

Sonja LaBarbera Nationally Recognized: “Women Hospital Presidents and CEOs to Know”

Sonja LaBarbera stands, yet again, among Becker’s Hospital Review’s “Women Hospital Presidents and CEOs to Know - 2025” - a prestigious national list of women leaders dedicated to advancing care access, equity, diversity, and overall healthcare improvement.

“LaBarbera’s tenure as president has been marked by a number of successful initiatives aimed at expanding strategic programmatic growth, delivering exceptional clinical outcomes and patient satisfaction scores that exceed national benchmarks,” noted Becker’s.



Discover more about Sonja’s achievements and explore other exemplary women leaders [here](#).



Left to right: Jackie Magnuszewski, Care Management, Caitlin Boland, PT, Madeline Adams, OT, Marcia Brassard, OT, and Bradley Douglas, RTA. More team members pictured on pg 2

Gaylord Cup Awarded To: Henry’s Care Team

We want to take a moment to recognize a truly remarkable care team—one that exemplifies not just clinical excellence— but the deepest commitment to compassion, resilience, and professionalism.

Over nearly two years, this team has supported a long-term patient whose care journey came with exceptional challenges, including complex family dynamics that required extraordinary patience, communication, and empathy.

continued on pg 2...

**ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL
GAYLORD GAUNTLET**



This year was our largest Gauntlet to-date! We sold out completely, hosting 1120 able-bodied and adaptive athletes, who gathered to conquer the 12th Annual Gaylord Gauntlet 5k. On behalf of Gaylord and the Sports Association, we would like to thank all of our staff who played a role in making this event possible. Check out media mentions and photos from the Gauntlet inside this edition of FYI.

I nnovation
T eamwork

I nclusion
S afety

I ntegrity
C ompassion
A ccountability
R espect
E xcellence

FYI DEADLINE

The deadline for the next FYI is
Thursday, July 3, 2025

Email:
publicrelations@gaylord.org

Our mission is to enhance health, maximize function and transform lives.

Gaylord Cup (continued)

Day after day, this team navigated difficult conversations, emotional interactions, and high-tension expectations—circumstances that could leave even the most seasoned professionals feeling depleted.

But this team never wavered. They showed up day after day with professionalism, patience, and grace. Even when their efforts flew under the radar, even when the stress ran high, they remained centered on what matters most: the patient.

On behalf of our leadership team, we extend our deepest gratitude and admiration to each of you. Gaylord is so fortunate to have such incredible professionals who make a difference every single day and never lose sight of the patient at the center of it all!



Top row left to right: Seppo Aro, MD, Jenna Forosisky, PCT, Karolina D'Angelo, LPN, Alyssa Holmes, PCT, Yazmin Ortiz, RN, Teresa Moryl, RN

Bottom row left to right: Jasmine Taddigs, PCT, Kendra Murphy, RN

Attention FYI Readers:

Due to the July 4th holiday, the submission deadline for the July 10th FYI issue is **WEDNESDAY JULY 3rd**

As always, to submit an article, promote an event, etc. in FYI, please email: publicrelations@gaylord.org with your details.

Thank you!

Ellie Brown Cleanup Day



On June 4, we celebrated our annual Ellie Brown Cleanup Day here on Gaylord's campus.

Ellie Brown was the wife of Dr. Curtland Brown Jr, a former president and medical director at Gaylord. Each day, Ellie would take a walk up and down Gaylord Farm Road, making it her personal mission to keep the road clean. She believed a clean road was a good first impression of the facility.

We would like to thank the thirteen Gaylord staff and their families who came out and volunteered.

The group then met at Serafino's Restaurant for appetizers to celebrate a job well done.



PROCESS IMPROVEMENT

ideas?

Please reach out to Leigh Golembiewski at lgolembiewski@gaylord.org



Sustainable Shopping: Small Choices, Big Impact

Sustainable shopping means making mindful, eco-friendly, and ethical choices when buying products. Small steps can make a big difference.

