

Golisano FOUNDATION

MEDIA ADVISORY

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Today is National R-word Awareness Day Rochester is Leading the Way to Spread the Word to End the R-word

*Golisano Foundation Leads 6th and Largest Annual Campaign
with Record Number, 20+ Campaign Events Locally*



WHAT:

[Golisano Foundation's](#) 6th annual campaign challenging the Rochester community to Spread the Word to End the R-word™.

This year's campaign has the largest participation ever in Rochester. The Rochester region's campaign is one of the largest in the country, holding over 20 different pledge events this year on the national [Spread the Word to End the Word](#) day of awareness on and around March 2. It asks people to pledge to take a stand against using the r-word, "retard" or "retarded." The R-word has gained popularity in culture, but is offensive and derogatory to people with developmental disabilities.



See Tom Golisano's video message

WHEN & WHERE:

Here's what's happening around Rochester to spread the word! Additional activities are being held in Florida and Buffalo at Golisano Foundation supported organizations.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 2

- **University of Rochester Medical Center (601 Elmwood Ave., Rochester)**
 - **Strong Café 401 (10 a.m. - 2 p.m.):** Banner signing; t-shirts and stickers to be handed out; Monroe ARC Gregory Street blues band to perform from Noon-1:30 p.m.
 - *Interview Opp from 10 a.m. to 11:45 a.m. with Ann Costello, Executive Director, Golisano Foundation*
 - **Eastman Institute for Oral Health Atrium (All-day):** poster signing, photos and awareness. Student performances. TOUR program in attendance/helping.
- **University of Rochester River Campus (252 Elmwood Ave)**
 - **Wilson Commons Bridge Lounge, 3rd floor (11 a.m. - 4 p.m.):** Student run initiative; banner signing; student performers; Transition Opportunities at UR (TOUR) students will be in attendance (*TOUR is an inclusive college experience at UofR for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities age 18-21*).
 - **UR Warner School of Education Institute for Innovative Transition (Genrich-Rusling Room, LeChase 215) (Noon - 12:50 p.m.):** Lunch talk with Martha Mock, PhD, Director of Inclusion at Warner and the Director of the Institute for Innovative Transition, and Cori Piels, Inclusion Specialist from MCC and AmeriCorps, who's featured in the micro-documentary series "[The Opportunity Project](#)."
 - *Interview Opp with Ann Costello, Executive Director, Golisano Foundation*
- **Baytrail Middle School (Penfield):** Student taking the pledge by signing poster.
- **Pittsford Mendon High School:** Taking the pledge by signing a banner.
- **Bishop Kearney High School:** A member of the Rochester Knighthawks will help with banner signing during two lunch periods.
- **McQuaid High School:** The Rochester Razor Sharks will help with banner signing during two lunch periods.
- **Mercy High School:** Pledge signing during homeroom and lunch period.
- **Monroe Community College:** Pledge signing in foyer by SADHA (Student American Dental Hygienists' Association).
- **Nazareth College:** Life Prep program will be helping with banner signings and tabling.

- **RIT:** Banner signing in the Student Union; social media push.
- **Roberts Wesleyan College:** Banner signing with the education department and nursing students.
- **Mary Cariola Children's Center:** Internal promotion encouraging staff to take pledge; Promoting on Facebook encouraging followers to also sign the pledge.
- **Special Olympics Genesee Region:** Will have athlete ambassadors in attendance at URMIC.
- **RMSC:** Will be posting videos on social media to encourage taking the pledge; encouraging staff to pledge; information given out at front admissions desk.
- **The National Museum of Play:** Will display poster at entrance for guests to see; Encouraging employees to take the pledge.

- **University at Buffalo (South Campus)**
 - **School of Dental Medicine Lobby (11 a.m. - 2 p.m.):** Dental students involved, banner signing, raise awareness among staff, students and patients.
 - **Harriman Hall (Cafe) (11 a.m. - 2 p.m.):** Dental Students involved, banner signing, 100 t-shirt giveaways, photos, raise awareness
- **University at Buffalo (North Campus)**
 - **Student Union (11 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.):** Ran by Students involved in the Undergraduate Biology Association (UBA), banner signing, raise awareness, 100 t-shirt giveaways
- **City Hall of Buffalo (lobby) (10:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.):** UB Smile Team, banner signing by Mayor and his team, 150 t-shirt giveaways
- **University Pediatric Dentistry (8 locations-all day):** Clinical and non-clinical staff are involved; banner/posters signing, collecting signatures from staff, as well as parents and patients

- **Golisano Center for Community Health, Niagara Falls Memorial Medical**
- **Golisano Children's Hospital of Southwest Florida, Lee Memorial Health System, Fort. Myers, FL**
- **Upstate Golisano Children's Hospital, Syracuse, NY**

SATURDAY, MARCH 5

- **Hochstein School of Music and Dance:** Pledge signing during Brockport Orchestra concert.

Media Contacts for University of Rochester events:

[Jim Mandelaro](#) (UR's River Campus); [Sean Dobbin](#) (Pediatrics at URMIC) ; [Theresa Danylak](#) (Warner School of Education)

Additional activities will be updated on [our web site:](#)

Spread the Word to End the Word was started by youth and is an ongoing effort of Special Olympics International and Best Buddies. Each year the foundation's goal is to reach out to more people who can spread the word and pledge to use respectful language that promotes more accepting attitudes for all people including those with intellectual and developmental disabilities who have unique gifts and talents to share with the world.

"Most people who use the words retard or retarded do not mean to be hurtful, but to the millions of people around the world have intellectual disabilities and developmental disabilities, and their families and friends, it is hurtful, and as cruel and offensive as any other slur," said Ann

Costello, Director of the Golisano Foundation.

"We're asking people, schools, businesses, organizations and communities to take the pledge to end the r-word and use the new r-word, respect. It's easy, it doesn't cost anything, it takes just a minute and it can make a big difference."

"We made a big impact last year and are grateful for the response we received. Now we need to build on that awareness and keep the message going."

How to Organize a Pledge Event

Go to r-word.org and take the pledge, and to get information and resources on how to Spread the word to end the word in schools, companies and organizations.

Email the Foundation with Pledge Activities

The Foundation will recognize those organizations that are spreading the word on the golisanofoundation.org web site. To be included organizations should send an email to egleason@golisanofoundation.org.

Social Media

The Foundation will also be following along on social media. Tag us in your pictures and tweets on Facebook and Twitter using the hashtags *#respect* and *#rword*.

[@GolisanoFdn](https://twitter.com/GolisanoFdn) / facebook.com/GolisanoFoundation

About the Golisano Foundation

The Golisano Foundation is one of the largest private foundations in the United States devoted exclusively to supporting programs for people with intellectual disabilities. Founded in 1985 with an initial gift of \$90,000 from B. Thomas Golisano, the founder and Chairman of Paychex, the Foundation now has more than \$32 million in assets and has awarded more than \$20 million in grants, about \$1.5 million annually, to non-profit organizations in a multi-county region surrounding Rochester, New York that serve people with developmental disabilities.

The foundation is committed to opening doors, changing perceptions, and forging unprecedented partnerships to provide individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities with pathways to self-sufficiency, personal dignity, and the best possible expression of their abilities and talents throughout their lifetimes.

Through targeted initiatives, the Foundation envisions communities that encourage and commit to inclusion, acceptance and opportunity for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities; and provide services that empower individuals to make their way productively and creatively in their communities.

For more information see golisanofoundation.org.

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