



FLORIDA UNITED METHODIST  
CHILDREN'S HOME®

ESTABLISHED 1908

# THE HERALD

SPRING 2016

VOLUME 26/NO. 2



To empower children and families to experience  
God's love as revealed in the ministry of Jesus Christ.



## A *word* FROM OUR PRESIDENT

**Becky Dotson**  
*President & CEO*  
*Florida United Methodist Children's Home*

Dear Florida United Methodist Children's Home family,

I have enjoyed the last three years here at the Home. You have made me feel welcome and become part of my family. However, I have decided that it is time to be faithful and follow God's leading. At this time, God is leading me in a different direction.

I am proud of the accomplishments we have made together. Thanks to your generosity and faithful support, we have been able to complete the Madison Youth Ranch and implement the equine therapy program at that campus. Together, we have been able to implement a new school, Legacy Scholars Academy at the Enterprise campus to serve the educational and emotional needs of many of our children. Through your faithfulness, we have faced difficult financial times and persevered. God is good!

Thanks to your generous support and loyalty, our thrift store, Heart and Home Resale shop has successfully completed one year and is now profitable. God is good!

Your generosity, faithful support, and perseverance have allowed us to move forward with a Broward County Foster Care office, which will officially open in July. God is good!

I am so proud of the faithful friends this wonderful ministry has built. Thank you for welcoming and supporting me during my tenure. God is good!

I will forever treasure your love and friendships.

Fondly,

**Becky Dotson**  
*President & CEO*

## *From* THE BOARD

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, we wish Becky and Ryan all the best as they move into the next phase of their journey. The Board as well as the staff appreciates the contribution that Becky has made to this organization during the past three years. Rest assured, the leadership team and staff at the Home are exceptional in caring for our children. The Board will keep you apprised as we move forward. We appreciate your prayers for discernment, guidance and direction.



# LEGACY SCHOLAR STUDENTS TAKE D.C. BY STORM!

During their Spring Break, six of our high school students had the opportunity to visit Washington, D.C. Not only was this the first time that these children had been to our nation's capitol, for some it was the first time they had been on a plane.

Their first day took them to the Smithsonian and included the American History Museum, Natural History Museum, and the Air and Space Museum. That was followed by the Arlington National Cemetery and the Iwo Jima Memorial. One of the high points was meeting with Congressman John Mica. He treated them to pizza and took them to the floor of the House to observe a vote. The students even presented him with a copy of *Under the Sheltering Tree, A Brief History of the Florida United Methodist Children's Home*, a history of our first one hundred years.

The week continued with visits to Ford's Theater, the Spy Museum, Library of Congress, and of course, the White House visitor center. They even enjoyed some night-time activity with a ghost tour, learning just how "haunted" the capitol is thought to be. The experience was truly a once-in-a-lifetime trip for these children, and it's one that they will never forget. It's also the kind of educational experience that is only possible through your generous support of the Children's Home.

The children's trip was sponsored through the legacy of Lois B. Jamieson. Interestingly, Lois lived in the D.C. area and volunteered at the Smithsonian Institute where she enjoyed showing artifacts to the visiting children. This trip, and much of what is done for the children, would not be possible without friends like Mrs. Jamieson.



## ANOTHER GREAT DAY ON CAMPUS

On April 9, more than 1,200 United Methodists and other friends of the Children's Home enjoyed a fun and festive day. Our annual Day On Campus is our way of saying thank you to the local United Methodist Churches and the many friends who support the Children's Home with their generous gifts throughout the year. This year's special guests included the East Central and South West Districts. If you've never attended a Day On Campus, make plans to bring a group next year on April 1, 2017, when the special guests will be the Gulf Central and South Central Districts. Stay tuned to our Facebook page for announcements about Day On Campus and other coming events.



### CHURCH OF THE YEAR

Steinhatchee UMC  
Steinhatchee, Florida

### PASTOR OF THE YEAR

Reverend William Buell  
Coleman UMC Coleman, Florida

### LOCAL CHURCH REPRESENTATIVE OF THE YEAR

Ashley Hughes  
First UMC Clermont, Florida

### MISSION WORK TEAM OF THE YEAR

Southside UMC  
Jacksonville, Florida

# Education AT THE CHILDREN'S HOME

*At the Florida United Methodist Children's Home, we recognize the importance of education in the long term success our children. Our programs are designed to satisfy the educational needs our children through all grade levels and into college. In addition to our residents, our preschool program serves those five years of age or less in the community.*

## IN AS MUCH

Located on our main campus in Enterprise, our Montessori based preschool serves children up to six years of age in three different programs.

