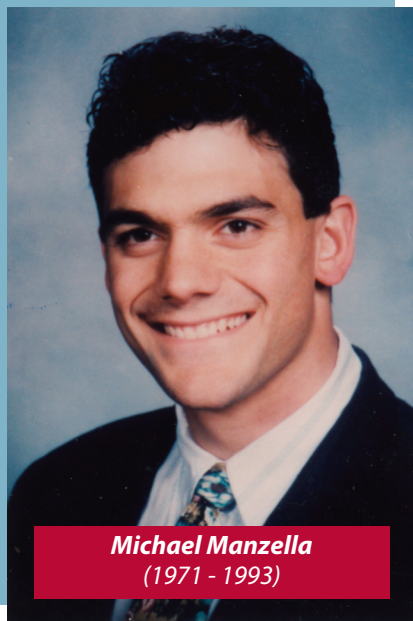


**MICHAEL • MANZELLA • FOUNDATION**  
EDUCATION • CHILDREN • CANCER RESEARCH • ARTS

## OUR MISSION



**Michael Manzella**  
(1971 - 1993)

**Michael Manzella**, a gifted scholar, musician and athlete, succumbed to a two-year battle with cancer in 1993 at the age of 21. He left behind a legacy of music, love and inspirational courage. This Foundation was conceived to honor that legacy.

The Michael Manzella Foundation is a not-for-profit corporation dedicated to activities in education, children's causes, cancer research and the arts. We support those individuals and institutions that demonstrate the leadership and potential to make significant contributions in these areas. These goals are consistent with the struggles and achievements of Michael's life.

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**Check out the MMF website at [themichaelmanzellafoundation.com](http://themichaelmanzellafoundation.com)**

## Michael Manzella Award 2021



Every year the Manzella Prize is awarded to the graduating senior in Yale's Timothy Dwight College who, "through the qualities of kindness, dedication and courage, most inspired his / her classmates." Pictured at left is this year's recipient, Spencer Johnson. In addition to sharing Michael's sterling personal qualities, Spencer is likewise an athlete (soccer), instrumentalist (violin) and vocalist (tenor). Particularly wonderful is his membership in Yale's Society of Orpheus and Bacchus, Michael's beloved a capella group. We could not be more delighted with these similarities and wish Spencer nothing but the best in his post-Yale endeavors.

**Keep in Touch!** To hear more about MMF events, please provide us with your e-mail address on the enclosed form.

**If you wish to support MMF, you may send a tax-deductible donation to:**

Michael Manzella Foundation  
412 Woodbridge Road  
Rockville Centre, New York 11570

You may also donate on-line at [www.themichaelmanzellafoundation.com](http://www.themichaelmanzellafoundation.com).  
This option is available under the "About" tab. Thank you for your support.

### YALE TAILGATE NOVEMBER 20, 2021



We would like to invite MMF friends and family to gather before The GAME! We will be meeting at 11:00am in the parking lot, look

for the MMF banner. Please check MMF Facebook page for further details.

### WHERE ARE THEY NOW!

Terrence Chin-Loy Y'14 was the recipient of the Michael Manzella Endowment Scholarship throughout his four years at Yale and was a MMF Summer Fellow in 2012. He is currently a member of the Marion Rose Pullin Opera Studio at Arizona Opera. In October, Terrence performed at the Yale Club in New York. He expressed his gratitude for the MMF support throughout his college years.



Pictured: Frank Manzella, Joan Manzella, Terrence Chin-Loy

## FROM THE CHAIRMAN

We did not miss a step last year!! That's right, even in the face of a global pandemic, MMF continued its nearly 30 year history in education, cancer research, children's causes and the arts.

Of course, we operated "virtually" and dearly missed socializing with each of you, but things are looking up. We will be hosting an outdoor tailgate reception at the Yale-Harvard Game this November and we have high hopes that our annual Comedy Club event will be on the docket for 2022.

But back to business. We awarded a record six Fellowships this year providing over \$18,000 to a fabulous collection of artists, educators and scientists.

