

# Meet the Board



**Rachel Maloney-Joyner**

Manager, Bus and Special Service Operations,  
Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority (NFTA-Metro)

**Board Chair  
(2023-2025)**

Rachel is the current chair of the local Buffalo Leadership Board. Her involvement in the ALA began as a corporate climber at the Fight for Air Climb and she has been hooked ever since. Rachel has been the co-chair of the Buffalo Fight for Air Climb seeing it through all its transitions and has been a member of the Board since 2020.

Professionally, Rachel is the Manager of Bus and Special Service Operations at the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority, where she oversees the bus and PAL service in our community. Previously she held various roles in the Planning Department where she has been both a Senior Transportation Planner and the Project Manager of Metro's largest project in a generation, the Amherst Buffalo Rail Extension project.

Rachel holds a master's degree in Urban and Regional Planning from the University at Buffalo where she is an adjunct professor. She is a graduate of the American Public Transit Association's Emerging Leaders Program and currently serves as an alumni mentor, as well as a member of the class of 2024 Leadership APTA. She is a recipient of both Buffalo Business First 40 Under 40 and Mass Transit 40 Under 40 for her service to her community and dedication to the transit industry. She lives in South Buffalo with her husband, Matt and their best fur friends Ruxin and Rooney. In her "free time" you can find her reading, at the gym, or pretending to be a gardener in her backyard.

Paul is a lifelong Western New York resident and has been a member of the Leadership Board since 2020. Paul has served on multiple committee's including, Lung Force Expo, Lung Force Walk and Community Connections Education Event. He and his family have also been active participants and fundraisers in support of the Climb and Lung Force Walk, for several years.

Paul's career at AstraZeneca and focus on lung health, led to his engagement and support of local ALA initiatives and education. Paul is passionate about the potential of lung cancer screening to save lives and is focused on education, to encourage people eligible to get screened.



**Paul Gorman**

Sr. Executive Clinical Oncology Specialist,  
AstraZeneca

**Board Vice Chair  
(2023-2025)**

**Buffalo Leadership Board**  
Fiscal Year 2024



## Patricia Clabeaux

Executive Vice President, Chief  
Human Resources Officer,  
Independent Health

**Board Nominating Chair  
(2023 - 2025)**

As executive vice president, chief human resources officer, Patricia Clabeaux oversees the Human Resources department, including the Learning Center. She is responsible for developing and implementing the organization's workforce strategy, and for sustaining an engaged workforce and positive organizational culture to enable the company to achieve its strategic goals.

Clabeaux oversees all aspects of the company's workforce strategy, including organizational development, change management, benefits and compensation, associate development, talent acquisition and retention, rewards and recognition, associate relations, human resources technology and compliance.

She leads and executes strategies to ensure the company's human capacities and energies are aligned with the company's mission, vision and values. Clabeaux also leads numerous initiatives and programs intended to increase associate satisfaction and works with key areas of the company to ensure initiatives have adequate resources to achieve successful outcomes.

Prior to joining Independent Health, she was senior director, human resources, at Kaleida Health. In this role, she was responsible for supervising and directing the human resources departments at Buffalo General Medical Center, Gates Vascular Institute, HighPointe Long-Term

Care and clinic operations. She led a successful integration of Millard Fillmore Gates and Buffalo General Medical Center. Before joining Kaleida, she was the corporate human resource director for Boykin Management Company, a company that manages the Buffalo/Niagara Marriott.

Clabeaux is an active member of the community and served on the board of directors for the Elizabeth Pierce Olmsted Center for Sight for 20 years, including being board chair for four. In addition, she has served on the advisory boards for several hotel management programs and was instrumental in the development and support of the National Statler Center for Careers in Hospitality Management.

## Board Purpose:

To advance the American Lung Association's mission to save lives by improving lung health and preventing lung disease in the local community through revenue regeneration, advocacy, and fostering diversity, equity and inclusion in our practices, programs, and processes.

John has been involved with the American Lung Association since 2018, serving as vice-chair of the Buffalo Leadership Board prior to serving as a member of the Regional ALA board. John joined the ALA after his first Fight for Air climb, in memorial of his mother, who passed after a lengthy struggle with lung cancer.

At GHD Services, John works primarily in air quality and natural gas resource optimization. John was also a certified Radon Inspector. John competes in Highland Games and Strongman and can be seen climbing stairs in a kilt in support of the Buffalo Fight for Air Climb, where he is typically a Top 10 fundraiser.



## John Katalinas

Air Quality Services Project Manager,  
GHD

**Regional Board Representative  
(2023 - 2025)**



**Mike Hecker**

Partner, Environmental Practice Leader, Hodgson Russ LLP

**Previous Board Chair (2018 - 2020)**

Mike is the leader of Hodgson Russ' Environmental Practice Group and has a broad-based environmental and energy-based practice, with a focus on addressing environmental issues in business transactions, regulatory compliance counseling and permitting, administrative, civil, and criminal environmental defense, and remediation-based project oversight and assistance.

