

goals  
reach  
transition  
evolution  
challenge  
innovation  
planning  
opportunity  
hope  
via ideas  
improvement



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## ANNUAL REPORT

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# 2024 2025

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### A YEAR OF TRANSITION





**VIA Vision –**

A Healthy and Vibrant Community

**VIA Mission –**

Enhance the Health & Well-being of Central Bucks County and Surrounding Communities

**VIA Core Values –**

Community Service, Compassion, and Commitment

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## From the VIA President, Kathleen Krick

2024-2026 (*term of presidency*)

### A YEAR OF TRANSITION FOR THE VIA

On April 1, 2025 Doylestown Health, Doylestown Health Foundation and Penn Medicine cleared all the regulatory approvals and officially became Penn Medicine Doylestown Hospital and Penn Medicine Doylestown Health Foundation. The VIA is extraordinarily proud that the prestigious University of Pennsylvania recognized the excellence of our community health care system that was founded by our foremothers in 1923 and grew to be named as one of the top fifty cardiovascular centers in the nation by IBM Watson Health. As part of the merger, Penn invited the VIA members of the Hospital and Foundation Boards to continue to serve on the new boards and appointed our members Barbara Ann Price as Chair and Lillian O'Connor as Vice Chair of the new boards.

From our beginnings in 1895, the VIA has continually engaged in reflection and planning to evaluate the areas of need in our community and has developed pathways to fill these needs. This year we have realized that many of our endeavors fall under an umbrella initiative of Mental Well-being. This includes the work of our Veterans Committee, our Home Life Committee, our Education Committee, our Women's Scholarship Committee, and our recently renamed Community Outreach Committee (formerly our Welfare Committee). As you read through this Annual Report, you will see the incredible work that each has accomplished. We have also created a Mental Well-being Committee whose members are working to creating a structure to de-stigmatize issues around mental health and to encourage people to care for their emotional health needs just as they do their physical health needs. We are also working with community partners to improve access to much-needed services.

To support our work in the community this year, we were dependent upon our Governance Committee (now combined with our Strategic Planning Committee), our Development Committee (including Fundraising Committee and 1895 Committee), our Finance Committee, our Membership Committee, our Information Technology Committee, and our Designer House Committee. To support our members, we are grateful to our Floral Arts Committee and to our Hospitality Committee, Social Committee and Literature Committee. Our headquarters, the James-Lorah Memorial Home, through its committee honors our legacy. The committee is actively pursuing museum status for this remarkable landmark and its historic contents, and its auditorium is becoming a true community hub for meetings and events.

I would like to recognize the women who have served on our Board of Directors and to thank each for her dedication and willingness to support our new initiatives. Since this is a giving report, I want to acknowledge that 100% of our Board Members made an unrestricted donation to our organization this year!

Please watch for further announcements of our upcoming initiatives, and please also consider joining us in our commitment to the health and well-being of central Bucks County and surrounding communities, by becoming a member or by your financial support. In keeping with our extraordinary legacy, membership is open to all women in our community.

