



Annual Report 2024



Photo Credit: Tahlia Root Photography



Table of Contents

Message from the Founder & Executive Director	3
Our Focus	4
Community Impact	5
Programs	9
Donation Recipients	13
Financials	14
Special Thanks	15
Individual Donors	16
Business Donors	17
Volunteers	19
Board of Directors	20

2024 Message



Vanessa Mussatto
Founder & Executive Director

Dear Friends and Supporters,

As we reflect on another remarkable year, I am filled with immense gratitude for the progress we've made together in advancing our mission. This past year, Just Cause Create Joy has continued to pursue our mission of Creating Joy through Small Acts of Kindness. We have completed so many amazing programs. We couldn't have done it without you - our dedicated community of supporters, volunteers, and partners.

Despite challenges such as economic uncertainties, our organization has demonstrated resilience and adaptability. We've embraced innovation, forged new partnerships, and strengthened our commitment to delivering sustainable solutions.

Looking ahead, we are excited to embark on new initiatives, deepen our impact, and continue to complete many programs in 2025. The road ahead is filled with opportunities, and with your ongoing support, I am confident we can achieve even greater milestones together.

Thank you for believing in our mission and for being a vital part of our journey. Together, we are making a difference.

With gratitude,

Vanessa



Our Focus

Core Programs

**Veterans,
DV Survivors,
Unhoused**



**Babies &
Children**

Elderly



VISION

To inspire others to create joy by sharing small charitable actions for just causes, Just beCause

MISSION

Create Joy through Small Acts of Kindness

VALUES

We care about our communities, and believe there are enough resources to donate, gift, and share with those in need



**Animal
Shelters**



**Young
Adults**

**Women &
Girls**



Additional Programs



Community Impact Media

COMMUNITY VOTES JOLIET 2024 WINNERS

- Platinum: Helping Heavy Hearts
- Gold: Just Cause Create Joy**
- Silver: Recycled Rhythm Inc.
- Bronze: Catholic Charities
- Top Pick: Cornerstone Services, Inc
- Top Pick: Hands of Hope of Illinois
- Top Pick: Miracles For Mya
- Top Pick: Pregnancy Resource Center Of Will County
- Top Pick: Richendeed
- Top Pick: The Hope Center of Joliet

GOLD WINNER

Plainfield Neighbors Magazine

November 2024 Issue

Just Cause Create Joy Holiday Program

Captions/photo provided by Vanessa Mussatto

The Just Cause Create Joy board of directors are (L to R) Tahila Root, Judy Ray, Sandi Jurek, Vanessa Mussatto, Mary Ihle, Jennifer Bartz and Carla Cooper. Sign-up closes November 15 for Just Cause Create Joy's Holiday Program to sponsor a child. The program involves collecting toys/ games for ages 3-18, clothing, undergarments, and other gifts for boys and girls in November and delivering them to children in December. This year Just Cause Create Joy will be donating to just over 300 children in several local organizations: the nursery; Lighthouse Academy; Smart Start Academy; and several individual families. Ways to support Just Cause Create Joy can be found on its website: <https://justcausecreatejoy.org/donate>

FOX 32 Chicago with Elizabeth Matthews

October 26, 2024

FOX 32 CHICAGO

JUST CAUSE CREATE JOY'S HOLIDAY GIFT DRIVE

8:19 AM 45°

Website Visitors

1,500

+37% from 2023

Newsletter Recipients

347 NEWS

+22% from 2023

Facebook Followers

957

+31% from 2023

Instagram Followers

170

new in 2024



Community Impact

Volunteers



103
Volunteers

2,458
Service Hours

\$82,939
Volunteer Value**

**2024 Value of Volunteer Time Report from the Independent Sector - hourly values: Illinois \$33.76; Michigan & N. Carolina \$33.49; Florida \$31.61



JCCJ Board members share even more joy by volunteering at other nonprofits & donating professional services*



