

WE WELCOME YOU AS WE CELEBRATE  
THE FIRST ANNUAL



# *Gratitude Gala*

## OUR MISSION

THE MISSION OF VOLUNPEER IS TO GET, GIVE, AND GROW SUPPORT FOR THOSE IN NEED. SHARING LIVED EXPERIENCES FOR CONNECTION WILL BE OFFERED WITH A FOUNDATION OF TRAINING, SUPPORT AND RESOURCES TO GUIDE THE VOLUNPEER SERVICES. VOLUNPEER WILL PARTNER WITH ORGANIZATIONS AND COMMUNITIES IN ORDER TO EXPAND AND ENHANCE PEER SUPPORT ACROSS THE COUNTRY

# THIS EVENING'S PROGRAM

6:30-7:30

Cocktails & Hors D'oeuvres

7:30-8:00

Dinner

8:00

awards

8:30

Music and dancing

9:00

Basket auction closes

Dessert

As a way to offer you my thanks, I wanted to take a moment to share my story with you. My life has been a journey of change, and I am grateful for the opportunity to connect, give, and receive to heal together.

Growing up, I had opportunities to help family members battling mental illness. It was through helping others that I discovered a sense of purpose and meaning for my life.

These experiences led me to a career as a clinician and national leader in mental health and peer support programs.

Over the years, I developed a model of peer support called “Reciprocal peer support” identified as a national best practice in the country focused on serving those who serve others. Rescuing rescuers like law enforcement officers, firefighters, military members veterans, and individuals with shared lived experiences coming together to help one another heal.

My focus expanded to identify other who serve selflessly like moms of special needs children, teachers, caregivers, nurses, and clergy members. Today these peer support programs have offered more than 200,000 services to those in need.

Over a year ago we lost our home and everything we owned in a devastating fire. In the days that followed, over 700 people reached out to support my family with heartfelt messages, expressing their gratitude for the help we had provided them in the past. They wanted to reciprocate the support.

During our home rebuild, I realized it was time for me to share my expertise in peer support to foster healing during the ongoing mental health crisis in our country. Inspired by this, I embarked on a new project – VolunPEER. VolunPEER is an organization dedicated to developing and offering peer support services in our communities. Together, we can overcome suffering and combat the mental health challenges we see using peer support because VolunPEER confirms that life is indeed about change.

In the end it is my faith that leads this effort as a thank you to God in gratitude for his grace, Thank you for joining our VolunPEER family, for offering your survivor service and kindness to help others and we look forward to a year of growth and connection serving each other because we are STRONGER TOGETHER!

With Grace & Gratitude, Cherie Castellano

# VOLUNPEER BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President/Founder..... Cherie Castellano  
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## BOARD MEMBERS

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## GALA COMMITTEE

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Eileen Thompson

VOLUNPEER SURVIVOR SERVICE AWARD:  
TRAUMA & LOSS

Ed & Sue Goldstein

Sue and Ed Goldstein, longtime New Jersey residents, suffered an unthinkable tragedy not once, but twice: losing both their daughters to cancer. In the face of their grief, the Goldsteins used their losses to help others, creating programs in the wake of each daughter's passing. Their extraordinary efforts over the past 40 years resulted in the creation of The Valerie Fund and the Stacey Goldstein Breast Center at Overlook Medical Center. Both organizations continue to provide hope and life-saving treatment for thousands of people.

Since Sue and Ed began their journey after losing Valerie at the age of 9, The Valerie Fund has become one of the largest pediatric oncology networks in the nation, with eight Valerie Fund Centers, treating more than 6,000 children annually.

# VOLUNPEER SURVIVOR SERVICE AWARD: TRAUMA & LOSS

## Ed & Sue Goldstein (cont'd)

Following the loss of Stacey in 2001, the couple first established a critical care waiting room to make it easier for families with loved ones in Overlooks Intensive Care Unit.

Today they recently dedicated a newly named Stacey Goldstein Breast Center at Overlook and are quoted saying “We want Overlook to be the number one breast center in the state.” A quote from the plaque in the entrance center reads “ We wish all who walk through these doors find comfort and peace in the journey that lies ahead.”

Ed and Sue Goldstein have been models of resilience and “survivor service” throughout their lives and hold a special place in the hearts of the Castellano Family and in turn VolunPEER. Rarely does a love between two people in marriage and the love for their children resonate so powerfully to impact literally hundreds of thousands of lives.