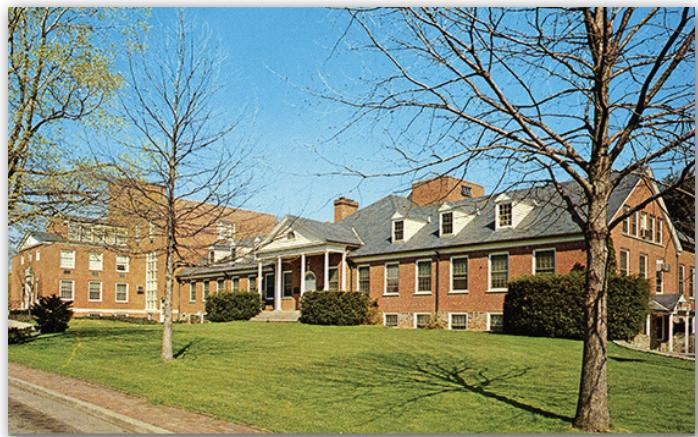


Kathleen Krick, VIA President





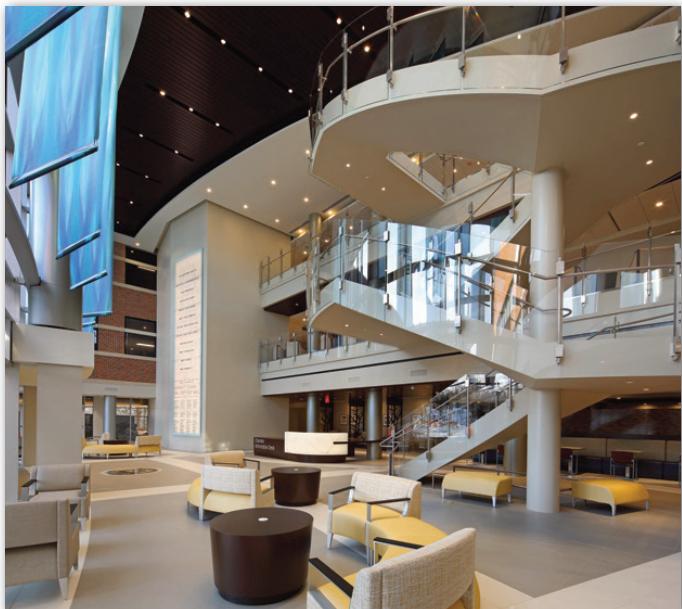
*First - Pine Street & Oakland Avenue*



*Second - Belmont Avenue*



*Third - 595 West State Street*



*We've come a long way!*

## History of Doylestown Hospital

It has been a truly momentous year for Doylestown Hospital. On April 1 Doylestown Health officially joined the University of Pennsylvania Health System (UPHS), marking a significant milestone in the evolution of the small 8-bed facility begun by the VIA in 1923 in a rented home on Doylestown's Oakland Avenue.

Today, Doylestown Hospital is a 247-bed community teaching hospital with 600 medical staff across 50+ specialties. The hospital offers a full range of inpatient, outpatient, surgical, and wellness services. Doylestown Health and its affiliates are now known as Penn Medicine Doylestown Health (PMDH).

This partnership strengthens access to advanced care for patients and families in Philadelphia's northern suburbs. It also unites one of the nation's top academic health systems—renowned for groundbreaking research and clinical innovation—with a regional health system recognized for excellence in community-based, compassionate care.

"Doylestown Health's integration into Penn Medicine is a key step in reimagining care delivery," said Kevin B. Mahoney, CEO of UPHS. "By combining trusted local care with Penn Medicine's expertise, we can simplify access, enhance convenience, and ensure patients in Bucks County and beyond receive the highest-quality treatment close to home."

"This is the next chapter in our long history of delivering quality healthcare close to home," said Jim Brexler, CEO of PMDH. "Joining Penn Medicine ensures our patients will benefit from expanded specialty services, advanced treatments, and access to clinical trials."

As part of the integration, Penn Medicine has appointed two members to the PMDH board, while two Doylestown trustees have joined the Penn Medicine Board of Trustees.

This collaboration builds on more than a decade of successful partnerships, including Penn Radiation Oncology Doylestown - serving over 400 patients annually since 2011 - and Doylestown Hospital's participation in the Penn Cancer Network.

Doylestown Hospital becomes the seventh Penn Medicine hospital, joining:

- Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania
- Penn Presbyterian Medical Center
- Pennsylvania Hospital
- Chester County Hospital
- Lancaster General Health
- Princeton Health

Penn Medicine is a world leader in academic medicine, combining education, research, patient care, and community service. It comprises the University of Pennsylvania Health System and the Raymond and Ruth Perelman School of Medicine, the nation's first medical school, founded in 1765.

Penn Medicine has a long legacy of innovation, from pioneering CAR T cell therapy for cancer to contributing to Nobel Prize-winning mRNA vaccine technology. In FY2023, the Perelman School of Medicine received \$580 million in NIH funding, ranking among the nation's top recipients.

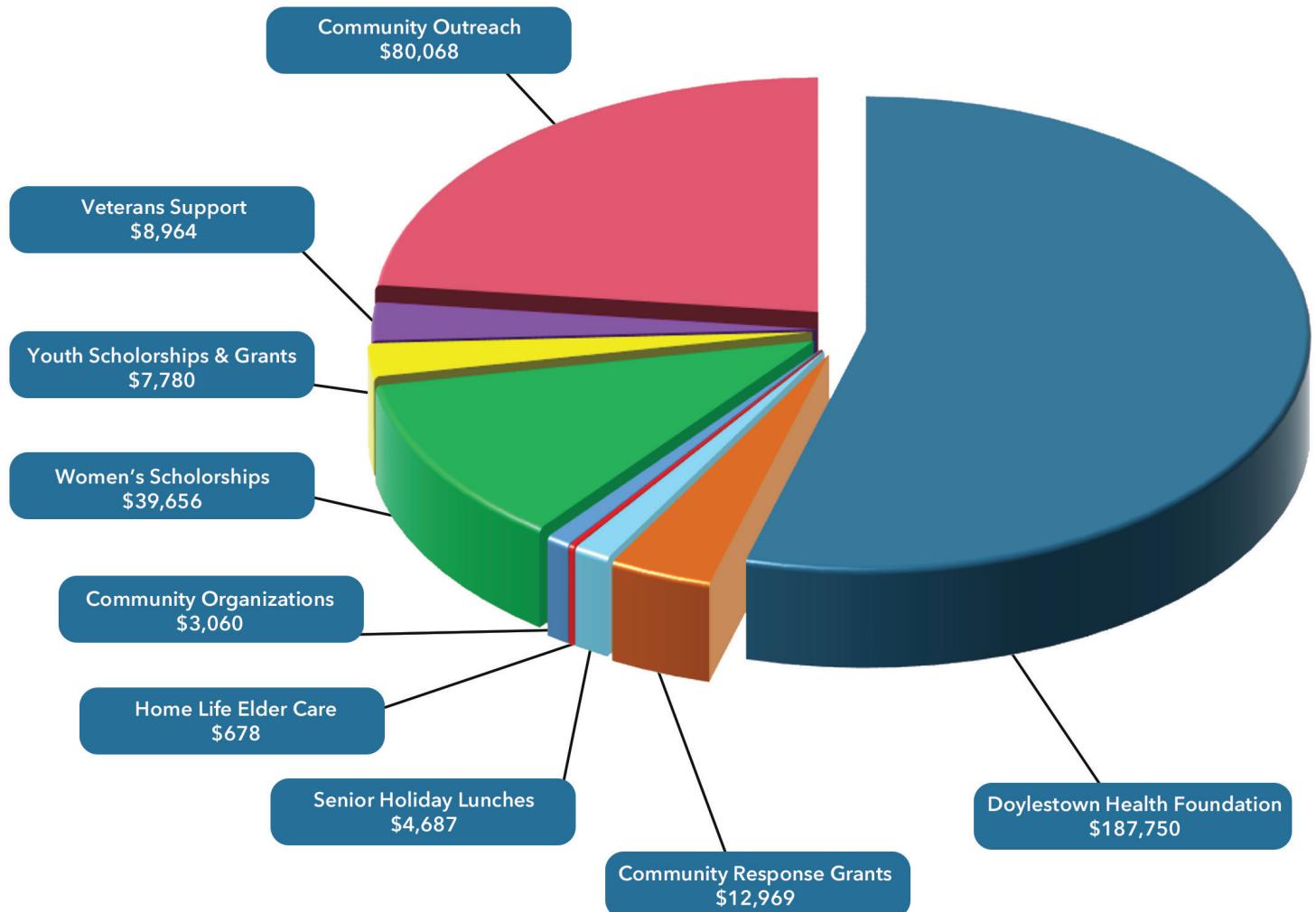
The \$11.9 billion health system, supported by nearly 49,000 employees, serves patients across Pennsylvania and New Jersey through hospitals, outpatient centers, home care services, and behavioral health programs.

