



photo by Bill Storer

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Funds to Support The Valerie Fund Children's Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders.*

High School Musicians Raise over \$2000 for Children's Hospital; Funds to Support The Valerie Fund Children's Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders. MIDDLETOWN – “Rock it! For Kids,” is an organization of young high school rock musicians from Middletown, New Jersey. Each year, the youth organization commits to helping others through their talents in music.

This year, the students, under direction of teacher and program founder, Bruce Gallipani, dedicated the proceeds of their December 8 benefit concert to The Valerie Center at The Children's Hospital at Monmouth Medical Center. The Valerie Fund Children's Center at The Children's Hospital is one of five hospital-based programs in New Jersey that provides treatment for children with cancer and blood disorders. The concert took place at Middletown High School South and raised more than \$2,000.

The group's intent was to raise awareness of The Valerie Fund and how it benefits the children and adolescents who are treated there. In addition to the raised funds, new toys and other gifts were donated to the Valerie Fund patients. During the holiday season, the group stays committed to helping others while continuing to maintain a learning environment with each other. Founder Bruce Gallipani said, “After a successful music career – thanks to the support of my family and mentorship from my dad, I recognized how important it is to give back, especially to our future generation. I want to provide the opportunity for adolescents to share their music experiences together and encourage them to learn and have fun, while returning the mentorship that was given to me when I was young.”

Gallipani is a resident of Middletown, New Jersey, where he and his wife Ruby have encouraged their two daughters, Alyssa and Bianca, to study dance and music instruction since grade school. “My students have an instant opportunity to learn and play with their peers; budding young guitarists, bassists, and keyboardists. The atmosphere is positive and encouraging and allows them to give back to the community through their talents.”

Lucia Baratta, vice president of Development at Monmouth Medical Center said, “We are grateful and humbled by the generosity of Mr. Gallipani and his wonderful and talented students. Their commitment to helping better the lives of those less fortunate is inspiring and uplifting.”

Through generous donations such as that made by Rokit! For Kids, The Valerie Fund Children’s Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders at The Children’s Hospital at Monmouth Medical Center has been renovated and redesigned based on the input and vision of its patients. The patients came together to decide how they wanted the center and rooms redesigned. Each of the treatment rooms are designed around a specific theme, including sailing and surfing with exam tables designed as a sail boat and surfboard, respectively.

The clinic houses a user-friendly play room, comfortable waiting room, Infusion Theater with plasma screen televisions; soda shop for patients and families to eat, talk or listen to music; as well as a computer and education space. Monmouth Medical Center is one of five hospitals in New Jersey that are part of the Valerie Fund, one of the largest and most advanced pediatric oncology/hematology networks in the country.

Because the center is an outpatient facility located near their homes, children are able to receive treatment without having to greatly alter their normal routines. As a result, they can return to school faster and have more time for everyday activities. Young patients receive care from a team of specialists including pediatric hematologists/oncologists, nurse practitioners, surgeons, radiologists, nurses, social workers, counselors and child-life specialists. For more information on the Valerie Fund Children’s Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders, please call the Saint Barnabas Health Care Link at (888) SBHS-123.