

Community Event Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

San Mar Bicycle Ride Fundraiser Achieves Record Results

Boonsboro, MD, September 14, 2026 – San Mar celebrates successful completion of the 39th edition of The Great Bicycle Tour of the C&O Canal



San Mar Family and Community Services held the 39th edition of its largest annual fundraiser, The Great Bicycle Tour (TGBT) of the C&O Canal, July 10-13, 2026. The 124 cyclists participating in this year's tour came from as far away as New York and Florida, investing four days to ride the entire C&O Canal and raise much-needed funds for San Mar's programs supporting children and families in Maryland.

Although the 184.5-mile ride from Cumberland, Maryland to Washington, DC always takes place in July, fundraising continues through the end of August, allowing riders to continue to collect donations and corporate matching funds. At the close of the fundraising period, riders had raised a record \$184,890 to support children, families, and communities in the region served through San Mar's key programs including Treatment Foster Care, the Bester Community of Hope initiative, and the Jack E. Barr Center for Well-Being outpatient mental health center. In addition, San Mar gratefully receives underwriting from corporate and local sponsorships that help cover event expenses, bringing the net event benefit to San Mar to \$197,421.

To participate, every rider committed to raising a minimum of \$550 in fundraising. This year, however, the average was almost \$1,500 per rider, with 16 riders achieving \$3,000 or more. The youngest participant to achieve this recognition-level fundraising amount of \$3,000 or more was 12-year-old Emerson Hamby-Price of Williamsport, who was riding for her third time.

Besides the valuable fundraising benefit to San Mar, participants frequently share what the event experience was like for them. One multi-year rider shared, "Life-changing' feels cliché and dramatic but I'm not sure how else to explain the camaraderie and joy I feel during this event." And a first-time rider shared,



“It was hot, humid, and physically demanding. It was also one of the richest human experiences I’ve had in a while.”



San Mar’s Director of Development and TGBT event manager, Elisa Mabina, noted that the energy, friendship, and support felt during the challenging four-day ride is another reason this fundraiser is so unique and such an important signature event for San Mar. “Bringing diverse people together in support of a unifying cause has a synergistic effect that is unmatched in my experience,” she shared.

One team came together in honor of a beloved family member who had recently passed. Rider Elizabeth Morgan of Winchester, Virginia shared, “San Mar embodies the values my mom lived by—that everyone has strengths, and a community that promotes belonging, safety, self-care, and respect empowers individuals young and old to find their unique purpose in life and contribute meaningfully to society. San Mar also believes in establishing life-long connections with foster care givers—exactly what happened between my mom and me. I can’t think of a better way to express my gratitude for my mom than to commemorate this year’s TGBT to her.”

Underwriting was received from presenting sponsor The Nora Roberts Foundation, lead sponsors Dot Foods, The Loats Foundation, Fulton Bank, and Middletown Valley Bank, and partnering sponsors Washington County Office of Grant Management, SEK CPAs & Advisors, Blue Ridge Risk Partners, Lamb Insurance Services, Jackie’s Trail Rentals, and Antietam Broadband. Partnering sponsors were AC&T, Staples Mid-Atlantic Distribution Center, Willow Brook Church, Younger Toyota, Cameron Group LLC, Patriot Federal Credit Union, Dublin Roasters, and BKG Media and Promotions. Additional in-kind support was received from Wheel Base Bikes, First United Bank & Trust, Hagerstown Ford, Boonsboro Lions Club, Broadfording Church, C&O Bicycle in Hancock, Wegmans, US Foods, and Matsutake Sushi and Steak in Frederick .



In the 39 years of hosting this bicycle tour, San Mar has now raised close to three million dollars in support of its programs serving children and families. Registration for next summer’s 40th Anniversary bicycle tour will open November 1, 2026, and TGBT XL will take place July 10-13, 2027.

San Mar Family and Community Services, whose mission is “Cultivating Hope and Well-Being in Children, Families and Communities” has been serving the Washington County, Maryland area since 1883. Services are provided through San Mar Treatment Foster Care, the Jack E. Barr Center for Well-Being outpatient mental health services, and Bester Community of Hope prevention programs.

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