 Doylestown Health  Penn Medicine

 **Penn Medicine**  
**Doylestown Health**



The Village Improvement Association of Doylestown donated more than \$345,612. This included \$184,100 to Doylestown Health Foundation from the 2024 Bucks County Designer House proceeds during the 2025 fiscal year to enhance the health and well-being of central Bucks County and surrounding communities.



- Welfare
- Veterans Support
- Youth Scholarships

- Women's Scholarships
- Community Organizations
- Home Life Elder Care

- Senior Holiday Lunches
- Community Response Grants
- Doylestown Health Foundation

**\$80,068  
Donated to  
Those in Need**

This year the Welfare Committee distributed a total of \$80,068 for community needs. Ongoing monthly and annual distributions were made directly to our partner community service organizations including FISH, Bucks County Pantry, Liz's Birthday Closet, Ann Silverman Clinic, Coalition to Shelter and Support the Homeless, Meals on Wheels, A Woman's Place, Lenape Valley Foundation, Valley Youth House Synergy Project, and Doylestown Health Foundation.

The Target gift card program provided gift cards to families in need in the Central Bucks School District to use for clothing, school supplies, and basic needs.

<b>A Woman's Place</b>	<b>\$3,000</b>
<b>Ann Silverman Community Health Clinic</b>	<b>\$3,000</b>
<b>Bucks County Pantry</b>	<b>\$5,000</b>
<b>Coalition To Shelter &amp; Support the Homeless</b>	<b>\$4,000</b>
<b>Doylestown Health Foundation</b>	<b>\$2,443</b>
<b>FISH</b>	<b>\$12,650</b>
<b>Lenape Valley Foundation</b>	<b>\$4,000</b>
<b>Liz's Birthday Closet</b>	<b>\$2,000</b>
<b>Meals On Wheels</b>	<b>\$2,500</b>
<b>Target Gift Cards; Central Bucks School Children</b>	<b>\$34,775</b>
<b>Valley Youth House (Synergy Project)</b>	<b>\$6,700</b>

**TOTAL: \$80,068**

## Home Life Committee



**The Home Life Committee provides the opportunity for VIA members to volunteer at Pine Run Lakeview and Pine Run Village Health Center in support of the VIA's mission to Enhance the Health and Well-Being of central Bucks County and surrounding communities.**

The Home Life Committee is pleased to have established a strong and continuing relationship with Presbyterian Senior Living following its acquisition of Pine Run in 2023.

The main purpose of this committee is to interact with Pine Run residents at the Health Center and at Pine Run Lakeview by celebrating holidays, scheduling visits, hosting sing-alongs, and delivering notes and flowers monthly. These activities are in line with the VIA's new mission of enhancing mental well-being in the community, noting that the most vulnerable members of the population often reside in personal care and long-term care communities.

This busy group of women were delighted to host holiday celebrations that included Halloween, Christmas, Valentine's Day, and two patriotic-themed teas. At Pine Run Lakeview, the committee enjoyed visiting residents and spearheading a trivia contest and spring sing-along. In June, Flag Day was celebrated at the Health Center, and they also sponsored a visit from a Ben Franklin impersonator. Expenses associated with these activities totaled \$678 in this fiscal year.