@ Moose & Me Baking



@ Tahlia Root Photography



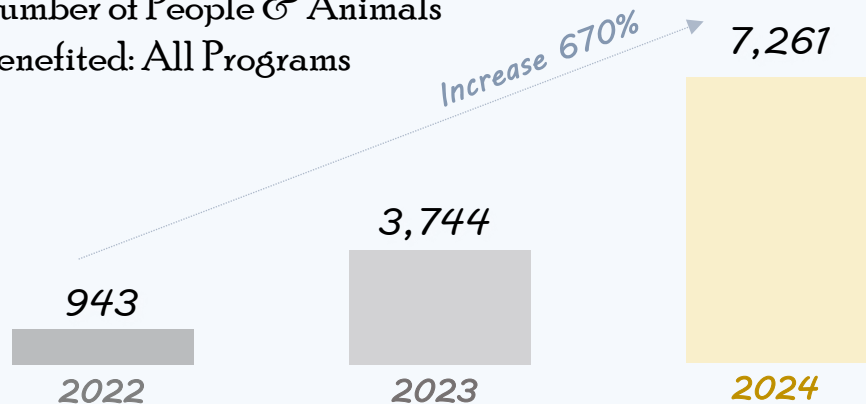
@ Horseplay Equestrian

*Board member volunteer hours at other nonprofits are included in volunteer metrics.

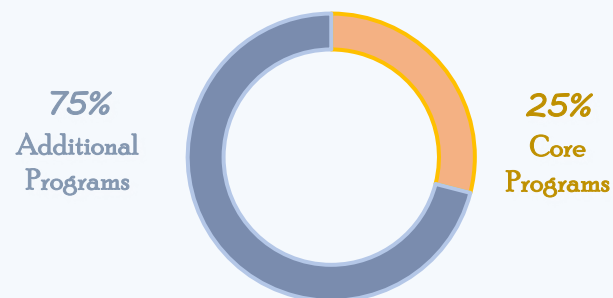


Community Impact Programs

Number of People & Animals Benefited: All Programs



Number of People & Animals Benefited in 2024



Value of Our In-Kind Donations to Others

Core Programs
\$41,376

Additional Programs
\$37,219

- Golden Guys & Gals
\$1,410
- Hearth & Home
\$3,550
- Comfort & Joy
\$36,416

Number of Additional Programs

Increase from 2023

↑ 114%

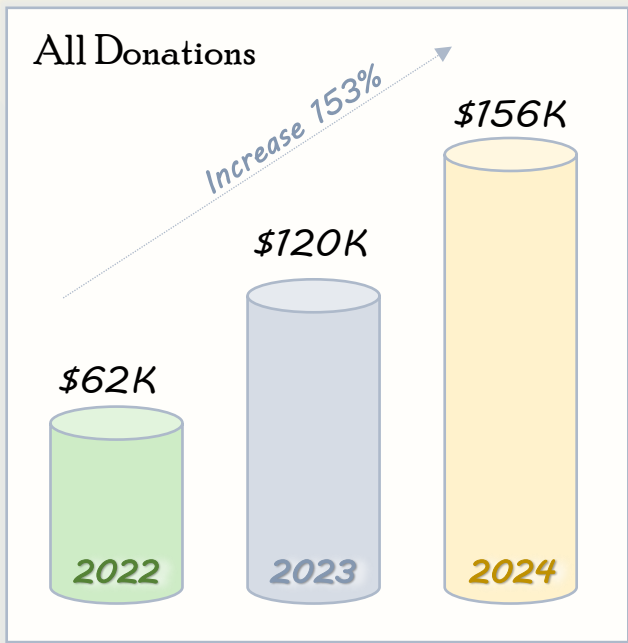


Community Impact

Donations

Number of New Donors

36



Number of Raffle Fundraiser Sponsors

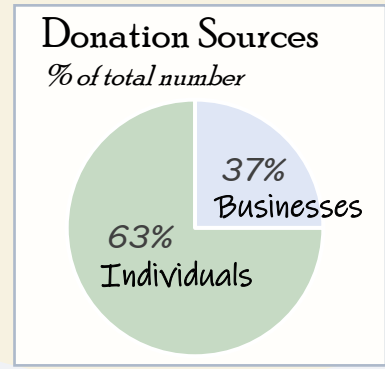
86



Average Donation

\$248

Not including major donors



Number of Donors

287

Core Programs

GOLDEN GUYS & GALS

Spring Program

We donate personal care & other needed items to elderly residents in low-income nursing homes



- ♥ Benefited 395 elderly residents
- ♥ Donated body lotion, body wash, puzzle book, & pen
- ♥ Cary Health & Rehab in North Carolina, 47 residents
- ♥ Douglas Cove Health & Rehab in West Michigan, 67 residents
- ♥ Caring Connection, in Southwest Michigan, 40 residents
- ♥ Renwick Nursing Home, 94 residents; Sunny Hills Nursing Home, 147 residents, in Illinois

HEARTH & HOME

Autumn Program

We donate wish list items to nonprofits who support veterans, domestic violence survivors, & unhoused



