



# NEAM 2025

## *National Epilepsy Awareness Month*

# UNSTOPPABLE TOGETHER

*Celebrate resilience. Champion progress. Spark hope.*

Step into a powerful collection of stories from the epilepsy community, including those of Adaline Casey and Ada Jordan, our 2025 Winning Kids. Dive into this issue to learn how these young changemakers are lighting the way for epilepsy awareness.

*Let this issue ignite your passion and connect you to a movement that's making a difference - one story at a time.*



### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- Real stories, real strength
- Foundation news you'll love
- Event updates
- Save the dates for 2026 events
- Educational opportunities
- Ways to get involved



**EPILEPSY**  
FOUNDATION

NORTHEASTERN  
NEW YORK

# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE – 2025

## Dear Friends,

As 2025 draws to a close, I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to all the individuals living with epilepsy who continue to be at the heart of our mission. Your strength, resilience, and willingness to share your experiences not only inspires us but also helps others understand the realities of life with epilepsy. You are the reason we do this work, and we are grateful to walk alongside you on this journey.

I also want to recognize the incredible dedication of our staff. Their compassion, professionalism, and tireless commitment to supporting our community never wavers. I am honored to work with this exceptional team who gives their all every single day.

To our Board of Directors and Professional Advisory Board: your leadership, insight, and generous contributions of time and resources allow us to grow and evolve in meaningful ways. Thank you for believing in our mission and helping guide our path forward.

And to our donors—you make it possible. Your generosity enables us to offer our programs and services at no cost to the individuals and families who need them most. Thank you for investing in this important work.

As we enter National Epilepsy Awareness Month (NEAM) this November, we are excited to rally around this year's theme: **All In! Unity. Commitment. Action.** This powerful call to action is a reminder that we are strongest when we come together—with energy, with purpose, and with the unwavering belief that change is possible.

Whether you're living with epilepsy, supporting a loved one, providing care, advocating for change, or raising awareness in your community, your voice matters. This November, we invite you to go **All In!** by sharing your story, engaging with others, and helping us build a more informed and empowered community. Together, we can break down stigma, uplift one another, and drive progress. Thank you for being part of our epilepsy community and for continuing to believe in our mission.

**Your support fuels our efforts and helps us create a brighter future for all those affected by epilepsy.**

**To make a year-end donation, please visit [www.efneny.org/donate](http://www.efneny.org/donate).**

Sincerely,



Jeannine S. Garab  
Executive Director





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# GIVE BACK, GIVE HOPE.

Support our 2026 projects, today!

November is National Epilepsy Awareness Month and thanks to you, 2025 was a year of impact.

Your generosity helped us offer life-changing support to individuals diagnosed with epilepsy, including critical resources such as counseling, education, and referrals. You empowered families, educators, and businesses with opportunities for seizure education and first-aid training, expanding awareness and creating a safer environment for people with epilepsy.



**\$10**

**Recognizes 1 in 10 individuals will have a seizure in their lifetime.**

Your \$10 gift builds hope. It equips a newly diagnosed family with essential information- empowering them to understand epilepsy and take control of their journey.

The Epilepsy Foundation of Northeastern New York's services go beyond epilepsy. For those with traumatic brain injuries causing a diagnosis of epilepsy, your support has provided transportation, hands-on assistance, and help in navigating the medical care system.

**\$26**

**Recognizes 1 in 26 that have epilepsy.**

Your \$26 gift provides freedom. It provides transportation for someone with epilepsy to get to a critical medical appointment- because access shouldn't be a barrier to care.

In Northeastern New York, over **45,000 people** live with epilepsy. Many of these individuals fight every day to maintain their independence and stay healthy. EFNENY is committed to leading the charge- raising awareness, supporting families, and working toward a future free from fear.

**\$100**

**100% of funds donated go to help individuals in Northeastern New York.**

Your \$100 gift builds community. It funds social gatherings for individuals with epilepsy in Northeastern New York, so no one feels alone in their diagnosis.

## TOGETHER, WE CAN DO MORE, MAKE YOUR YEAR-END GIFT TODAY!

**As the year ends, we invite you to make a lasting impact by making a donation.**

**\$250**

**Give the Gift of Summer!**

Your \$250 gift sends a child with epilepsy to camp, where confidence grows, friendships blossom, and memories last a lifetime.

