

A MAGAZINE FOR THE COMMUNITY

FALL 2025

The Holley Institute



Riboflavin Transporter Deficiency

Zachary's story of living with RTD and finding support through The Holley Institute

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We want to hear from you



Past President/Founder Message



Dear Friends of the Holley Institute,

This will be my last message written for our newsletter. It will be simple but filled with gratitude to so many. Always, always remember, you are The Holley Institute! This, and I have no doubt, is God's work. Every time I felt like giving up, and there were many times that I moaned and said, "Enough!" I called upon Him and He always answered, I listened and stepped forward. Never doubted its success.

These 35 years have been a blessing and joy working toward a better world for the Deaf, DeafBlind and Hard of Hearing and their families, locally, nationally and internationally. I hope to be around observing future successes as we step forward with new and wonderful leadership.

With warm personal regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ardis J. Gardella'.

Ardis J. Gardella
Past President and Founder
The Holley Institute

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Board Chair's Message



Dear Friends and Colleagues,

It is with tremendous excitement and gratitude that I write to introduce you to Erica Scorpio, our new Executive Director of The Holley Institute.

After an extensive search process, we are thrilled to welcome someone whose passion, experience, and vision align perfectly with our mission to provide life enhancing programs and services for those with hearing loss, vision loss, and deafness while also supporting hearing health in our community.

Erica brings a deep commitment to ensuring every Deaf, DeafBlind and Hard of Hearing child has access to the resources, support, and opportunities they need to thrive. Her leadership comes at an exciting time for our organization as we continue to expand our programs and reach more families who need our services.

I am impressed by her dedication to our mission and her innovative ideas for the future. With her at the helm, I am confident that the future looks exceptionally bright for our organization and, most importantly, for the children and families we serve.

As we embark on this new chapter, we recognize that transitions require the continued support of our incredible community. Your partnership has always been the foundation of our success, and during this pivotal time, your ongoing support means more than ever. Together, we will continue to break down barriers, create opportunities, and ensure that every deaf child in our community has the chance to reach their full potential.

Please join me in giving Erica Scorpio a warm welcome. I know you will find her as inspiring and dedicated as we do, and I look forward to the remarkable work we will accomplish together in the months and years ahead.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Daniel DJ Megler, MD".

Daniel DJ Megler, MD
Board Chair
The Holley Institute

Executive Director's Message



Dear Friends of the Holley Institute,

I am writing to you today with a heart full of gratitude and a sense of profound purpose as I introduce myself as the new Executive Director of the Holley Institute in my inaugural message. I am truly honored to join this incredible organization and to partner with you in carrying forward its mission of providing life enhancing programs for those with hearing loss, vision loss and deafness.

For over a decade, my professional life has been dedicated to a singular goal: building a more inclusive and accessible world. I come to this role with a long-standing commitment to ensuring everyone feels a sense of belonging, and a special focus on the needs of the Deaf, DeafBlind and Hard of Hearing community. My journey has been shaped by a deep connection to the Deaf community, and my fluency in American Sign Language (ASL) has been a cornerstone of my work. I have seen firsthand the transformative power of communication and the profound impact of providing equitable access to resources and opportunities.

At The Holley Institute, I am committed to building on the legacy of compassion and service that has defined this organization for so many years. My vision is to expand our reach, enhance our programs, and continue to serve as a beacon of hope for families across Michigan. We have a shared responsibility to ensure that every individual, regardless of their abilities, has the chance to thrive.

As we approach the holiday season, I am filled with excitement about our upcoming St. Nicholas Christmas Event—a cherished tradition that brings so much joy to our community. This event is more than just a fundraiser; it is a testament to the warmth and generosity of our supporters and a celebration of the spirit of inclusion. Your continued support is vital in making events like this possible and in sustaining our year-round programs.

I look forward to meeting you and learning more about what inspires your commitment to the Holley Institute. Please feel free to reach out to me directly with any questions or thoughts.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Erica Scorpio". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline.

Sincerely,
Erica Scorpio
Executive Director
The Holley Institute and Holley Family Village, Inc.

Meet the Coller family from St. Clair Shores

Camille and Chris Coller from St. Clair Shores first noticed something was different about their two-year-old son, Zachary, in their daily activities at home. Zachary no longer responded to noise and was pronouncing words incorrectly that he once knew. Zachary was also experiencing other puzzling medical issues which led Camille and Chris to seek answers.

