



# Cupcakes and Courage

**SUPERSTAR PASTRY CHEF BUDDY VALASTRO HAS A SWEET STRATEGY FOR RAISING AWARENESS.**

**Y**ou probably know Buddy Valastro from the hit reality TV show *Cake Boss*. Every week he and his team create extravagant edible art modeled after, say, the Bronx Zoo, *Sesame Street* or a full-scale race car.

But this past spring, the chef's biggest ambition was more far-reaching: baking to increase awareness and funds for people with epilepsy. In March he hosted "Cupcakes With Buddy: Supporting Epilepsy Awareness" in Hoboken, N.J. The sweet-stravaganza brought in top bakeries from three states, and each one created a delectable array of purple cupcakes.

"The event was spectacular!" says Valastro, who hosted the celebration at the W Hotel. "Epilepsy is something that is near and dear to my heart since my niece has epilepsy. Raising awareness means a lot to me and my family. I understand what families af-

ected by epilepsy are going through and I'm thankful that there are organizations we can partner with to make a difference."

Epilepsy is far from a new cause for the Boss and his family. Valastro's niece, Bartolina Faugno, began to have infantile seizures when she was six months old. Now 14 and seizure-free for nearly three years, Bartolina leads an active, average teenage life.

But her family has never forgotten how terrified and helpless they felt when Bartolina's seizures hit—or when they ran into people who were ignorant about epilepsy. The proceeds from Cupcakes With Buddy, which was organized by the Anita Kaufmann Foundation, went toward funding educational programs and materials, and for sessions at which individuals are trained, at no extra cost, to deliver first aid to someone having a seizure.

So what special cake did Valastro unveil at the event? "The cake I created was purple with a globe on it. Purple is the official color symbolizing epilepsy, and the globe represents the impact that this disorder has on people all around the world." It was a sweet message. As Buddy says, "If we all come together, we can raise awareness and better the lives affected by epilepsy."



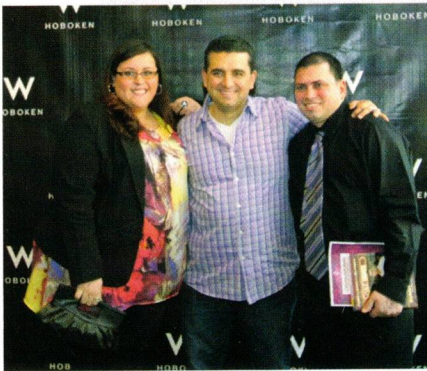
Find out more about Buddy Valastro's event and the work of the Anita Kaufmann Foundation at [akfus.org](http://akfus.org).



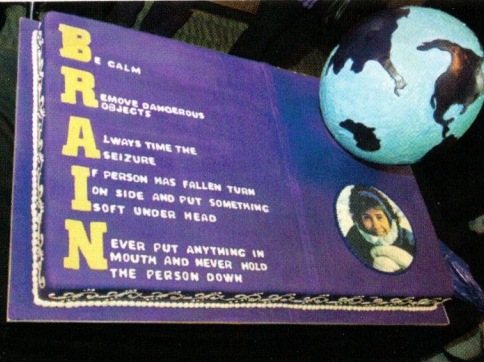
From left to right: Deborah Josephs (AKF), Grace Faugno, Joe Faugno, Robert Faugno, Bartolina Faugno, Buddy Valastro and Danielle Josephs (AKF).

Superstar cake artist Buddy Valastro and his real-life television family thrilled their fans at the inaugural Cupcakes with Buddy charitable tasting event held on March 13, 2011 at the W Hotel in Hoboken, New Jersey. A dozen local bakeries served their cupcake creations to help raise money for the Anita Kaufmann Foundation's mission of improving the public's brain seizure education and awareness. The event was a kick-off to this year's Great Purple Cupcake Project, a worldwide charitable event held annually on March 26th. Buddy's teenage niece, Bartolina Faugno, has been challenged by seizures for many years, and her family was happy to be there to support her and the Anita Kaufmann Foundation (AKF). Guests were also treated to chocolates by Valrhona, coffee from Starbucks, ice cream by Ronnybrook Farm Dairy, and milk courtesy of Fairway Market. Dessert Professional is proud to be a supporter of the Anita Kaufmann Foundation. For more information and to participate in the 2012 Great Purple Cupcake Project, visit [www.akfus.org](http://www.akfus.org).

# cupcakes with buddy



CupcakesTakeTheCake.Com contest winners Erica Vernidis and Osvlado Maldonado celebrate with Buddy.



Cake by Buddy and Carlo's Bakery.



Cupcake-shaped handbags by Judith Leiber.