Contributions can be made by scanning the QR code or by visiting [www.efneny.org/donate](http://www.efneny.org/donate).

*Your gift brings hope, healing, and a brighter future to those who need it most.*



# 2025 WINNING KIDS MEET ADDY & ADA!

Each year, the Epilepsy Foundation selects one or two children living with epilepsy to help raise awareness and let other children know they are not alone. Our “Winning Kids” symbolize the spirit and courage that all children with epilepsy display in dealing with this disorder.

This year, Adaline (Addy) Casey and Ada Jordan were named our Winning Kids for their kindness, resilience, and dedication to Kids Crew.

Addy and Ada were featured on billboards across the Capital Region this summer, showing the world what courage looks like. Thank you both for being incredible ambassadors!



ADALINE CASEY



Adaline “Addy” Casey is a vibrant and determined six-year-old who refuses to let epilepsy define her. Diagnosed with focal epilepsy after experiencing infantile spasms and atonic seizures as a baby, Addy has faced many challenges- but her joy and resilience shine through. Whether she’s playing soccer, riding horses, swimming, or cheering on her brother’s lacrosse team, Addy embraces life with enthusiasm. Her family has been proactive in raising epilepsy awareness, ensuring her school staff received seizure first-aid training to keep Addy and others safe.

Addy’s progress in physical therapy and growing independence on the playground are just a few examples of her unstoppable spirit. She and her family are active members of the Northeastern New York epilepsy community, participating in Kids Crew events and forming “Team Addy” for EFNENY’s Walk for Epilepsy.

***Despite her epilepsy, Addy knows she can do anything she puts her mind to!***

At just five years old, Ada Jordan has shown remarkable strength and compassion through her journey with epilepsy. Diagnosed the week of her first birthday, Ada experienced focal impaired awareness seizures that became increasingly difficult to manage. After a month-long hospital stay, her seizures were controlled with medication- until they returned with greater intensity a year later. In 2023, Ada bravely underwent brain surgery, and since then, she has been seizure-free.

Beyond her medical journey, Ada is growing into a kind and empathetic young girl who instinctively cares for others facing challenges. Her parents describe her as someone who notices when others are hurting and eagerly offers support. Ada’s courage in medical settings and her nurturing spirit make her a role model in the epilepsy community. Her family led “Team Ada” at this year’s EFNENY Walk for Epilepsy and looks forward to staying involved within their community.



ADA JORDAN

***Ada would like others to know the battle with epilepsy is often a daily one, but the warriors who fight it are mighty and resilient!***



# NATIONAL EPILEPSY AWARENESS MONTH

Save the date and stand with the epilepsy community. Your involvement during National Epilepsy Awareness Month helps spark conversations, build understanding, and inspire change.

## 2025 EVENTS

### 3 Blaze Pizza, Albany Dine to Donate Fundraiser

Monday, November 3rd  
12:00 PM - 6:00 PM

Blaze Pizza Albany, 1475 Western Ave (Stuyvesant Plaza)  
20% of proceeds will benefit EFNENY when event flyer is presented



### 7 Art for Hope Art Show

Friday, November 7th  
5:00 PM - 7:00 PM

CREATE Community Studios  
621 River St, Troy, NY

### 5 Seizure First Aid Certification Webinar

Wednesday, November 5th  
3:00 PM - 4:30 PM  
Virtual via ZOOM



### 12 Panera Bread, Poughkeepsie Dine to Donate Fundraiser

Wednesday, November 12th  
4:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Panera Bread, 2020 South Rd, Poughkeepsie, NY 12601  
20% of proceeds will benefit EFNENY when event flyer is presented



### 5 Recovery Sports Grill Dine to Donate Fundraiser

Wednesday, November 5th  
4:00 PM - 8:00 PM

All Capital Region Locations

15% of proceeds will benefit EFNENY when event flyer is presented. Online orders use code: EPILEPSY1125



### 15 Caffe Lena Presents TrueSongs

Saturday, November 15th  
7:00 PM

Universal Preservation Hall  
25 Washington St, Saratoga Springs



### 6 SCCC Cupcake Fundraiser

Thursday, November 6th  
9:00 AM - 1:00 PM

SUNY Schenectady County Community College

### 20 Annual Awards Luncheon

Thursday, November 20th  
11:30 AM - 1:30 PM

Duo at the Dunes (Italian American Community Center)  
257 Washington Ave Ext., Albany  
Pre-registration required to attend



## HISTORY OF NEAM

Since 1969, November has been recognized as National Epilepsy Awareness Month (NEAM), thanks to the efforts of the Epilepsy Foundation and a formal resolution passed by Congress in 2003. NEAM is a time dedicated to raising awareness, sharing stories, and educating others about epilepsy and seizure safety.