After months of doctors' appointments and tests, it was revealed that he was born with Riboflavin Transporter Deficiency (RTD), a rare disease that prevents the body from properly transporting riboflavin (vitamin B2) across cell membranes. Vitamin B2 is imperative for typical growth and development. Symptoms of RTD can include respiratory compromise, facial weakness, hearing loss due to auditory neuropathy, vision loss due to optic atrophy, difficulty chewing and swallowing, muscle weakness of the arms and legs, scoliosis, and gait ataxia. Zachary subsequently developed bilateral profound hearing loss from this deficiency. The audiologist's words were clinical but devastating as Camille received the diagnosis alone in an exam room as this was during the COVID-19 pandemic and Chris was not able to attend. At 2 years old, Zachary was diagnosed with auditory neuropathy and began his journey into Deaf culture. For Camille and her husband Chris, the diagnosis felt like stepping into uncharted territory.

"We had no idea where to start," Chris remembers. "The doctors talked about hearing aids, cochlear implants, sign language, speech therapy. It was overwhelming. We

just wanted our son to have every opportunity in life, but we didn't know how to give that to him."

The early months were filled with medical appointments, insurance battles, and sleepless nights spent researching. With less than 400 cases worldwide, getting a diagnosis felt lucky, but without a cure, also heartbreaking. The couple felt isolated; they were struggling to find resources and connect with other families who understood their journey.

Everything changed when they were connected to The Holley Institute, through our community partner, Michigan Hands and Voices, a parent-led nonprofit organization. Camille was initially hesitant to reach out.

"I think part of me wasn't ready to accept that we needed help," she admits. "But that first email changed our lives."

Within days, the family was connected with Maria Klein, The Community Health and Literacy Program Director. For the first time since Zachary's diagnosis, Camille and Chris felt like they weren't alone.

"Maria didn't just give us information," Chris explains. "She gave us hope. Here was someone who understood exactly what Zachary would face and was a needed example of what it means to be a Deaf adult and what Zachary could achieve."



The Holley Institute provided something the Coller's hadn't found anywhere else: comprehensive support for the entire family.

Zachary was paired with Deaf Mentors, Jojo Forbes and later, Chelsey Munger. "Chelsey comes over to our home once a week and mentors Zachary and our whole family including our other two hearing children, Benjamin (4) and Eliette (1), and it is amazing to watch. Jojo and Chelsey showed Zachary—and us—what was possible."

The Holley Institute also connected the Coller's with educational resources, helping them navigate the complex world of early intervention services and school district programs. But most importantly, the Institute connected the Coller's with other families on similar journeys in our programs.

"The first time we attended the Summer Family Programs, I cried," Camille remembers. "Not sad tears, but tears of relief. We watched kids with cochlear implants playing and laughing together. Parents were sharing stories and advice. For the first time in months, I felt like we belonged somewhere."

The Coller's quickly learned that deafness wasn't something to experience alone. The Holley Institute provided low cost ASL classes for Camille's sister, Danielle, ensuring that Zachary would always have family members who can communicate with them in ASL. Camille's sister, Danielle, has attended ASL story times at local community libraries with other DDBHH families, and attend Family Literacy Weekends at the village.

Today, at seven years old, Zachary is a confident, curious child who loves building Legos, nature, anything mechanical, and always wants to know how and why something works (and if he can take it apart). His family thinks he will be an engineer. His cochlear implants have given him access to sound, while ASL provides him with a rich cultural connection to the Deaf community.



As Zachary enters into first grade this fall, the Coller's feel optimistic about his future. The Holley Institute continues to be a resource, helping them plan for his educational journey and connecting them with Deaf adults in various careers who serve as mentors, counselors and supporters.

"When Zachary was first diagnosed, I worried about all the things he might not be able to do; now we focus on all the amazing things he will do. With his determination and the support system we've built around him, there are no limits." - Camille and Chris Coller

For more information on Riboflavin Transporter Deficiency, please visit Cure RTD at <https://curetd.org/>.



St. Nicholas Christmas Event 2025

Please join us in support of the
2025 St. Nicholas Christmas Event

Friday, December 12 • 6-9pm

Grosse Pointe Yacht Club
788 Lake Shore Road
Grosse Pointe Shores, MI 48236



The St. Nicholas Christmas Event is The Holley Institute's only fundraising endeavor of the year. Your support of the event provides critical year-round support for the Deaf, DeafBlind and Hard of Hearing children and their families we serve.

