



Children and
Family Services

NEWSLETTER

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

Winter 2019

CELEBRATING OUR ADOPTION HEROES

As we recognize November as National Adoption Month, we think back on our 90 year history of helping over 5,000 children find their forever families and look forward to building on our success of connecting children in need of love, safety and stability to families opening their hearts and homes.

Our partners in ensuring the safety and success of our kids are our foster and adoptive parents. Here is an excerpt of an awards nomination submission about an exemplary foster parent, Ms. Estell Thompson, who took the next step and became an adoptive parent and who continues to care for all her children, regardless of whether or not they are in her home.

Ms. Thompson has played many different roles over the years – parent, mother, grandmother and guardian. In her role as a foster parent, she has set a high bar. According to our staff, in the over 10 years that she has helped children in need, she has proven to be the ultimate role model and example of the ideal foster parent who loves what she does.

Ms. Thompson is affectionately known as the grandma of the neighborhood and the go-to for those in her community in need of assistance. One mother who fell on hard times did exactly that – she turned to Ms. Thompson for help in taking care of her children.

The older children formally entered foster care and our staff sought Ms. Thompson's assistance. They knew she would be receptive and would do what was necessary to help build a sturdy foundation for the children, which she did. Stepping fully into her motherly role, Ms. Thompson, noticing some inconsistencies in one of the children, spent hours and days at Lenox Hill hospital so that the child could be seen by myriad specialists to determine a cause. She would not leave the child's side. Eventually, the two children became permanent members of her family through adoption.

A few years later, Ms. Thompson was called on again when a placement was needed for the two younger siblings of the children she adopted. Typical of Ms. Thompson, she answered the call. Unable to adopt the younger siblings for reasons beyond her control, she still did what she could for them. The kids continue to look to her when in need of maternal care and stop by the house for dinner, clothing, shelter and some love.

Ms. Thompson became a willing grandmother when she was asked to take in the newborn of a former foster daughter. Her response? "Bring my baby home." Like a mother or a grandmother, she has nothing but unconditional love and acceptance for all her children, foster or not.

Ms. Thompson is devout and full of faith, always praising the Lord. "We stop to thank the Lord for bringing her into our fold here at Little Flower and into the lives of all those she has cared for and continues to care for. She is always busy running from point A to point B with and for the kids, all the while keeping up with her church duties, her training, and whatever else Little Flower asks of her," recounted the staff working closely with Ms. Thompson.

Ms. Thompson exudes strength and power, while being a dedicated, caring, loving parent. And, we thank her for the care and love she shows to our children in need.



Message from the Chief Executive Officer - Corinne Hammons

As we approach the end of our 90th Anniversary year, I would like to acknowledge each one of you for being part of the Little Flower family. Our accomplishments are your accomplishments and I want to take this opportunity to thank you for assisting us to build the foundation so that our clients have the tools they need to reach their potential. For some that means providing family support in a time of turmoil and trauma, or a safe place to live while they are attending school, or a summer internship at a local business. And for some who may never live on their own, Little Flower becomes home and family. In every stage of our 90 years you have been there to help and support us. Thank you!

Our staff and clients will be ending the year with a host of different holiday celebrations throughout the region. We will be celebrating as friends, colleagues, and families. I know you and your families will do the same. From all of us at Little Flower I wish you and yours a holiday season full of health and happiness.

Sincerely,



Corinne Hammons
Chief Executive Officer



St. John's Residence for Boys - New Leader and Direction



Jennifer Horsley, Executive Director,
St. John's Residence for Boys

In July 2019, Little Flower and St. John's Residence for Boys, Inc. proudly announced the appointment of Jennifer Horsley as St. John's Executive Director, after serving as the Interim Executive Director for six months. Her 20 plus years of experience in the child welfare field and with teens in the foster care system has been a great asset to St. John's and has already proven to have a positive impact.

Since joining the St. John's team, Jennifer has prioritized deepening St. John's connection with the surrounding community. Local community members including House on the Rock Church, members of the NYPD 100th Precinct, and neighbors joined staff and youth on campus to celebrate their accomplishments and show their support at a St. John's Day in June. Despite the weather, there was great energy and discussion.