Here's how you can help:

- **Look for eco-labels:** Choose items with certifications like Fair Trade, Organic, or B Corp.
- **Buy less, choose quality:** Durable goods last longer and reduce waste.
- **Support local:** Local products cut down on emissions and support your community.
- **Pick ethical brands:** Choose companies with fair labor and green practices.
- **Reuse and recycle:** Repurpose or upcycle before buying new.
- **Avoid excess packaging:** Choose recyclable or biodegradable options.
- **Go refillable:** Reduce waste with refillable household and personal care items.
- **Pause before buying:** Ask if you truly need it to avoid overconsumption.

Every purchase matters—shop with purpose for a better planet.



Welcome to the

Ethics Committee Corner

The Ethics Committee at Gaylord Hospital serves as a resource to help patients, families, and healthcare professionals navigate complex ethical dilemmas and make informed decisions that respect everyone's values and interests.

The committee can provide guidance and support on specific ethical issues that arise in patient care, such as end-of-life decisions, withdrawal of life support, and conflicts regarding treatment plans.

The best way to get in touch with the Chairpersons is by email.



Liz Weber, RN
eweber@gaylord.org



Jackie Magnuszewski, COTA
jmagnuszewski@gaylord.org

Did you know Gaylord holds a weekly 'Photo of the Week' Contest on the intranet homepage?

Share your amazing photos with us and your photo may be chosen for display on the intranet homepage for one week for all to see. Please email photo entries to publicrelations@gaylord.org with your name, department, title and brief description of the photo.



Thank you!

PCT Appreciation Week Awards

Gaylord celebrated our PCT staff with awards, unit superlatives, and plenty of treats. Thank you, PCTs, for being the rockstars of patient care – your compassion, dedication, and hard work deserve a standing ovation!

Chief Nursing Officer, Lisa Kalafus said, “I want to thank all of our PCTs for the work you do—your dedication to our patients and your teams, does not go unnoticed. You are all such vital assets to the nursing team, we could not function without you!”



Congrats!

Jim Russo, MS

Human Resources

Recipient of the
2025 Connecticut's Finest Honoree
by the **Cystic Fibrosis Foundation's**
Connecticut Chapter



We are thrilled to announce that **Jim Russo, MS, of HR,** has been named a **2025 Connecticut's Finest Honoree** by the **Cystic Fibrosis Foundation's Connecticut Chapter!**

This recognition celebrates professionals who lead with heart — in their work, in their communities, and in support of meaningful causes. Jim was selected for his leadership, dedication, and his commitment to helping advance the Foundation's mission.

Want to learn more about cystic fibrosis or the Connecticut's Finest program? Check it out here:

www.cff.org/intro-cf/about-cystic-fibrosis

<https://finest.cff.org/CTFinest>

Way to go, Jim — we're proud of you!



From Strike Force to Smoothies: Staff Wellness in Action!

From board-breaking demos to smoothie samples, trivia, snacks, and wellness tips—this year's Wellness Fair brought the energy! Staff tested their strike force with a local martial arts pro and staff member, Brian Murray, chatted with wellness vendors, and sampled delicious and nutritious smoothies made by Liz Glass. Congratulations to our raffle winners and thank you to all who came out to support health, fun, and each other!



Raffle Winners:

Lavender Basket

Janelle Roman, Nursing Services

Gift Card

Margaret Gainer, Respiratory Therapy

Gift Card

Laura Wiley, Information Technology

Gift Card

Carrie Belcourt, Speech Therapy

Crock Pot

Joy Savulak, Public Relations

Instant Pot

Rebecca Kilfeather, Food & Nutrition

Yoga Mat

Annette Flores, Nursing Services

Sweet Start to Summer

Summer officially arrived with an Ice Cream Emergency!

HR answered the call, bringing back the much-loved repurposed ambulance, which rolled in just in time to help staff beat the heat and kick off the season with a smile.



Amy Benoit Honored as a 2025 CHA Healthcare Hero

Join us in congratulating Amy Benoit, Manager of the Louis D. Taurig House, on being named a 2025 Connecticut Hospital Association Healthcare Hero — a prestigious award honoring above-and-beyond dedication to patient care and community, which Amy embodies every single day.

