



*Skating Strides Against Breast Cancer*  
**Women's Hockey East Association**  
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## **Hockey East's "Skating Strides" to Partner with The Ellie Fund**

**WAKEFIELD, Mass.** – Hockey East Commissioner **Joe Bertagna** has announced that the conference's "Skating Strides Against Breast Cancer" initiative has partnered with the Ellie Fund. The charitable organization has been designated to receive the funds raised from Skating Strides events in Massachusetts and New Hampshire, as of February 2018.

Founded in 2007, the Hockey East Skating Strides program has raised over \$400,000 for various breast cancer charities, while creating awareness for the cause, as well as interest in the women's hockey programs. Skating Strides has given the student-athletes the opportunity to give back to the communities in which they study and play hockey. Each season, all nine women's programs, in addition to several of the men's teams, host a designated Skating Strides game on campus, between October and February.

The mission of the Ellie Fund is to provide essential support services for breast cancer patients to ease the stresses of everyday life, allowing the focus to be on family, recovery and healing. By providing nutritional and grocery assistance, transportation to medical appointments, childcare, light housekeeping, prepared and delivered meals and integrative therapies through their Healing Together Patient and Family Care Program and Metastatic Breast Cancer Program, the Ellie Fund helps to relieve a patient's burden while in treatment.

"The Skating Strides initiative is one of the highlights of each season," said Bertagna. "It is the sort of thing we should be doing, alongside the games and the competition, and it is encouraging to see all of our schools engaged in a sincere and productive way. A great deal of credit should go to Associate Commissioner **Kathy Wynters** who makes it all happen."

"We are truly honored to partner with the Hockey East Skating Strides program," said **Gail Fine**, Executive Director of the Ellie Fund. "The generosity of students and fans will help provide invaluable hope and support to the hundreds of breast cancer patients and their families we serve."

Hockey East's Skating Strides program was honored in May 2016 by Massachusetts General Hospital Cancer Center at "The One Hundred", a fundraising and awareness initiative that honors those who have displayed a commitment to fighting cancer.

**# WHEA #**

*Hockey East member institutions include Boston College ~ Boston University ~ UConn  
University of Maine ~ University of Massachusetts+ ~ UMass Lowell+ ~ Merrimack College  
University of New Hampshire ~ Northeastern University ~ Providence College ~ University of Vermont  
+Men's hockey only*