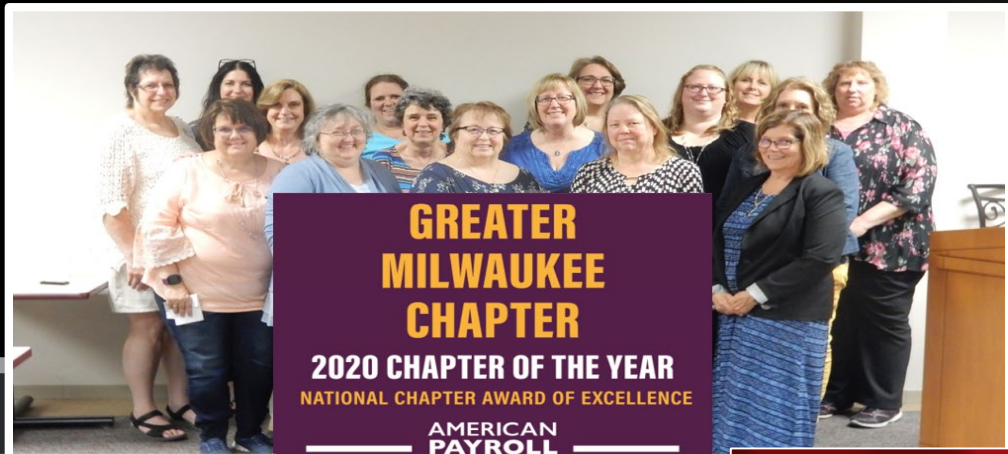




# WE LOVE PAYROLL



## GREATER MILWAUKEE CHAPTER OF APA WINS 2020 CHAPTER OF THE YEAR





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## Education Is Their Foundation

Greater Milwaukee Chapter Again Brings Home Chapter of the Year Award

BY KIKO MARTINEZ

Photos by Steven LaFollette, with composite image created by Tracy Stoffel



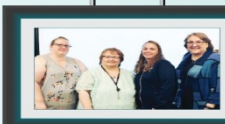
What started as a small group of payroll professionals studying for their certification exams in 1994 has transformed into an organization that can now call itself a two-time APA Chapter of the Year.

8 December 2020

The Greater Milwaukee Chapter (GMC) of the APA was honored for the second time in its 30-year history during the APA's Congress Network virtual conference in June, their last winning title in 2015. The GMC has continued its commitment to deliver payroll education to its members and to give each one of them the tools they need to succeed as payroll professionals.

"The GMC not only provides wonderful educational opportunities to make their chapter a success, they also mentor neighboring Wisconsin chapters, share educational ideas, and assist with their state-level conferences," said Elizabeth Herrera, Chapter Relations Manager for the APA. "The chapter, which celebrated its 26th anniversary last year, is a shining example of an organization that puts its members and community first."

Kiko Martinez is Associate Editor of Membership Publications for the APA.



Clockwise from top left: Chapter members meet during the 2019 Annual Congress; Dan Matlock receives the "John Hildison Special Friend Award" from Michelle Garner, CFP, during the chapter's 26th anniversary. Cindy Cichosz, CFP, receives the Special Friend Award from the Northeast Wisconsin Chapter at the 2019-2020 Statewide, and the chapter officers for 2019-2020.

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### Education From Day One

Cindy Cichosz, CFP, President of the GMC, was one of those payroll pros who co-founded the organization in 1994. She wanted to earn her Certified Payroll Professional (CPP) designation but was not sure of the best way to go about it. She started a study group to help her reach that goal.

"After passing the exam, I continued to instruct the study group," Cichosz said. "This came from a need and want to help others pass the exam and to help the chapter grow."

In doing so, the GMC's educational opportunities for its members became the backbone of the chapter. For Cichosz, her greatest contribution and reward as a chapter leader has been serving as a mentor to many of her fellow members, especially when it comes to helping them earn their professional certifications. During the summer, she encouraged its study group coordinators and inspired chapter members to become CPP and PPS-certified during a Twitter chat called "Successful Chapter Study Groups." Currently, the GMC has 31 CPPs and four Fundamental Payroll Certification (FPC) designations out of its 96-member chapter.