A large part of Mike's practice focuses on assisting regional, national, and international clients with regulatory compliance and remedial matters. His experience includes counseling corporate and facility-based management on operational compliance programs and permitting pursuant to local, State and Federal requirements and disclosure obligations, including the Clean Water Act, the Clean Air Act, the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act ("RCRA"), Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act, and other environmental statutes and regulations. In addition, Mike has substantial experience in overseeing small to large-scale, multi-faceted remedial projects, including those pursuant to the New York State ("NYS") Spills Program, the NYS Brownfields Program, the NYS Inactive Hazardous Waste Disposal Site Remedial Program, RCRA, and the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act ("CERCLA"). As part of these representations, Mike has negotiated a number of State and Federal Orders and Decrees with various agencies, including the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, United States Environmental Protection Agency and the United States Department of Justice.

Mike has served on the American Lung Association board for three terms. He has served in multiple leadership roles including Vice Chair (2016-2018), Board Chair (2018 - 2020) and Nominating Chair (2020-2023). He also leads the Hodgson Russ team annually in our Buffalo Fight For Air Climb!

Dr. Zielinski has been practicing hematology oncology for over 30 years. He is Board Certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine, American Board of Hematology and American Board of Medical Oncology. Dr. Zielinski received his MD from the State University of New York Health Sciences Center at Syracuse.

Zielinski is a member of the American College of Physicians and American Society of Clinical Oncology, a member of the Board of Trustees for Hospice Buffalo, and is a part of the Buffalo Medical Group Board of Directors. Zielinski holds fellowships with Hematology and Oncology at the University at Buffalo School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences and Roswell Park Cancer Institute. His hospital affiliations include Buffalo General Medical Center, Gates Vascular Institute and Millard Fillmore Suburban, Roswell Park Cancer Institute, Sisters of Charity Hospital, Kenmore Mercy Hospital, Lockport Memorial Hospital and Intercommunity Hospital in Newfane.

When Dr. Zielinski isn't working, he enjoys being on a golf course, at a Bills game with his grandsons, or scuba diving.



**Robert Zielinski, MD**

Associate Medical Director, Oncologist, Buffalo Medical Group

**Our Mission:**

To save lives by improving lung health and preventing lung disease through research, education and advocacy.



## Michelle McMahon

Founder

Take a Breath for Life Foundation

Michelle McMahon is a lung cancer survivor with a long history of advocacy and community service in the greater WNY community. Using her education in Therapeutic Recreation she worked in senior services, mental health, and community recreation. With the connections she developed, she has helped bring a Meals on Wheels program to the Southtowns, serving on that board for some 11 years before transitioning to a newly founded nonprofit outreach and food pantry in her community, the Bread of Life Outreach Center. Her real passion is founding the Take a Breath for Life Foundation in 2010 which is committed to raising funds for lung cancer research and education. In the past 14 years the organization has raised over \$150,000 mostly going to the American Lung Association in support of their lung cancer programs. This mission is in recognition of her gratitude, with hopes of easing others' pain as they navigate through their diagnosis and bringing attention and increased funding to the number 1 cancer killer, lung cancer.

A natural storyteller and seasoned writer, Amy Moritz has worked in print journalism for more than 20 years, primarily reporting on sports. From her four years at the Olean Times Herald to her 19 at the Buffalo News, Amy's love for communication and her kind, compassionate nature has made her a key asset to every team she's worked on. She currently works as a Public Relations Manager at The Martin Group, an integrated marketing agency in Buffalo. Amy is an avid runner and triathlete—even completing an Ironman! Amy also enjoys spending time with her family hiking, biking, or just hanging out.

Amy started with our organization as a Climber in our annual Fight For Air Climb to honor, and now in memory of her mother who was diagnosed with lung cancer. She became more involved with the Fight For Air Climb, joining our committee and then becoming Climb co-chair in 2020. Through her Climb leadership, she led the event through the pandemic and helped us become the 5th largest fundraising Fight For Air Climb in the nation in 2023! She lends her expertise as a communications and marketing professional and passion to our cause, helping raise more awareness and share our mission!



## Amy Moritz

Public Relations Manager,  
The Martin Group

Adam Stopa is the Director of Partner Development at Brook Health in Buffalo, NY, where he educates and builds partnerships focused on the benefits of Brook Health's suite of services to healthcare providers. Previously, Adam served as a Manager of Managed Care Contracting at Kaleida Health, where he reviewed and negotiated payer contracts and collaborated with C-Suite leadership to align rates with key initiatives. As a Board Member of the American Lung Association, Adam provides leadership in developing and achieving the Association's annual goals. Prior to that, Adam held positions at Vatica Health, Independent Health, and CCS Medical, where he helped organizations transform processes and improve outcomes in provider engagement, risk management, and account management. Adam holds a Master's degree in Healthcare Administration from Capella University and a Bachelor's degree in Health Service Administration from Bryant & Stratton College. Throughout his career, Adam has been recognized for his exemplary service and has received multiple awards for his contributions to the healthcare industry.