- **INFANT PROGRAM.** The goals of our infant classroom are to help the children to develop a strong sense of trust and independence. Materials are meticulously chosen and displayed on low open shelves to bring out an infant's natural curiosity.
- **TODDLER PROGRAM.** Our toddler program's focus is to aid the child in developing independence and self-management, while meeting their basic needs of trust and separation. In the Montessori environment, the children develop a strong sense of self-esteem and security.
- **PRESCHOOL & VPK PROGRAMS.** The preschool environment is intended to be a catalyst for the child's own natural desire to learn. We encourage the children to experience choices and guide the child to do things for themselves and build their independence. This program is geared to children between the ages of three and six, with classrooms sized and geared to their pace and interests. Classrooms are organized into several curriculum areas, including: language, mathematics, geography, science, social studies, art, music, living skills, sensory awareness and movement.

## ALDERSGATE ACADEMY

As part of our residential program here at the Children's Home, we serve children who need short term emergency shelter due to traumatic disruptions in their previous living situations. In order to meet their education needs, we began a State of Florida registered private school on our Enterprise campus called, Aldersgate Academy. Due to the short term duration of emergency shelter placements, our school's primary focus is to create a stabilized learning environment, while supporting continuity in academic instruction.

## LEGACY SCHOLARS ACADEMY

Residents on both campuses range from five to seventeen years of age. Many of the children at our Enterprise campus attend local public schools in Volusia county, while the children at our Madison Youth Ranch attend the local public schools in Madison county. Legacy Scholars Academy was created on our Enterprise campus to provide the educational needs of our children who would be better served by the extra attention that our staff can give them.

The Legacy Scholars Academy was created in partnership with the Volusia County School district and provides education for residents in grades K-12. The classroom ratio remains low with eight students to each teacher and paraprofessionals, allowing us to give children the attention and direction they need for academic success. This partnership gives the Children's Home access to a broad range of resources including academic specialists, Volusia Virtual School, dual enrollment, and the ability to attain a high school diploma.

An education at Legacy Scholars Academy focuses on the skills that students need to compete and be professionally successful. STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) is an important part of today's job market, and is part of our curriculum. Education partners like Bethune-Cookman University, Mentis Science, Inc. and Raytheon have provided equipment and support, allowing us to expand our children's knowledge in STEM related areas.

Our children don't stop learning when they leave the classroom. Through the generous support of our friends, we were able to send some of our students to Washington, D.C. during spring break. In addition to touring the sites, they were able to spend some one-on-one time with Congressman John Mica, who even took the children to the House floor to observe a legislative vote.



*Garrett presents Congressman John Mica with a book.*



*Students learn about STEM related principles at Legacy Scholars Academy.*



Your support has not only allowed the students to have these great opportunities, it is helping to make a positive and lasting impact on their lives. We can see it every day in the successes of our students.

- Tristian, a tenth grader who attended University High School prior to coming to the Children's Home, had five disciplinary referrals and was behind in his math and reading. Now that he is here at the Children's Home, he has had zero referrals at our Legacy Scholars Academy and recently tested above grade level in math. His score was high enough to allow him to begin college level math.
- Arnold, who also is in tenth grade, came to our Aldersgate Academy below grade level in math. Now at Legacy, he is back to grade level with test scores nearly high enough to begin college level math.
- Lily, a fifth grader, had eight referrals last year at Forest Lake Elementary, but has really turned her behavior around this year at Legacy Scholars Academy. She was also below grade level in reading in math, and has already caught up to her grade level.
- This June, we will be graduating six students with high school diplomas, and all of them have plans to attend one of the local colleges to continue their education.

While it is true that education is critical to the success of the children in becoming productive and independent adults, their education would not be possible without your support.





## A CONVERSATION WITH HOWARD & MARILYN WITT

Howard and Marilyn Witt are friends of the Florida United Methodist Children's Home. We recently spoke with them during a visit to the Children's Home. They shared their passion for the Home and why they are so involved.

Our connection to the Florida United Methodist Children's Home is related to the death of our young daughter, Kristin, as well as the adoption of our two daughters, Laura and Ashley. Several years after her adoption, we learned that Laura had been sexually abused as a very young child. Each of these life events led to our desire to help make the world a better place for all children.