"Encouraging and mentoring others in this profession is what I am most proud of," Cichosz said. "I wish I would have kept a list! I have worked hard to promote payroll as a professional position."

Similarly, CFP Immediate Past President of the GMC, is also delighted that the chapter has focused on education over the years. The chapter holds two study group sessions—one in the spring and one in the fall—that are free to chapter members who wish to study for the PPS or CPP exam. The support among members during these sessions over the years has never diminished. Usually, the instructors are members who recently passed their CPP exam and want to pay it forward.

"Our chapter is fortunate to have many qualified CPPs who are willing to help others study and prepare for the exam," Cichosz said. "We usually study group members who pass the exam after each session because of the hard work and commitment of these study group leaders."

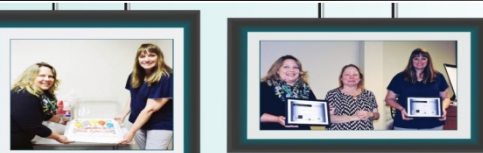
10 December 2020

## PAYTECH



In This Issue:  
Special Section:  
Be Fraud-free  
in 6 Steps to Payroll Program Compliance

Education Is Their Foundation  
Greater Milwaukee Chapter  
2020 Chapter of the Year



(l-r) Chapter members Maria Miller, CFP, and Robin Clemmenssen, CFP, celebrate passing their CPP exam in 2019 and chapter study group instructors Maria Miller, CFP, Annette Jones, CFP, and Robin Clemmenssen, CFP.

Jones adds that the GMC's goal is to enhance the skills of the payroll professional through education and networking, including offering its members opportunities to earn more ICs by attending one-day conferences and promoting events from the APA.

"We utilize the resources from the APA and value our partnership with them as well as our other chapters," Jones said. "We focus on education and networking but never forget the importance of having fun together as a chapter."

### A Challenging Year

While the GMC's 2015 Chapter of the Year title came with a lot of in-person celebration, the year has been a bit different because of the ongoing pandemic. The GMC learned about its victory during a virtual Congress Network and Chapter Exchange event instead of the APA's award in person Chapter Exchange at the Annual Congress. That, however, did not stop chapter members from showing their excitement when they found out.

"I was so proud," Jones said. "With so many deserving chapters nationwide, we were pleased to be honored."

The pandemic has also forced the GMC to change the way it conducts meetings. Its first virtual meeting was in March. Although the chapter had some technological issues at the beginning, it was able to open its APA's Virtual Learning Institute Department to solve those problems and forge ahead.

"We still miss seeing each other face to face, the food, the networking, and the social aspect of our meetings," Cichosz said. "But we are all doing the best we can with these new challenges."

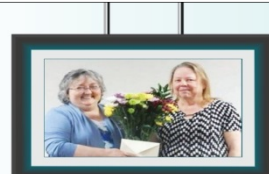
Despite the many challenges that 2020 has brought, payroll processing does not stop because of a pandemic.

With all the loss and confusion that 2020 has brought, we need each other and the education more than ever," Cichosz added. "We continue to help our members with these issues."

### Giving Back

When GMC members are not assisting fellow chapter members, they also take time to serve the APA on a national

## 1ST 2020 CHAPTER OF THE YEAR



stage. The GMC board encourages members to get involved with the APA by joining its committees.

Cichosz serves in several roles with the APA, including as an APA Ambassador and a member of the Government Relations Task Force (GRTF) Federal Issues Subcommittee and the Education Grant Committee, CHAMP Committee, and Chapter Recognition Committee. She also serves on the Hotline Referral Committee, National Speakers Bureau, and many other platforms. Jones serves on the Strategic Payroll Leadership Task Force (SLPTF) Best Practices and Emerging Technologies Subcommittees.

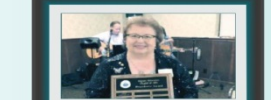
"We are a fun group of hard working individuals who come together to help each other in this profession," Cichosz said. "We can help with compliance, tax laws, systems, and any other concerns you may have in payroll."

For the GMC, giving back also means reaching out to the Milwaukee community as much as possible. The chapter created a community involvement committee that promotes a charitable event or organization at each monthly meeting. In the past, the GMC has completed other charitable acts, including donating to food pantries, taking toys to children at the hospital, joining breast cancer awareness walks, conducting public television phone drives, and mentoring students about a career in payroll.