Amy leads Connecticut's only transitional living facility for people recovering from traumatic brain injury and stroke, creating a warm, empowering environment where residents feel supported every step of the way. Known for her compassion and commitment, she often goes beyond the call of duty — staying overnight with new admissions, accompanying families to the ER, and even conducting home visits.

As one grateful parent shared, *"Amy takes patients from the hospital and truly makes them whole again."*

Her leadership has also inspired nearly \$600,000 in donations to support uninsured patients. Amy's impact is felt across the organization and community — and we couldn't be prouder to celebrate this incredible achievement!

Read more [here](#)



Celebrating a Milestone: Roger DeBaise

At 17, Roger DeBaise started cutting grass on Gaylord's campus. This week — 55 years later — we celebrated our Environment of Care Coordinator, master electrician, compliance expert, emergency preparedness lead, and resident historian.

Along the way, he earned certifications in biomedical engineering, EMT training, water treatment, and E1 and E2 electrical licenses. He's known for quoting fire codes from memory — but even more so for his dedication to teamwork and learning.

"I've learned so much from every department — nursing, respiratory, medical — and we all grow by learning from each other," Roger says.

He credits Gaylord's culture of growth for shaping his journey.

"Facilities management isn't taught in a classroom — it's mastered through experience, and Roger is living proof," says his supervisor, Robert Hall.

Roger's legacy is a true reflection of *Thinking Possible*. Thank you for celebrating this milestone with us!



**Need to access Gaylord's
Employee Assistance Program?
Call (860) 233-6228.**

HOOKED ON GIVING



STOP&SHOP

This August, reel in support for a great cause! When you visit our designated Stop & Shop store and purchase a reusable \$2.50 Community Bag, \$1 will be donated directly to our organization.

stopandshop.2givelocal.com
Community Bag Program

We are excited to announce that **Gaylord Specialty Healthcare** has been selected as a nonprofit partner in the **Stop & Shop Community Bag Program** for August 2025.

This means Gaylord will receive a \$1 donation for every \$2.50 reusable Community Bag sold during the month of August 2025 at:

930 North Colony Road, Wallingford CT

Click Here

What's the Cafeteria Got Cookin'?

Visit the Food & Nutrition department page on Sharepoint to see what they're serving up this week - including soup specials!



Loyalty Program

Buy 9, receive the 10th FREE!
must be 10 of the same item

coffee



soup



bowl special



Buy any one of these items in the Wallingford campus cafeteria to receive your loyalty punch card

GAUNTLET PHOTOS ON THE NEXT PAGE

Relive the Action


We captured some of the day's most inspiring moments and learn more about our featured Athlete, DJ!

Watch it here: <https://youtu.be/RC9LOKea-eg>

Check out this segment by Susan Raff of WFSB on Gauntlet, featuring former Gaylord patients and adaptive athletes Anthony Picchione and Laurie Bizzario ... and, of course, starring our resident adaptive sports expert, Katie Joly.

Watch it here: <https://www.wfsb.com/2025/06/11/gaylord-hospital-celebrates-11th-annual-gauntlet-obstacle-course/>

Save the Date: June 13, 2026
We'll be back, and we hope you will be too!




Did your co-worker go above and beyond?



Scan the QR code and fill out the form to recognize them.







The featured organization is:

CATA Penny Dunker Scholarship

Established in 2010, this endowment awards \$1,000 annually to a Connecticut athletic training student who reflects Ms. Dunker-Polek's dedication and community spirit. The scholarship honors her legacy as a devoted athletic trainer, educator, and EMT who bravely battled cancer.

[Click here to learn more](#)

Employees need a Jeans for Charity sticker or button to indicate their participation.

Stickers can be purchased for \$2 in the cafeteria, Jackson Java, Jackson 2 outpatient, Human Resources, and all outpatient clinics.



Put it on the Calendar!
Snapshot of dates to be aware of

More details for items below can be found on our internal Sharepoint Snapcomm page.