- ♥ Benefited over 1,010 individuals
- ♥ HeseD House in Illinois: hats, gloves, scarves, & new socks for 200
- ♥ Families Moving Forward in North Carolina: shampoos, conditioners, deodorants, bubble bath for 200+
- ♥ Nestlings | Diaper Bank of West Michigan: 1,614 diapers & wipes
- ♥ Berrien Resa in Southwest Michigan: 3,250 feminine hygiene products

COMFORT & JOY

Winter Program

We donate toys, clothing, books, snacks & personal care items to subsidized schoolchildren & families in need



- ♥ Benefited 432 people
- ♥ AppleTree Daycare, North Carolina: 40 toddlers & children
- ♥ People Helping People, West Michigan: 30 students
- ♥ Flowers Early Learning, Southwest Michigan: 25 toddlers
- ♥ KinderCare Joliet (15) & Bolingbrook (33); BrightPoint Academy (80); BrightPoint Nursery (64) Lighthouse Academy (10); Smart Start Academy (6); Plainfield South High School Giving Tree (65); Morning Star Mission (32); Individual Families (30); Illinois
- ♥ Partnered with Moose & Me Baking Co. on toy drive



Additional Programs

BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS



- ♥ Benefited more than 500 kids in 4 locations: Greater SW MI; Greater Holland MI; Joliet IL; Wake County NC
- ♥ Donations went toward Academic Incentive Programs
- ♥ Projectors, tablets, science supplies, crafts, toys, games, books, snacks, storage supplies
- ♥ *This program was made possible by a donation from H&F Grossman, Charitable Trust*

CABINET INSTALLATION



- ♥ Installed 16 upper cabinets for storage space
- ♥ Colony Displays teamed up with Kinzie Capital Partners to fund and manage this program
- ♥ At Brightpoint's Mitzi Freidheim Child & Family Center in Englewood, IL

BOOK DRIVE



- ♥ Benefited over 700 children and young adults
- ♥ IL recipients were: SOS Children's Village; Morning Star Mission; and Silver Oaks Behavioral Hospital

NICU BOOK CART



- ♥ Benefited 75 families; ongoing benefit to hundreds
- ♥ New books for parents to keep and read to their babies in the neonatal intensive care at Silver Cross Hospital, New Lenox, IL
- ♥ Complementary snacks and water for parents

ANIMAL SHELTERS



- ♥ Donated approximately \$2,685 in pet supplies
- ♥ Treats, bowls, beds, food, toys, bathing products, leashes, collars, crates, cleaning products, blankets
- ♥ IL recipients were: WAGS-to-Wishes; Will County Humane Society; and A.D.O.P.T.



Additional Programs

BIRTHDAY BOXES



- ♥ Benefited 208 birthday celebrations!
- ♥ Donated cake mix, frosting, plates, napkins, candles, custom birthday cards, noise makers, balloons, cake pans
- ♥ Northern Illinois Food Bank; 4 K.I.D.S. Sake; and Plainfield Area Interfaith Food Pantry; all in IL

HALLOWEEN COSTUMES



- ♥ Benefited 220 young and teen children
- ♥ Donated new and gently-used Halloween costumes
- ♥ Boys & Girls Club of Joliet, IL

BAKING SUPPLIES



- ♥ Donated \$450 in baking supplies, including milk, sugar, eggs, chocolate food coloring
- ♥ Moose & Me Baking Company in Will county, IL

BOOK DAY & PANTRY RESTOCK



- ♥ Benefited 125 children with books & snacks
- ♥ Up 56% from same program in 2023
- ♥ Stocked 500 toiletry items, and 1,000 diapers and wipes
- ♥ Stock-the-Pantry program at Brightpoint in Englewood, IL

YOUTH OUTLOOK



- ♥ Benefited 50 youth in recognition of Pride month
- ♥ Donated craft supplies, bus passes, custom notecards, and snacks for LGBTQ+ community to access a safe haven
- ♥ Youth Outlook in Joliet, IL



Additional Programs

SANTA MEET & GREET



- ♥ Benefited 80 children
- ♥ Photo & letter to Santa Rich (Mussatto), cookie decoration, hot cocoa
- ♥ At Moose & Me Baking Co, Naperville, IL

LIGHTEN THE LOAD



- ♥ Donated more than 1,000 laundry pods and dryer sheets
- ♥ IL locations: Laundry Basket; Laundromat; Soap & Suds; Coin-Laundry; Laundromat; Laundry World; SudSational; Silver Coin; Blue Kangaroo
- ♥ Partnered with Helping Heavy Hearts

