

Max Strus Family Foundation Celebrates 2026 Impact: More Than \$100,000 Donated and Over 1,500 Community Members Reached

October 2026 — The Max Strus Family Foundation is proud to announce a year of significant growth and community impact in 2026, awarding **more than \$100,000 in charitable grants** while creating opportunities for more than **500 athletes and participants** and bringing together more than **1,500 members of the community** through its events and programs.

Founded by NBA player and Chicago native **Max Strus**, the Max Strus Family Foundation is committed to giving back to the communities that have shaped Max's life. Through charitable giving, youth sports, education, healthcare, mental health initiatives and community programming, the Foundation works to create opportunities and bring people together.

More Than \$100,000 Donated in 2026 to Date

In 2026, the Foundation has provided more than **\$100,000 in charitable grants** to organizations making a meaningful difference in the lives of individuals and families, including:

- [The Andrew Weishar Foundation](#)
- [The Carson Strong Foundation](#)
- [Rec2Connect Foundation](#)
- [Best Buddies in Ohio](#)
- [Envision Excellence in STEM](#)

The Foundation's giving reflects its commitment to supporting organizations aligned with its core areas of focus, including **youth sports, education, mental health, cancer support and research, and healthcare**.

“These organizations are doing incredible work in their communities, and we're proud to be able to support them,” said **Max Strus, Founder of the Max Strus Family Foundation**. “Giving back has always been important to me and my family. The goal is to use our platform to create opportunities, support great organizations and make a real difference in the lives of the people who need it most.”

Building Community Through Basketball

The Foundation's 2026 impact extends well beyond its charitable grants.

This summer marked the **fifth year of the Max Strus Basketball Camp in Chicago** and the **second year of Max Strus Basketball Camp in Cleveland**, bringing young athletes together for basketball instruction, mentorship and an opportunity to learn directly from Max and members of his basketball community.

Combined, the Foundation's basketball programming helped provide opportunities for hundreds of young athletes while reinforcing Max's commitment to giving back to the communities that helped shape his journey.

The Foundation also hosted its inaugural [Empower Sports Clinic](#), expanding its programming beyond traditional youth basketball to provide a sports experience for **teens and adults with disabilities**.

In total, the Foundation worked with **more than 500 athletes and participants through its 2026 sports programming**, creating opportunities for athletes of different ages and abilities to participate, compete and connect.

Honoring Gary Wimmer's Legacy

A cornerstone of the Foundation's charitable mission is the Gary Strong Award, which was established to honor the legacy of Creative Director Jake Wimmer's late father, Gary Wimmer. The award recognizes an individual or family that has demonstrated extraordinary strength, perseverance, and community impact.

This year, the Max Strus Family Foundation awarded the **2026 Gary Strong Award** to Kory Wiita, along with a **\$10,000 grant** to support his mission to bring the same technology that changed his life to change the lives of others in his community.

In 2009, Kory Wiita suffered a paralyzing spinal cord injury during the final football game of his high school career. Sixteen years later, Kory continues to inspire others living with spinal cord injuries while embracing a new technology that is helping him regain abilities he hasn't experienced since his accident.

With the help of the ARC-EX device, which uses electrical stimulation to activate nerves along the spinal cord, Kory has regained movement and sensation in his hands. He can now move his fingers, pinch and hold a pen, use a fork, and—most meaningfully—feel the touch of his young son on his hand for the first time.

He recently opened up the first facility in Ohio to use this technology to help others live without limits.

His resilience, perseverance, and commitment to inspiring others make Kory a powerful example of the spirit behind the Gary Strong Award.

Inaugural Pickle & Pints Event Gives Back to PAWS

The Foundation also launched its inaugural **Pickle & Pints** event in Chicago in 2026, bringing together athletes, celebrities, supporters, and members of the community for a day of pickleball, food, drinks and fundraising.

The celebrity tournament featured a competitive field of athletes and personalities, with **Robbie Hummel** ultimately taking home the championship.

As part of the event, Hummel selected **PAWS Chicago** as the beneficiary of the celebrity tournament's charitable donation, resulting in a **\$10,000 donation to PAWS Chicago on his behalf**.

But the giving didn't stop there.

Following the final match, **Max personally donated an additional \$10,000 to PAWS Chicago**, bringing the total charitable contribution to **\$20,000**.

The moment perfectly captured the spirit of the event—bringing together competition, community, and philanthropy while giving participants an opportunity to use their platforms to support causes they care about.

More Than 1,500 People Come Together for the Parking Lot Party

One of the Foundation's largest community celebrations of the year was the **Max Strus Family Foundation Parking Lot Party**, hosted at **Moraine Valley Community College** in celebration of 5 years of Max Strus Basketball Camp.

The free community event welcomed **more than 1,500 attendees**, brought together families, children, and residents, from the very communities where Max was raised.

The Parking Lot Party provided an opportunity for the community to come together, enjoy a day of activities, and celebrate the people and places that have played an important role in Max's journey.

For Max, the event represents something bigger than a single day.

“Growing up in this community, I know how important it is to have places and events where everyone can come together,” said Strus. “The Parking Lot Party was incredible because I got to see so many people from the communities that supported me growing up. Being able to give back to them a night of incredible food, music, and bring everyone together is what the Foundation is all about.”

Looking Ahead: A New Chapter in Los Angeles

As 2026 continues, the Max Strus Family Foundation is preparing for an exciting new chapter as **Max joins the LA Clippers for his 8th year in the NBA**.

While Max's basketball journey is taking him to a new city, his commitment to giving back remains at the heart of everything the Foundation does. The Foundation will continue to support the communities that have played such an important role in Max's life while also looking for new opportunities to create impact.

Max has always believed that his platform is an opportunity to give back, and we're looking forward to seeing where this adventure takes us. Our roots will always be in Chicago and Cleveland, but we're excited about the possibility of building new relationships and creating an even greater impact.

And the Foundation's 2026 story is not over yet.

The Max Strus Family Foundation will be announcing additional grant recipients and several special initiatives before the end of the year. Supporters are encouraged to stay tuned as the Foundation closes out 2026 with more opportunities to give back, celebrate its communities, and make an impact.

"We have a lot more to come," said Strus. "I'm really proud of what we've accomplished this year, but we're not done yet. I'm excited for everyone to see what's next."

About the Max Strus Family Foundation

The Max Strus Family Foundation is a nonprofit organization founded by NBA player Max Strus with a mission to create a sense of community and provide opportunities for individuals and families through charitable giving, youth sports, education, healthcare, mental health initiatives, and community programming. The Foundation is committed to supporting organizations and communities that have a meaningful connection to Max's life and values.

Thank you to all that have become a part of our growing community.