The committee would like to explore ways to engage additional retirement facilities in Bucks County and discover ways within our greater community to bring generations (young children up to seniors) together through art and music. The number of members on this committee may not support the additional activity; however, the Home Life Committee would like to consider the possibility of becoming a subcommittee of the "Community Outreach" committee within the VIA to expand our reach into the community and provide support of the VIA's mission.



## Veterans Committee

The Veterans Committee is dedicated to providing assistance to military members, active and veterans, as well as their families.

The Veterans Committee supports military objectives for veterans in the form of donations, as well as our presence in the nursing homes and supporting their functions to make their life better.

The annual Petite Luncheon raises much-needed funds to help with Wreaths Across America, the Veterans Christmas Party, and the Tour of Honor. Collected paperback books are distributed for in-country, as well as our deployed troops.

## Community Response and Recognition

### A Two Fold Challenge:

- **Community Recognition** will recognize individuals or organizations whose efforts have contributed to the mission of the VIA.
- **Community Response** will provide one-time support to programs that will enrich the quality of life in our community in keeping with the mission of the VIA.

In keeping with the mission of the VIA, the Community Response and Recognition Committee recognizes individuals or organizations whose efforts have contributed to the mission of the VIA and provides one-time support to programs that enrich the quality of life in our community.

During the 2024/2025 fiscal year, the VIA donated \$5,000 to Roxy Therapy Dogs and \$7,969 to Cancer Support Community for a total of \$12,969 to help community organizations.

**Over the years the VIA has donated in excess \$200,000 to more than 50 organizations.**

## Floral Arts Committee



The Floral Arts Committee shares the importance of flowers in cultivating an elegant ambiance that enhances our monthly VIA member gatherings and special occasions and provides an additional means of fundraising for the organization.

Once again, the work of the committee was showcased at events including the November Petite Luncheon, the Bucks County Designer House & Gardens Preview Gala, and the June Luncheon.



## Strategic Planning

The Strategic Planning Committee oversees the process of developing the VIA Strategic Plan, which provides the roadmap for VIA activities. It forms the backbone of our organizational narrative to both our internal and external stakeholders as we spread our message and engage in community activities.

Our strategic plan uses a two-tier approach: There is a new Priority Tier of two focused priority areas, Community Outreach and Organizational Growth, as well as a Baseline Tier with the ongoing work of our key committees and events.

**Community Outreach** is the priority area where we will focus our new mental well-being efforts, the REACH Initiative. The priorities under this category are raising community awareness of mental health, reducing the stigma of mental illness, and improving access to services. We are working with the new Mental Well-Being Committee to build out these specialty area goals.

**Organizational Growth** is the other priority area, where we are focusing on Member Engagement (engaging existing members and attracting and retaining new members) and on Financial Stability. Financial goals include refining workflow and processes to increase efficiency in our accounting and banking activities. A Development pilot program is evolving to identify new funding sources, as well as establish financial plans for investment strategy, funding reserves, and support of our programming.

The organization's **Baseline Tier** activities continue as always, driven by the various committees that submit their annual goals each Fall and report on their progress in the Spring. We are increasing efforts to crosswalk those individual committee goals with our new priority areas to be sure we have consistent and compatible efforts across the organization.

In the coming year, strategic planning will review and refine organizational direction with a focus on the roll-out of the REACH Initiative and related activities and programs.

A core success element will be development of a Strategic Communications Plan. This includes key communication messages about what we are doing and why we're doing it, with formal plans to intentionally reach out to targeted audiences with appropriate messaging about who we are and the programs that achieve our mission and vision. We are developing a VIA playbook with messaging that allows any VIA member to speak to the VIA's past, present, and future in any setting: who we are, what we do, and why. Ours is a big story to tell, and we are developing and refining impactful messages to help us all tell it effectively.



## Innovators Committee

The Innovators, a new committee, was created this year to identify, research, and analyze current and unmet needs within the community and the VIA, and to present recommendations for future action to the VIA Board for their consideration.

The committee has interviewed other nonprofit organizations to assist in the identification of community needs. One of the first nonprofits was Roxy Therapy Dogs, an all-volunteer organization whose mission is to bring comfort to children, to enhance the experience of learning, and to enrich the lives of their canine and human volunteers. Committee members were extremely impressed with the mission and focus of the organization, and the VIA Board approved their application and awarded them a \$5,500 grant.

A committee member completed a research project into mental health ambulances, learning

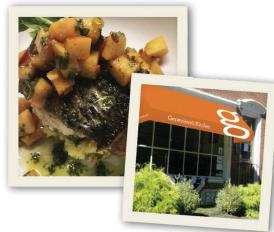
about the critical role that these mobile ambulances play in addressing mental health concerns in any community, as far away as Europe and as nearby as Montgomery County. Understanding how mobile ambulances fit in promoting mental wellness will be one of the important goals for the VIA in the future as we turn our focus to our new mental well-being initiative.

