

# Sharing HOPE

HOPE Network for Single Moms | December 2025

## \$1,000 Awarded to each of the 3 Single Mother Scholars



**Scholarships**  
**\$18,000**



**Single Mothers Served**  
**470**



**Backpacks**  
**350**



**Baby Essentials**  
**84,600**



**Diapers Provided**  
**338,400**

### The Starting Point for Lasting Success

With more than 140 scholarships awarded since 1988, Hope Network takes pride in the future of families. With help from HOPE Network, women are inspiring their children, completing degrees, and building family-supporting careers.

### Creating Equity Through HOPE's scholarships

For many mothers, childcare is an additional hurdle to jump in achieving their educational goals. HOPE Network's scholarships can be used for tuition, or for childcare, while the mother attends school. This flexibility creates equity for mothers struggling to complete their education. Our goal is to alleviate some of the financial stress for our members who are pursuing their academic dreams.

#### RACHEL HOLLEY SCIORTINO EDUCATIONAL GRANT

In 2018, HOPE Network's board created the Rachel Holley Sciortino Educational Grant with memorials received following the tragic death of our beloved executive director, Rachel Sciortino. In her short time with HOPE Network, she brought to us her zest for life, wonderful new ideas, and community connections. Thanks to the generosity of Rachel's family, HOPE Network will be able to honor her memory with this scholarship for years to come.

## 2025 Scholarship Award Winners

The recipients for the 2025-2026 school year represent diverse circumstance and areas of study.



**Haley Peronto**  
UW-Milwaukee  
Nursing



**Alinka Swider**  
UW-Milwaukee  
Supply Chain &  
Operations Management



**Destiny Eberhardt**  
UW-Milwaukee  
Nursing



HOPE Network for Single Mothers

"Being a single parent is not a life full of struggles but a journey for the strong"

-Meg Lowrey



For More Information

To learn more about HOPE Scholarship opportunities for single mothers, go to our website at [hopenetworkinc.org](http://hopenetworkinc.org)

# Cozy Corner Updates

## Events

### Back to School Supply Drive

With the school year approaching very soon, HOPE hosted an event where we provided free school supplies to support our HOPE members!

### A Beacon Against Abuse (ABAA) Community Resource Fair

We participated and tabled at Beacon of Hope's community resource fair. We were able to spread HOPE one conversation at a time. It was a pleasure meeting and connecting with so many families at their annual event.

### Christmas in July

🎄 Christmas in July: A Heartfelt Thanks to St. Mary's 🎁  
We are incredibly grateful to St. Mary's for their generous support in hosting a Christmas in July event for our community. Their thoughtful contributions provided essential items for our single mothers, bringing joy and relief during a time that can often be challenging. St. Mary's continues to be a valued partner in our mission, and we deeply appreciate their ongoing commitment to uplifting and empowering the families we serve. Thank you, St. Mary's, for making a meaningful difference



## Giveaways!



This past summer, we hosted a few exciting giveaways for our HOPE members — including tickets to the Milwaukee Symphony and a few Brewers game — in exchange for sharing how HOPE has made an impact in their lives.

We loved hearing your stories and seeing your photos! For future giveaways, don't miss your chance to win — share your story and pictures with us to be entered!

## New Addition to the Board

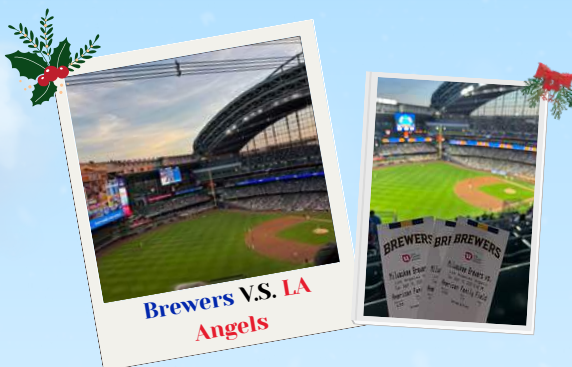
### Christina Italiano



Dr. Christina Italiano joins the HOPE Network Board with 20 years of experience in finance, operations, and community leadership. She currently serves as the Statewide Finance Manager for Wisconsin Medicaid at Elevance Health and is committed to improving outcomes for vulnerable populations across Wisconsin.

Christina has a strong record of community service, including over 11 years as a Wish Granter with Make-A-Wish Wisconsin and volunteer leadership with the Wisconsin Hispanic Scholarship Foundation (WHSF) / Mexican Fiesta, supporting educational and cultural advancement in the Hispanic community.

