

Little Flower NEWSLETTER

A Publication for Friends of Little Flower Children and Family Services of NY

Fall 2017

Youth Spotlight



Alex has been with Little Flower for a couple of years and has accomplished a lot and grown since his first day. He had the opportunity to share his journey with guests at our recent Annual Golf Outing; here is an excerpt of his story.

As a young child my sister and I were orphaned in Russia. Fortunately, we were adopted and brought to the United States and spent the rest of our childhood in Bellmore, NY. Unfortunately, the prior years of neglect had caused trauma and left scars. I struggled with anxiety and emotional issues that prevented me from growing and thriving and had to be hospitalized a number of times because of this.

At the age of 14 I was placed in the care of Little Flower. When I first came to Little Flower I was very upset and wanted to go home; I didn't want to live with strange people in a strange place. I wanted to avoid everyone and stay alone in my room, until I went to school and several peers introduced themselves to me. They explained why they came to Little Flower and made me feel welcomed and supported. I realized I had similar issues and problems.

I got involved with the Culinary Arts Program on campus. It was there that the director – Jen Quinlan – would say to us over and over again, "Everyone in this program will get respect. And I will not accept anything from you but the best!"

I recall a time in this program... there were a few other kids like me. We would barely talk to each other outside of the cafe. But as we started to create things together, like shrimp po'boys or Fiesta bowls, we began to connect; we started taking responsibility for what we were doing, then for the program, and even took responsibility for being part of a team.

I started feeling more confident. I made friends. I let myself depend on others! And really importantly, I developed more ways to deal with my emotions.

Every year I have been at Little Flower we have participated in an annual Junior Iron Chef Competition. For the last two years, we have placed first. And yours truly, was part of that team!

"I started feeling more confident. I made friends. I let myself depend on others! And really importantly, I developed more ways to deal with my emotions."

I have enjoyed other opportunities while in Little Flower's care. I have participated in baseball, playing on the local little league team. This has helped to build my self-esteem and shown me the importance of sportsmanship and character.

I want to thank my volunteer mentor John. We have had many adventures together. He has introduced me to experiences in the world outside of the campus –from kayaking, to playing in escape rooms, to eating...vegetarian!

Now I am starting to think about my future. My dream is to study forensics. I will start on that path next fall by entering Nassau Community College.

I want to thank the dedicated staff at Little Flower. They support me. They help me set goals. They show me how I have grown and encourage me to keep going! They care and they are there for me.

Message from the Chief Executive Officer - Corinne Hammons



Earlier this month, Little Flower observed an organization-wide moment of silence acknowledging the devastation caused by natural and human disasters around the world over the past couple of months. Many of you have family and friends in affected areas and we sincerely hope they are all safe and secure. I believe it is during times like this that our work has even more meaning and value, and the importance of all of us as stewards of a mission to help the vulnerable is all the more clear.

This edition of our newsletter centers on hope, with the focus of enriching lives. Our youth in Wading River kicked off a new school year full of hope and promise in a newly renovated and expanded building operated by the Little Flower Union Free School District. Our partnership with the school on the campus is an important element in preparing the kids in the RTC to be their best selves, enforcing the idea that it takes a village and the need for partnerships and collaboration if we're to continue to grow. With that in mind, I want to highlight a few collaborative efforts that we have been nurturing for the betterment of those we serve.

- Thanks to a relationship with *iFoster*, 20 high school youth in foster care received new laptops to start the school year off on the right foot.
- Our membership in the *Health and Welfare Council of Long Island* gave us the opportunity to participate in a Town Hall meeting with Congressman Suozzi.

- The *Administration for Children Services* continues to be at the forefront of creating innovative permanency solutions for our young people. Little Flower is honored to have been chosen to be among 10 organizations who will expand the work of the *Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption's* national investment in permanency in NYC under the ACS umbrella over the coming year.
- As a member of the *Catholic Federation*, a non-profit organization comprised of social service organizations serving Brooklyn and Queens, we're closely tracking and participating in many changes in our field, including health care.
- And of course our strongest collaboration is with our *Board of Directors*, a group of men and women who bring their compassion, sensibility, resources and thoughtfulness to helping us achieve the best possible outcome for the men, women and children under our care.