The Innovators are also working internally with VIA committees to assist them in achieving their objectives. They have worked with the Membership committee to increase member participation and encourage volunteerism within the VIA and in the community. One of their first initiatives has been to assist in planning an evening VIA business meeting that includes social and volunteer activities, with an additional focus on utilization of the James Lorah Memorial House as a community venue. Work with individual committees will continue into next year.

## Fundraising Committee

The Fundraising Committee is tasked with the planning and execution of appropriate fundraisers and coordinating fundraising projects within the VIA to prevent overlap. Fundraising activities held throughout the year included:

- **Genevieve's Kitchen** - two dinners, in October and June, which raised approximately \$2,500. This event requires little involvement by Committee members other than to secure a date with Chef Joey and publish it along with a menu.
- **Holiday Flea Market** in November coinciding with the Doylestown Christmas tree lighting. This event requires a fair amount of lead time and significant participation by Committee members, VIA members, and the community. The event raised \$3,000 with very little expense.
- On April 4, 2025, we hosted **The Ultimate Designer Bag Bingo** which netted \$10,737 for the Women's Scholarship Committee and \$7,158 for VIA Mission. This event required significant pre-planning, expense, and the commitment of many VIA members. We were fortunate to have real Designer handbags at considerable savings; The National Shrine of Our Lady of Czestochowa was a wonderful venue. More than 300 people attended. The Fundraising Committee was helped significantly by members of the Leadership team.



## Youth Scholarships

The VIA Education Committee supports the mission of the VIA by overseeing the yearly pursuit, evaluation, selection, and presentation of three \$2,000 scholarships to students who are planning to study Human Health Care. This scholarship is named in memory of two outstanding women and members of the VIA - Hannah Pollock, a visiting nurse, and her sister, Laura Haddock, a school teacher. Additionally, the committee seeks, evaluates, and selects candidates for the \$2,500 VIA Ruth Boland Memorial Nursing Scholarship.

The Education Committee sends an email and letter in early February to the guidance department of each high school in the Central Bucks School District and surrounding communities to advise the students of the application requirements. To be eligible, the student, male or female, must be accepted for further study in a human health related program and reside in the Central Bucks School District.

### **Hannah Pollock - Laura Haddock Scholarships**

awarded \$2,000 scholarships to three Central Bucks School District students planning to study human health care.

Three \$2,000 Hannah Pollock-Laura Haddock Scholarships were presented to students at their schools' award ceremonies and announced at the annual VIA June luncheon.

**Roma Reddy**, Germantown Academy, who will pursue a 4+4 BS/MD Program at Drexel University as a Biology Major

**Zoe Riley**, Central Bucks HS East, who will attend Pace University Honors College as a Health Sciences and Psychology Major

**Sydney Tannenbaum**, Central Bucks HS East, who will attend George Washington University as a Biomedical Engineering Major

### **Boland Scholarship**

The committee evaluates senior high school nursing scholarship candidates and selects the recipient for the VIA Ruth Boland Memorial Nursing Scholarship, which is financially supported by the family of late VIA President and former nurse Ruth Boland. As they have for many years, sisters Kathleen and Jeanne Boland contributed a \$2,500 scholarship this year.

This year's recipient was **June Haflett** (Central Bucks High School West) who will be attending Stockton University as a Nursing Major.

### **Richard A. Reif Scholarship**

Doylestown Health's Volunteer Services interviews all teen volunteers who have contributed significant hours of service by their senior year. This award focuses on the contribution to the Culture of Caring at Doylestown Health.

This year the Rich Reif Culture of Caring Scholarship was awarded to **Shreyas Trivedi**, a student at Central Bucks HS South (with a 4.67 GPA), who volunteered in Patient Transport. He contributed 366 hours and will be attending the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill studying Neuroscience and Statistics.

Ruth Boland  
Memorial Nursing  
Scholarship

\$2,500

The  
Richard A. Reif  
Scholarship

\$1,000

# HOBY Scholarships

**\$580**

James-Lorah  
Memorial Home  
Awards  
\$100 awarded to  
2 students

\$100 awarded to  
2 students

## HOBY Scholarships

Since 1992, the Village Improvement Association of Doylestown has worked with the Central Bucks School District high schools to identify outstanding sophomore students with promising leadership skills to attend the two-day HOBY Leadership seminars. "HOBY" stands for "Hugh O'Brian Youth." Hugh O'Brian, best known for his acting role as Marshall Wyatt Earp in the 1950s TV series "The Life and Legend of Wyatt Earp," was a humanitarian as well. In 1958 O'Brian established the Hugh O'Brian Youth Foundation whose mission is "to inspire students to a life of leadership and service to their communities." Today, the HOBY Foundation holds seminars nationwide and in many foreign countries with more than 12,000 students participating each year.