NEAM is more than just a calendar event—it's a movement. Each November, the epilepsy community comes together to shed light on the realities of living with seizures, challenge the stigma, and promote safety and preparedness. It's a time to amplify voices, foster empathy, and encourage meaningful conversations that can lead to change.

This year's theme, "**All In for National Epilepsy Awareness Month**," is a powerful call to action. It invites everyone—whether personally affected by epilepsy or simply passionate about making a difference—to show up and contribute in their own way. Being "All In" means committing to awareness, advocacy, and support. It's about recognizing that every action, no matter how small, helps build a stronger, more united epilepsy community.



Stay up to date with all things NEAM by scanning the QR code!



# YOU SHOWED UP, YOU MADE A DIFFERENCE.

Thank you for making 2025 unforgettable! Your presence, fundraising efforts, and unwavering support helped raise critical awareness and funds for epilepsy—driving our mission forward. Our events simply wouldn't be possible without incredible community champions like you.

## Gala for Hope

Over 1,000 servings of  
chocolate dessert

**\$80,000 raised**

To view more photos from  
this event scan the QR code!



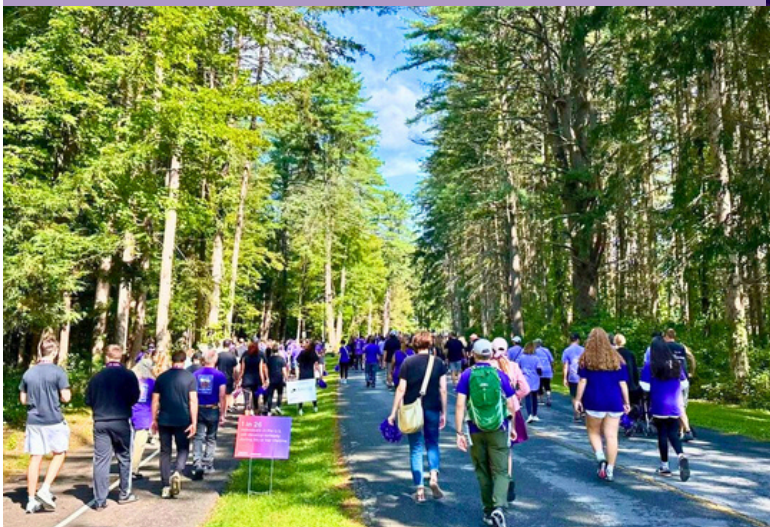
## Walk for Epilepsy

Over 900 walkers

*in 3 locations including: Saratoga Springs, Highland and Inlet!*

**\$67,000 raised**

To view more photos from  
this event scan the QR code!



## Golf Tournament for Epilepsy

144 golfers

**\$63,000 raised**

To view more photos from  
this event scan the QR code!







# STRONGER TOGETHER.

Mark your calendars for 2026! Join us for a powerful lineup of community events that raise epilepsy awareness, build an unstoppable community of purple power, and help fund life-changing initiatives.

Let's make every moment matter—together!



## 2026 EVENTS

### Confections in Chocolate Gala for Hope

Saturday, March 21st | 5:00 PM - 10:00 PM  
Franklin Plaza, Troy

### Purple Day

Wednesday, March 26th

*#GoPurple this Purple Day®! Join us on March 26th by wearing purple, raising awareness about epilepsy and helping to end the stigma around epilepsy!*

### Walk for Epilepsy

Sunday, September 13th

*Walk in person at one of three beautiful locations in Northeastern New York including Saratoga Springs, Inlet and Highland!*

### Golf Tournament for Epilepsy

Monday, October 5th  
Wolferts Roost Country Club, Albany





# KNOWLEDGE IS POWER

Understanding epilepsy helps reduce stigma, improve safety, and support those affected. A little knowledge can make a big difference.

