

IMPACT REPORT



Pictured: Kionne Abrams

THON

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THON™
2025

OUR MISSION

Dear THON™ Supporters,

THON is defined by support – for volunteers, spectators, dancers, and most importantly, families. From the simplest acts like a volunteer placing a child on their shoulders to the immeasurable impact of the words of a family speaker that help a dancer through their last few hours on their feet, THON is **powered by the love** we show for one another. Since 1977, students at Penn State have taken a stand against childhood cancer by raising funds to directly support **over 4,800 families** at Penn State Health Golisano Children's Hospital. The love that our 16,500 student-volunteers feel for our mission has brought us to the milestone of over **\$250 million raised** in pursuit of a cure.

My name is Ben Roitman, and I am honored to be serving as the Executive Director for THON 2026. Like many other first-year students, I found myself lost as I tried to acclimate to a big school. I found my home in THON, alongside students of all ages dedicated to providing magical moments to families battling childhood cancer and building hope through funding for research with a global impact. I know that a cure for cancer will one day be found because a community of students at Penn State will stop at nothing to support our families. Thousands of students to come after my time at school will dance until we are dancing in celebration of a cure. The impact of THON's support extends far beyond the financial: equally important as co-pays covered are dreams come true. **THON creates moments where kids can be superheroes, performers, athletes, and most importantly, kids.**

Our community has taken many steps in the fight against childhood cancer, building on the great legacy of the Millards. The story of our fight is incomplete and will be furthered through the love we give to each other and our families.

While we do not know which dollar will be the one to fund the cure for childhood cancer, we will not rest until we raise it.

For The Kids®,



Ben Roitman
THON 2026 Executive Director



THON is a student-run philanthropy committed to enhancing the lives of children and families impacted by childhood cancer. Our mission is to provide emotional and financial support, spread awareness, and ensure funding for critical research—all in pursuit of a cure.

COMPREHENSIVE SUPPORT

ASSISTING CHILD LIFE SPECIALISTS

The holiday basket initiative is a project led by the Hospitality Committee to share festive holiday cheer with Four Diamonds children and child life workers at Penn State Health Golisano Children's Hospital. Unique to THON 2025, this initiative was opened to all 16 THON committees, not just Hospitality, and a total of 34 holiday baskets were donated and delivered in early December. Each committee that participated was assigned a specific age range to focus their basket donation to ensure all Four Diamonds children were included in the fun. This has become an exciting THON-wide opportunity for volunteers to work together to directly support child life specialists and encourage Four Diamonds children during the holiday season.

“How have the Holiday Baskets and Hershey Holiday Toy Drive impacted Four Diamonds families?”

“The holiday baskets and the toy drive that THON initiates every year have always been a huge support to our patients and families. It brings joy to them in a season where they are likely unable to participate in all of the family traditions and events that they typically look forward to. Because we receive all of these thoughtfully curated baskets and toys, it allows us to offer opportunities of laughter, joy and comfort in an environment that is different than home and can feel devoid of those meaningful items.”

“Can you tell us a story of a child or family who benefitted from one of our initiatives?”

“...I will always remember around the holiday times when we had a holiday cart in clinic that we would allow patients to select a couple of special items from. The patient that I had walked to the cart was talking about how much they would love to be able to give a thoughtful gift to their two siblings, because they too had been going through so much during this season of their family's life...The gifts they went on to select for their brother and sister were specific to their interests, and I know it was empowering for the patient to be able to give them as a way of recognizing their brother and sister's hard work during this season.”

“How has THON's mission impacted your day to day?”

“THON's hard work allows me to show up to work and be able to provide care and support that is completely free and of no-cost to our patients and families. A patient's and their family's well-being and coping should never be viewed as secondary need, and fortunately, THON allows for it to be a primary need that I'm able to meet and provide supportive care for.”

“How do you think being in the THON community impacts children and families impacted by childhood cancer?”

“I think the THON community can help create opportunities for normalcy and joy outside the walls of the hospital. The events throughout the year and the times spent with the families give everyone events to look forward to. Suddenly, the family calendar isn't just full of clinic appointments and hospital admission dates, but rather it becomes filled with laughter and joy-centered events. Whenever we can boost morale and joy, it leads to an increase in coping and an improved outlook on the circumstances.”