As a former single mother, Christina understands the resilience and support needed when parenting independently. Her lived experience fuels her passion for helping women build confidence, stability, and strong futures for their families. She is honored to support HOPE Network's mission of empowering women parenting independently and strengthening resilient families.



## Company Video



🎥 Get to Know Us Better!

We're thrilled to unveil our latest company video—a behind-the-scenes look at who we are, what we do, and the passion that fuels our mission every day.

📱 Simply scan the QR code to watch and discover the heart of our team in action!

## Board of Directors

President: Rita Saavedra  
Vice President: Jessica Janz-McKnight  
Treasurer: Christina Italiano  
Crystal Hearvey  
Jacob Carlson  
Babette Honore  
Candice Wright

Sharing HOPE is a publication of HOPE Network for Single Mothers

## Office Hours

Please call the office at (262) 251-7333 to schedule an appointment or for more information

## Office Staff

Executive Director: Ana Saavedra  
Office Manager: Isabel Saavedra

## Website



# Frost & Features

## HOPE Partner Spotlights

### Milwaukee Fire Department



HOPE is proud to announce a new partnership between HOPE Network for Single Mothers and the Milwaukee Fire Department!

We're incredibly grateful to the MKE Fire Department for their generous support during our recent HOPE Drive. Thanks to their involvement, the event was a great success and helped us reach even more families in need.

In addition to supporting our drive, the Milwaukee Fire Department celebrated their 150th anniversary with a vibrant community event at Henry Maier Festival Park. The celebration featured:

- 🎵 Live music
- 🚒 Fire truck displays and demonstrations
- 🧒 Interactive family activities
- 🔥 Fire safety education
- 🍷 Local food and drinks
- ... and so much more!

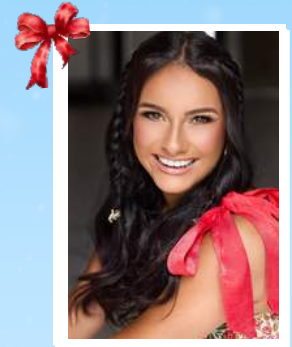
We're honored to collaborate with such a dedicated team and look forward to future opportunities to support the families we serve together.

### Journey 2 Confidence



Journey 2 Confidence's vision is to empower and inspire individuals by providing valuable resources, encouragement, and opportunities to believe in themselves. Our mission is to support youth as they grow in confidence, embrace self-love, and become upstanders against bullying.

"As a student, model, pageant queen, dancer, and athlete, I have witnessed the impact of bullying firsthand. Through Journey 2 Confidence, I strive to help young people find their inner sparkle — the courage, confidence, and self-worth that allow them to shine authentically and stand tall in the face of challenges." Leaila Rios



### Volunteer Spotlight- Meet Nina Truong

Nina was our intern from this past spring and continued to volunteer for HOPE by creating marketing materials and managing our social media.

She recently graduated from UW-Madison. Nina supports HOPE with a lot of passion and dedication in all of her work. She is currently job searching and baking in her free time.



## Milwaukee Food Pantries as SNAP Cuts Hit Wisconsin

We are deeply concerned about the recent reductions in SNAP (FoodShare) funding across Wisconsin. Many individuals and families rely on these benefits to meet their basic nutritional needs, and we understand how challenging this change can be.

If you or someone you know is experiencing food insecurity, please know that help is available. Local food pantries and community organizations continue to offer support to ensure that no one in our community goes hungry. Below are several food resources available in our area:

- Alicia Food Share
- Feeding America Eastern Wisconsin
- Nourish MKE
- Just One More Ministry
- Kinship Community Food Center (Administrative Office)

We encourage anyone in need to reach out to these organizations for assistance or to share this information with others who may benefit. Together, we can help ensure that everyone has access to the food and care they deserve.

# Falling Into HOPE Recap

On November 7th, we recently held a fundraiser for HOPE at Blue's Egg, which included curated food stations, sweet treats, raffles, an online auction, and a festive gift tree. We hope everyone who attended had a truly enjoyable time. Thank you to all who joined us and supported the event, because your presence made it special! We extend our deepest gratitude to our sponsors, donors, friends, and families for their generosity and continued support. This event would not have been possible without you. Your kindness, compassion, and generosity fuel our mission to bring hope to the single mothers and families we serve.