When you donate to The Holley Institute, you're not just funding programs — you're investing in a Deaf, DeafBlind and Hard of Hearing child's confidence, a family's hope, and a community's strength. You're saying that every child, regardless of their hearing ability, deserves access to excellent education and the support to reach their full potential.

What Your Sponsorship Supports:

\$1,000 sponsors 4 ASL Storytimes where Deaf and Hard of Hearing children can read in a library together with hearing children

\$1,500 sponsors 1 family's participation in our summer family programs

\$3,000 sponsors 1 family's yearlong participation in the Community Health and Literacy Program which teaches them communication skills while they bond as a family in home

\$6,000 sponsors 2 families' yearlong participation in the Community Health and Literacy Program

\$10,000 sponsors high-quality training for our Deaf mentors

\$25,000 sponsors up to 20 family's tuition in our summer family programs



We have 26 families in the Community Health and Literacy program this year, and over 45 families attend our summer family programs annually. The urgency to fund our programs grows year over year.

Please scan the QR Code using your phone's camera to view the benefits that come with each sponsorship level for the event or visit: <https://cbo.io/app/public/bidapp/holley>

If you are unable to sponsor, any donation, large or small, makes an impact. Please use the return envelope to make your donation today and ensure a bright future for every Deaf, DeafBlind and Hard of Hearing child.



Scan the QR code for more information or to donate

Thank you to our 2025 St. Nick Event Committee Chairs and Members.



Event Chairs
Dr. Dennis and Rita Bojrab, II



Honorary Chair
Mark R. Weber, Ph.D

We are proud to recognize Board Member, Mark R. Weber, Ph.D. as our Honorary Chair of the event

Committee Members:

Dr. Richard and Stephanie Berri
Sean D. and Ann Gardella
Dr. Jacob C. Lucas and Gabrielle Lucas
William and Katie O'Keefe
Ashlee Trempus

2025 Summer Family Programs

Please enjoy these photographic highlights from the 32nd season of programming at The Carls Family Village. Thank you to our dedicated staff who made this season possible!





Professional Development

Deaf Women's Conference



Deaf Women United held its “40 Years of Empowerment” National Conference this July in Texas. The special event marking four decades of Deaf Women United’s work in the community. The 40-year celebration of empowerment promoted networking and support among Deaf women through various social interactions, with attendees from around the country

including, The Holley Institute’s, Community Health and Literacy Program Director, Maria Klein and JoJo Forbes who is CHLP mentor and Sign Language Interpreting Program Coordinator at Oakland Community College’s Orchard Ridge Campus. The Holley Institute was a proud sponsor of the event as well and look forward to many more years of empowerment for Deaf women.

DHH Literacy Launch Conference 2025

Maria Klein, Community Health and Literacy Program Director and CHLP Mentor Monique Balcarcel who is also an ASL Instructor at Lansing Community College, attended the DHH Literacy Launch at the end of August presented by Access Ability DHH Consulting. Founded by Trish Lopucki and Amy Wotring, they work shoulder-to-shoulder with schools, districts, and agencies to transform outcomes for Deaf and Hard

of Hearing students. Maria and Monique took away valuable skills and information related to curriculum strategies and assessment training at the conference. Expert presentations were given, and participants were able to gather in a one-of-a-kind setting for meaningful learning, connection, and preparation before school and academic programs were back in session.



Community Engagement

Lion's Club Meeting August 2025

Lion's Club International District 11-B1 members joined Executive Director, Erica Scorpio and Development Officer, Olivia Abrahamian on Saturday, August 9th at The Holley Family Village site to learn more about our mission and tour the village grounds to get a better idea what we do all summer long at the village to support Deaf, DeafBlind and Hard of Hearing Families. A thank you to all Lion's members who joined us and a special thank you to Lion, Michael Nowak for arranging the meeting and connecting us with the other local district clubs. We look forward to continuing our partnership and the impact we can make for the families we support.