St. John's has partnered with organizations throughout the borough such as the Queens Law Associates (QLA) who have brought their empowerment programs to the young men and offered opportunities to inform and educate the boys through activities like a "know your rights" forum.

Connecting with your community also involves connecting with your local elected officials and St. John's has been fortunate to have the support of State Senator Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr., Assemblywoman Stacey Pheffer Amato, and Councilmember Eric Ulrich. The Assemblywoman even made a special trip to the facility to personally congratulate the young men on their educational achievements and graduations.

Jennifer and her team are furthering their commitment to the community with a "friendraising" event next Spring on Saturday, April 25, 2020. Keep in touch through St. John's Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/stjohnsresidenceforboys/>) for more details about the event in the coming months.



Assemblywoman Stacey Pheffer
Amato with a St. John's resident

Little Flower Honorees Shine at Annual Golf Classic

On Monday, September 16th, Little Flower honored *Jason Zoracki, President and CEO of Elite Glass, Mya Zoracki, Founder of Feed Your Soul, and Stephen DeMinio, President of Affinity Building Solutions*, at the Annual Golf Classic at Engineers Country Club.

Over 100 people gathered for a day of golfing and a moving awards program. It truly was an honor to recognize such enthusiastic and generous individuals like Jason, Mya, and Stephen; their energy was felt throughout the day!

The outing was sponsored in part by *Elite Glass; BNB Bank; Affinity Building Solutions; Feed Your Soul; Alliant Employee Benefits; Atlantic Tomorrow's Office; Boris Benic & Associates; Cook Maran; Executive Cleaning Services; and Swezey Fuel.*

Guests heard from Inyce, a recent graduate of Little Flower's Emergence Project, a transformative after-school leadership development program for foster youth ages 16-21. Her experience in the program offered her the opportunity to ask as many questions as she wanted, "which made me feel powerful...I built up the courage to speak up and have people listen to what I had to say. I felt like I belonged, and I had a right to be there."

Due to the efforts of our honorees and our all-star committee, led by co-chairs, Howard Nolan and Frank Tosto, we raised over \$230,000.

Thanks to our amazing honorees, golf committee, donors, friends, volunteers and staff for making it a truly remarkable day.



*Top Photo -Honorees, Golf Committee Co-Chairs, and Corinne Hammons, CEO, Little Flower;
Bottom Photo - 2019 Golf Committee
Photo Credit: Gerald Peart*

Upcoming Events

Saturday, December 8, 2019 12 PM-3PM Long Island Harley Owners Group Annual Toy Run
Monsignor John T. Fagan Campus, Wading River, NY

Join us as we welcome and cheer on the riders of the 33rd LI HOG's Annual Toy Run and express our gratitude for their generosity.

Saturday, April 25, 2020 12 PM - 4 PM St. John's Fundraising Event
St. John's Residence for Boys, Rockaway Park, NY

Reintroducing St. John's youth and staff to the community so that together we can build an even stronger partnership. Learn more about the facility, the history and the future, and meet our youth while enjoying food, music and fun.



*Children and Family
Services of New York*

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Give the Gift of Hope

For the many children, families and individuals with developmental disabilities in Little Flower's care, the holidays can be difficult. But, with your kindness and generosity we can give them hope for a better tomorrow.

Not only does your holiday gift allow the over 2,000 people we serve experience a sense of connection and belonging, but your support also allows us to provide the foundation and the tools to our families so that they can begin building a stable and successful future and reach their full potential.

As we come together with loved ones, let us remember those that consider us their family and community – our children, families, and individuals with developmental disabilities.

We hope that you will include Little Flower in your year-end charitable giving. Your support truly makes a difference!



Yes! I want to help the children, families and adults of Little Flower reach their full potential:

\$10,000 \$5,000 \$2,500 \$1,000 \$500 \$100 other_____

If you prefer to mail your donation, please use the included envelope.

You can also give online by visiting littleflowerny.thankyou4caring.org