“How has THON's support grown over the years?”

“The number of students that are involved in THON seems to only increase every year – and so do its initiatives, visions, and goals...And in return, we are able to provide more supportive services, more funding for research, and increase access to quality care. It's amazing that THON continues to promote and champion the hard work of every individual – like myself! I'm so thankful to be supported so that I can show up and continue caring for each and every patient because it really is all about the kids!”

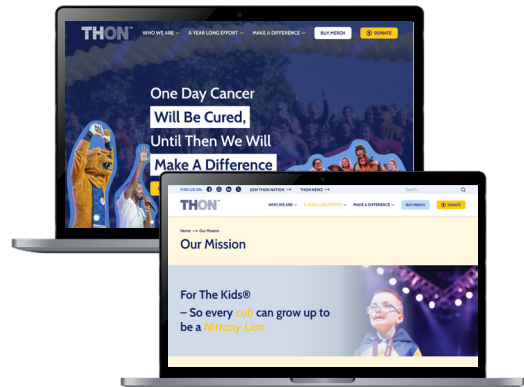


FROM VISION TO ACTION: DIGITAL ADVANCEMENTS

THON.org

THON.org is the largest outwards facing website for all supporters. The site serves as the main platform to connect donors to DonorDrive, merchandise, the mission, and family stories. THON.org also advertises THON News, our partners, and how to get involved.

During this past year, THON.org underwent a revamp to generate a cohesive design for the site. The consistency in the theme emphasized the professionalism of the student-run organization while maintaining the ease of navigating the website.



THONcast

The Alumni Engagement Committee plans many alumni campaigns throughout the year to involve alumni all over the country. These campaigns and initiatives are tailored to educate and engage THON's alumni audience throughout the fiscal year, with an emphasis on alumni-specific data, speakers, and content. However, the 2025 Alumni Engagement Committee wanted to broaden THON's scope nationally, garnering support for the mission from not only alumni, but anyone who resonates with THON's mission and wants to support families impacted by childhood cancer.

Therefore, the podcast THONcast: Beyond the 46 Hours, was created and launched in the 2025 fiscal year. Its goal is to spread THON's impact and mission on a national level, giving more insight into all the behind-the-scenes efforts that culminate in the iconic 46-hour dance marathon. This project gives Four Diamonds families, THON volunteers, Penn State Health Golisano Children's Hospital staff, and Four Diamonds staff a platform to share their work with the world.



The first season of THONcast focuses on THON's history and how money raised has supported families emotionally and financially. To listen in, this project can be found on both Spotify and YouTube!

In Episode 1, a comprehensive history of THON and Four Diamonds is given with guest speakers Stacy Binger-Forbes, the THON 1995 Overall Chair; Stacia Millard Bird, the daughter of the founder of Four Diamonds, Charles Millard; and Suzanne Graney, the Executive Director of Four Diamonds. This episode outlines THON's rich history and prominent figures in the THON community that have shaped THON into what it is today.

In Episode 2, our Four Diamonds families were highlighted with guest speakers Keira Woods, Four Diamonds Teen, and Sara Merrill, Lead Social Worker at Penn State Health Golisano Children's Hospital. This episode dives into how Four Diamonds families are supported by Penn State student organizations and volunteers as well as different services offered to families at Penn State Health Golisano Children's Hospital.

COMMITTEES BY THE NUMBERS

THON is run by 19 directors, 378 captains, and 3,577 committee members.

COMMUNICATIONS

26 captains
135 committee members

Communications supported **300+ organizations** and **175+ Independent Dancer Couples**.

DANCER RELATIONS

24 captains
760 committee members

Dancer Relations supported **700+ dancers** throughout the 46-hour dance marathon.

ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT

17 captains
65 committee members

Alumni Engagement supported **25,000+ alumni** around the world who amassed **\$1 million+** in annual donations.

DEVELOPMENT

16 captains
65 committee members

Development distributed **45,000+ THONvelopes** requested during THON 2025.

ENTERTAINMENT

28 captains
55 committee members

Entertainment coordinated **65 different performances** during THON Weekend.

