



Friends of
**JOSHUA
HOUSE**
Foundation, Inc.

Joshua House
CONNECTION

FRIENDSOFJOSHUAHOUSE.ORG

— SUMMER 2019 —

FOJH – LETTER FROM THE CHAIR



Tracy Falkowitz
Chair

Summer is in full force! Hopefully, you are planning fun adventures, vacations, and carefree times with friends and family. For so many of us, backyard barbecues and beach trips are part of our memories. At Joshua House, our children don't have these memories. Summertime memories are vivid reminders of caring for younger siblings, parents with addiction problems, food instability, worrying about family strife and violence, and hiding their reality from the outside world.

Together with our excellent and dedicated donors and volunteers, we have an opportunity to help create beautiful, happy memories for the children who call Joshua House home. Our mission at Friends of Joshua House includes healing the emotional wounds suffered by the abused and neglected children in care. Providing structured summer activities that create moments of fun and memories of joy takes a team effort. We need your help to deliver these activities and more. Many of our children would like to enroll in camp programs, visit theme parks, enjoy memberships at gyms and the YMCA, and yes, take trips to the beach. These are simple requests that we would like to grant to assist with the healing of these children. Please help us create a summer of positive memories for our children.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tracy M. Falkowitz". The script is fluid and cursive.

FOJH – LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



DeDe Grundel
Executive Director

Time marches on. Last December, I wrote about a 2018 federal law that was propelling radical change in our Nation's foster care system, the law is called the Family First Prevention Services Act. It prioritizes keeping families together by encouraging prevention measures for children at risk of entering foster care. Primarily, more money is funneled toward at-home parenting classes, mental health counseling and substance abuse treatment — and puts significant limits on child welfare services placing children in congregate care settings, such as group homes like Joshua House. Well, since my last letter, many concerned child advocates have worked tirelessly to address how this law will reform our state's child welfare system. And the bottom line is that they are still working on it. But, the first impact was in passing this year's State budget. Legislators passed a \$91.1 billion budget, with an increase of \$2.4 billion over last year. I cannot imagine the struggle legislators go through when trying to allocate limited funds to all the areas of social service needs with a state whose population is booming. Somebody ends up losing even with an increase. The results for Child Welfare Services were a wash. Hard to believe with \$28.4 million new dollars allocated for Community-Based Care foster care. But this was done out of necessity to cover the expected losses in federal funds, so, essentially, no practical advantages were made.

However dismal it may sound that the State of Florida had to cover the loss of federal funds, it is a testament to our state and the dedication of caring citizens that we want to assure that our at-risk children are provided the best possible opportunities to thrive. I am exceedingly proud that every effort is being made at Joshua House to ensure that we are collectively accomplishing our mission of providing exemplary care to the children in residence, using the most progressive and thoughtful program services, with compassionate and caring staff. Eventually, after we navigate our way through dwindling federal dollars, complex legislation, and systemic social dysfunction...it is the children that ultimately matter.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "D. Grundel". The script is cursive and somewhat stylized.

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East Lake 5K

Thank you to our friends at East Lake Fire Rescue for choosing us as a beneficiary of \$7,500 from their 5th Annual 5K Run/Walk for Charity on October 20th, 2018. Over 500 registrants received an East Lake Fire Rescue Race T-shirt, a medal, a pancake breakfast and a post-race party. Great job!



Pin Party 2019

The pins were down, but spirits were up! It was another great afternoon at Pin Chasers on Sunday, February 24th. Food, bowling, face painting, and a silent auction of unique artwork by our children were some of the ingredients of a fun and eventful Pin Party. Everyone was smiling and laughing as they had a great time and helped us raise money, too. How can this event not be a huge hit with the Joshua House children and attendees? Pin Chasers, our volunteers, teams, and sponsors make it fun! The Pin Party just gets better every year. Be sure to mark your calendar for Sunday, February 23rd, 2020! Come roll with us!