BABY & TODDLER TOILETRIES



- ♥ Benefited more than 100 babies, toddlers, and children
- ♥ Donated 100 bottles of baby shampoo, baby lotion, baby conditioner, and wipes
- ♥ Spring Giveaway Program at Helping Heavy Hearts, IL

CHRISTMAS GIVEAWAY



- ♥ Benefited 275 children
- ♥ Donated 275 toys; cookies & hot cocoa; candy canes; meet-and-greet with Santa
- ♥ Cookies donated by Moose & Me Baking Co.
- ♥ At Out for Love and Peace, Englewood, IL

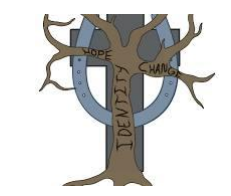
CRISIS PREVENTION



- ♥ Benefited a single mom with 4 special needs children
- ♥ This was an emergency program for a community member who gives so much to others
- ♥ Donations helped her keep her home, car, and children



Donation Recipients in 2024





2024 Financials

Fiscal Year = Calendar Year

REVENUE

Cash - Unrestricted	\$60,692
Cash - Program Specific	12,967
Gift Cards	300
In Kind Donations	66,713
Raffle Fundraiser Donation Values & Profit	15,896
Total Revenue	\$156,567

EXPENSES

Programs	\$78,595
Raffle Fundraiser Donation Values	12,230
Wages Executive Director	13,659
Professional Services	3,843
Sweatshirts, Biz Cards, Notecards	3,090
Insurance, Licensing, Credit Card Fees	1,700
General Admin	2,173
Total Expenses	\$115,290

NET **\$41,277**

In-Kind Donations



\$13,205

Hygiene Care



\$50,823

Clothing, Toys,
Books, Snacks



\$2,685

Animal Care



Our Support Team

Special Thanks

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Susan Bauer

Wendy Dahm

Jennifer Peters

Laura Turner

ADVISORY BOARD

Rich Jurek

Advisor

Rich Mussatto

Advisor & Logistics Coordinator

Cynthia Perini, CPA

Tax Accountant

Kim Street

Program Assistant Director

PROJECT COORDINATORS

Lily Dahm

Alayna Jurek

Blayne Jurek

Evan Orlet

Ryan Schifo

Hayden Street

Hanna Turner

Addie Vrba





Individual Donors

Pam Albee
 Lisa Allen
 Anonymous
 James Appleberg
 Virginia Appleberg
 Josette Ashiru
 Lisa Banasiak
 Crisa Barriball
 Jen & Brian Bartz
 Susan Bauer
 Lori & Natalie Bearbower
 Brian Begg
 Kelly Bell
 Kate Bensen
 Jamie Bernabei
 Nicole Bicking
 Michelle Bobos
 Selina Boersma
 Jane Bonasera
 Ashli Boss
 Ann Bouska
 Robyn & Norm Brooks
 Pamela Broderick
 Dawn Brown
 Katherine Buchanan
 Margaret Callaghan
 Krista Carretto

Jackie Carroll
 R. Carroll
 Kim Caspers
 Christina Chavez
 Kristin Reichard Ciccone
 Dawn Cimbala
 Carla & Robert Cooper
 Donna Cosimini
 Wendy Dahm
 Erin Davis
 Francesca DeBiase
 Charitable Trust
 Amy Deguzman
 Heidi Delahanty
 Pete & Tracey Demay
 Suzanne Derrick
 Kimberly Diane
 Amy DiSantis
 Donna Drinan
 Lisa DuSatko
 Mitch Edwards
 Kacia Emily
 Rose Engel
 Anne Enk
 Catherine Espinosa
 Maryn Evans
 Cynthia Fauth

Barb Fieldman
 Kerry Freeberg
 Kay Ellen Fricke
 Kendra Frigo
 RC Fund
 Kelly Funk
 Stacey Gaerte
 Alan & Leona Gamache
 Lisa Garbis
 Alberta Garza
 Amanda Glos
 Hannah & Frank Grossman,
 Charitable Trust
 Carla Hellmann
 Allyce Hemm
 Lauren Henzel
 Shannon Hudetz
 Mary Ihle
 Dina Jansen
 Marcie Jessie
 Alayna & Blayne Jurek
 Sandi & Rich Jurek
 Shelley & Jeff Kanara
 Disiree Kedzi
 Desiree Kedzior
 Sylvia Kemp
 Tracey Kirby