FAMILY RELATIONS

25 captains

Family Relations connected **260 families** with organizations through the Adopt-A-Family Program.

FINANCE

24 captains
95 committee members

Finance processed and counted **6,700 fundraisers and physical donations**, including checks, matching funds, and general cash.

HOSPITALITY

24 captains
360 committee members

Hospitality procured **\$200,000+ of in-kind donations**, completely eliminating internal costs for all food and beverages at THON Events.

MERCHANDISE

24 captains
55 committee members

Merchandise generated **\$300,000+** through the sale of quality merchandise.

OPERATIONS

22 captains
615 committee members

OPPerations ensured that **62.3% of the waste** produced at THON Weekend was diverted into recyclable or compostable material.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

35 captains
95 committee members

Public Relations increased THON's social media presence by reaching **254K+ followers** across all platforms.

EVENT SAFETY

24 captains
540 committee members

Event Safety facilitated the safe and efficient entry of **25,000+ attendees** into the Bryce Jordan Center.

FUNDRAISING SAFETY

22 captains
540 committee members

Fundraising Safety approved **1,900+ Alternative Fundraisers** for THON 2025.

SPECIAL EVENTS

20 captains
135 committee members

Special Events registered **4,800+ participants** in the THON 2025 5K powered by PNC.

SUPPLY LOGISTICS

21 captains
70 committee members

Supply Logistics acquired **\$125K+ of in-kind donations**.

TECHNOLOGY

26 captains

Technology facilitated the effective functioning of THINK, THON.org, and DASH. THINK is used by **16,500 volunteers** and **575 families**. THON.org was viewed by **161k+ users**, and DASH registered **66k new users** over THON Weekend.

THE GRACE SCHNEIDER FAMILY

And their paired organization, Delta Sigma Pi

AN INTERVIEW WITH THE SCHNEIDER FAMILY:

What does your relationship with DSP mean to you?

“Our relationship with DSP means so much to us! From the very beginning, they’ve embraced our family with genuine kindness, excitement, and love. They’ve been a constant source of support and joy during one of the hardest times in our lives and continue to show up for our family even after Grace’s treatment ended. DSP gives us hope and reminds us that there are truly selfless people committed to something bigger than themselves. They give Brooks and Grace the chance to just be kids again, showering them with love, laughter, and fun! They’ve shared countless fun, happy moments with the kids, something we treasure deeply after years of treatment. DSP continues to remind us how much goodness still exists in the world!”

What is your favorite memory from THON 2025 with DSP?

“It’s hard to choose just one memory because every THON with DSP has been filled with unforgettable moments. When we asked Grace and Brooks, they immediately mentioned the water gun fights, painting the guys’ nails, watching the dancers stand up Friday evening and finally sit down after 46 hours! We love visiting the dancers throughout the weekend, cheering them on, and seeing their excitement when we arrive. It feels great to give back even a little of the support they’ve given us.

Another highlight is seeing the incredible support from the entire DSP community! Meeting so many brothers, their families, and friends reminds us how amazing and strong the DSP community is! It’s inspiring to watch DSP cheer each other on, lift each other up, and so generously give their ALL for such an amazing cause!”

What type of impact has DSP THON had on your family?

“DSP has had an incredible impact on our family, bringing happiness, laughter, and positivity into our lives. They’ve become role models for Grace and Brooks, showing that kindness, generosity, and compassion are powerful. After years of treatment, DSP gives our kids space to laugh, play, and just be themselves, whether it’s through games, football, Nerf battles, or crazy dances. Their joy is contagious!

DSP has been a beautiful reminder of how much love, generosity and goodness exists in the world. Their relationships are helping to shape the kind, empathetic people our kids are becoming. DSP has made all of us better people!”





AN INTERVIEW WITH DELTA SIGMA PI:

What have you learned from the Grace Schneider Family?

“After being paired with the Grace Schneider Family since December 2021, they have taught us many different lessons. Two of the biggest lessons they have taught us are strength and courage. Grace is an incredibly strong young girl who proves time and time again how her strength is beyond many. Another lesson that we have learned is ‘it takes a village.’ When Grace was going through her treatments, her community had her back. Even more so, her entire extended family rallied together to not only support Grace, but also Brooks and her entire family. Having this many people support her speaks volumes for their community and support system alone. The Grace Schneider Family has taught us many lessons all for the better, and we are so happy to experience this with them.”