Child Abuse Awareness Benefit Luncheon 2019

Each year we strive to bring to light the different atrocities that define child abuse and neglect at our annual Child Abuse Awareness Benefit held in April. Although this is a fundraiser for Joshua House, it also serves as a platform to educate and inform our community about current trends and issues regarding child abuse, and about the challenges faced by our child welfare service providers. This year's April 26th event did not disappoint.



Both speakers were a revelation to all. Dr. John DeGarmo, foster care expert, author, and a professional trainer was our inspirational keynote speaker, and DeLina Turner shared her story of tragic child abuse to a successful survivor. Thank you to our presenting sponsors Lazydays RV Center and McNichols Company, and the incredibly talented eleven-year-old Frankie Older who opened the program with a moving rendition of our National Anthem. The talented Gayle Martin Sierens flawlessly emceed the entire program, and Linda Goldstein along with Company Man Studios produced the educational Joshua House video.

The Child Abuse Awareness Benefit is chaired by Jeremy Pfeifer and is steered by an incredible group of volunteers; Tasmin Beatty, Molly Crews, Suzy Holley, Nancy Pfordresher-Newkirk, Diana Zubrowski, Jason Geisler, and Dana Philp. This year we awarded some very industrious folks with the Olin Mott Golden Heart, Dottie Berger MacKinnon Wings of Inspiration, and Bob Thomas Star of Philanthropy awards, read the details about these winners in this issue.



Tampa Tarpons Philanthropic HOPE Week

The mission of the Tampa Tarpons' philanthropic week of giving, fondly called HOPE Week, Helping Others Persevere and Excel, delivered on HOPE for Joshua House and four other nonprofits with a generous \$2,500 gift. Every New York Yankees affiliate and the major league club provide a community "service" week that encourages players to connect with their

community. This June, the children's lives at Joshua House were enriched by the players during the day and by the game at night. Thank you for the opportunity and the gracious support Tampa Tarpons!

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR AWARD WINNERS

2019 OLIN MOTT GOLDEN HEART AWARD



ALPHA KAPPA ALPHA GAMMA THETA OMEGA CHAPTER

In 1908, at Howard University in Washington, D.C., a group of courageous, scholarly, and talented female students founded Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated, the first Greek-letter organization for African-American women. They purposed the organization to foster sisterhood, promote scholarly achievement and serve others. In 1940, Gamma Theta Omega Chapter was chartered here in Tampa and became the second graduate chapter to be chartered in the State of Florida.

These dynamic women of the Gamma Theta Omega Chapter have demonstrated an unwavering devotion to providing community service to Tampa Bay. Aspiring to live their mission, Service to ALL Mankind, they have extended their talents and wisdom to design and build local programs that positively develop youth, inspire integrity, and create compassionate leaders. For many years, the Gamma Theta Omega chapter has included our Joshua House girls, ages 11-17, in life enriching projects, from the fun and informative Chat N Chew seminars to participating in their Ivy AKAdemy where our foster youth are included in learning workshops focused on educational, cultural, philanthropic and social principles. Individual members have helped our youth create Vision Boards, explore career options, develop business skills, and so much more. They impact the lives of girls through innovative programs providing leadership development skills, civic engagement, enhanced academic preparation, resume writing, character building, and dressing for success.

Like its namesake, this award emulates the "heart of gold" attitude that guided the late Olin Mott's life. A selfless man and a champion of children, Olin Mott often put the needs of others above his own. For many decades, the remarkable women of the Gamma Theta Omega chapter have done the same. Gamma Theta Omega Chapter has a 51-year history of providing scholarships to a multitude of students through various program venues. The signature scholarship program is the Miss Teenage Scholarship Pageant (MTAT). This year, 2019, Gamma Theta Omega awarded a total of \$42,000 in scholarships during the MTAT Scholarship Pageant; additionally, Gamma Theta Omega funds and awards scholarships to help offset the costs of tuition, books and classroom equipment and or supplies through an established partnership with the Hillsborough Education Foundation. Their efforts and partnerships allow them to award scholarships to deserving, under-represented students. For this and the many ways they have helped our community they are the perfect recipients of the 2019 Olin Mott Golden Heart Award.

