



# IMPACT REPORT 2024

Enriching the Lives of Children & Families  
[breakingbarriersmi.org](https://breakingbarriersmi.org)



**BREAKING BARRIERS**  
FOR KIDS AND FAMILIES



## Founders

**Charles Dardas**

*AlphaUSA*

**Ann Owen**

*Retired Principal -  
Livonia Public Schools*

**Eric Ladwig**

*Owner - The UPS Store #3011*

## President

**Veronica Cruz**

*AlphaUSA*

## Board of Directors

**Cheryl Doelker**

*Owner - JCD Group Inc.*

**Jane Muszynski**

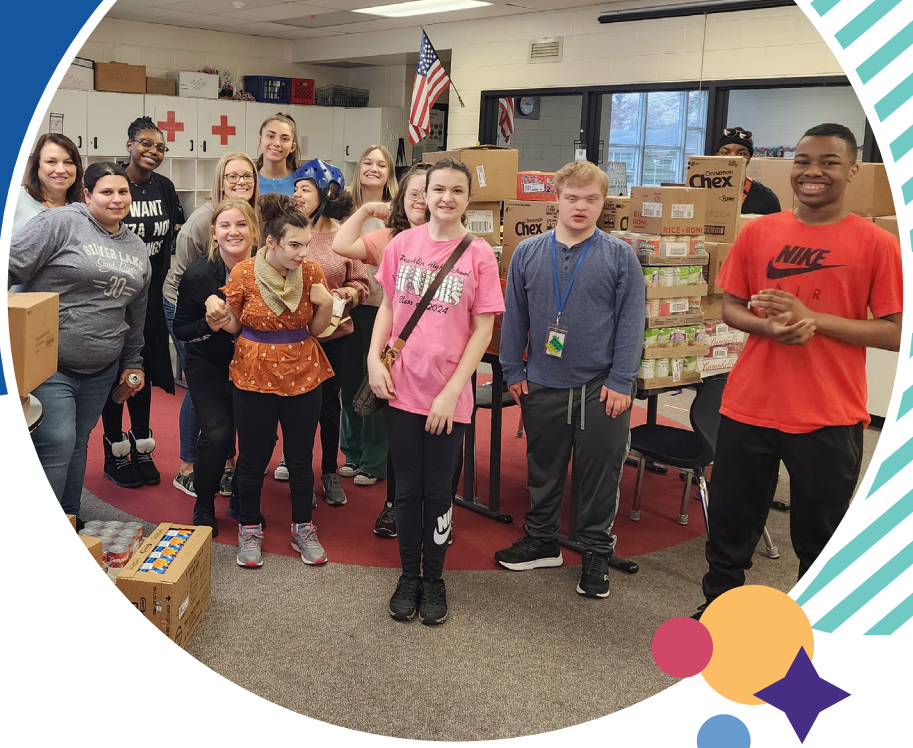
*Program Coordinator -  
Mi Work Matters*

**Maegan Sprow**

*Director of Student Services -  
Livonia Public Schools*

**Venessa Zverotic**

*District Wellness Coordinator -  
Clarenceville School District*



## Breaking Barriers Mission/Vision

To support our community by providing families and students with supplemental food, clothing, and resources. We offer career education and skill-building opportunities through STEAM-based learning and job readiness programs. Importantly, we involve moderately cognitively impaired high school students in our food pantry operations.



# Our Programs

## Food Pantries

We currently serve over 500 families, impacting approximately 2,500 adults and children, through our six food pantries. Our reach has expanded to 16 schools focusing on families eligible for Title One support.

## Greenhouse Education

The incorporation of greenhouse education for special needs students focuses on interactive, hands-on learning tailored to various abilities. Students engage in planting, nurturing, and harvesting crops. The farm-to-table approach allows students to experience the complete food cycle, from seed germination to meal preparation. This experiential learning enhances their cognitive skills while promoting social interactions, teamwork, and sensory exploration, alongside an appreciation for healthy eating and sustainability. Custom modifications and supportive tools ensure full participation, making greenhouse education a rewarding and inclusive experience for all students.

## STEAM Education

We are committed to the advancement of STEAM education (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, & Mathematics) through the establishment of state-of-the-art technology laboratories that provide students with hands-on learning opportunities and access to essential resources. By collaborating with local schools and community organizations, we seek to inspire the next generation of innovators and prepare them for success in an ever-evolving technological environment. Furthermore, we provide musical instruments and necessary consumables to schools to support a comprehensive educational experience.