"Being a dog lover, one of my favorite charities we worked with was the Wisconsin Police K-9 Unit," Cichosz said. "An officer and his K-9 partner came to our meeting, and they showed us how they got their bad guys. We collected donations and the chapter board matched those donations, and we ended up donating \$250 to the department."

Jones remembers spending a Saturday morning filling boxes with food for the city's Hunger Task Force, purchasing supplies for the homeless, working with the local police department to donate teddy bears for children involved in traumatic situations, and collecting school supplies for disadvantaged students.

"Our chapter members are always coming up with new ways to help," Jones said. "We have a great time together at our meetings and when we're out in the community giving back."



Clockwise from top left: Sue Bradley, CFP, is congratulated by fellow chapter member Annette Jones, CFP, for her 2019 Meritorious Service Award; Joann Bielinski, CFP, displays a 2019 NPW Presentation from the Milwaukee Mayor; Cindy Cichosz, CFP, is recognized by the chapter with the Presidents Award; and retired payroll professionals Patti Mohr, CFP, Trina Adams, CFP, and Barb Kish, CFP, remain active with the chapter.

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2021 Greater Milwaukee Chapter of APA Pictorial





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## Presenting the Officers of the GMCAPA for 2020-2021:



President:

Stephanie Jerge

Vice President:

Mary Wittmann, CPP

Treasurer:

Erica Umbach, CPP

Recording Secretary:

Carol Minesal

Membership Secretary:

Sue Bradley, CPP

Government Liaison Officer:

Diane Saeger, CPP

Immediate Past President:

Cindy Cichosz, CPP



### I LOVE PAYROLL QUOTES:

**Stephanie Jerge – Asst. Payroll Services Mgr. – Payroll Complete** *I love payroll, because it is ever changing and never boring. I love to educate others regarding payroll rules, regulations and best practices. I also love being able to take the stress of payroll and taxes off a business owner's plate so they can do what they do best.*

**Sue Bradley, CPP –HRIS/Payroll Mgr. – J.L. Clark** *I love payroll because it's never the same two days in a row. It creates friendships that are never-ending.*

**Mary Wittmann, CPP Sr. Human Resources Assistant – West Bend Mutual Insurance Company** *Being part of an organization that "speaks my language" is awesome! The Great Milwaukee Chapter has been supportive, encouraging and helpful in my pursuit of payroll education and I'm glad help pay it forward. The best part? All the great friends I've made along the way. Loving what I do, where I do it and who I do it with makes every day great!*

GMCAPA OFFICERS report to the Chapter Executive Board and all Officers also serve on the Executive Board.

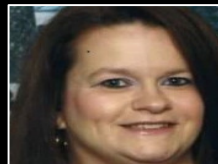
**2021 Greater Milwaukee Chapter of APA Pictorial**



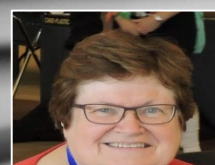
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## Executive Board Members of GMCAPA



Trina Adams, CPP  
 Jeanne Aiona, CPP  
 Linda Degnitz, CPP  
 Michelle Ganzer, CPP  
 Angela Greenhill, CPP  
 Linda Gregurich, CPP  
 Linda Hackbarth, CPP  
 Cheryl Hartwig, CPP  
 Andrea Hoettels, CPP  
 Annette Jones, CPP  
 Barb Kissh, CPP  
 Noreen Tietyen, CPP  
 Sandy Westerdahl, CPP  
 Claire Wojtak, CPP



I LOVE  
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 QUOTES:



I LOVE  
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 QUOTES:

Andrea Hoettels, CPP – Payroll Manager MCFI - *What I love about payroll – “I love the diversity of different topics and subject matter that comes together for one goal . . . paying employees accurately, timely and maintaining regulations across the many different regulatory agencies. I love that there is always room for continued education and the field is always evolving. It is especially awesome to have a supportive network of payroll professionals through the National APA and local Chapters.”*