2019 BOB THOMAS STAR OF PHILANTHROPY



CAPITAL ONE

Philanthropy comes in many forms. Our late founder, Bob Thomas, was well known for his selfless acts of humanity, always generous with his gifts of money, he was also known for his boundless kindness, willingness to lend a hand, and for sharing his keen sense of business practices that have helped many charitable organizations thrive for more than a decade after his passing.

This year we honored Capital One with the 2019 Bob Thomas Star of Philanthropy award, not just for their unwavering grant support of the Earn to Learn Project, but also for the gifts of kindness, volunteerism, and generous support found amongst their incredible Capital One associates that call Tampa Bay home.

Capital One believes that as business leaders they have a unique opportunity to create value in the communities where their associates live and work. Applying innovation, collaboration, and empowerment to their philanthropic activities in our community has helped Capital One leverage time and money to fuel creative solutions and inspire their associates to act independently as philanthropists. Partnering with local nonprofits and civic leaders, Capital One encourages their teams of associates to "take it to the streets" and invest both sweat equity and personal capital with partner agencies and within their own neighborhoods. Joshua House has been one such lucky recipient of over 900 Capital One philanthropists since 2014!

Our Capital One friends have personally invested in our Back to School campaigns, Wish Lists, Holiday, Pantry, and Clothing Drives, and have spent over 2,225 volunteer hours on both home improvement labor and children's activities. All of which greatly improves the quality of Joshua House's program and the lives of the children and teens served. Much like the late Robert "Bob" Thomas, founder of Joshua House and the namesake of this award, Capital One corporate and their associates have demonstrated overwhelming compassion and dedication to our community. We were delighted to present Capital One and their Tampa Bay associates with the 2019 Bob Thomas Star of Philanthropy award. Congratulations C1!

AWARD WINNERS!

2019 DOTTIE BERGER MACKINNON WINGS OF INSPIRATION AWARD

Some leaders are born, and some of them are built. But what makes leaders truly inspirational? Holding onto their purpose and passion and executing them, no matter how difficult it is to overcome what life puts in their way – that's what makes inspirational leaders. This is the reason that we honored Tammy Levent with the 2019 Dottie Berger MacKinnon Wings of Inspiration award. Tammy always pushes the limits of her capabilities, not just in herself, but also in others. She is an award-winning CEO and the driving force behind Elite Travel Management Group, and TASK, a workshop and seminar series that unleashes her clients' inner power in their personal and professional lives.



TAMMY LEVENT

Faced with several misfortunes, Tammy has managed to rise above her set-backs and become a leader in the travel industry for the past 23 years. She is also a powerful, vivid and vivacious speaker. In an unstable economy and industry, her competitive nature has earned her an extensive list of awards and accolades such as Editor's Choice Award for Women Who Mean Business, three time Finalist Tampa Bay Business Woman of the Year; three time winner of Fast 50 Top Growing Companies in Tampa Bay; Recipient of the Magellan and Travvy Awards for the most Innovative Travel Agent Worldwide, National Diversity Council -Finalist Glass Ceiling Award, American Express Global Award Worldwide Best of the Best Agency 16 years in a row, and many more.

Involved in providing support in a myriad of way for over two decades; Tammy became disheartened by the number of children arriving at Joshua House with all of their belongings in pillow cases or trash bags. She was concerned that foster children were receiving a damaging message that they were as disposable as their belongings. Seeing a natural connection between the travel industry and suitcases, she endeavored to assure that our Joshua House children all left with a suitcase in hand. She didn't realize the power of her plea. She soon established It's My Bag (named by our Joshua House residents). And now, through her extensive networking she has taken the project nationwide, and even international. Today, It's My Bag has successfully delivered over 15,000 suitcases into the hands of homeless and foster children throughout the world.

As a tireless advocate, a champion of foster children; and as a leader in our community, the late Dottie Berger MacKinnon would be proud to see Tammy Levent receive this award. Dottie's legacy created Joshua House, Friends of Joshua House Foundation, Kids Charity of Tampa Bay, and A Kid's Place of Tampa Bay. She constantly strived to make a positive impact within child welfare services, but it was the needs of the individual child that touched her most profoundly. The Dottie Berger MacKinnon Wings of Inspiration award is meant to go to a person that is a catalyst for positive change in our community, no matter the sacrifices.