Lisa Kinney
 Annie Klupshas
 Janelle Kolosh
 Mary Kubica
 Kyrychenko
 Mindy Kyle
 Matt Kunkel
 Carmen Ladd-Koch
 Mary Lambert
 Melissa LaSota
 Debbie Latham
 Christine Lauren
 Neal Lenhoff
 Angel Leitner
 Elyse Lester
 Chris Litavsky
 Amy Luz
 Tina MacDonald
 Christine Mahoney
 Cliff Malcolm
 Cliff Malcolm
 Emily Maletich
 Jessica Marion
 Jill Marmo
 Carly Martin
 Mary Jo Mastorides
 Tammy Mathieu

Janet Matson
 Patti McDonnell
 Jessica McGrath
 Dawn McNulty
 Lori Miller
 Kelly Minnis
 Karen Mizwicki
 Pam Motyka
 Lisa Mullins
 Vanessa & Rich Mussatto
 Michelle Nawa
 Erin Nelson
 Kathleen Neushwander
 Jennifer Newman
 Lisa Orlet
 Amanda Ottlinger
 Michelle Owens
 Nancy Paglina
 Sharon Paterson
 Sandy Pendergast
 Cindy Perini
 Jennifer Peters
 LeeAnne Peters
 Debbie Piatak
 Jo Anne & Scott Pierce
 Kalli Phillips
 Mary Podgers

Kathy Podlasek
 Louise Porter
 Amy Pyle
 Rochelle Que
 Christine Rasmussen
 Sarah Rathbun
 Judy Ray
 Jan Rebechini
 Jennifer Rees
 Kimberly Ricker
 Aleece & Lawrence Root
 Tahlia Root
 Shane Rotkis
 Jen Sais
 Terry & Marta Sasala
 Sue Schomer
 Kimberly Schlichting
 Dina Schnable
 Faith Schoon
 Ashley Schultz
 Christine Schweighardt
 Tim Scully
 Johanna Sedillo
 Maurene Sibež
 Kimberly Simpson
 Kristina St. Clair
 Gina Stahl

Debbie Stapleton
 Dawn Stirvett
 Tim Straker
 Sue Streal
 Kimberly & Jay Street
 Sue Streal
 Maria Sweeney
 Tracy Thurston
 Kristy Timbo
 Danette Travis
 Laura Turner
 Joann Uhlig
 Thomas Underwood
 Shari Urbancic
 Theresa Mandat Vanek
 Alison Verney
 Mike & Jennifer Vrba
 Lori Watt
 Christine Wettlaufer
 Michelle Wiberg
 Alice Williams
 Kris Wilson
 Cindy & Jim Wise
 Megan Wollbrink
 Patricia Wood
 Melissa Yurco
 Nicole Zalewski
 Julie & Andrew Zelenski



Business Donors: Programs





Business Donors: Raffle Fundraiser

[Altiro Latin Fusion](#)
[Anytime Fitness](#)
[Astro Fun World – Aurora](#)
[Backroads Burger & Bar – Plainfield](#)
[Beauty Addiction Co. – Plainfield](#)
[Beauty by Becca](#)
[Big Apple Café – Plainfield](#)
[Big Sammy's – Plainfield](#)
[Bolingbrook Golf Club](#)
[Bowlero – Naperville](#)
[Buffalo Wild Wings – Plainfield](#)
[Cards by Karen](#)
[Chop'd](#)
[Cinemark Movie Theater – Joliet](#)
[Coopers Hawk – Naperville](#)
[Cracker Barrel](#)
[Crumbl Cookie – Bolingbrook](#)



[Crumbl Cookie – Naperville](#)
[Crusade Burger – Yorkville](#)
[Culver's – Plainfield](#)
[Defied Gravity Aerial Arts](#)
[Fat Ricky's](#)
[Flight Tasting Room – Yorkville](#)
[Fogo De Chao](#)
[Funtopia – Naperville](#)
[Gia Mia – Naperville](#)
[Giordano's – Naperville](#)
[Great Clips – Plainfield](#)
[Hand & Stone – Naperville](#)
[Hand & Stone – Oswego](#)
[Hand & Stone – Shorewood](#)
[Heineken Craft Beers](#)
[Hollywood Palms Cinema – Naperville](#)
[Honey Jam Café](#)