Sandy Westerdahl, CPP - Salaried Payroll Coordinator at Molson Coors Beverage Company USA - *I see payroll as a service providing department, and I enjoy helping people. Even though there are some issues that make me want to pull my hair out, at the end of the day I feel good that I am able to provide accurate pay, solid answers and good service to our employees. Being a member of the APA gives me the confidence, knowledge and support I need to be successful on the job.*

Michelle Ganzer, CPP – Director of Payroll, RSM US - *I Love Payroll for so many reasons but most importantly the wonderful people I have met over the last 35+ years developed me to whom I am professionally. The countless mentors I have learned from in my Payroll career including members from American Payroll Association (APA) Nationally and The Greater Milwaukee APA Chapter shaped me to whom I am personally. American Payroll Association is known for exceptional education but it is more than just education. APA gives back to each member the an opportunity to develop to a new level professionally and personally. This is why I love Payroll!!!*

Carol Minesal - Human Resource Assistant - West Bend Mutual Insurance Company  
*- Becoming a member and getting involved in the Greater Milwaukee Chapter of the APA was the best decision I've ever made! It's crazy how much knowledge this group has, how willing they are to share and how much they want to help other payroll professionals and our communities. It's hard not to “love” them!!*

**2021 Greater Milwaukee Chapter of APA Pictorial**





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**QUOTE:** As coordinator of our **CPP/FPC Study Group** in fall 2020 and spring 2021, I feel excited and happy that offering a virtual Study Group actually allowed us to help payroll professionals in other states that wanted to sit for the exam. **We are based in Milwaukee, WI and had individuals from AZ, MI and NJ join our Study Group.** It has been awesome having a broader reach and I'm proud to be a member of the Greater Milwaukee Chapter who so fervently encourages education.

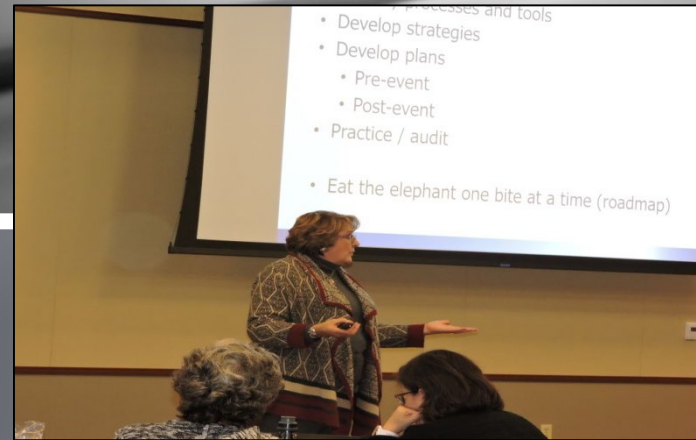
Mary Wittmann – GMCAPA Vice President

Mary Wittmann, CPP, AINS, CPIW

Sr. Human Resources Assistant | Human Resources

West Bend Mutual Insurance Company

Email: [mwittmann@wbmi.com](mailto:mwittmann@wbmi.com)





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Our last in-person Chapter meeting was February 2020. We successfully transitioned to virtual meetings in March 2020 without missing a meeting/educational opportunity for our members!

**FAVORITE MEETING : February 2020.** We love coming back to the Chapter for networking after year end, W-2's and taxes are complete. It just happened to be our last in person meeting. Topic: Understanding the Unemployment Insurance System – Speaker: Scott Bankert, Account Executive, Employment Tax Services – Equifax. Scott is an excellent speaker and a great “Friend” of the Chapter for over 20 years. The highlight of the meeting was our

Community Involvement: Officer Ben and K-9 Officer Zeb of the Wauwatosa Police K-9 Unit stopped in to show us how Zeb can sniff out drugs/guns and they catch the “Bad Guys”. We collected money for a donation to the K-9 Unit.

GMCAPA GIVES  
BACK TO  
COMMUNITY



WE DONATED

\$250

2021 Greater Milwaukee Chapter of APA Pictorial





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**April 2020 Meeting: Great Meeting Experience:** Essentials for Thought Leadership and Content Marketing meeting. The Speaker was Paul Kaplan, Author. He lives in New York City and at 7:00 pm Eastern time the whole city goes out on the balconies and opens their windows and chaps and makes noise to honor the Essential Worker Heroes working during the Covid-19 Pandemic. Paul took his lap top computer to the window so we could hear and see this and join in from **Wisconsin**. We also purchased 10 books from Paul and gave them to meeting attendees as a door prize.