# VOLUNPEER SURVIVOR SERVICE AWARD: SPECIAL POPULATIONS

## Dr. Genevive Kumapley

Dr. Genevieve Kumapley is the Founder and the Executive Director of MyGOAL, a 501 C(3) non-profit autism organization established in 2008 in South Brunswick, NJ that helps families with limited economic resources access therapies, programs and information about autism spectrum disorder in various countries including the United States.

Dr. Kumapley received her Doctor of Pharmacy Degree with Honors from the University of Illinois at Chicago. Dr. Kumapley is a Board Certified Oncology Pharmacist and leads as a Clinical Pharmacy Manager and Pharmacy Residency Program Director at Holy Name Medical Center ; she also holds an Adjunct Clinical Professor appointment with Rutgers University Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy. She uses her leadership skills to inspire and educate the community. She is committed to serving her community through her roles on several boards.

VOLUNPEER SURVIVOR SERVICE AWARD:  
SPECIAL POPULATIONS

Dr. Genevive Kumapley (cont'd)

Dr. Kumapley is a John Maxwell Certified Speaker, Coach and Trainer. She has received awards for her leadership ; She is a co- author of 2 books, “7 Principles to Developing and Maintaining Your Passion, a book anthology, Network to Increase your Net Worth and her chapter is titled, No Passion, No Gain. She has been featured in several TV and Radio Networks including Ghana TV, NBC, ABC News .

When asked why I was interested in serving on the VolunPEER Board, I prayed about how can I be a partner in advancing the work of bringing wholeness to people. The answer came in seeing that my life mission aligns with this mission and I am committed to be a part of the movement.



# VOLUNPEER SURVIVOR SERVICE AWARD: FIRST RESPONDERS

## Roseland Volunteer Fire Fighters

Founded in 1913, the Roseland Fire Department is an all-volunteer department consisting of 34 active and junior members operating from a single station in Roseland, New Jersey. Each year, the Department responds to many requests for fire and rescue services while maintaining an active role in the community.

Roseland is primarily residential, but also contains several office complexes, schools, houses of worship, industrial sites, and has a major state highway, (Route 280) running through it. As a result, the fire department responds to a wide variety of incidents ranging from structure fires, car fires, motor vehicle accidents, rescues, fire alarms, medical service, electrical fires, and mutual aid to other Essex and Morris County communities. After more than 100 years, the fire department continues to provide free fire and rescue services to the community of Roseland while maintaining a high level of professionalism and readiness for any emergencies that may arise.

In a meeting hosted by VolunPEER to explore the survivor experiences the RFD members, members years of service totled more the 350 YEARS of Volunteer service with members with more than 40 years of service!

VOLUNPEER SURVIVOR SERVICE AWARD:  
DISASTER  
Valerie A Velazquez-Stetz

Valerie's public service career began as Police Officer, for the Jersey City Police Dept. in the early 90's. Which is her native City. She was one of the first 40 females within the department, 4th Hispanic female. She was instrumental in various areas such as: Neighborhood Task Force, 1st female on Bicycle squad, narcotics (assigned out to the prosecutor's office), vice-prostitution stings, community service, and patrol. A 9/11/01 responder that assisted in the search, rescue and recovery efforts in NYC, during one of the worst times in our Nation's history.

She actively continued advancing and training. Assisted the Jersey City Police Officer's Benevolent association with elections. Receiving numerous awards and certifications: Excellent Police service awards, Police Commendation, 9/11 participation. Urban Crime Tactics, Community Policing, D.A.R.E initiatives, DNA and Law Enforcement Prospective-From Hudson County Prosecutor's Office.

After only a few years of retirement from an on the job injury, Val began to engage back into the Police world. She volunteered for a National Media Company geared towards first responders. She had her own weekly Podcast "Blue World Uncensored" with guests from around the State and out of State. This spun into writing in their Police Magazine and marketing for the Media Company as well. This area of work led her to obtain her Private Investigators License. Specializing in marital infidelities, child custody, and surveillance.

During this time Val realized First Responders needed assistance with quality medical and legal care. She started her Medical consulting and marketing support businesses.