## Adam Stopa

Partner Development Director,  
Brook Health



### **April DeArmitt**

Senior Account Executive,  
AcariaHealth Specialty Pharmacy

April DeArmitt is a Senior Account Executive at AcariaHealth Specialty Pharmacy, with a passion for healthcare, public health, and community. April has been involved in the pharmaceutical and specialty pharmacy industry spanning over 20 years while developing relationships to help make an impact on the well-being of individuals and the success of healthcare organizations. April holds an MBA from Nova Southeastern University and a bachelor's from the University of North Carolina.

April strives to promote, volunteer, and educate on the importance of lung health and early detection after losing her sister in 2020 to lung cancer. April was part of the Lung Force Advocacy Day and will continue to dedicate her passion and inspiration towards lung health awareness and promotion. April is a member of the Healthcare Businesswomen's Association and Life Coaching Network.

Dr. Sai Yendamuri is a Professor of Oncology and Chair of the Department of Thoracic Surgery at Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center, where he leads a team of surgeons who are recognized as top providers in their field. Together, they are dedicated to providing Roswell Park's patients with the most current screening and treatment options for lung cancer care.

After earning his medical degree from the prestigious All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Dr. Yendamuri continued his surgical training at the University of Pennsylvania and New York Hospital Queens, with fellowships at MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston, Texas, and Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri. In 2022, he went to earn an Executive MBA from the Wharton School, with a focus in strategy - an undertaking he describes as a "transformational experience".

Dr. Yendamuri is a true surgeon-scientist, believing that excellence in clinical care goes hand in hand with scientific curiosity and innovation. Over the past 25 years he has shared his research hundreds of times, in presentations at the conferences of many esteemed surgical societies, and in publications across multiple top-tier peer-reviewed journals. His long-term research goal is to develop interventions that can improve the survival of patients with early-stage lung cancer, including chemoprevention, microbiome-based therapy, and immunotherapy. Among other awards and grants, his research has been continuously funded by the National Cancer Institute for the past 12 years.

Dr. Yendamuri deeply believes in the value of collaboration and mentorship, having guided and trained dozens of students in both the US and India, from high school-age to medical students, post-doctoral trainees, and PhD candidates. His contribution to mentorship has been recently recognized by a Presidential Service Award from the Eastern Cardiothoracic Surgical Society.

Dr. Yendamuri values the opportunity that the Lung Association board membership will provide to amplify public awareness about lung cancer screening, treatment, and clinical trial availability.



### **Sai Yendamuri, MD, MBA, FACS**

Chair, Professor; Department of  
Thoracic Surgery,  
Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer  
Center



**Xilei Xu Chen, MD**

Clinical Assistant Professor,  
Pediatric Pulmonology,  
Jacobs School of Medicine &  
Biomedical Sciences, Oishei  
Children’s Hospital

Dr. Xilei Xu Chen is a board-certified pediatric pulmonologist with a special interest in treating children with asthma. Having completed her fellowship in pediatric pulmonology at Children’s National Hospital in Washington, DC, Dr. Xu Chen developed a profound understanding of respiratory diseases, particularly asthma, which has been a constant area of interest through her career. She worked in many research projects involving the investigation of infant viral immunogenetic responses in the airway epithelium, which led to numerous publications that contributed to the understanding of asthma pathophysiology. With a commitment to improving patient outcomes, Dr. Xu Chen has worked on many quality improvement projects focused on asthma care. She is currently one of the coordinators for Project BREATHE at Oishei Children’s Hospital, a joint initiative with the American Lung Association aimed at enhancing the quality of life for children with asthma and their families.

Dr. Xu Chen is currently working as a pediatric pulmonologist at Oishei Children’s Hospital. In addition to her clinical roles, Dr. Xu Chen also serves as a Clinical Assistant Professor at Jacobs Medical School, imparting her expertise to future medical professionals. She has also been an active member of professional societies such as the American Thoracic Society, the European Respiratory Society, and the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Damien is an Operations and Supply Chain executive working at Moog in the Commercial Aircraft Group division.

Previously he held various roles in General Management, Operations, Supply Chain, Design & Development in the Automotive and Aerospace industries. Damien holds an Executive MBA from HEC (Paris, France), and a double engineering degree from Cranfield university (UK) and Universite de Technologie de Compiègne (France).

He lives in the Northtowns of Buffalo with his wife, Aurelie and their two teenagers (Antonin and Andrea) and their family mascot: an English bulldog named Winston. Prior to relocating to the Western New York area, the Damperon family lived in China, Singapore, the Philippines and France.

In his free time, Damien likes to play tennis and travel to discover new cultures.



**Damien Damperon**

Integrated Supply Chain General  
Manager, Commercial Aircraft  
Group  
Moog Aircraft



**Are you looking for an opportunity to support our mission and grow your professional network?**

Email Kaelyn Gates, Senior Development Director of Western New York at [Kaelyn.Gates@Lung.org](mailto:Kaelyn.Gates@Lung.org) to learn more about our open Leadership Board opportunities.