And then we have you, our friends and donors. *The James A. Cullen Memorial Golf Outing* has become a tradition spanning 35 years, thanks to the dedication and commitment of our Board member Tom Cullen and his brothers Brian and Jim and the entire staff and vendors of King Kullen Grocers. Our own *Annual Golf Outing* had a record breaking year thanks in a large part to our honoree, David Einbinder from *First Development Corporation*.

I am convinced that our relationship building is the impetus for hope and success and I thank all of you. Happy Reading!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Corinne Hammons".

Corinne Hammons
CEO

Little Flower Connects with our Local Officials

Little Flower has been building stronger relationships with our local elected officials. We've had the honor of meeting with *Assemblymember Jo Anne Simon*, representing Brooklyn; *Senator Phil Boyle*, representing Suffolk County; and *Senator Leroy Comrie*, representing Queens. Each meeting has allowed Little Flower to bring awareness to the work we do as well as connect our representatives with the people in their districts.

Little Flower was proud to join nearly 100 nonprofit partners at a *Health & Welfare Council of Long Island* Town Hall event with *Rep. Tom Suozzi* earlier this Fall. Congressman Suozzi, after hearing our concerns and listening to our questions, expressed his support for health care access as well as support for social and economic policies to help local families.



[Photo credit: Health & Welfare Council of LI]

Our Kids



GLIMMER PROJECT

Young women in our foster care program were invited to the *Ticket to Dream: We Believe in You – Share Your Glimmer* event. They participated in a career development workshop that included: style consultations, tips for professional hair and makeup for interviews and the workplace, a LinkedIn portrait session and a resume building workshop. They also sat in on a Women Leadership Panel and conversation with four women in fashion/beauty, media and the nonprofit sector. We are grateful for the opportunity to participate and this wonderful partnership with Mattress Firm and their Ticket to Dream Foundation.



PYA PICNIC

The young adults in our foster care program celebrated the beginning of summer and new beginnings for those off to college with each other and their favorite staff with a luau in the park! Volunteers were also able to spend quality time with the youth playing tag football, board games and dancing. It was the essence of summer wrapped into one day!



RTC PROM

To mark the end of another school year and new beginnings for those moving on, youth in the Residential Treatment Center celebrated their journey at their Spring Formal. The formal is a rite of passage that even children dealing with special circumstances, like our youth, are able to experience and it is a great pleasure that we can provide them with this opportunity!

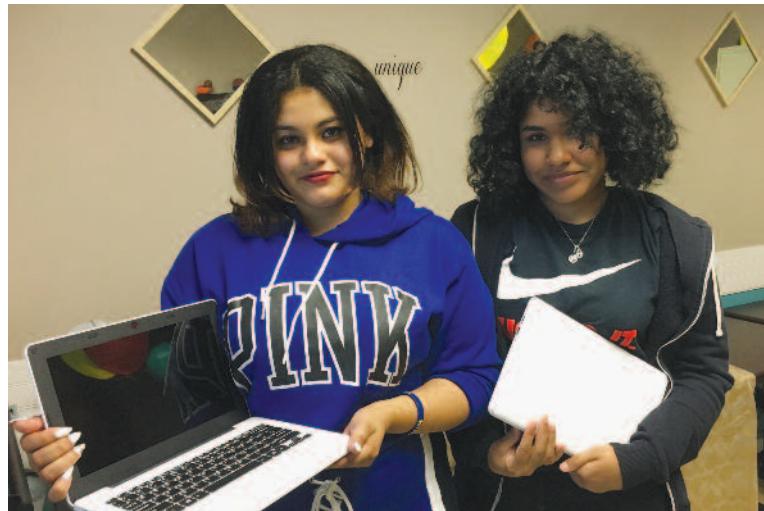
Our Kids



Bright Hopes Quilting Group

Quilting – not something you associate with teenagers and young children. But the youth on the Msgr. Fagan campus are rocking their quilting skills. A group of the young residents participated in a *QuiltWorks* workshop, facilitated by volunteers from the *Bright Hopes* organization. The workshop is designed for individuals living in residential settings and each participant works on a quilt that they can take home once completed.