The 2025 winners of the HOBY Scholarship Awards, who each received a \$290 sponsorship to attend the HOBY Youth Leadership Seminar at Neumann University in Aston, PA were:

**Alexis Cho**, Central Bucks HS South  
**Cecelia Hayes**, Central Bucks HS East

James-Lorah Memorial Home Awards • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • •

The VIA's headquarters, the James-Lorah Memorial Home, is named in honor of the last two families who lived in the mansion. Martha James Lorah established the *Deeds of Kindness Prize* in her will to honor local youth. Her husband, the Reverend George Lorah, who was an amateur poet, established the *George H. Lorah English Prize* in his wife's memory. Each student is presented with a \$100 check.

### *Martha James Lorah Prize for Deeds of Kindness:*

Emerson Schulz (CB West)

*The winner of the Dr. George H. Lorah Prize in English:*

Emma Botes (CB West)

## Women's Scholarships

The Women's Scholarship Committee (WSC) provides need-based financial support to women pursuing vocational certificates, education, or diplomas in undergraduate degree programs who are entering or reentering the job market.

During this fiscal year, the Women's Scholarship Committee has been very active in re-establishing relationships with our partner organizations. We have approved \$39,656 in scholarships for eight women. The application essays and letters of recommendation are heartwarming. They demonstrate the drive and dedication that these women possess, as they strive to overcome obstacles in their lives. One multiple-semester awardee recently made the President's Honor List and plans to graduate this fall.

The WSC collaborates with the Bucks County Opportunity Council, Bucks County Housing Group, and local educational institutions to identify eligible candidates. All recipients must live in Bucks County and work closely with counselors or career and self-sufficiency coaches to ensure success.

With the initial funding generously provided by Marvin and Dee Ann Woodall, and the ongoing support of the VIA and Designer House allocations, the Women's Scholarship Fund has become a consistent source of support for Bucks County women as they pursue their educational goals.



## James-Lorah Memorial Home

The mission of the James-Lorah Memorial Home (JLMH) Committee is the preservation, restoration, and management of the JLMH, its contents, auditorium, and grounds. The Committee is dedicated to educating the community about the significance of the home in local history. The JLMH serves as the Headquarters of the VIA in accordance with the wishes expressed by Miss Sarah M. James in her Last Will and Testament.

## Safety and Security

1. A radon remediation system was installed.
2. A new recording box was purchased and installed in the security system.
3. Security cameras throughout the property were fully activated with a 30-day replay feature.
4. Upon recommendation of the Doylestown Fire Marshal, a Knox box was installed to facilitate fire department access to the building.
5. Escape Route maps were posted throughout the house as required by the Fire Marshall.
6. The caretaker apartment was cleaned, painted, and inspected for electrical issues. Electrical repairs were completed by Trail Electric. A smoke detector was installed, a fire extinguisher purchased, and the porch light was replaced with a dawn to dusk feature. A Residential Use and Occupancy Permit was obtained from Doylestown Borough. The apartment was registered with the borough as a separate unit for mail delivery. The College Hunks hauled away items that were left in the apartment basement.
7. The brick walkway adjacent to our neighbor's property was rehabilitated using existing bricks. Steps and a new hand rail were installed.
8. Exterior lighting was installed on the front of the building. Lighting on the auditorium porch was enhanced.

9. "No parking" cones were placed in the 2 designated spots for the JLMH in the municipal lot to ensure that contractors have a place to park.
10. Unwanted items were removed from the attic and basement and taken away by a waste company.
11. Representatives from VIA Committees sorted through their storage items, and placed what they wanted to keep in plastic containers.
12. The trash vendor was changed from Republic to Whitetail reducing our cost for trash service.
13. Two chair trolleys were purchased to facilitate the ergonomic move of chairs in the auditorium.
14. "No trespassing" signage was placed around the property.

## Finance

1. Two bank accounts were eliminated.
2. Auditorium rental rates were increased to absorb the costs of renting and depreciation of the facility.
3. An assistant treasurer was appointed to deposit checks and help the treasurer with financial matters.

## Property

1. The exterior stone wall surrounding the Broad Street side of the auditorium and the spring house were power-washed and loose stones repaired.

2. The roof on the 1841 and 1844 section of the building was replaced with a synthetic slate product.
3. During the roof repair, extensive painting was completed on several areas of the house, while the scaffolding was in place.
4. Leaf guards were installed on the gutters in the back of the house while the roof was replaced. Gutters were replaced or reinforced.
5. The 50s kitchen cabinets were cleaned out. Items were donated, discarded, or will be sold.
6. A tenant was secured for the caretaker apartment at a monthly rate of \$1800. Buxmont Property Management was engaged to handle the management of the apartment.
7. Forrest Glen Arborists looked at the trees on the property for health and safety. Trees were treated as needed.
8. The Master Gardeners continue to care for the garden and the grounds, decorate the urns per season, and advise the committee on the care of the grounds.
9. The back-office space was turned back to Dr. James medical office. The apothecary cabinet, the restored original patient's chair, and the black bench from 1810 were placed in the office. Original medical equipment is now displayed in the office.
10. A recycling plan was implemented at the property.
4. Several chairs, the 1810 black bench, pictures, and lights were cleaned and repaired. The entire collection of silver was polished, a teapot and a coffee pot were repaired.
5. The third floor is being rearranged to increase exhibit space. The library has been reorganized to include not only books, but the interests of the residents. One of the storage rooms will contain VIA and Women's Club archives. These archives have been reviewed and sorted. The other storage is being cleaned out to become an exhibit of the servants' quarters.