## IMPACT REPORT: SEIZURE SAFETY TRAINING BY THE NUMBERS

# 1,204

Professionals Educated

# 1,161

Students Trained

# 17

Educational Events

*\*Numbers reflect individuals educated from  
January, 1st - September, 30th 2025\**

## HELP MAKE 2026 EVEN SAFER!



Learn more  
about education  
opportunities by  
scanning the  
QR code!



## KNOWLEDGE SAVES LIVES, CHANGE STARTS WITH YOU.

Getting trained on seizure first aid and knowing how to respond in the event of a seizure could save a life

### Educational programs are provided to:

- K-12 Students
- College Classes and Groups
- School Personnel
- School Nurses
- Transportation Personnel
- Professional Organizations
- Childcare Agencies
- First Responders
- Affected Families
- The public!

Each program covers seizure basics, recognition, first aid, and emergencies. Programs are tailored to each group's needs and typically last one hour. School-aged sessions are age-appropriate.

*Thank you to our 2025-2026 Educational Programs Sponsors for making these educational opportunities possible! Thanks to their generosity, we are able to offer all trainings FREE of charge.*



**Jazz** Pharmaceuticals.



**NEURELIS**



# SEIZURE SAFETY IN NYS SCHOOLS: **THE SEIZURE SAFE SCHOOLS ACT**

New York State legislators are considering a bill that would make schools safer for students with epilepsy across the state.

## WHAT DO BILL A.8726 & S.7445 ENTAIL?

1

### Requiring Seizure Action Plans

Seizure action plans will be required to be kept on file at the school nurse's office for each child with a known seizure disorder & distributed to relevant school personnel and staff.

2

### Increased trainings for staff

Approved seizure awareness training will be required for relevant school staff members every other year.

3

### Increased trainings for students

Approved seizure awareness trainings will be required to be offered to school students K-12.

4

### Trainings for emergency events

At least one individual will be trained in seizure rescue medication administration by the school nurse to ensure at least two individuals will be trained and available in the event of an emergency.



## BE A VOICE FOR **CHANGE.**

Help Make our Schools Seizure Safe!



#### **YOUR ELECTED OFFICIALS NEED TO HEAR FROM YOU!**

Urge them to support this critical legislation and help progress it by letting them know you support this bill.

Scan the QR code to send them your support.





# YOU ARE NOT ALONE.

You're not alone—connect with others who understand. Our support groups offer a safe space to share, learn, and grow together.

## PROGRAMS PROVIDED:

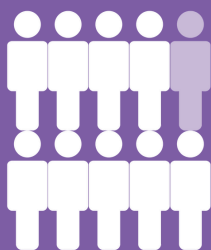
- Kids Crew
- In-Person Art Therapy
- Virtual Art Therapy
- Adult Support Group
- Self-Management Program

*\*\*Support group programs are free to attend, but registration is required.\*\**



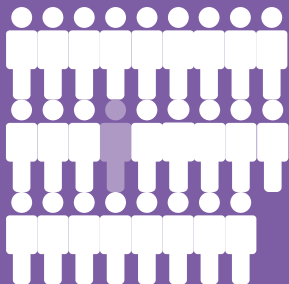
# 45,000

people live with epilepsy in Northeastern New York.



# 1 in 10

people will have a seizure in their lifetime.



# 1 in 26

people will be diagnosed with epilepsy in their lifetime.



Learn more about our support programs by scanning the QR code!





# RESOURCES THAT EMPOWER, SUPPORT THAT LASTS.

Discover the resources available to support you and your family—because **no one** should face epilepsy alone.



## TARA KAMINSKI FAMILY SUPPORT FUND

Thanks to a generous donor, this fund helps families and caregivers with special, one-time equipment needs that aren't covered by other sources.

Due to limited resources, only one request per family per year is considered—except in emergencies. First-time applicants may receive priority.

To learn more visit  
[efneny.org/tara-fund/](https://efneny.org/tara-fund/)



## RIDE SHARE TRANSPORTATION FUND

With support from the Community Foundation for the Greater Capital Region, this travel fund assists individuals with epilepsy who cannot drive or use public transportation due to active seizures. Eligible applicants must live within our service area and lack access to personal transportation.

The fund covers travel for medical appointments, counseling, support groups, Studio E, educational programs, Epilepsy Foundation events, grocery trips, and social visits.