We first became acquainted with the Home during annual visits to our church from the President of the Home. We became really connected a few years ago during a Children's Home sermon at the Boca Grande Lighthouse Church by the new President Becky Dotson, especially when she mentioned the adoption of her own son, Ryan. Soon after we visited the Home for the first time at the Day on Campus event and were motivated not only by Becky, but by the passionate and dedicated staff. This is what drew us and others from Boca Grande Lighthouse Church to buy in and make major commitments. In fact, we personally joined forces with another couple who was also moved by Becky's sermon to provide the seed money to start the Legacy Scholars Academy on the Enterprise campus. Soon after a third couple from our church joined in and matched our gift.

In this way, we are making a positive impact in the lives of the children living there who have been abused and not given the advantages in life that our children have been given. We are proud to give back in a small way for our many blessings.

The greatest impact the Home provides is by giving abused and neglected children a safe, secure and loving home resulting in a new lease on life. Legacy Scholars Academy is a very important part of this ministry because of its emphasis on social emotional learning (an initiative we are familiar with at other organizations we support) which enables the children to succeed in their academic studies.

## A Bequest is a Wonderful Way for You to Help Further the Work of the Children's Home and its Mission.

There are many reasons why you might consider making a charitable bequest. A bequest is one of the easiest gifts you can make to significantly impact our work. Your estate planning attorney can include a provision in your will that leaves a lasting gift to Florida United Methodist Children's Home. Your bequest could be a gift of specific assets, a dollar amount, or a percentage of your estate. A bequest could also be made from the residue of your estate or what is left after all gifts have been made to your heirs.

A charitable bequest is not only easy, but includes many benefits.

- It costs you nothing today to make a bequest
- A bequest is free of federal estate tax
- Your bequest can be changed down the road
- You can still benefit your heirs with specific gifts
- A bequest may produce estate tax savings
- You can leave a legacy through a bequest

The Florida United Methodist Children's Home continues to serve because of the generosity of individuals and churches, through one-time, reoccurring and legacy gifts.

For more information, you may reach us via  
[www.fumchlegacy.org](http://www.fumchlegacy.org), email [plannedgiving@FUMCH.org](mailto:plannedgiving@FUMCH.org), or  
contact Jeanne Griffith, Associate Director of Development at  
386-668-4774 ext. 2234.

## Heart & Home Resale Shop



### CAN YOU HELP?

Our Resale Shop located in Orange City is always in need of assistance. Please consider volunteering to help sort donations, price items, etc.

Contact Lynn Bellomy for more information at  
[lynn.bellomy@fumch.org](mailto:lynn.bellomy@fumch.org).

## LIKE US ON FACEBOOK



Want to stay updated on the latest  
Children's Home news online?

Like our Facebook page at  
[www.facebook.com/fumch](http://www.facebook.com/fumch)



#### ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

We'd like to make it right. Help us update our records. Please correct the Herald label with the information below and mail it back to us or email at the email address [info@fumch.org](mailto:info@fumch.org) or call 386.668.5088.

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The Heart & Home Resale Shop supports the Florida United Methodist Children's Home while providing an affordable way for individuals to buy items they may need.

**Monday – Saturday 9:30 am to 7:00 pm**

Located in the Big Lots Shopping Center  
2460 South Volusia Avenue  
Orange City | 386.960.7678



Keep up to date with everything at the  
Florida United Methodist Children's Home  
by following us on Social Media.  
We are on Facebook, Twitter,  
LinkedIn and YouTube.



The Florida United Methodist Children's Home does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, veteran status, marital status, or any other status protected by law except where such protected category is a bona fide occupational qualification (BFOQ), to the extent that someone's needs can be addressed and cared for within the scope of program services with the financial resources of the agency.

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A COPY OF THE OFFICIAL REGISTRATION AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION FOR THE FLORIDA UNITED METHODIST CHILDREN'S HOME, A FLORIDA-BASED NONPROFIT CORPORATION (REGISTRATION NO. CH1628), MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES BY CALLING TOLL-FREE 1-800-HELP-FLA (435-7352) WITHIN THE STATE OR VISITING THEIR WEBSITE <https://csapp.800helpfla.com/cspublicapp/giftgiversquery/giftgiversquery.aspx> REGISTRATION DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT, APPROVAL OR RECOMMENDATION BY THE STATE.