# VOLUNPEER SURVIVOR SERVICE AWARD: DISASTER

## Valerie A Velazquez-Stetz (cont'd)

Working side by side with Doctors and specialist to assist the First Responders. Proven by tremendous success, and her pristine reputation.

As a 9/11 survivor and First Responder herself, she began assisting Barasch & McGarry in 2018. The top Law Firm for the 9/11 Community. Signing-up 1000's of clients in the WTC Health Program and Victim's Compensation Fund(VCF). Also, following up with responders and their families with paperwork needed to move their cases forward. Sadly, assisting families when their loved one passes away due to a 9/11 illness. After less than a year of work, she received an award from Michael Barasch recognizing her commitment to the 9/11 community. Shortly after, Val became the Outreach Director for New Jersey. Her dedication and compassion to all 9/11 Responders became immeasurable. She currently has an assistant, whom is a retired JCFD Deputy Chief.

Recently, in 2023 Val was elected as a Fire Commissioner for Wall Township, N.J. District 2-Glendola. She was also selected for the Presidential Motorcade and provided her security expertise to our 45th President.

An active member of several organizations: Fraternal Order of Police(FOP), JCPD Lodge 4, NJ Police Honor Legion, Jersey City Police Officers Benevolent Association(POBA), LEO ONLY, a private police group of 35,000 plus, JCPD Detectives Bureau Assoc(DBA), Ocean County-Retired Police and Fire Local 8, NYPD Jersey Shore 10-13 Club, Rotary Club of Jersey City, Italian/American Police Society, Hispanic American Law Enforcement Assoc.(HALEA), Monmouth County Woman's Republican Club, Wall Township Republican Club.

# YOU CAN VOLUNTEER AT VOLUNPEER TO PROVIDE SUPPORT TO OTHERS IN MANY WAYS!

SIGN UP AS A VOLUNTEER FOR ALL OF OUR VOLUNPEER EVENTS!

~VolunPEER Resilience Center Headquarters

~VolunPEER Holiday Toy Drive! Join us to provide gifts for kids in need!

~VolunPEER Outreach Social media & community connections support!

~VolunPEER fundraising events

~offer your shared lived experience to engage in direct services

~GET VolunPEER services -One to one or GROUPS

~GIVE VolunPEER services – take our six session training to become a VolunPEER mentor

~GROW VolunPEER service by having your non profit partner for a needs assessment and consultation to grow support within your organization

Click here for more information on how to get involved.



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

OUR THANKS TO ALL THOSE WHO DONATED TO THE GIFT AUCTION AND TO  
THE REST OF THE EVENING.

Applebees	Nikko's Hibachi Restaurant
Chipotle	Tom O'Beirne
Coco Nails/Crystal del Luna	Olive Garden
Escapades Family Fun Arcade	Vivian Pagliotus
Fairchilds Market	Panera
Farnolio Italian delicacy	Paramount Country Club
Gemini Restoration	Pleasantdale Nursery
Giants	Sylvia Rossi
Gina's Tennis World	Mike Safris
Graphically Speaking Jamie Lewis	Seton Hall U. Basketball
HomeGoods	Shop Rite, West Orange
JAM Graphics & John Tedesco	Kendra Scott
Jennifer Neuenhoff	Kate Spade
Jersey Mikes	Lynee Tenten
Jets	Trader Joe's
King Family	Turtle Back Zoo
Longhorn	Vera Bradley
Marra's Restaurant	Warby Parker
Michael Kors	Whole Foods
Mochimoly Gourmet Donuts	Wine & Country

Envi Creations Roseland Party Treats  
St Nicholas, Constantine & Helen Greek Orthodox Church

OUR THANKS AND APOLOGIES TO ANYONE FOR THEIR DONATED TIME AND TALENT TO THIS PRODUCTION  
THAT WE MAY HAVE INADVERTENTLY OMITTED

Join the MSDA Community for the annual



**Saturday December 2, 2023**

*Thank you to our 2023 Lead Sponsors*



Scan here to register



In a world often marked by isolation and challenges, VolunPEER offers a message of hope and stands as a guiding light.

Your approach is not just about extending a helping hand, but about reaching out and saying, "I understand because I've been there too." It's in this shared understanding that real healing and growth take root.

Thank you for being there in our darkest moments, where your hands are ready to hold ours, hearts ready to understand ours, and a community ready to support and guide us.

We Thank you

The 1010 Team  
Lynne & Michael Tenten





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