- Th 6/26:** Mock Code Marathon 7:30am-6:30pm
Yoga, 4:10pm, Inpatient Gym
- M 6/30:** Zumba Series Class 4, 4:10pm
- Th 7/10:** Weekly Walking Group, 12:15pm- 12:45
Yoga, 4:10pm, Inpatient Gym
- 7/14-18:** Legacy Week
- Th 7/17:** Employee of the Year Event, 12pm, South Lawn
Weekly Walking Group, 12:15pm- 12:45
Yoga, 4:10pm, Inpatient Gym
- Th 7/24:** Weekly Walking Group, 12:15pm- 12:45
Yoga, 4:10pm, Inpatient Gym
- T 7/29:** Blood Drive, 11am-4pm
- Th 7/31:** Headshot Appointments 9am-3pm
Weekly Walking Group, 12:15pm- 12:45
Yoga, 4:10pm, Inpatient Gym

July

August

September

Disability Pride Month	National Nonprofit Day August 17	Employee Appreciation Day September 10
Legacy Week July 14-18		Corks and Forks September 18
Blood Drive July 29, 11am-4pm		

ATTENTION STAFF



Weekly Walking Group

Thursdays
starting July 10
12:15 p.m. - 12:45 p.m.
Meet in Jackson Lobby
Walk around Gaylord's
Wallingford Campus



Questions: Reach out to Christina Drogkaris at cdrogkaris@gaylord.org



Other Step Up to Wellness Initiatives:

Monday Zumba Classes - 4:10pm in the Inpatient Gym for the rest of June. Classes will continue based on participation.

Thursday Yoga Classes - 4:10pm in the Inpatient Gym will be ongoing

Hospital-Wide Open Headshots Monthly Signups

Going to a conference?
Need to refresh your email photo?

Sign up today to have a fresh headshot taken!

Thursday, July 31 from 9am-3pm
Video Room on Jackson Ground
*By appointment only

[Click Here](#) to select your time slot!

Outpatient headshots available upon request.
Contact Kate Brophy with any questions. x3459 / kbrophy@gaylord.org.

People Magazine Features Gaylord Patient and Therapist

Last fall, Jadean Hoff, PT in North Haven, began working with a 17-year-old outpatient, Bella Chambasis who came to us paralyzed on left side after a stroke several years earlier. Though she had been in physical therapy for several years, she was unable to walk ... until she met Jadean.

Jadean asked Bella what her goal for therapy was. After surviving a rare autoimmune disease, kidney failure, a stroke, and a month-long coma, Bella replied,

*"I will walk
at my graduation."*

Jadean and the rest of Bella's North Haven crew, including OT, Alexa Adams, worked very hard with Bella to make her goal a reality. On June 12, Bella walked across the stage at East Haven High graduation to a roaring standing ovation.

Bella's is a true THINK POSSIBLE story – and we can't wait to see what she accomplishes next.

Congratulations, Jadean and Alexa and team, on making her dream come true!

[Read her full story in People here.](#)





Mock Code Marathon

Thursday, June 26
7:30am - 6:30 pm

Registration Required
Register via the course calendar in
UKG Gaylord University
Located in the Clinical Education
Classroom on Jackson Ground

Gaylord
Specialty Healthcare

Questions? Contact
Nursing Professional
Development or the
Respiratory Department

Your voice matters.

**DID YOU
TAKE YOUR
Great Place
to Work
SURVEY?**

Gaylord
Specialty Healthcare

Look for an email from Great Place To Work

FRIDAY SUMMER BBQS ARE BACK!

Get your grill on with us each Friday
this summer!

Where? Milne Circle
When? Every Friday
11:30am and 1:30pm

Fridays just got a whole lot tastier!



Thank you for your support!

PET DRIVE

We would like to extend our heartfelt
thanks to all who donated to our pet
drive. **We received over 350 items!**
Mandy's fellow furry friends at the
Wallingford Animal Shelter can breathe
easier and hope for a quick adoption.