## 2020 MEETINGS

**February 2020** - Understanding the Unemployment Insurance System – Speaker - Scott Bankert, Account Executive, Employment Tax Services – Equifax – In person meeting at Wis Lift Truck

**March 2020** - COVID-19 in the Workplace Implications of work from home – Speaker s

- Kelly Meseck and Scott Walter from Deloitte Legal – Virtual Google Meet meeting

**April 2020** – Essentials for Thought Leadership and Content Marketing – Speaker - Paul Kaplan, Author - Virtual Webex meeting

**May 2020** –COVID-19 in the Workplace and Hot Topics – Speaker - Sue Bradley, CPP and Chapter Member, HRIS/Payroll Manager at J.L. Clark – Virtual Google Meet meeting

**June 2020** – Managing a team "Stay at Home" Tips for 2020 W-4 – New Officers – Chapter Member Awards – Speaker -Jon Schausten, CPP Director, Payroll and HRIS, Human Resources One America - Region 2 APA

Board of Advisors - 2020 Payroll Man of the Year – Virtual Google Meet meeting

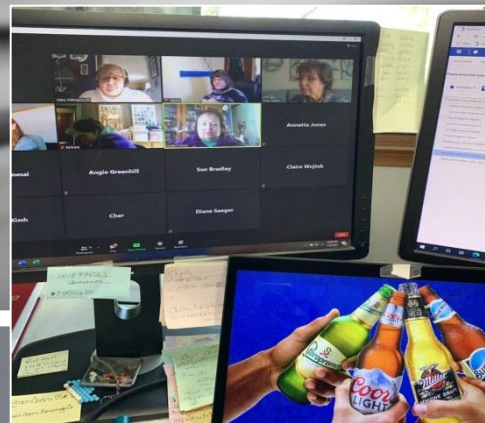
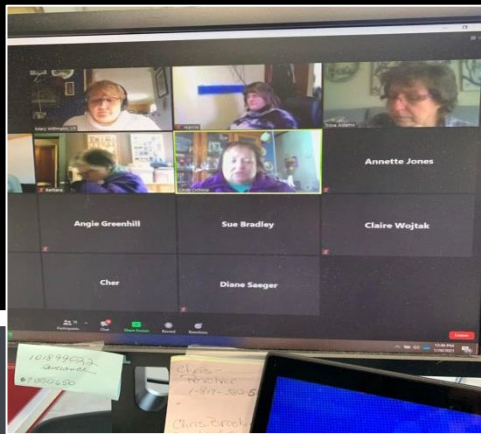
**September 2020** – NPW Celebration Current & Upcoming Topics we need to be prepared and Aware of Including Employee Tax Deferral, Benefits and Child Care - Speaker - Karin Field, Sr. Director Washington National Tax Compensation & Benefits Grp, RSM US LLP – Virtual Webex meeting

**September 2020** – NPW Social Happy Hour – Games and fun – Michelle Ganzer, CPP hosted – Virtual Webex meeting

**October 2020** - Social Security 101 – Speaker - Elida Elizondo, Public Affairs Specialist from Milwaukee Social Security Office – Virtual Webex meeting

**November 2020** - Unemployment Economic Update - 2020 and Beyond – Speakers - Equifax -Rori Carney - Senior Manager, Employment Tax Services Adam Beck - Account Executive Employment Services and Michelle Ganzer, CPP Educational Summary of Virtual Congress Sessions – Virtual Zoom meeting

**December 2020** - Preparing for 2020 Yearend and 2021 Hot Topics - Covid-19 – Speakers - Niko Arhos, Esq., LLM Debby Salam, CPP Ernest & Young – Virtual Zoom meeting