To learn more or apply visit  
[efneny.org/transportation-fund/](https://efneny.org/transportation-fund/)



## TRAVEL ASSISTANCE FUNDS

The Epilepsy Foundation of Northeastern New York offers travel reimbursement for families seeking epilepsy-related medical care, thanks to the generosity of The Adirondack Foundation and Maria Lutz—a young woman from Hamilton County who chose to give back through her Make-A-Wish grant.

Eligible expenses include mileage, hotel stays, and meals. Receipts are required for reimbursement.

To learn more or apply visit  
[efneny.org/travel-assistance-funds/](https://efneny.org/travel-assistance-funds/)



## 2025 IMPACT OF RIDE SHARE FUND:

**302** Rides  
Provided

**33** Individuals  
Served

*\*Numbers reflect individuals served from  
January, 1st - August, 30th 2025\**



# SHAPE TOMORROW, JOIN THE LEGACY TODAY.

Your legacy can empower future generations and create long lasting change. Consider joining the Purple Legacy Society.

**Purple** is more than a color at the Epilepsy Foundation of Northeastern New York—it's a promise to fight epilepsy and save lives.

By including EFNENY in your estate plans, you join our **Purple Legacy Society**, helping us continue our mission for years to come. Your gift—whether through a bequest, trust, life insurance, or other means—makes a lasting impact. No gift is too small.

If you choose to leave a legacy, please let us know so we can celebrate your commitment today!



Learn more  
by scanning  
the QR code!



## SOCIETY SPOTLIGHT



### BARBARA QUACKENBUSH

Barbara Quackenbush experienced her first seizure at age 38 but wasn't diagnosed with epilepsy until more than a decade later. After years of trying different medications, a change in doctors finally led to effective treatment. Despite the challenges—including periods without a driver's license while raising children—she built a successful career as a middle school principal and later a school superintendent.

Motivated by her journey, Barbara joined the Board of Directors at the Epilepsy Foundation of Northeastern New York, serving for ten years. Her work deepened her commitment to supporting others with epilepsy. When the Purple Legacy Society was introduced, she included the Foundation in her estate plans to help sustain its vital programs and services.

Read Barbara's full  
story by scanning  
the QR code!





# YOUR SUPPORT MAKES A DIFFERENCE.

Explore the many ways you can support our mission and help create lasting impact.



## EMPOWERING LIVES THROUGH YOUR SUPPORT.

Every donation to the Epilepsy Foundation of Northeastern New York fuels critical programs, research, and advocacy that directly benefit individuals living with epilepsy in our community.

Your generosity helps provide life-changing resources. From seizure response training and support groups to access to care and education. Together, we're breaking down the stigma, building safer environments through education, and creating more opportunities for people with epilepsy to thrive.

**Join us in making a lasting impact—  
explore the many ways you can give today.**

Learn more by  
scanning the QR code!



## WAYS TO GIVE

*Ways to support EFNENY all year long:*

1

### TURN YOUR USED VEHICLE INTO SUPPORT

Donate your unwanted car, truck, motorcycle, RV, or boat and make a big impact for EFNENY. The process is fast, free, and your gift helps fund vital programs and services for those living with epilepsy.

Learn more and donate  
by scanning the QR code!



2

### RECYCLE FOR A CAUSE WITH CLYNK

Support EFNENY by filling specially tagged CLYNK bags with returnable bottles and cans, then dropping them off at participating Hannaford locations. **You can also donate your deposit balance directly to our "CLYNK to Give" account online.**

**Call us at (518) 456-7501 to get your tagged bags and start making a difference.**

3

### YOUR NEXT CELEBRATION CAN CHANGE LIVES

Mark your birthday, anniversary, or special occasion by creating a Facebook Fundraiser to support EFNENY. Your celebration can help fund essential programs and services for individuals affected by epilepsy across the 22 counties we serve.

**Start your fundraiser and make your special day even more meaningful!**

# HOPE STARTS HERE.

*The mission of the Epilepsy Foundation is to improve the lives of people affected by epilepsy through education, advocacy, research, and connection.*



## RECENT UPDATES:

### A Renewed Commitment to Our Community

This year, we proudly adopted a new mission that reflects our deepened commitment to the epilepsy community:

*"Improve the lives of people affected by epilepsy through education, advocacy, research, and connection."*

### EFNENY Merchandise Store Now Open!

Our EFNENY merch store is open! Every purchase raises awareness and helps to fund education, advocacy, and support programs for people affected by epilepsy in Northeastern New York.