Over eight-weeks the kids learned the basics of quilt making and how to use a sewing machine, pick their fabrics and measure and cut pieces. The most recent cohort donated a group design auctioned off at this year's Msgr. Fagan Awards Fundraiser!



Tech to Launch Our Youth Into the Future

Thanks to the *Ticket to Dream Foundation*, we were introduced to *iFoster*, an organization that provides life-changing resources for youth, who partnered with Little Flower to provide our young adults with the tools to jump start their future. Twenty youth in the Preparing Youth for Adulthood program took home new laptops they can use for homework, college, financial aid, and job applications, as well as other items needed for housing, personal care and much more. We're grateful to *iFoster* for helping our youth step into their future!

Little Flower in the Community

Little Flower at New York Nonprofit Media OpCon



Little Flower was proud to participate in the *New York Nonprofit Media's* 3rd annual *Nonprofit OpCon*, an event that brought together leaders across New York's nonprofit sector to share information and best practices to help streamline operations.

Our CEO, Corinne Hammons, presented on the panel *Nonprofit Efficiency: Managing Risks, Overhead, and Challenges* in which there was a lively discussion on the ability of organizations to review its exposure to losses and to develop strategies to prevent them when feasible or to lessen harm. The discussion also touched on overhead, financial efficiency and fraud prevention.

Overall it was a great day engaging with our peers and learning from one another to help each other provide the best programs and services to those in our care!

Fangtastic Halloween



The Bridges to Health Boo Bash

The Bridges to Health Program (B2H) held their annual Halloween Party for the children they serve. They had a spooktacular time enjoying a color your own trick-or-treat bag activity, pizza, games, and of course trick-or-treating around the office. They even received a special treat of Halloween themed donuts from our landlord and recent Golf Outing honoree, **David Einbinder** and his colleague, Alison Brennan.

The children were having such a great day that when it came time to head home one youth became ghoulish and frightful, not ready for the party to end. An older child came to his aid, assuring him that there was no need to be sad as there will be many more fun events to attend in the future. Witnessing this warmed the staff's hearts. "Moments like this remind us how exciting our events are to our children and it is what keeps us energized for our next festivities!"

HWCLI Halloween Ball

Little Flower was thrilled to support one of our partner agencies, the *Health and Welfare Council of Long Island* (HWCLI), at their first *Halloween Ball*. HWCLI's mission is dedicated to improving the lives of vulnerable residents of Long Island by responding to their needs through the promotion and development of public policies and direct services. Our own CEO, Corinne Hammons, serves on their board! We're excited to further develop our partnership to help serve the needs of those in our community who need help the most!



Kids Helping Kids

Girls Scouts Game Shelf

10 young women, between the ages of 10-11 from Troop 674 in Selden, Long Island developed plans for a game shelf and then spent over 20 hours bringing it to life. The project helped fulfill the requirements for a Bronze award and was a fun and hands-on way of giving back and helping others. They held a yard sale to raise funds to buy supplies and board games. The project also allowed some of the fathers to get involved by teaching the girls how to measure, sand, and build. To fill the shelf, the troop solicited local stores and games companies, like Loony Labs and Tenzi, for donations of a variety of board games. There are many game nights on campus in which the game shelf will come into good use!



Recent Events



Annual Golf Classic

On Monday, September 18th, Little Flower honored **David Einbinder**, co-founder of **First Development Corporation** at our **Annual Golf Outing** at Engineers Country Club in Roslyn.

Little Flower was thrilled to honor David for his commitment to our mission, and his philanthropic passion. Over 170 people gathered for a full day of golfing followed by cocktails, dinner, and a moving awards program. "David inspires me in the work I do and inspires so many other people," said Corinne Hammons, Little Flower CEO.