Our artists are people of immense potential, performing throughout Europe, writing original compositions for the Yale Symphony Orchestra and using music as a novel form of pediatric therapy. Their efforts remind us of the unique and lasting power of the arts to shape our lives. Perhaps MMF Fellow Lil Wenker said it best, "*we are hungry for art, and after Covid 19, we have never needed it more.*"

Likewise, our educators and scientists are incredibly talented, focused on tackling the mental health crisis and various forms of cancer. While MMF-sponsored seminars helped New Haven youth cope with the pandemic, our scientists were deeply enmeshed in cutting-edge research in three different cancer labs.

We are 110% certain that each of these remarkable individuals will leave an indelible mark on the human experience in the years to come.

In addition to our Fellowships, we continued our steadfast and longstanding alignment with our partner charities - Friends of Karen, DreamYard and Back Country Jazz. We're delighted that your support has enabled us to be a foundational partner to these fantastic organizations.

And last, but certainly not least, I want to conclude with a wonderful coincidence. One of Michael's greatest pleasures at Yale - besides his classmates - was a *capella* singing with *The Society of Orpheus and Bacchus*, the SOB's. This year, we were delighted to learn that Spencer Johnson, the recipient of the graduation award given in Michael's memory at Yale's Timothy Dwight College, is also a "distinguished SOB" - so to speak. What a marvelous way to bring together the inspiring impact that Michael had on his classmates with one of his most endearing artistic endeavors!!

And, with that, we thank you for your support and look forward to continuing to be long-term partners in changing the world one step at a time.

Sincerely,

*Frank J. Manzella*

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## Michael Manzella Foundation Summer Fellows 2021

*By supporting 6 talented and dedicated undergraduates for a total of \$18,800 to cover project expenses, the MMF helped advance tomorrow's leaders*

### PERFORMING ARTS



#### Lillian Wenker

A remarkable performing artist the MMF has supported through previous fellowships, Lil realized a dream by

writing and performing original theater compositions at fringe festivals throughout Europe in the summer of 2021. An unexpected highlight of her performance schedule was the chance to perform her own material alongside former Cirque du Soleil director and performer Slava Polunin, at his estate, the Moulin Jaune. Her learnings

**"Thank you, always, for your confidence, kindness, and interest. I owe so much life, so many friends, so much wonder to your organization."**

— Lillian Wenker,  
Summer Fellow 2019-21

extended from artistic growth to cultural awareness, as Lil noted, "Connecting with other artists who had experiences in the cities I was traveling to gave me insight on the performance communities before I arrived. Despite having the tools and network to work in Europe now, I will go back to Yale full of energy and with so much left to learn from that community, too." Indeed, when performing for masked, determined crowds who had gone more than a year without live performances, Lil remarked, "It confirmed my suspicion: we are hungry for art, and after COVID, we have never needed it more."

### CHILDREN'S CAUSES, EDUCATION



#### Katherine Du

Katherine founded an organization called Mindful Exchanges, which offered virtual mental health seminars in the midst

of the pandemic. In the summer of 2021, with MMF support, the Mindful Exchanges team was delighted to host in-person programming for the first time for children ages 6-14 at the Boys & Girls Club of New Haven. Notes Katherine, "With the various age groups, personalities, and perspectives, I learned early on that different kids absorb and engage with our lesson material best in different ways; what resonates from our lessons with each kid is unique to them. This experience fueled my desire to enter medical school with a focus on exploring the role of mental health in overall health. I aim to keep spreading mental health education to youth with Mindful Exchanges, increasing health equity through mental wellness."

### PERFORMING ARTS, EDUCATION



#### Michael Gancz

A musician and composer, Michael spent the summer of 2021 enrolled in three music composition

conferences: the Summer Institute for Contemporary Performance Practice (SICPP), the Sō Percussion Summer Institute (SōSI), and the Ostrava Days New and Experimental Music Institute and Festival. As Michael reflects, "Each conference served as a focal point for the development not only of my compositional practice but also my qualities as a person." From one

conference, Michael "learned to think about instruments not as soundmaking abstracts, but as a meeting point of cultural, environmental, and personal factors." After attending another composition conference, Michael's horizons grew even further, as he observed, "The experience makes me think that I'd like to write more virtual and interactive compositions that make musical experimentalism accessible through the familiar aesthetics of video games and apps—possibly even as a means of developing novel forms of pediatric music therapy!" Channeling his learning experiences into an original composition for the Yale Symphony Orchestra, Michael notes, "I still don't know what sound world it will end up in, but I know it'll reflect forms of introspection and community awareness that I couldn't have imagined before this summer."