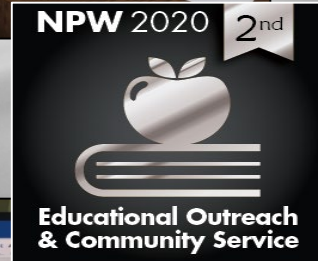
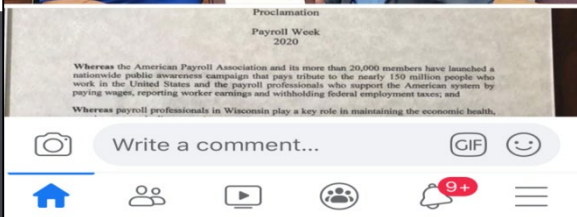
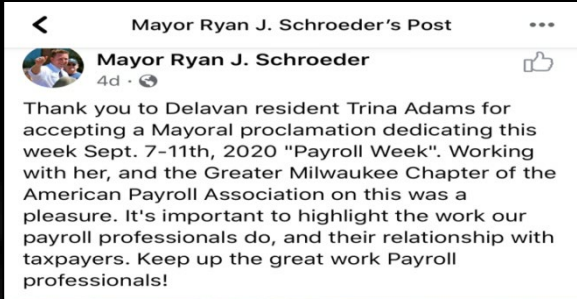




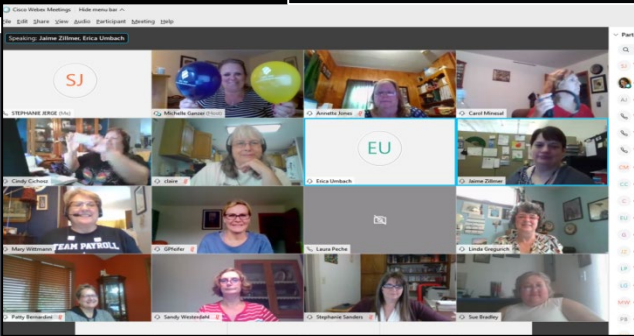
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## 2020 NATIONAL PAYROLL WEEK



2021 Greater Milwaukee Chapter of APA Pictorial







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## VIRTUAL SEMINARS

EARN ADDITIONAL RCH CREDITS

### Sushma Tripathi

VP Workforce Strategy and Compliance, ADP, Inc.



- Prior to current role, served as Vice President Total Absence Management, ADP; Sr. Vice President of Product Management, SHPS; Director, Product Development & Management, CIGNA
- 20+ years of experience in leadership, operations and product management in workforce management, payroll, compensation and benefits strategy, compliance, and administration in the fast-paced, high-growth, outsourcing and insurance markets
- Recognized authority and a noted speaker at industry conferences and events, spokesperson on critical HR topics to national media, a frequent contributor to ADP blogs and widely published in outlets including SHRM, Employee Benefits News, HR Daily Advisor, HRO Today, Forbes, CFO Magazine, and CPA Practice Advisor.
- MBA in Finance and Organizational Behavior from Drexel University, Philadelphia, PA

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Michelle Ganzer, CPP worked with ADP Chad Mertes to set up an additional Educational opportunity for our members and all Payroll Professionals in the State of Wisconsin.

Three, 1 to 1-1/2 sessions in a learning series sponsored by ADP and presented Speaker Sushma Tripathi from ADP.

Excellent opportunity to earn extra RCH's.

**10/9/20 : Navigating the Way Forward: Workforce Management Strategies**

**10/16/20 : Wage and Hour – A Fresh Look at Existing and New Requirements**

**10/23/20 : At a Crossroads: The Intersection of the CARES Act and the PPP, and FFCRA**

*2021 Greater Milwaukee Chapter of APA Pictorial*



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## 2020 COMMUNITY

## INVOLVEMENT



Breast Cancer Walk



Breast Cancer Walk



8/15/20  
Dear Michelle,  
Thank you for your generous donation of \$150 to the Maple Room to the Ronald McDonald House Charities. We appreciate your support of the House - You truly make a difference in the lives of the families who stay with us.  
Sincerely,  
The staff and volunteers of the Ronald McDonald House

Toys for Ronald McDonald House



Food for St Ben's food pantry

*Thank you for your time to review the Greater Milwaukee Chapter of APA's 2021 Pictorial.*

At Each Meeting: We also asked our members to personally reach out to Essential Workers to say THANK YOU!

2021 Greater Milwaukee Chapter of APA Pictorial