The Golf Outing was sponsored in part by the **Einbinder Family; Alderman & Company; Cronin & Cronin LLP; Lazer, Aptheker, Rosella & Yedid; and Cosentino Realty Group**. Guests had the opportunity to hear from one of our youth in the Residential Treatment Center, Alex, about how Little Flower "support[s] me. They help me set goals. They show me how I have grown up and encourage me to keep going! They care and they are there for me."

Due to the efforts of David, our terrific committee, co-chaired by Howard Nolan and Frank Tosto, and all of our supporters, we are able to offer our youth critical programs and services to help put them on the right path.

Thanks to our honoree, our sponsors, guests, volunteers and staff for making it a truly remarkable day!



Summer in the Hamptons

On Saturday, July 22nd, Little Flower Board Member Michael Rafferty and his wife, Kathryn welcomed over 90 people to their home in Quogue, to celebrate Little Flower. We were delighted to greet so many longtime supporters and new friends, and for the opportunity to invite everyone to join us in our work to help young people transition to life as adults.

Recent Events



Staff Picnic

This past August staff from all locations and departments came together at Aviator Sports and Event Center to enjoy a day celebrating their dedication, hard work, and comradery. With an agency as spread out as Little Flower, it's always wonderful to meet and spend time with colleagues as well as share in the great work being done for the families, children and adults with developmental disabilities in our care!

The Annual James A. Cullen Memorial Golf Outing

Little Flower is very fortunate and honored to have the support and commitment of Tom, Brian and Jim Cullen and the entire *King Kullen* community. The *Annual James A. Cullen Memorial Golf Outing*, held in September, is one of the many ways they support Little Flower. One of the highlights of the evening program was hearing from Gabriel, a current Little Flower foster youth in our Preparing Youth for Adulthood program, who is looking forward to graduating high school and beginning college in the next year. She shared with the audience a poem she wrote, "Try, Try, Try until I succeed - For all the obstacles in my life - I'm not worried about the obstacles. I'm worried about overcoming them and succeeding".

We couldn't have asked for a more supportive partner in the Cullen Family and thank them for being such an integral part of our family.





NON-PROFIT ORG.
US POSTAGE
PAID
FLUSHING, NY
PERMIT NO. 1045

*Children and Family
Services of New York*

2450 N. Wading River Road
Wading River, NY 11792-1402

SAVE THE DATE

Sunday, November 19, 2017, 12:30PM-3PM – Long Island Harley Owners Group Annual Toy Run

Monsignor John T. Fagan Campus, Wading River, New York

Join us as we spend the day celebrating 31 years of the LI HOG's Annual Toy Run.

Interested in volunteering that day? Contact Donna Masi at: masid@lfchild.org.

Thursday, November 30, 2017 – Sunday, December 3, 2017 – Champions for Charity

Americana Manhasset; Wheatley Plaza

Little Flower is participating in Americana Manhasset's Champions for Charity®. From Thurs., Nov. 30 – Sun., Dec. 3, over 70 participating Americana Manhasset and select Wheatley Plaza stores will donate 25% of designated full-price pre-tax purchases to the participating organization(s) of the customer's choice. Purchases are not automatically eligible; you must register for a complimentary Champion Number, designate Little Flower as your charity of choice, and present your Champion Number when making purchases.

For more information visit championsforcharity.org or call 800.818.6767

Friday, December 1, 2017, 6PM-7PM – 3rd Annual Holiday Tree Lighting

Monsignor John T. Fagan Campus, Wading River, New York

Little Flower staff, residents, and the Wading River community will come together to mark the beginning of the holiday season with our annual tree lighting! Join us for an evening of wonderment and holiday cheer!

For more information, contact Jasmine White at: whitej@lfchild.org.

Help Make a Difference in the Lives of those We Serve

If you would like to make a donation, please make checks payable to:

Little Flower Children and Family Services of New York

Kindly mail to: Little Flower, Development Office, 2450 North Wading River Road, Wading River, NY 11792

Donations can also be made online at: littleflowerny.thankyou4caring.org