

## We are AAIR

**Good news—we're growing, we're evolving, and we're going national!** As many of you may have seen back in January, after 40 years as the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America – St. Louis Chapter, we've taken a bold step forward. We're now an independent national organization with a new name that matches our mission and momentum: **We are the Foundation for Asthma and Allergy Impact and Rescue. We are AAIR.**

Backed by the full support of our Board of Directors and AAFA, this transformation allows us to scale our lifesaving and cost-saving work without borders, reaching children across the country without limitations. Our purpose remains the same—We're here to transform systems, not just treat symptoms. Our mission is clear: every child should be **Rescued at School, Healthy at Home, and Connected to Care.**

This next chapter is about action, access, and impact. With the right partners, thoughtful interventions, and your continued support, we're driving toward a future where **every child with asthma or food allergies has the chance to live a healthy life.**

You make our work possible, and I am so grateful for that. In this reimagined newsletter, you'll find stories that inspire, updates that energize, and ways to step into the movement. Guided by the belief that **Readiness Saves Lives**, let's make sure every school, every community, and every child is ready.

Yours in service,  
**Chris**



## Our Mission

**Rescued at School**  
Every child should have the necessary resources to learn and thrive at school.

**Healthy at Home**  
Every child should have a safe and healthy environment in their home and community.

**Connected to Care**  
Every child should be connected to a medical professional who will provide care in their neighborhood.

## From White Castle to Arch Madness: Thank You for Your Support!

### White Castle

Huge thanks to White Castle for selecting AAIR to be their "round-up" charity here in the MO/IL area. It's been fun (and delicious!) stopping by the Shiloh and Bellville Castles to say thank you and pick up a meal. AAIR will be the charity of choice again for White Castle in October and November this year.



- Alton: 2998 Homer Adams Pkwy
- Belleville: 5820 Belleville Crossing St
- Belleville/Shiloh: 1141 North Green Mt
- Cahokia Heights: 1620 Camp Jackson Rd
- Collinsville: 3 Eastport Plaza Dr
- Fairview Heights: 10849 Lincoln Trail



### Arch Madness

Along with midwest basketball fans, AAIR was proud to be the featured charity at Missouri Valley Conference's Arch Madness last month. Thanks to the incredible support through the 50/50 raffle, we raised over \$15,000 to benefit children and families affected by asthma and food allergies — **a true slam dunk for our community's kids!**

Congratulations to Drake University for winning the tournament!



**Thank you to everyone who has ordered White Castle or participated in Arch Madness**

## Advocacy Efforts in Texas

One of our most important areas of work is our advocacy. Last month, our CEO Chris Martinez accepted the invitation to testify before the Texas State Senate to advocate for student safety in the Lonestar State. This is just one of the ways AAIR is a leader in this field. Chris joined a passionate team committed to helping Texas schools adopt programs like RESCUE, ensuring that children with asthma can stay safe and remain in school.



## Advocacy in Arkansas

A major 'Thank You' is in order to Representative Dr. Lee Johnson (AR) for his leadership in getting bill AR HB 1817 passed in Arkansas. This bill, otherwise known as Elijah's Law, marks a major win for the food allergy community.



# The Power of BREATH: A Child's Life-Changing Care

## Truly's Fight to Breathe: How the BREATH Program Made All the Difference

When Truly was just 13 months old, she contracted RSV, a common respiratory virus that can cause infections in the lungs and respiratory tract. Ever since, she has suffered from uncontrolled asthma, with multiple visits to the emergency room. Recently, Truly was admitted to the hospital for severe respiratory complications as a result of her asthma. Without healthcare coverage, the family knew the cost would be astronomical. Through our signature BREATH program, Truly was able to receive the medications, equipment, and supplies she needed.

“The BREATH program saves children's lives. When families are first told about it, they are completely shocked that someone is willing to help in such a monumental way.” - Missy Korenblat-Hanin, St. Louis Children's Hospital



May is National Asthma and Allergy Awareness Month. Do you know a child or family managing a food allergy? Share our resources [here](#).

### New faces:

Our staff powers our mission in some pretty amazing ways. We couldn't accomplish much without their energy, dedication, and talent. Learn more about the people behind our organization.



**Alison Van Bergen**  
Director of Development  
[avanbergen@weareair.org](mailto:avanbergen@weareair.org)

“I'm thrilled to join the AAIR Team! As a mom with two children who have food allergies and one diagnosed with asthma, AAIR's mission is deeply personal to me. I'm excited to combine my sales experience and my passion for this cause to expand our reach and ensure more kids are safe, healthy, and thriving.”

“Based in Illinois and a proud dog lover, I kicked off a new chapter by starting my new role in December 2024. I'm most looking forward to our trivia night on November 8<sup>th</sup>, so mark your calendars.”



**Mario McCart (he/him/his)**  
Development Coordinator  
[mmccart@weareair.org](mailto:mmccart@weareair.org)

## SAVE THE DATE

**Foundation for Asthma and Allergy Impact and Rescue  
Day at the Ballpark | Allergen Friendly Section & Concessions  
Sunday, August 17th**

*Tailgate: 10:45am  
First Pitch: 1:15pm*



Brought to you by:



### Donate to AAIR

We're making a real difference in the lives of kids and families, and we need your continued help. Please make a gift today to support us in this critical work. You can provide a week, a month, or a year of care - or making a reoccurring donation. Every gift helps a child in need, and we are grateful for your support.