*Learn more and shop by visiting the back page of this issue!*

### Celebrating 45 Years of Impact

In 2026, EFNENY celebrates 45 years of service, advocacy, and impact. This milestone honors our history, the lives we've touched, and the progress we've made—while looking ahead to a future of continued growth and support for the epilepsy community.



## THE EFNENY TEAM



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Executive Director



**Darcy Below**  
Office Manager



**Daniel Biddiscombe**  
Special Events Manager



**Mary Beth Champagne**  
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**Kathy Gavitt, MS**  
TBI Service Coordinator



**Susan Kaczynski**  
Director of Donor Engagement



**Gabrielle Kernozek**  
Marketing & Communications  
Manager



**Jeff Riccio, MSEd**  
Director of TBI Service  
Coordination



**Suzanna Ritchey**  
TBI Service Coordinator



**Maria Vigorito-Lopez**  
Director of Epilepsy Programs and Services



**Rachel Yattaw**  
Health Educator & Advocacy  
Coordinator



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## WAYS TO VOLUNTEER

Fueled by purpose, driven by volunteers — join us and be part of the impact!

Volunteering is more than just giving your time — it's about making a meaningful impact in your community, building connections, and growing personally and professionally. Consider volunteering with EFNENY through one of the opportunities below and be part of something bigger.

Board of Directors

Event Planning  
Committees

Event Volunteers

In Office Volunteer

To learn more or to  
get involved scan  
the QR code!





3 Washington Square, Albany, NY 12205  
Phone: 518.456.7501  
Fax: 518.452.1282  
WWW.EFNENY.ORG

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Permit No. 694

## EFNENY Merch Store is OPEN!

Your purchase funds education,  
advocacy, and support programs  
for individuals throughout  
Northeastern New York!



Visit our store by  
scanning the  
QR code!



## DON'T FORGET! 2026 Raffle for Hope tickets are on sale now!

ONLY 100 tickets are available for our  
2026 Raffle for Hope!

Enter to win big for \$100 per ticket!

2026 winners will receive:

First-prize: **\$4,000**

Two Second-prize winners: **\$500 each**

Drawing to be held on March 21st, 2026



Purchase your tickets  
now by scanning the  
QR code!

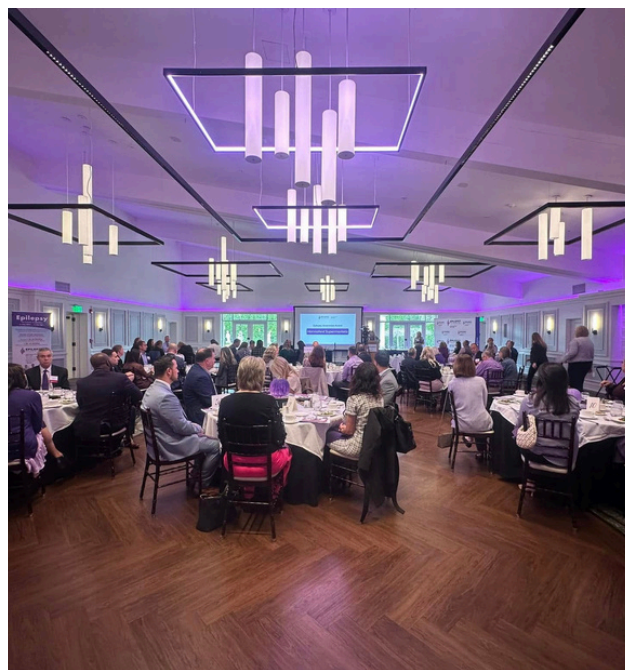
The remaining funds will be used to support EFNENY's programs and services that we offer  
at no cost to an estimated 45,000 people affected by epilepsy in Northeastern New York.

## 2025 Annual Awards Luncheon

*Celebrate with us at the Annual Awards  
Luncheon — a special event recognizing our  
honorees, donors, and volunteers.*

Thursday, November 20th | 11:30 AM - 1:30 PM  
Duo at the Dunes (Italian American Community Center)  
257 Washington Ave Ext, Albany, NY 12205

Learn more and  
register by  
scanning the QR code!



**EPILEPSY**  
FOUNDATION

NORTHEASTERN  
NEW YORK

3 Washington Square, Albany, NY 12205

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