What is one moment from THON 2025 that you cherish with the Grace Schneider Family?

“THON 2025 was filled with so many unforgettable moments with the Grace Schneider Family. From getting to watch Grace and her family members complete a scavenger hunt throughout THON Weekend, watching the previous Family Relations Chair donate her hair on stage at THON while Grace and her entire family cheered her on, to spending time with the Schneider family in the stands, we are so grateful for every memory we were able to create during THON 2025. One memory in particular is getting to spend Final Four together with Grace and the Schneiders. While the Schneider family was on the floor with our dancers, the brothers spent the final four with their extended family in the stands. Having members of DSP be with their family throughout the final hours of THON was amazing and a moment we will always cherish.”

How has Delta Sigma Pi’s relationship grown with the Grace Schneider Family?

“Since being paired with the Grace Schneider Family for five years now, our relationship grows stronger each year with them. Grace has come a long way from being shy when we come to visit them, where now she comes right up and starts talking to all of us. She loves to make jokes with us, too. Even getting to see all of the activities Grace has gotten involved in post-treatment has been amazing to see. We have also gotten the chance to watch Brooks grow so much during this time as well. From watching his love for sports grow, to watching Grace and Brooks’ relationship getting even stronger each year, we are so proud of both of them. The Grace Schneider Family is so important to DSP and we are so lucky to know them and make endless memories with them every single year.”

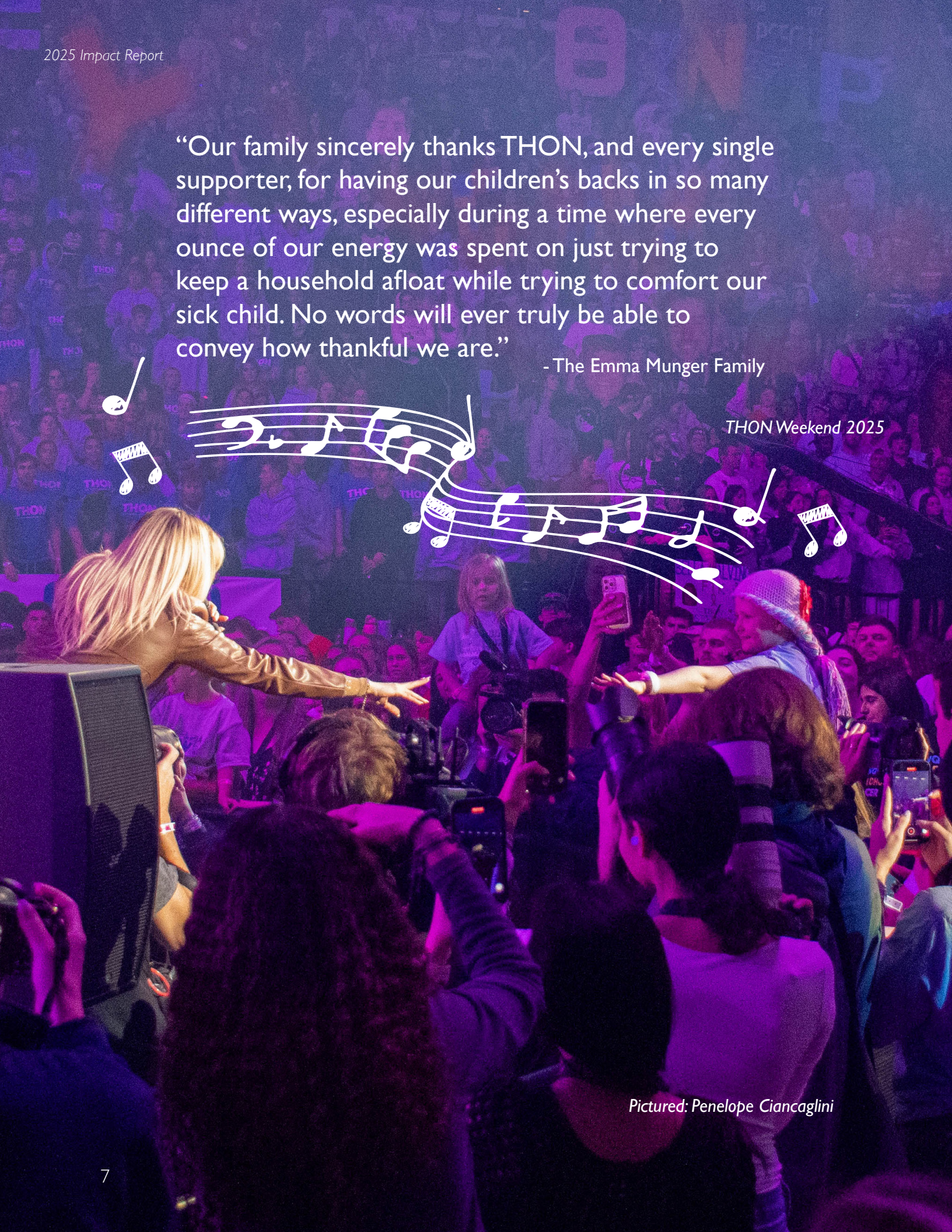
What’s one unique thing that your paired family gets to do with Delta Sigma Pi?