## Education and Community Awareness

1. The following tours were offered this year:
  - a. A Victorian Wake in partnership with the Civil War Museum.
  - b. A Victorian Christmas Tour
  - c. A Victorian Dessert Tea
  - d. Annual VIA Card Party
2. Two cash awards of \$100 were given to two Central Bucks West seniors. One award is the Martha James Lorah Prize for Kindness, and the second award is Dr. George H. Lorah Prize in English.
3. The JLMH Committee was pleased to have three of our veteran members give us a bit of VIA history

## Collection Management

1. In June, the JLMH officially subscribed to Catalogit, an online electronic collection management system. The process to convert our paper files to online has begun.
2. The doll collection is being evaluated and dated by a doll expert in Lancaster. Dolls that need repairs are being prioritized.
3. Two antique pedestals were moved from auditorium subspace to the auditorium porch. Two concrete urns were purchased to place on the pedestals.

4. Several chairs, the 1810 black bench, pictures, and lights were cleaned and repaired. The entire collection of silver was polished, a teapot and a coffee pot were repaired.
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2. Two cash awards of \$100 were given to two Central Bucks West seniors. One award is the Martha James Lorah Prize for Kindness, and the second award is Dr. George H. Lorah Prize in English.
3. The JLMH Committee was pleased to have three of our veteran members give us a bit of VIA history from the 1950's and 60's. Judy Melson, Sallie Steinbach, and Jean Rutherford each spoke of their experiences with, and growth of the VIA, from that time period. They told stories about Doylestown Hospital, the Village Fair, and how meetings were conducted. The meetings were held in the parlor.
4. Kathryn McKenna revised her book "A Treasured Legacy." Copies were available to purchase at the VIA general meeting and online.
5. The JLMH Committee toured the Mercer Warehouse upon invitation of Cory Amsler.
6. Flowers were placed on the James Family gravesite in keeping with the wishes of Sarah James.

Every year the JLMH Committee awards  
\$100 to each of two Central Bucks West seniors.

- The Martha James Lorah Prize for Deeds of Kindness
  - The Dr. George H. Lorah Prize in English



## Membership Committee

The Membership Committee seeks prospective new members to join the organization and encourages the active involvement of current members in various committees, with a goal of increasing membership year over year and identifying new VIA leadership.

This year there were 23 new VIA members for whom the Committee provided individual mentors to answer questions regarding the VIA and provide information about committees. The Committee also scheduled social functions for new/existing members that encourage member involvement and support the fundraising needs of various VIA committees. This year, new VIA members were encouraged to participate in the November Holiday Flea market as well as the April Designer Bag Bingo event.

The Committee also worked to promote awareness of the organization by posting "Ten Things to Know About the VIA" to the VIA website and Facebook page. A QR code was included to facilitate linkage to the VIA member application. An evening program for new members was held in October so that new members could meet one another while learning about opportunities to join various VIA committees. In December, new members were invited to attend a special holiday tour of the James-Lorah Memorial home. The Membership Committee also encouraged mentors to invite their mentees to attend the June luncheon.

Recognizing that many potential members learn about the VIA by visiting the Designer House or serving as Designer House guides, a slide presentation about the history and mission

of the VIA was presented at Designer House guide training sessions this year. An insert for the Designer House badge worn by guides at the property was created to highlight the accomplishments of the VIA over our 130-year history and guides wore buttons encouraging visitors to ask them about the VIA.

A membership working group has also been meeting to plan evening meetings for the fall of 2025 to encourage working women to join the VIA.

Sadly, the organization mourned the loss of 13 remarkable VIA members who passed away during the year. We are grateful for their many contributions.



## Information Technology Committee



The Village Improvement Association has used technology for many years, but really began to implement business systems such as a Google Workspace Intranet and VIA maintenance of our two websites around 2018. The organization's technology use and equipment have grown exponentially since then, with the IT Committee both maintaining and operating our systems.

We now support the organization's full Google Workspace, two websites, and various audio-visual equipment needs. Our VIA volunteers do the majority of the work for each area, including annual updates for both Google accounts, email groups, and shared drives - and for the two websites. The primary challenge is finding members with the knowledge and time to

provide the needed support. In response, work teams are being developed to focus on specific areas so that multiple people are trained in each major area, but that work is ongoing. There will likely be a need to add more commercial support for this work as the VIA's IT dependence grows.

## Governance Committee

The role of the Governance Committee is to provide leadership development, Board Education, Board performance assessment, and to monitor and assist the Membership and Strategic Planning Committees. The Bylaws and Nominating Committees are subcommittees of Governance; therefore all Bylaws, policy changes, and nominations are reviewed by the Governance Committee.

Changes were made to the Designer House policy and the Finance policy during this fiscal year. Bylaws will need to be changed due to the Doylestown Health and Penn Medicine merger.

