

FALL 2023

# LOVE NOTES

*Love*  
it's been 120 years...  
HAVE WE MET YET?

THE MARIA LOVE  
CONVALESCENT FUND  
EST. 1903



# Fall 2023 Love Notes

Dear directors, directors emeritus, past directors, committee members, and loyal friends of the Maria Love Fund,

It's been 120 years...have we met yet? This is our mantra as we embark on our 120th year as the Maria M. Love Convalescent Fund. It is incredibly reflective of the deliberate and quiet approach of our past while encouraging a warm embrace of the future, encouraging philanthropy, compassion, and a collaboration with our neighbors to ensure a sustainable future.

This summer, our Executive Committee engaged in multiple conversations and a director questionnaire which drove updates to our bylaws and how we operate. As a result, we named four Committee Chairs: Elise Edwards, Governance & Audit, Nina Barone, Marketing & Communication, Jamie Kelly, Development, and Jennifer Dulac-Silverman, Finance. We continue to share a commitment to serve, sustain, and grow the Mission of Maria Love through our gifts of time, financial resources, fund-raising, and teamwork! This year we will have a more intentional focus on meeting as committees to brainstorm and develop the strategies and tactics necessary to meet our forever goal of greater community impact.

We have more ways than ever for you to get involved! Follow us on Instagram @marialovefund and TikTok @themarialovefund and be sure to comment, share, and like. You can also like us on Facebook @Maria M Love Convalescent Fund to receive updates. Our Development Committee is designing community service outings that everyone can join and there are opportunities to donate at [marialovefund.org](http://marialovefund.org).

The 120th Maria Love Charity Ball is scheduled for Saturday, November 4, 2023, at Buffalo RiverWorks. Co-chairs Julie Plata, Jill Metz, and Development Chair Jamie Kelly have an incredible evening of fun designed for our guests including entertainment from lovable DJs Yes and Milk. The Middle School dance is from 5-7 PM and High School from 8-10 PM. To purchase or donate to either dance, visit [marialovecharityball.com](http://marialovecharityball.com). To donate your ticket, simply select "donate angel ticket" or consider a sponsorship.

More information about our Annual Campaign will be revealed in the coming weeks, and the 32nd Annual Spring Luncheon will again be Chaired by Patti Deni on Thursday, May 16, 2024, at the Country Club of Buffalo! An excerpt from Alice Jacob's Founders Award acceptance speech from the 2023 luncheon is now posted on [marialovefund.org](http://marialovefund.org).

We are a bridge to independence providing immediate financial assistance to the people of Erie County with convalescence care needs and are incredibly grateful for your commitment to the Maria Love Fund. It is an honor to work with all of you to make a difference in the lives of others.

It's been 120 years...have we met yet?

Warmly,  
*Julie VanDyke Gicewicz*  
*Board President*

# Executive Director Update

## by Nancy B. Stevens

Dear Friends of the Maria Love Fund,

This past fiscal year, the fund created a new initiative known as “Maria’s Grants.” This is a one time grant: a sentiment of health, healing, and love. The purpose of Maria’s Grants is to address current needs of qualifying organizations in Erie County that might not be covered by other resources. The board of directors submitted recommendations of qualifying organizations that were reviewed by the Executive Committee and presented to the full board for a vote.

The following organizations were recipients of a \$1,000 grant:

***Buffalo Therapeutic Riding Center:*** Riding Program scholarship funds for children with special needs

***City Year:*** supporting the AmeriCorps recruits that serve in the under resourced schools in Buffalo

***Compass House:*** provide food pantry items and personal care items

***FeedMore:*** Baby Needs Program

***First Fruits Food Pantry:*** reusable bags, carts, and dollies

***Haven House:*** support for victims of domestic violence

***Upward Design for Life:*** transforming empty spaces into furnished homes for individuals in need

***Visually Impaired Advancement (VIA):*** assist with co-pays for individuals in the low vision clinic

The Maria Love Fund meets many needs each month. Whether it be a medication co-pay, security deposit or rental assistance, transportation to

and from a doctor's visit, walkers, g-tube belts for children with feeding tubes—all are reviewed carefully and, on a case-by-case basis. I so enjoy working with our agency partners, new and familiar ones alike. We depend on these thoughtful and detailed assessments that our agency partners perform before submitting a referral. Together, with our partners and loyal supporters, we are making a difference in the lives of others.

One Friday in late August, my week ended with a very heartwarming experience. When fulfilling medication requests, I often find that getting the medications quickly is important, and if I can visit the pharmacy easily, I do. I had a request to help a gentleman with critical heart medications that he had not refilled because he had recently lost his job and could not afford them. The pharmacy was in the newly renovated Tops on Jefferson, and as I entered the doors, the feelings of grief for the loss of ten of our fellow citizens was not lost on me.

I headed towards the pharmacy and found myself walking behind a gentleman who was moving slowly. I took a breath and told myself to relax, slow down, and follow him. It turns out we were both headed to the pharmacy, and when we arrived, he hesitated. I asked if he was in line and he said, “yes, but you go first.” I thanked him and told him that he was very kind. I gave the check to the pharmacist who wanted to know when they would be picked up. I told her I would notify the case worker and let them know it was paid for. I thanked the gentleman again for letting me go ahead of him and then went about my shopping.

Soon after, I heard this “hello, hello” and I turned around and it was the gentleman that let me go ahead of him in line. He said, “I’m happy I found you, I am Jesse, that medication you just paid for is for me. I’m glad you went ahead of me because I might not have had anything to pick up.” His smile was so warm and grateful. I told him it was his good karma for being kind and letting me go first. We walked to the checkout, and he thanked me along the way, telling me about losing his job due to his poor health. How serendipitous that we turned up at the same time. This experience is one of the many benefits of my work. I am grateful to our supporters!

With warm regards,  
*Nancy B. Stevens*  
*Executive Director*



it's been 120 years...  
HAVE WE MET YET?

## *The 120th Maria Love Charity Ball*


*Saturday, November 4, 2023!*

It's our 120th dance party to raise funds helping other kids and families in Erie County pay for medically-related needs!

**Middle School Dance: grades 5-8, from 5:00-7:00 p.m.**

**High School Dance: grades 9-12, from 8:00-10:00 p.m.**

We love our our new location at **Buffalo Riverworks**, and so do our middle and high school attendees—it's been the perfect venue for our reimagined Charity Ball. Parents even have a great place to hang out nearby during the event if you prefer to remain at the venue.



Tickets include dance admission, snacks, photo booth, selfie station, entertainment by DJ Yes and DJ Milk, and your donation to the Maria Love Convalescent Fund.

### **Charity Ball Angel Tickets**

Angel tickets are a great way to continue our tradition of giving and supporting those in our community. Visit [marialovecharityball.com](http://marialovecharityball.com) to give.

Thank you for your support.

### **Stay Connected**

Want to connect with us? Following us on social media is a great way to be in the loop on all we have going on and you are welcome to email us:

[marialovefund@msn.com](mailto:marialovefund@msn.com)

**IT'S BEEN 120 YEARS...HAVE WE MET YET?**

# 2023-2024

## Board of Directors

### Celebrating 120 Years

*Executive Director, Nancy B Stevens*

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