“One very unique thing that has now become a yearly tradition for Delta Sigma Pi and the Grace Schneider Family happens the Friday before the annual THON football game. The Schneider family invites members from Delta Sigma Pi to spend time with them at a cabin they own nearby. This night is filled with games, music, and laughter. We always have a fire when we go, and we get to eat the famous Schneider Mountain Pies. This is one of the best times of year for both us and the Grace Schneider Family, and we cannot wait for the tradition to continue!”

“Our family sincerely thanks THON, and every single supporter, for having our children’s backs in so many different ways, especially during a time where every ounce of our energy was spent on just trying to keep a household afloat while trying to comfort our sick child. No words will ever truly be able to convey how thankful we are.”

- The Emma Munger Family

THON Weekend 2025



Pictured: Penelope Ciancaglini

BOSTON'S NIGHT OF HOPE

THON BEYOND GRADUATION



Like so many Penn State alumni, the board members of the Greater Boston Chapter of the Penn State Alumni Association carry a deep love for THON and Four Diamonds. Many of us danced at THON, volunteered on committees, or fundraised through student organizations. Now, living seven hours from State College, we've found that any chance to talk about Penn State, and especially THON, brings us right back together. Penn State pride runs deep everywhere, but there's something special about sharing it in Boston, a city that knows pride well.

For the past three years, our chapter has poured that spirit into Boston's Night of Hope, a gala benefitting THON and Four Diamonds. In June 2024, our event raised \$11,195.22, a total that represented not just the generosity of our community, but the power of perseverance and belief in a cause that unites us all.

The idea for Boston's Night of Hope began in 2019, when alumnus David Candito approached the chapter with an idea: to bring a THON fundraising gala to Boston, similar to New York City's Hope Gala. We were excited, but also unsure. Would we have enough volunteers to plan it? Could we sell tickets, find sponsors, or explain THON's mission to a city?

Over the next two years, Boston's Night of Hope was postponed due to the pandemic. It felt like a beautiful idea that would stay just that, an idea.

Then, in 2022, our then-president Aaron Pinkett decided to give Night of Hope one more try. What began as his "last hurrah" turned into something extraordinary. That spring, Boston's Night of Hope finally came to life. Against all odds, we hosted our first gala and donated \$5,854.21 to Four Diamonds. It wasn't just the money that mattered, it was proof that we could do it.

Momentum built quickly. In 2023, our second annual gala more than doubled our impact, raising \$13,309.21. The room was filled with laughter, stories, and the unmistakable energy of Penn Staters coming together for a cause bigger than ourselves.

By 2024, we were ready to grow. We moved to a larger venue and brought in two incredible speakers: Emma Olofson, Advancement and Giving Specialist at Four Diamonds, who shared how each dollar raised supports families in their fight against childhood cancer; and Tucker Haas, a Penn State alum, former Four Diamonds child, and four-time cancer survivor, who inspired everyone with his story of hope and strength.

That evening reminded us why we do this. We had created something lasting, an event that brings people together, celebrates courage, and fuels hope.