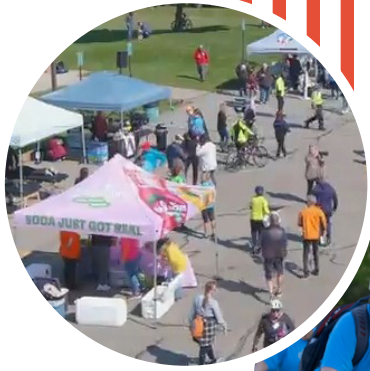




# Fundraising Events

## Tour de Livonia - 3rd Annual

We are thrilled to report that our Annual Tour de Livonia Ride for a Cause fundraiser successfully raised an incredible \$40,000, marking our largest fundraising achievement to date. This remarkable support plays a crucial role in ensuring the continuation of community resources, including our six food pantries and STEAM labs, which serve to uplift and empower those in need. The generosity of our participants and donors not only reflects their commitment to our mission but also enhances our ability to provide essential services and educational opportunities that promote resilience and innovation in our community. Thank you for making a significant impact!



## Livonia All-Stars vs. Detroit Red Wing Alumni

The collaboration between Detroit Red Wing Alumni and the Livonia All-Stars successfully raised \$12,500 to combat food insecurities for local families, demonstrating the power of sports to unite communities for a worthy cause. This initiative highlights the impact of fundraising efforts in providing essential resources to those in need, reinforcing the idea that hockey can be a force for positive change.





# Program Highlights

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to Livonia AM Rotary for their efforts to find supporting sponsors who generously funded the purchase and installation of an 8x10 walk-in cooler. This cooler will service the entire Clarenceville School District, which will benefit 1800 students and their families. This essential addition will enhance our ability to provide healthier food options, promoting better nutrition and well-being within our community. Thank you for your support in making this project a reality. We would also like to acknowledge the Livonia AM Rotary and the following generous sponsors:

## Platinum Sponsors

- Livonia AM Rotary
- AlphaUSA
- Schoolcraft College Foundation
- Rotary Club of Plymouth
- Hardies Family Trust

## Gold Sponsor

- Community Financial Credit Union

## Silver Sponsors

- Bill Brown Ford
- Rotary Club of Essex
- Heritage Bakery
- Public Service Credit Union
- Vibe Credit Union
- Tiseo Architects, Inc.
- Jack Pelon



## A Special Thanks to Portillo's

Portillo's, thank you for choosing our Breaking Barriers for Kids and Families program for your charity partner! We are so grateful for the generous donation of \$5,000 during the Grand Opening Event of the Livonia location on July 16, 2024.

We are truly grateful for the support we received from Michael Portillo, who showed the importance of giving back to the communities they represent. We would also like to thank Portillo's for providing sandwich vouchers for the Tour de Livonia Swag Bags. Thank you for your incredible support!





# Community Food Drive

Community Choice Credit Union's partnership with Breaking Barriers has successfully supported over 200 families through a collaborative drive-up food pantry which provided essential food and hygiene items. With Community Choice Credit Union assembling hygiene bags, the initiative exemplified community solidarity and commitment to addressing basic needs, fostering a positive impact on families facing challenges. We would also like to thank you for your support throughout the year with all of your volunteer efforts and sponsorship support! Community Choice Credit Union is making a positive impact in our local communities.



## In the News

### Channel 4 News - Tour de Livonia

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to Channel 4 News for inviting Chuck Dardas and Veronica Cruz from Breaking Barriers for Kids and Families, for a live interview at their studios. The opportunity to discuss our largest fundraiser, the 3rd Annual Tour de Livonia, was an enjoyable experience, and we truly appreciate their support in helping us raise awareness for this important event.

*Special 'Thanks' to Masco and Channel 4 News for featuring us on the Click on Detroit Website.*





# Thank You to Our 2024 Supporters

We couldn't do the work that we do without your support. Your donations allow us to provide quality care and services to our community.

100% of  
Donations Directly  
Impacts Families  
Throughout Wayne  
and Oakland County.

## Premier Sponsors

AlphaUSA

MASCO



Rotary  
Club of Livonia AM



Schoolcraft  
College

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## Supporting Sponsors



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THANK YOU  
FOR YOUR SUPPORT!



**BREAKING BARRIERS**  
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