## Our Sponsors

- Milwaukee County Department of Health & Human Services
- Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield
- Pittman, Kalkhoff, Sicula, & Dentice
- Outreach Community Health Centers
- Hmong American Friendship Association
- Froedtert Hospital
- Magellan's on Main St
- Muslim Community & Health
- UMOS, Inc.
- Diamond Jubilee Pearls Foundation
- Pat Wille
- Rita Saavedra
- Brandy Helchen

## Auction Donors

- 1<sup>st</sup> and BOWL
- LGM Associations
- La Salsa Mexican Restaurant
- Milwaukee Admirals
- Mexican Fiesta
- Todo Postres
- Conquistador Latino Newspaper
- LeRoy Butler
- Dr. Ramard & Candice Wright
- Bouncing Circus World
- Wisconsin Chinese Chamber of Commerce
- Cubanitas
- Guadalajara Restaurant
- Cape Cod
- Lake Michigan Sailing



## Mayor Cavalier Johnson

Although the mayor was unable to attend the fundraiser in person, he shared a heartfelt message expressing his strong support for our organization. We invite you to watch his video message, now available on our website.



Mayor Cavalier Johnson



## Raffle Winner

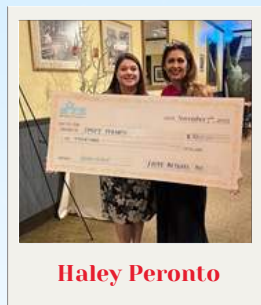
We want to express our heartfelt gratitude to our 50/50 raffle winner Habacuc Saavedra for generously donating their winnings back to our organization, helping further support our mission and the success of this fundraising event.

## Gift Card Tree

At our event, guests were invited to participate in our Gift Card Tree by making a \$20 donation in exchange for selecting a numbered envelope containing gift cards valued between \$20 and \$50, adding a surprising and rewarding element to the evening while supporting our cause.



## Scholarship Recipient



Haley Peronto

We were overjoyed to celebrate our scholarship recipient, who demonstrated resilience, dedication, and perseverance, which is truly inspiring. Because of your support, it strengthens our community and alleviates stress for our members to pursue higher education.

	<b>Attendees</b> 80
	<b>Amount Fundraised</b> \$23,000

Thank you to everyone who attended and made this event possible! We hope to see you at any of our future events. Because of you, we were able to raise \$23,000! We want to extend our deepest gratitude to you all for believing and supporting us. HOPE Network will continue to empower single mothers and families we serve.



# Thank You To Our Generous Donors!



The following donations were received May 1<sup>st</sup> – October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2025

If we have inadvertently omitted your name, please forgive us and give us a call so we can correct our records.

- |                                   |                                        |                               |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield | Holy Assumption Church                 | Panther Pub                   |
| Bank Five Nine                    | Steven Kerr                            | Jacob Saavedra                |
| Tiffany Boyd                      | Sandra Klein                           | Bonnie Schetski               |
| Kenneth Byrne                     | Elizabeth Kohn                         | Schroeder Moving              |
| County of Milwaukee               | Tom & Sue, Kress                       | Kirsten Simanonok             |
| Margot Dunn                       | Stephen & Linda Mary, Kupcho           | Jim & Jan, Spredemann         |
| David Dziubek                     | Angela Leigl                           | St. Agnes Congregation        |
| Educators Credit Union            | Tyler Mais                             | St. Augustine Parish – Office |
| Lynn & Peter Engel                | Mimosa Breakfast & Brunch – Brookfield | St. Luke Congregation         |
| Famous Daves – 27th               | Mimosa Breakfast & Brunch – Franklin   | Starbucks – 76th              |
| Sherron & James, Felton           | Thomas Moran                           | Starbucks–Holt                |
| Mary & William, Freisleben        | Ondrej Moravec                         | Gabriel Tawil                 |
| Good Shepherd Church              | Robert Nelesen                         | John Weber                    |
| Mary Grenier                      | Panda Express – 76th                   | Wehr Nature Center            |
| Juanita Guzman                    |                                        |                               |



## Winter Hearts, Forver Connected

*Katie Kershek*



In loving memory of Katie Kershek, a generous spirit whose legacy lives on in our hearts. We wanted to express appreciation and gratitude in honor of Katie Kershek, who showed a lot of compassion and kindness. Because of her gift, we can continue our mission and make a lasting impact in the lives of those we serve. Thank you for believing in our work and for standing with us – your support truly makes a difference!