The committee identified and facilitated the replacement of several key board positions this year when the Recording Secretary for the Board and 2nd Vice President resigned.

Board Education sessions were conducted on the following topics:

- VIA Finance Overview
- Google Drive Training
- Community Mental Health Needs and Issues
- Update on Doylestown Health's Emergency Department issues as it related to Mental Health
- Home Health, Hospice, and Palliative Care at Doylestown Health
- Monthly updates on Doylestown Health's merger with Penn Medicine
- Board Self-Assessment Results

Monthly tracking of financial support by board members was completed by the committee, which also tracked the number of volunteer hours that each board member contributed for IRS Form 990 reporting. An annual self-assessment survey was conducted as well. A survey was developed to ask members what they are interested in for the general membership meetings.

The Governance and Strategic Planning Committees met in January to discuss the direction of the VIA after the Penn Merger. It has been decided that, going forward, the functions of the Strategic Planning Committee will be combined with those of Governance. The Board will develop the annual strategic plan, and Governance will monitor those goals during the year.



# Hidden Trail Farm

## Bucks County Designer House & Gardens

We were very fortunate to have a truly unique setting, Hidden Trail Farm, for our 2025 Bucks County Designer House & Gardens. The 14-acre property, located in Northampton Township, has a long and storied history.

The heart of Hidden Trail Farm was a 5,000-square-foot farmhouse dating from 1721, featuring a welcoming porch, three fireplaces, six bedrooms, and numerous gathering and entertaining spaces. The property also included an impressive custom-designed chalet built in 1992 with an open, multi-story living area, loft, and two additional bedrooms. A pool and patio area, including a large screened-in gazebo and stunning Koi pond with waterfall, provided spectacular outdoor living space.

We were able to hold an Empty House Party for the first time in several years, permitting attendees to view the property before the designers began their work. On Sunday afternoon, February 23, guests enjoyed lite fare and wine while touring the two homes and speaking with the designers about their plans.

The completed Designer House and grounds contained 35 separate design spaces and 11 landscaped areas. The event, which ran from April 27 to May 25, opened with an on-site Preview Gala on Friday, April 25th - a perfect spring evening. Attendees enjoyed cocktails, dinner and dancing, visited both houses, and viewed the garden areas.

During the house tours a barn-turned-kennel on the property had space for an on-site café featuring food selections from McCaffreys and multiple boutiques selling home décor items, clothing, jewelry, artwork, and plants. Old York Road Cellars partnered with us to sell a selection of wines to accompany the food and to take home.

Proceeds from this year's Designer House will benefit community mental health and well-being, and the enhancement of the Penn Medicine Doylestown Health Emergency Department mental health unit with the donation being made to the Doylestown Health Foundation.



49th  
BUCKS COUNTY  
Designer House & Gardens

We would like to extend a special thank you to our

2025 HONORARY CHAIRS

Kelly and Jim Brexler



As Honorary Chairs of the  
49th Bucks County  
Designer House & Gardens,  
the Brexlers are delighted to welcome you to  
Hidden Trail Farm.

The 49th  
BUCKS COUNTY  
Designer House & Gardens  
would like to thank our

PREMIER  
PREVIEW GALA SPONSOR

Penn Medicine



WELCOME TO OUR COMMUNITY

Doylestown Health and its affiliates  
will now be known as  
Penn Medicine Doylestown Health (PMDH).

The new integration brings together one of  
the nation's top academic health systems,  
world-renowned for its clinical and research  
excellence, with a regional health system  
known for clinical excellence and  
high-quality, compassionate care.

Village Improvement  
Association of Doylestown

The Bucks County Designer House & Gardens  
would like to extend a special thank you to  
our Generous Sponsors!

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## VIA Donors July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025

The VIA would like to thank all of the generous donors who help make our impact in the community possible. In addition to the monetary gifts listed below, countless contributors of gifts-in-kind and services rendered are greatly appreciated and help us to fulfill our mission to "Enhance the Health & Well-Being of Central Bucks County and Surrounding Communities."

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## Doylestown Hosp



Have you or someone you love experienced difficulty finding mental health resources in Bucks County?



## GET INVOLVED

**Take an important step** in helping us launch our new "REACH" initiative, creating proactive pathways to mental well-being in our community.

**The VIA's new  
"REACH"  
initiative is  
striving to create  
proactive  
pathways to  
mental well-  
being in our  
community.**



## What is REACH?

The VIA's new initiative - creating proactive pathways to mental well-being in our community. Our goal is to expand the VIA's longstanding mission by creating greater awareness and increasing access to mental well-being resources in our community.

## Help us understand our community's needs

Help us understand the challenges of finding mental health resources. This will help us better understand the challenges people face in accessing mental health resources in our community.







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## ANNUAL REPORT

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# 2024 2025

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### A YEAR OF TRANSITION



Village Improvement Association  
132 North Main Street  
Doylestown, PA 18901

[VIA-Doylestown.org](http://VIA-Doylestown.org) | 215.348.2187