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AETNA
HUB INTERNATIONAL

CIGNA
HUB INTERNATIONAL

JOHNNIE & EVE COSTA
ROSEMARIE GARCIA GETTING

DREW FALKOWITZ & FAMILY
CHERYL WEINBERG

TRACY FALKOWITZ'S BIRTHDAY
ERIN AEBEL
HARRY COHEN
SUE ELLEN CORNING
WES EVERETT
CATHY ROBERTS FRIEDMAN
ANDREA GREENBLATT
KIM KOHN
DEBRA KRONOWITZ-
EDELMAN
RACHEL KRONOWITZ
MAGGIE FOWLER
DEDE GRUNDEL
HILARY COGGINS HIGH
WILL LAZENBY
DAVE LOOS
KRISTIN STRAMMER MALLIA
SHITAL PATEL
VICTORIA PERK
JENNIE REBECCA
DAVID RIFKIN
ANITA CHESTER SHULER
ANITA GRIFFIN THOMAS
DANIELLE ZETTLES VEGA
LUIS VIERA
GLENN YANCEY

FLORIDA BLUE
HUB INTERNATIONAL

DEDE GRUNDEL
JOYCE BALDWIN
LINDA GOLDSTEIN
LINDA HEATHERLY
GAYLE SIERENS & MIKE
MARTIN
LINDA MILLS

GUARDIAN
HUB INTERNATIONAL

STEVE HALL
MARTIN DE BRUIN

LINDA HESS
CHRIS & TIMOTHY PARISO

HUMANA
HUB INTERNATIONAL

JACKIE & CHRIS LOWE'S WEDDING
CARRIE WILDES

DESI MCCOLGAN
BIANCA BADIA

MUTUAL OF OMAHA
HUB INTERNATIONAL

FRANKIE OLDER
JENNIFER OLDER
DR. & MRS. LOIS & JUSTIN
OLDER

SARAH OLSEN'S BIRTHDAY
ALICE BESSETTE
NANCY BILLUPS
MANDY CLAPP

HEATHER CRESOLI
CYD MOORE DENNEN
KIM FAIR
MAGGIE FOWLER
SHIRLEY ROSEVELT GARCIA
SUSAN FAIRCHILD GRAY
DEDE GRUNDEL
JOYCE KEESEE
CHRISTIE KROEGER
RITA MAE
JOANNE MAYERS
KATHY OLSEN
TAYRA COX PAUL
MICHELLE M PETERSON
SUSAN ROSENBLATT
KAREN SHERMAN
CHUCK WAVRA

LOU-ANNE PACKARD'S BIRTHDAY
MICHELLE SMITH

PRINCIPAL
HUB INTERNATIONAL

DANIELLA QUAST
ANNE & MIKE CARNEY

RUCHI & LALITHA
TEJAS PATEL

SUN LIFE
HUB INTERNATIONAL

JAN SUTTON
ANNE STEEL

THE TEAM AT MOFFITT CANCER CENTER
VALERIE & ROBERT HODGES

TRIGGER & MAGNUS
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KAREN CAMPOS
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STACEY GLASS-BIDDLE
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MORGENSTERN
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JULIA & MARCUS STEVENS
DIANNE TAPPEN-BOLTON
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NAOMI & JEFF TRAPP-DAVIS
ALYSON & SHANNON
TREADWAY
MAURISA VERSEL
PATRICIA WEINBERGER
LISA & PAUL WEINBERGER
CAROL WEINSTEIN

PAULA WINOKUR
JOANN
MAHFOOD

MEMORIAM
MEMORY
GIVEN BY

"A TOUCH OF JJ" JJ ACKERMAN
OUIDA RICE

CYNTHIA CONATY
DONALD CONATY

BETTY-ANNE S. HUNZIKER
DIANNE & RICHARD MARCH

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