Gaylord
Specialty Healthcare

celebrate
LEGACY WEEK
JULY 14-18

Service Award Events, Employee of the Year
Ceremony and Volunteer Luncheon

2025
EMPLOYEE of the YEAR



Who will it be?
Join us: **Thursday, July 17**
12pm, Brooker South Lawn



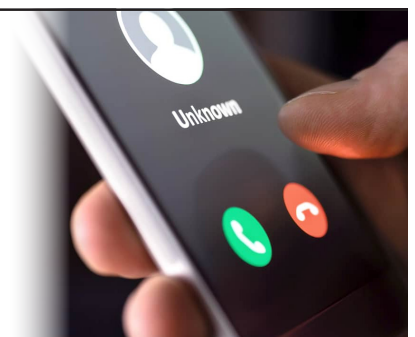
**Share your
innovative
ideas with us.**

Scan the QR code or
email innovation@gaylord.org



Spectralink Scam Calls: WHAT TO DO

- Do not engage with the caller or provide any personal information.
- Hang up immediately.
- Please report the incident through our normal IT support channels (e.g., submitting a ticket, contacting the help desk). Your reports are crucial for us to track these calls and work with our vendor to address the issue.



Special invitation to all Gaylord staff, patients and family

20% off theater tickets

LEGACY THEATRE

Don't miss the world premiere of
"Long Days"
 at Legacy Theatre
June 12-29

Scan to buy tickets

20% off code: LDS20

A dark, humorous play about a production of Eugene O'Neill's 'Long Days' Journey into Night.

128 Thimble Islands Road, Branford, CT

GAYLORD FACT:
 Eugene O'Neill was a Gaylord patient in 1912-1913 and began his writing career there.

CHESHIRE
 Parks & Recreation

SUMMER 2025 CONCERT LINEUP

7-9pm

Bartlem Beats

GREAT LAWN @ BARTLEM PARK 520 S MAIN ST, CHESHIRE CT

	JULY 11TH Heavy Hitters (Rain Date: July 15th) Party/ Dance Band
	JULY 18TH American Girl (Rain Date: July 22nd) A Tribute To Tom Petty & The Heartbreakers
	AUGUST 1ST The Zoo (Rain Date: August 5th) High-energy band blending rock, pop, and dance hits
	AUGUST 8TH Shot Down Rain Date: August 12th Modern and classic country music

THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR SPONSORS

Presenting Sponsor: Richard Chevrolet

Platinum Sponsors: IAT Insurance, Saint Bridget School, Saint Bridget of Sweden Church

Gold Sponsors: Cheshire Lions Club, Feldman Orthodontics, Gaylord Physical Therapy, Holiday Hill Day Camp, Ricci Construction Group Inc, Cheshire Coffee, Blacks Road Self Storage, DW Gem Services LLC, Knott

4TH OF JULY
CONCERT
 ON THE GREEN IN MADISON

PRESENTED BY MADISON CULTURAL ARTS
 SATURDAY, JULY 5, 2025 (Rain date Sunday, July 6, 2025)

A Salute to the Boston Pops

Wallingford Symphony Orchestra
 Conducted by Philip Ventre at 7PM
 Opening Act: Lancraft Fire & Drum Corps at 6PM

WITH SPECIAL THANKS TO:

MAESTRO SPONSOR: BAUSCH+STROBEL
 PREMIER SPONSORS: DAVIS BANK, GSB, CHESHIRE HOSPITAL
 GOLD SPONSOR: Madison Rotary
 SILVER SPONSORS: Gaylord, LANSBURY

TOWN OF MADISON / MADISON BEACH & RECREATION DEPT. / FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF MADISON

Free Admission

Saturday, July 5,
 Madison Cultrial Arts will hold its
 annual "Concert on the Green."

**AS A SPONSOR, GAYLORD HAS SPACE
 RESERVED FOR THOSE WHO WOULD
 LIKE TO ATTEND.**

If you are interested in attending, please email
kbrophy@gaylord.org or call x3459.
 Space is limited, so reach out early!

