

children's relief fund 2019 news



from ROSE:

The Children's Relief Fund has grown leaps and bounds since it became a non-profit organization in 1991! We have raised millions of dollars in the Hilton Head/Bluffton area to support programs and services for our local special needs children! Our organization is unique in that we have remained an all volunteer organization since the beginning. I still run the organization from my house so there is no overhead. We have funded various therapies, provided special equipment, summer camp programs, funded therapeutic music classes and provided funding for transition programs in our local schools. We have partnered with organizations such as Special Olympics, Heroes on Horseback, Pockets Full of Sunshine, Fishing With Friends and The Lowcountry Autism Foundation. By partnering with other non-profit organizations we are all able to provide the funding needed to sustain and grow as our community grows. This year we teamed up with LAF to provide a parents night out once a month for families with children who have an autistic child. My greatest joy this year will be the completion of Gregory's Playground. This playground, named in memory of my son Gregory, will provide children of all abilities, a place to just be kids and form everlasting friendships! I am still in awe of these special children who motivate me to continue on this journey called The Children's Relief Fund and I am forever grateful to all those who have given from their hearts to help these special kids.

Straight from my heart,
Rose Fotia
Founder,
The Children's Relief Fund



gregory's playground opening



Gregory's Playground 2019

Another phase of the Island Recreation Center's rebuild is completed with the opening of Gregory's Playground. Many thanks go to the Children's Relief Fund, Hilton Head Kiwanis Club, Town of Hilton Head Island and People for Park for making this dream come true for our community. This new state of the art inclusive playground replaces the first one



Frankie and Gregory Fotia circa 1994



Rose Fotia and Frank Soule at Gregory's Playground dedication 1994

which opened in 1994. The playground has all new equipment for children of all ages and abilities. The surface is specially designed for easy mobility for people in wheelchairs and walkers. The Rec Center staff is extremely excited to have this new playground on-site because of the benefits it will have on all programs especially the inclusive programs offered at the Center.

*Grand Opening of Gregory's Playground
will be Tuesday, January 7 at noon.
We hope you can join in the celebration!*

special olympics reflection



Special Olympics, Area 8 continues to increase programs and numbers of athletes. Tennis, bowling, horseback riding, swimming, track and field and bocce, still going strong! Our Kayak Team, the Ospreys, has really grown. They practiced every Wednesday at Shelter Cove for months getting ready for the state competition in Charleston. Dorian postponed the competition, but the team was able to

go and compete later in September and everyone came back with medals and ribbons! Our tennis team was able to participate in the "September Slam" in Columbia and are all looking forward to the Special Olympics North American tennis tournament at Van Der Meer Tennis Center at Shipyard on Hilton Head. Our bowling competitions have grown so much that we now have to have THREE tournaments in December!



Children's Relief Fund has always been our greatest source of funding and we absolutely could not provide these opportunities for our athletes without the hard work of the CRF volunteers!!! We appreciate, love you and thank you all STRAIGHT FROM OUR HEARTS!!

Cherie Taylor and Kathy Cramer

challenge camp

On behalf of the Island Recreation Center we would like to thank you for the continuous support of our Challenge Camp and SOAR summer programs. The Children's Relief Fund has allowed us to

successfully run our 8 week program enhancing the continuous development of cognitive, social and motor skills of children with disabilities. 2019 was a very successful summer for us, serving 24 participants in Challenge Camp and 11 in SOAR. Daily campers participated in our All Day Summer Camp. This opportunity allows them to have a fully inclusive summer camp experience in weekly field trips, swimming, art, drama, media, and both active and passive games. This program would not be possible without the generosity of The Children's Relief Fund.

*Allie Rogers
Adaptive Recreation Director
Island Recreation Center*



our 2019 scholarship recipients

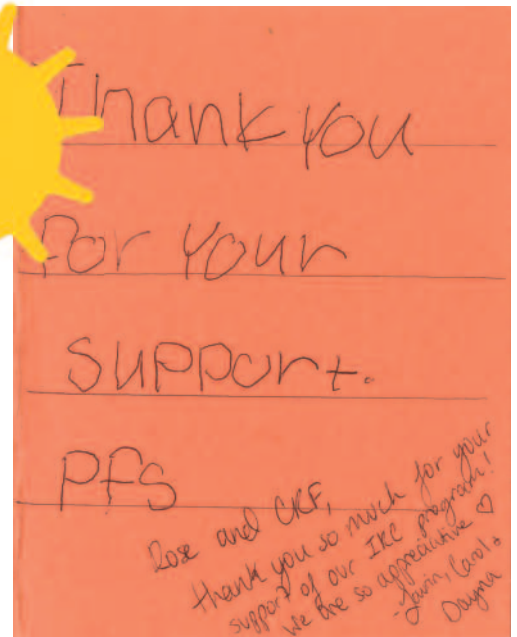
We were honored to announce our 2019 Scholarship Recipients.