### CANCER RESEARCH



#### Medha Majety

The MMF Fellowship enabled Medha to spend her summer conducting cancer research at the Sidi Chen Lab at Yale.

Reflecting on her fellowship, Medha observes, "Overall, this summer was incredibly rewarding and a huge learning experience for me. It taught me valuable lessons and I learned that research not only involves replicating an experiment several times, but also doing several assays to validate the result and strike out any chance of luck or coincidence. I also learned that research involves a lot of troubleshooting and planning, such as when we ran into the hurdles in my projects. Academic and career-wise, my plans still remain the same – to study and



## MMF NURTURES & INVESTS IN LEADERS OF THE FUTURE

understand cancer from a clinical and research setting. I gained a lot of insight on the intricate mechanisms of cancer research this summer."

### CANCER RESEARCH



#### **Onyedikachi "Oby" Uche**

Conducting cancer research in the laboratory of Dr. Shirin Bahmanyar at Yale, Oby's project

focused on characterizing the role of the protein phosphatase CTDNEP1 in regulating lipid homeostasis in cancer cells. In his own words, Oby conveys the power of the fellowship, writing, "Since the day I began this project, my experience has been incredible. I learned so much about not only the science behind my project and the laboratory techniques I have employed to investigate it, but also about what goes into being a researcher. Something I've considered for a while now is going to graduate school and pursuing a career in research, and this experience

has really shown me what to expect. In summary, I can't say enough about how valuable the experience of working on this project has been to me. Not only has this project given me insight into the workings of a research career and expanded my knowledge as a science student, but it has also been very rewarding, as it addresses the incredibly significant issue of cancer and has the potential to produce some very impactful results."

### CANCER RESEARCH



#### **Mathew Krick**

Mathew's summer research project at the Halene Laboratory at the Yale Cancer Center focused on investigating the role of genetic mutations and their association with blood malignancies, such as Myelodysplastic Syndromes and Acute Myeloid Leukemia. Looking back on his summer fellowship, Mathew notes, "Throughout the summer, I learned several valuable

critical thinking, technical, and personal lessons. I learned how scientific research can be both challenging, but nevertheless, with consistency, it is

**"I am beyond grateful to the Manzella Fellowship for this life-changing opportunity, and I am more than ever motivated to continue to pursue a path in cancer treatment and care."**

— Mathew Krick,  
Summer Fellow 2021

rewarding. I also appreciated the teamwork element that comprises scientific research. This experience fortified my interest in medicine and affirmed that this path feels right for me. Overall, my summer research experience confirmed my dedication to pursue oncology. I am beyond grateful to the Manzella Fellowship for this life-changing opportunity, and I am more than ever motivated to continue to pursue a path in cancer treatment and care."

## FURTHERING OUR MISSION

*MMF will be providing a \$5,000 grant to each of the following organizations.*

### **Back Country Jazz**

BCJ was particularly grateful this year for MMF's continued support. Due to COVID and Zoom "burn out", BCJ recognized a higher incidence of depression amongst the under-served community they support. With grants from MMF, BCJ was able to purchase new instruments as well as provide one-on-one mentoring for students with world class musicians such as Steve Davis, Kenny Washington, Matt Dwonszyk and Bennie Wallace.



### **Friends of Karen**

FOK provides critically ill children and their families with social workers to help support the family needs during and after caring for a child battling cancer or other life threatening illnesses. MMF's grant helps keep the families stable now and into the future by providing financial support to pay for rent, groceries and other illness-related expenses.



### **DreamYard**

Music has been such a critical aspect of helping people cope with the pandemic and DreamYard was a great resource for over 10 schools in the Bronx. Through their musicals, music production and career pathways work, DY fulfilled short-term need and drove long-term, systemic changes.