Yes, I (we) would like to help HOPE Network:  \$25  \$50  \$100  \$250  Other \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Please Charge a one-time gift to my credit card. Name on Card: \_\_\_\_\_

Card #: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Card:  MC  Visa  Discover  Amex Expiration: \_\_\_\_\_ Card ID #: \_\_\_\_\_

**We Protect your privacy and will not give away or sell your contact information**  
**All Donations are fully tax deductible**

I want to support this organization on a regular basis. Send me information on being a monthly donor

I want updates via:  Text  Phone  Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Acknowledgement of gift:  Letter  Email  No Acknowledgement



PayPal



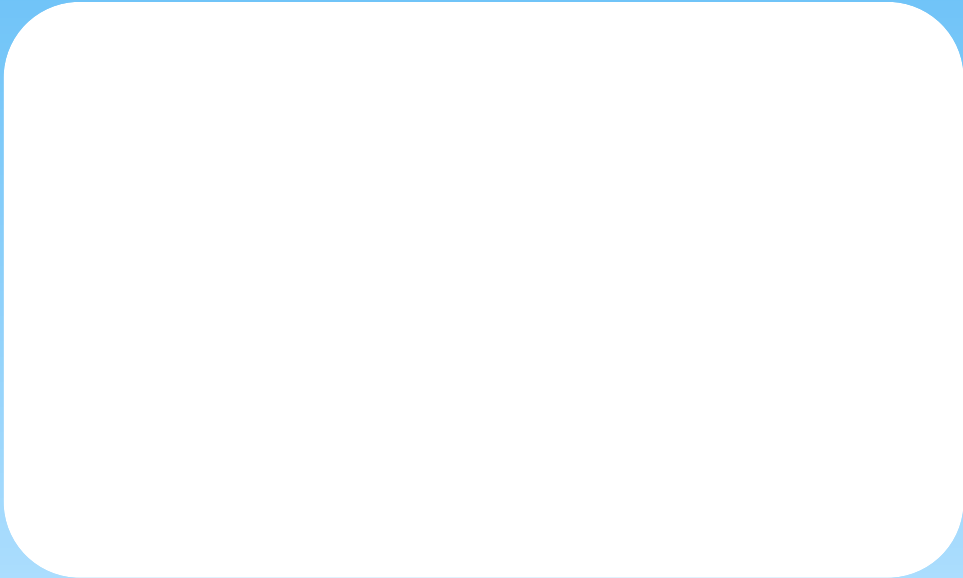
HOPE Network for Single Mothers

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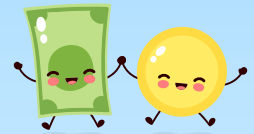
Follow us on Facebook & Instagram



@hopenetworkinc



## Financial Literacy for Parents and Single Moms



### Single-Income Survival: Practical Tips for Single Moms

If you're a single mom, you're probably familiar with the challenge of stretching one paycheck to cover all your family's needs. Here's how to make the most of your resources:

- Utilize Tax benefits: research and claim tax credits available to single parents, such as the Child Tax Credit.
- Explore hidden money opportunities: turning in plastic cans and water bottles to recycling centers for extra cash, Fetch Rewards (scanning receipts for points that can be redeemed for gift cards)
- Explore government assistance Programs: BadgerCare Plus, Food Share, Heating/Utility Assistance, etc.
  - Check this website to explore resources in Milwaukee: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/legislative/milwaukee.htm>

### Mastering Credit Scores: Your Key to Financial Freedom

Your **credit score** is like a report card for your finances, and it affects everything from renting an apartment to getting a loan.

#### How to Improve Your Credit Score:

- Pay Bills on Time: Late payments can tank your score. Set reminders or automate payments.
- Keep Balances Low: Try not to use more than 30% of your available credit limit.
- Monitor Your Credit: Use free resources like AnnualCreditReport.com to spot errors and track your progress.

## Celebrate The Season: Free Holiday Fun In Milwaukee

### Milwaukee Holiday Lights Festival

See over a half-million bulbs illuminate downtown parks and streets. Events often include free cocoa, cookies, and Jingle Bus rides during the kick-off.

### Milwaukee County Zoo

Admission is free on December 7 for Family Free Day and again from December 26-30 for Frosty Free Week

### Candy Cane Lane

Drive through West Allis to see a large display of decorated homes that benefits the MACC Fund