Dr. Robert Bokar Scholarship was awarded to A'Nya Aloni Marshburn-Foushee

Gregory Fotia Scholarship was awarded to Abigail Harburger



Pockets Full of Sunshine continues to be thankful for Children's Relief Fund support!



Parents Night Out

By Lowcountry Autism Foundation



Autism families in Beaufort County are frustrated by the daily challenges that autism brings. Currently, the Lowcountry Autism Foundation serves over 200 families in Beaufort County. Parents are having to cope with the astounding costs of therapies and medical expenses, challenges with local school districts regarding their child's education and the daily one-on-one struggles with their autistic child. All of these factors greatly affect the family dynamic of an autism family. According to Cecelia McCarton, MD, founder of the McCarton Center for Developmental Pediatrics in New York, autism is not only an epidemic (1 out of 59 children are diagnosed with autism), but "A family epidemic. The ripple effect that happens when you have an autistic child is astronomical in terms of family dynamics." Parents, siblings, grandparents and extended family members are all affected by autism, no matter how mild or severe the disorder.

Parents and siblings especially need to be able to have a break from the stress of autism. Having an autistic child is in itself a full time job, especially if the child has moderate to severe autism. Many of these children cannot be left alone, even for a couple of seconds. Simple activities like being able to go to the restroom, present with multiple challenge. A parent of a child with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) remains on a heightened state of alert 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Imagine being an air traffic controller without a lunch break or a day off. Because of these factors, most autism parents rarely have the opportunity for a date night or movie night away. Even if a family can afford a qualified sitter, there are not many in existence to care for their child. The stress and challenges that accompany having a child with ASD puts a strain on parents/caregivers individually and on their relationships with each other and their other children.

Families in Beaufort County need an opportunity to have a break and trust that their child with ASD is being appropriately cared for. In 2018, the Lowcountry Autism Foundation placed respite as a top priority for Beaufort County families by launching our program "Parents Night Out" once a month to give parents and siblings of autistic children time to focus on self-care. Lowcountry Autism Foundation is honored to have been selected to receive funding from

Children's Relief Fund. This contribution allows LAF to fully fund our respite program once a month. LAF's Parents Night Out is a three-hour respite specifically designed for children and young adults diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder. One Friday evening per month, trained volunteers consisting of occupational therapists, physical therapists, ABA therapists, speech therapists, special education teachers and assistants volunteer their time so that autism parents and caregivers can receive a much needed break. LAF has partnered with Island Playground, a local indoor fun gym. The children love the bouncy houses and craft activities. They have lots of fun playing and socializing while their parents and siblings take time for themselves. Thanks to Children's Relief Fund, Lowcountry Autism Foundation can achieve our mission of enhancing the lives of individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder and their families.

*Sophia Townes, Program Coordinator
LAF/Beaufort County*



Please Save the Date

Children's Relief Fund for Disabled Children
& Area 8 Special Olympics



Friday
February 14th
at Venue 1223
Bluffton

\$250 per person
Tickets may be
purchased at
TheChildrensReliefFund.org
Limited Seats Available



9th Annual Sporting Clays Shoot

March 6, 2020

Forest City Gun Club, Savannah, GA
Proceeds benefit adults with disabilities
of the Lowcountry. Pockets Full of
Sunshine greatly appreciates CRF
partnership and support. To register or
further information visit
www.pocketsfullofsun.org or call
Carol Bartholomew at 843-384-1315

Our Board Members

Mary Baumann	Amy Metzger
Rose Fotia	Ryan Ott
Michele Iverson	Maggy Stefonick
Robert Lee	Cherie Taylor
Debi Lynes	Becky Tracy

New Board Member



Bob Lee received his bachelor's degree from Washington & Lee University and his MBA from the University of Dallas. After completing his education, Bob spent 10 years in commercial banking and 15 years in manufacturing before retiring to the non-profit sector. Bob is currently serving as executive director for Heroes on Horseback, chairman of the board of trustees for the Arts Center of Coastal Carolina, treasurer for the board of trustees of the Hilton Head Island Concours d'Elegance & Motoring Festival, and board member for Area 8 Special Olympics. Bob is also an adjunct professor at Georgia Southern University, where he teaches entrepreneurship.

SUNTRUST SUPPORT



We are very grateful to SunTrust Foundation for their continued support of our mission to help the special needs children in our community.

Pictured from left to right:
Alan Perry/SunTrust Mortgage Loan officer and
Claudia Aller / SunTrust Indigo Run Branch Manager,
Susan Axtell/Vice President,
Commercial Relationship Manager SunTrust Bank and
Rose Fotia/CRF

The Children's Relief Fund is proud to be 100% volunteer driven.
To volunteer to help or to request assistance please call Rose Fotia at 843-681-7668.



children's relief fund

www.thechildrensrelieffund.org
P.O. Box 22574, Hilton Head Island, SC 29925