In 2024, Boston's Night of Hope was honored with the DMAIG Fundraiser of the Year Award, a recognition that felt like the perfect reflection of what makes Penn Staters special: when one door closes, we find another way forward.

As we look ahead to our 4th Annual Boston's Night of Hope in Fall 2025, we're more inspired than ever. What started as a "what if" has become a beloved tradition, connecting alumni, families, and friends through generosity, love, and the shared belief that one day, we'll dance in celebration.

THON LEGACY

THE FIRESTONE FAMILY

Sara Firestone



How did you get involved with Four Diamonds and THON?

"I first became aware of Four Diamonds from a co-worker shortly after I graduated from college. ... I enjoyed my first full-time job after graduating but felt that I wanted to do something that had a more direct impact on people. My co-worker let me know that there was a position open with Four Diamonds and encouraged me to apply. I vividly remember the interview process and feeling in awe of the work that Four Diamonds did and that they could do so much because of the support from THON. I left the hospital after the day-long interview and told myself that even if I didn't get the position that I would become a volunteer for Four Diamonds. Thankfully, I was offered the position, and it was one that would change my life!"

How did you see THON evolve during your time as a Director of Four Diamonds and beyond?

"I served as the Director of Four Diamonds from 2001-2010 and the growth that happened during that time was incredible. THON 2002 (...With All Your Heart) was the first one that I experienced, and it was held in Rec Hall. There are so many traditions that I remember from 2002 that still happen at THON today. The THON total that year was \$3.6 million.

The THON 2004 Overall Committee was also the first THON committee to make a major fundraising commitment to the Penn State Children's Hospital building campaign. The committee agreed to support

the campaign with a \$10 million commitment for the pediatric hematology/oncology areas in the new hospital. I will never forget being with the Overall Committee members when they signed the pledge documents for the campaign gift. The 2004 Overall Committee Members were visionaries!

THON 2005 and 2006 saw tremendous growth in the number of people who came to THON Weekend. Capacity at Rec Hall was starting to become an issue so discussions began on where THON's next home would be. ... Some people were concerned that moving the event to a larger venue would lose the feel of THON, but THON 2007, the first year in the BJC, proved that wrong when the building was filled to capacity.

THON 2010 was my last one working for Four Diamonds and the total that year exceeded \$10 million. No matter what the total was each year, it was the support for the families, the dedication of the students, and the genuine spirit of giving so freely that made being a part of Four Diamonds so remarkable."



How has Four Diamonds made a global impact on childhood cancer?

"When I look back at how much Four Diamonds has grown, the global impact that Four Diamonds and THON are having on childhood cancer is through research. The work that is being done by the Four Diamonds researchers is creating better treatments and potential cures for pediatric cancer."

Addison Firestone

What was your favorite event to go to growing up, and has that changed or evolved since becoming a THON volunteer?

“As cliché as it sounds, my favorite event growing up was THON Weekend itself. As a kid, THON Weekend was the time when I had the opportunity to meet many of the Four Diamonds families and THON students that I heard my mom talk so much about. I was able to play with the other kids and make sincere friendships.

Since becoming a THON Volunteer, I have been able to attend many more of the events leading up to THON Weekend that keep the magic alive all year long. I really enjoyed running in the 5K this year and seeing the incredible positivity and support from the community and other volunteers. I also really enjoyed going to the 100 Days Until THON celebration, watching the hair cutting and seeing the efforts of the Dream Forward campaign come to fruition.”



How have you been involved with THON as a student?

“In high school, I was on the leadership team for our Mini-THON and was responsible for planning the Mini-THON events at my school district’s elementary schools. It was incredibly rewarding to see the joy of the younger students as they participated in the activities we planned and the reveal we did at the end of the day. I knew when I decided to come to Penn State that I wanted to continue my involvement with THON which led me to apply for a committee... I have loved playing a more active role with THON and being able to connect with other students who are just as passionate... These experiences have been amazing, and it truly feels full circle to be able to continue being a volunteer.”

Addison has served as Family Relations Liaison for her Dancer Relations Committee, a Family Relations Sub-Chair for Alpha Epsilon Delta, and a Family Relations Captain.



