He left a few hours later beaming from ear-to-ear in his new, blue custom manual wheelchair (which can even fold to fit in his mom or dad's car)! His new chair provides him with the right position he needs to participate in school, navigate his home and more easily integrate into the community. When asked if he liked the chair and if he was comfortable, he immediately answered "Yes!"

Elijah's ability to use his eye gaze communication device has drastically improved since he received his new wheelchair. He is now able to discuss an array of topics, such as requesting assistance, expressing his opinions and answering questions. His personality has blossomed because of this assistive technology. He has always been called "Smiley" here at UCP because of his infectious smile, but we are getting to see his smile even more now because he is able to express his thoughts without difficulty or frustrations. Most importantly, he knows he is finally understood.

With his new wheelchair and communication device, Elijah's future is full of possibilities!



Elijah trick-or-treating during therapy at 20 months old.



Elijah laughing while using his new eye gaze communication device.



Beth visiting with a child during therapy in 2011.



Beth poses with members of Team Julia at a fundraising event.



With more than two decades of experience in the nonprofit sector, Beth Lucas is ready for her new role as President & CEO of UCP.

A LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT & CEO

Dear UCP Friends,

When I started at UCP of Greater Cleveland fourteen years ago, I had no idea I would still be here today, much less as CEO! I think back on those early days often; they were tough, but I can say that I experienced the welcoming nature of everyone right away. I talk now a lot about dedication and commitment when it comes all to those here, but it is so much more. It seemed that every single person had the will to advance the Agency, the strength to not give up and the wherewithal to move through any barrier. My newly-found inspiration came from the people we work with and all those in their corners.

The first family I met immediately asked me how they could help UCP. One of the next gathered a large group of friends to organize a fundraiser. A dozen families came together and completed the Cleveland Triathlon to raise funds and awareness for UCP. I heard stories about families finding UCP in the most random ways – moments they called life-changing. It became apparent that those who worked here were a team, banding together to make sure that each person, each child, each family could have what they needed. While the challenges never stopped, everyone supported each other, and so many supported me.

Thinking back, what we faced in 2008 was nothing compared to what we would experience in the future. But the sentiment remains the same and has multiplied beyond belief. Through my time at UCP, we have been lifted up by all these individuals to do amazing things. Our donors are paramount to our success. During each critical time in our history, the community has come through to make sure we were able to continue to do what we do best. From those families I met when I started to all who give their treasure and time today, we are here because of you. We could not do it without you.

I thank all the individuals, corporations, foundations and community groups who have impacted UCP of Greater Cleveland. I look forward to working closely with you all and I have endless gratitude. I am proud to lead an organization that you find worthy to share with.

Be Well,

Beth Lucas



COMMUNITY FUNDRAISING EVENT SPOTLIGHT: CLEVELAND GAMING CLASSIC

Although Tom Jenkin's day job is the Director of Global Services for Hyland Software, he has a personal passion project: planning the Cleveland Gaming Classic (CGC). The event began 10 years ago through a shared love for gaming amongst a small group of friends in a Cleveland basement and has since blossomed into an event that attracts over 2,000 people from across the country. The CGC features video games, toys, collectibles, tournament competitions, card games, comics, tabletop games, legendary icon meet-and-greets, nostalgia and much more.

When the pandemic began, Tom was not sure what to do with the event that he anticipated hosting in the fall of 2020. As Tom continued to explore his options, he knew it would be in the best interest of all participants to host the CGC virtually. However, he felt that it was missing something: a charity presence. Tom, who is a UCP Board Member, reached out to UCP's development team to form a partnership. For the first time since its inception, the event included a fundraising component as well as appearances by UCP clients and employees.

Tom, with the help of a dedicated team of volunteers, transitioned the CGC back to an in-person event in 2021 while welcoming in a record-number of attendees. In just two years, the CGC has raised over \$11,000 for UCP programming!

The 2022 Cleveland Gaming Classic will be held on Saturday, September 25 at the I-X Center. Learn more by visiting gamecleveland.com.

If you have an idea for an event that you would like to host to benefit UCP of Greater Cleveland, contact our development department at 216-453-4969.

CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT WORKS FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

Shira started working with UCP's OakLeaf Partners in late 2020 to learn job-seeking skills and ultimately apply for, obtain and retain employment. While her previous jobs involved cleaning, she desired to work in an office environment. OakLeaf Job Placement Coordinator, Greg Zaryk, helped her build interview skills, and in December 2020 she participated in a mock interview with emeritus UCP Board Member, Ron Barber.

The mock interview went so well that Ron expressed interest in hiring Shira at his consulting firm when there were less pandemic-related restrictions. After a call from Greg in Spring 2021, Shira started working three days per week as an Office Associate at RG Barber Consultants, CPA's where she assists with administrative duties including scanning and filing. She also provides light office cleaning such as vacuuming and dusting.

This is a great example of customized employment, a process for achieving competitive integrated employment through a relationship between employee and employer that is personalized to meet the needs of both parties. Her position incorporates Shira's previous experience in providing cleaning services after her administrative duties are complete. She quickly increased her hours and now works four days per week and recently received praise from a client of the firm who, after visiting the office, said "Shira is a breath of fresh air."



Shira briefly pauses her administrative work at RG Barber Consultants, CPA's for a quick photo.