[HOTWORX Yoga – Plainfield](#)
[Imagine Arts at JJC](#)
[La Dolce Vita – Plainfield](#)
[Lash Bar – Plainfield](#)
[Legendary Escape Room](#)
[Maggiano's – Naperville](#)
[Maple Butter Café](#)
[Millbrook Trail Rides](#)
[MISH MASH Adventures](#)
[Mistwood Golf Club](#)
[Monarch Photography](#)
[Nothing Bundt Cakes – Naperville](#)
[Nothing Bundt Cakes – Shorewood](#)
[Occasions – Naperville](#)
[Plainfield River Tubing](#)
[Portillo's – Shorewood](#)
[Potbelly – Plainfield](#)



[Prairie Bluff Golf Club](#)
[PRP Wine International](#)
[Red Robin – Plainfield](#)
[Rosati's Pizza – Plainfield North](#)
[Rosati's Restaurant – Plainfield South](#)
[Ruffled Feathers Golf Club](#)
[Salon Nine](#)
[Scene 75 – Romeoville](#)
[Seven Bridges Ice Area](#)
[Simply Embellished](#)
[Six Flags Great America](#)
[Sky Zone – Aurora](#)
[Soul Flo Yoga](#)
[Southern Bell's Pancake House](#)
[Southern Glazer's Wines & Spirits](#)
[Sovereign – Plainfield](#)
[Spartan Ale House](#)

[Spirited Escapes](#)
[Sports Clips – Plainfield](#)
[Stan's Donuts](#)
[Star Cinema – Bolingbrook Promenade](#)
[Tamarack Golf Club](#)
[Top Golf – Naperville](#)
[Traverso's – Naperville](#)
[Twisted Pin](#)
[Ulta](#)
[Uptown – Plainfield](#)
[Vita Bella Pizza](#)
[Werk Force Brewing Co.](#)
[WhirlyBall – Naperville](#)
[White Chocolate Grill](#)
[White Tail Ridge Golf Club](#)
[Wilderness Falls – Bolingbrook](#)
[Wine & Cheese Company](#)
[YMCA – Plainfield](#)



Photo Credit: Tahlia Root Photography



Volunteers

Ursula Brown
 Megan Calderon
 Ryan Capion
 Cynthia Carlos
 McKayla Carretto
 Abe Carretto
 Krista Carretto



Clay Ihle
 Juju Ihle
 Mary Ihle
 Dylan Jennings



Amanda Ottlinger
 Cynthia Perini
 Kim Paetschow
 Jennifer Peters
 Pink Elite Basketball



Nick Aylsworth
 Eleanor Ames
 Ilyana Barriball
 Ryan Barriball
 Braxton Bartz
 Brian Bartz
 Jennifer Bartz
 Mylee Bartz
 Frank Bauer
 Sue Bauer
 Ron Brown



Addison Dell'Aquila
 Aiden Dolata
 Lindsey Drazdik
 Max Espinosa
 Megan Elder
 Amanda Glos
 Sydney Ha
 Allyce Hemm



Addison Kyrychenko
 Mary Kyrychenko
 Samantha Madura
 MacKenzie McEwan
 Avery Miller
 Makayla Mussatto
 Marissa Mussatto
 Rich Mussatto
 Jody O'Reel
 Avery Orlet
 Evan Orlet
 Lisa Orlet



Hayden Street
 Kim Street
 Peyton Street
 Hanna Turner
 Heidi Turner
 Jeff Turner
 Laura Turner
 Addie Vrba
 Brandt Vrba
 Brielle Vrba
 Jenn Hinds Vrba
 Ellie Zymall

Carla C. Cooper
 Robert Cooper
 Maddie Czarnik
 Kevin Dahm
 Laney Dahm
 Lily Dahm
 Wendy Dahm
 Madi Delahanty
 Riley Delahanty



Alayna Jurek
 Blayne Jurek
 Rich Jurek
 Sandi Jurek
 Quinn Koch
 Emma Kolosh
 Janelle Kolosh
 Madeline Kolosh



Judy Ray
 Tahlia Root
 Ryan Schifo
 Kaitlyn Sedillo
 Megan Sedillo
 Jeanna Simpson
 Kim Simpson
 Debbie Sirek



2024 Board of Directors

Illinois

Vanessa Mussatto
Founder & Executive Director

Tahlia Root
Board Secretary

Sandi Jurek
Treasurer

Jennifer Bartz
Director

Michigan

Mary Ihle
Board Vice President

Carla Caputo-Cooper
Director

North Carolina

Judy Ray
Board President





website: [Just Cause Create Joy](https://www.JustCauseCreateJoy.org)

501(c)(3) public charity / EIN# 88-1824333

Email us at: Hello@JustCauseCreateJoy.org

Find us on 