How has THON impacted you as a student and made you want to continue your THON journey through college and beyond?

“THON has really shown me that when people come together and are passionate about something, real change can be made. THON is an incredibly special cause that truly connects the Penn State community. The first time I stepped foot in the BJC and saw thousands of exhausted, sore people dancing and singing like they’re at the best concert in the world, I knew that I wanted to be a part of it. It puts so many things into perspective and allows you to understand the impact of everyone’s hard work throughout the year. Similarly, the support system that THON provides for the Four Diamonds families is the main reason I wanted to continue my involvement with THON. Showing the families that there are thousands of people who are there for them and want to give them positive experiences is so inspiring to see.”



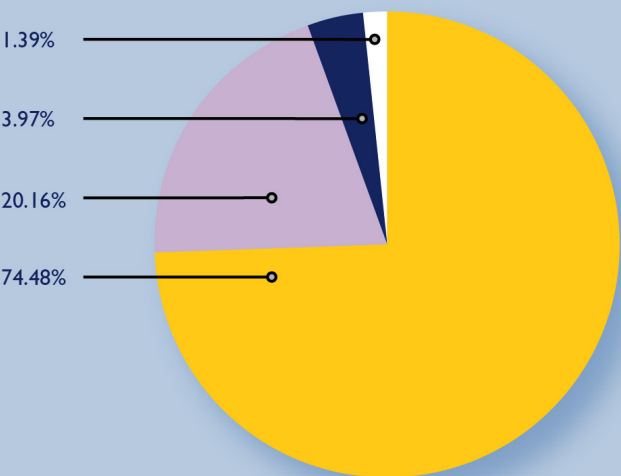
THON™ 2025

Summary of Fundraising Activities

TOTAL: \$18,319,635.30

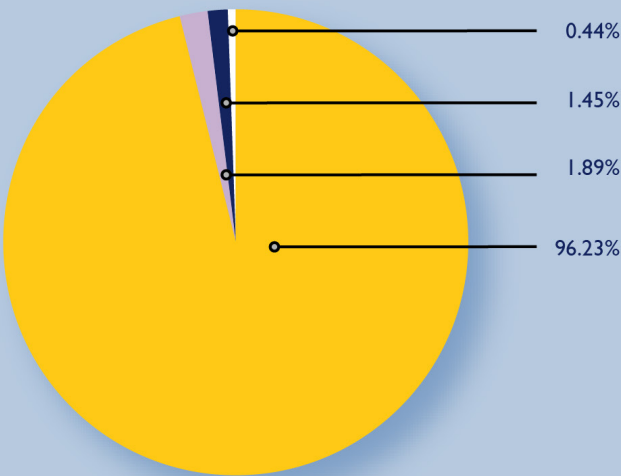
The following information is an official Summary of Fundraising Activities for the THON 2025 fiscal year, beginning July 1, 2024 and ending June 30, 2025.

Sources of Funds



- Gifts from Individuals**
Canvassing, solicitation, Lion Line, online donations, and personal checks
\$13,643,702.88
- Corporate Donations**
Gifts from a corporation, foundation, or small business; matching gifts
\$3,694,129.66
- Fundraising Events**
Alternative Fundraisers, Hospitality Promotions, THON 5K, and THON Raffle
\$726,952.52
- THON Store**
Profits from the sale of official THON Merchandise
\$254,850.24

Uses of Funds



- Four Diamonds**
Total contributions made to Four Diamonds
\$17,634,422.73
- Development**
Direct mailing campaigns, donor stewardship initiatives, prized THON informational material, and credit card fees
\$345,465.41
- Event Management**
Pre-THON Events and THON Weekend
\$265,638.02
- Operations & Administration**
Office equipment, postage, space usage, and other general administrative expenses
\$80,109.58

In the 2025 fundraising season, THON raised
\$18,319,635.30



96¢ of every \$1
donated directly benefits
Four Diamonds



In the 2025 fundraising season, THON spent
just 4¢ to raise every \$1

“We will never forget our first THON weekend... It’s not something that can easily be described... It has to be experienced to be fully understood.”

- Collin Kratzer Family





THON
PEP RALLY

PennState[®]
Alumni Association

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