LEAD-K Video featuring the Schults Family

Def Lens Media produced a short video introducing Language Equality and Acquisition for Deaf Kids, (LEAD-K) for use on the new LEAD-K parent resource website that launched on August 31, 2025. The Schults family from Ann Arbor volunteered their time to be in the video. Chelse Schults said, "The Lead-K project directly benefits my family by ensuring children have full access to language, supporting both ASL and English, and helping families and schools provide the tools kids need to thrive. It was a true privilege to be part of it. Axel, Knox, and I loved seeing an all-Deaf film crew in action and being in a space with full access to communication. Meeting another family and hearing about their school experiences and community resources made the day even more meaningful."



CHARITY PARTNER NIGHT

with

The Holley Institute



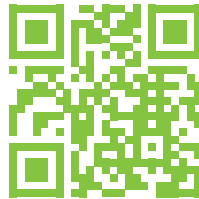
October 16, 2025 • 5-8pm

Show this ad at the following stores and a portion of your purchases will be donated to the Holley Institute!

Participating stores:

- Apple Blossom Baby
- Glitter and Scotch
- Newport
- Prosperity
- Savvy Chic Boutique
- Small Favors
- The Spice and Tea Exchange
- Susie at Home
- Village Nutrition
- Village Palm!

**exceptions may apply; see stores for details*



Visit www.holleyfv.org
to learn more!



www.thevillagegrossepointe.org
313-886-7474

Your support helps
Deaf, DeafBlind and
Hard of Hearing
children achieve
success by providing
access to the support
they need to thrive!



Help us stay connected with YOU!

We want to make sure you receive updates and information that matters most to you. To continue sharing the inspiring stories of the families we serve and keep you informed about our programs' impact, we need your current contact information and communication preferences. Whether you've moved, changed your email address, or simply want to adjust your communication preferences, **please take just a minute to update your information by scanning the QR Code.**

Your continued engagement is vital to our mission, and by keeping your information and preferences current, you ensure you won't miss important updates about our community!

Please scan the
QR code to keep
your information
current with us!



The Holley Institute

The Holley Institute | Holley Family Village, Inc.

Ardis J. Gardella, Past President and Founder

Erica Scorpio, Executive Director

Olivia Abrahamian, Development Officer

Maria Klein, Program Director, Community Health and Literacy

Jonathon Klotz, Program Specialist

Mary Ann Muller, Facility Director

Paul Kuplicki, Finance Manager

Fr. Michael A. Depcik, OSFS, Spiritual Director

Audiology Department

B. Jill Courson, Au.D., CCC-A, Lead Audiologist

Gerilyn Jones AuD., CCC-A, Audiologist

Sharon English, AuD., CCC-A Audiologist

Mentors

Chelsey Munger

Christina Whetsel

Courtney Gunville

Deidri Hines

Diana Rice

Diane Hines

Jennifer Berrigan

Joanne Forbes

Michaela Jitaru

Monique Balcarcel

Nicole Faino

Sarah Elwood

Founded in 1993, The Holley Institute is a nonprofit organization dedicated to:

- Service to those in need
- Reverence
- Compassion
- Integrity
- Creativity and innovation
- Forward thinking
- Dedication
- Education

The mission of The Holley Institute is to provide life-enhancing programs for those experiencing hearing loss, vision loss or deafness. We also provide programs for parents with children with hearing loss, vision loss or deafness. We screen all infants for hearing loss and provide outreach programs and services and education relating to hearing loss for the community at large.

Please contact us for more information at:

The Holley Institute

Boll Prof. Building One, Ste. 223

22151 Moross Road • Detroit, MI 48236-2172

313-343-3165 (Voice) • 313-343-4111 (Fax)

www.holleyfv.org

The Holley Family Village

1142 DeSales Drive • Brooklyn, MI 49230-9078

517-592-6283 (Voice) • 517-592-2389 (Fax)

www.holleyfv.org

The Holley Institute

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2025 Calendar of Events

The Holley Institute

Date	Activity	Location
October 15	Board Meeting	Van Elslander Cancer Center
October 17-19	Fall Family Literacy Weekend	The Holley Family Village
December 12	St. Nicholas Christmas Event	Grosse Pointe Yacht Club
April or May	Spring Family Literacy Weekend	The Holley Family Village
June	Staff Orientation	The Holley Family Village
July	Family Weeks	The Holley Family Village
July	ASL Immersion Week	The Holley Family Village
August	Jesus Deaf CREW	The Holley Family Village
August	Volunteer Week	The Holley Family Village

These dates are tentative and subject to change

