



The Michael H. Flanagan Foundation

Teach this triple truth to all: A generous heart, kind speech, and a life of service and compassion are the things which renew humanity.

--Buddha

Spring 2010 Volume 8

OUR STORY



The Michael H. Flanagan Foundation was established by his family in 2002 in memory of this young man who at the age of 19 was diagnosed with leukemia.

Many others continue to fight this terrible disease on a daily basis. Michael strived to live his life with courage, integrity and faith during his three and a half year struggle with leukemia and two bone marrow transplants. He received the very best in medical and nursing care at both the Miriam Hospital in Rhode Island and the Tufts Medical Center in Boston. Bone marrow transplant patients spend weeks and sometimes months in isolation while they struggle with complications and wait for their new immune system to develop. After witnessing Michael's time in the hospital, his family decided to establish this foundation as a way to keep his memory alive and to support other patients facing the same difficult journey. It is the mission of the Foundation to provide comfort to these patients and their families during this very challenging time.

The Michael H. Flanagan Foundation is a 501 (c) (3) charitable organization.

- To become a donor please visit our website at www.mikesfoundation.org or contact us at 146 County Road, Barrington, RI 02806.
- To inquire about financial assistance available through our grant program, please contact your social worker.

*www.mikesfoundation.com
under reconstruction but coming soon...stay tuned*

**P.O. Box 708
Barrington RI 02806**



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www.mikesfoundation.com

Under construction...to be up and running soon ! We will be able to send email blasts with MHF Foundation updates, events and news...stay tuned...

April 25th Opening Day!

For Further Information Please Contact:

The Michael H. Flanagan Foundation • P.O. Box 708 • Barrington RI 02806

Dear Friends,

On behalf of everyone involved with The Michael H. Flanagan Foundation, I would like to thank you for your continued support of our mission. This opportunity to keep my brother's memory alive has allowed us to make incredible strides towards providing many levels of comfort for leukemia patients and their families in the New England area and beyond. Our Grant Program has become the umbrella offering shelter from hidden expenses experienced in the sudden unpredictable storm that leukemia can feel like. Funds are efficiently directed to patients and their families. Our Comfort Bags send a message of care and concern for those entering the journey of a bone marrow transplant. We thank you for your part in making this happen.

My brother Michael, who would have turned 32 this April, inspired us to create this foundation and we have been given an opportunity, through your generosity, to make a difference in the lives of hundreds of individuals since its inception. Visit any hospital and observe the needs you see, now imagine the needs that go unseen. This issue of our newsletter includes a sample of actual requests from social workers and letters of thanks from patients, which gives us an appreciation of some otherwise unseen needs and the Foundation's impact on those needs.

Being able to commit full circle requires many steps and your support is invaluable in allowing us to join forces. Your invaluable support provides direct comfort to the patients and their families and keeps us steadfast in our mission. You are a critical part of a very special cause.

Take care,
Christine E. Griffin, Director

★ 2009 MILESTONES

These are our accomplishments of 2009 that would not have happened without your support. Thank you!

- Assisted 10 families with Neely House accommodations while a loved one underwent a bone marrow transplant at Tufts.
- North 8 Patients on Christmas morning at Tufts Medical Center woke up to a holiday gift and card from MHF Foundation elves...a cozy scarf and mittens was a simple gesture to let them know someone cared.
- Renovations in the MHFF Family Room at Tufts on North 8 have begun and are including a work space desk and additional seating . This room has been "well loved" and is due for some updates after its opening in 2005.
- Fifty two Comfort Bags were distributed to leukemia and Bone Marrow Transplant patients at Tufts Medical Center, Boston, Rhode Island Hospital, The Miriam Hospital and as far away as Idaho, New York and Florida.
- Forty Four financial grants were funded, over \$15,000—grant spending has had a 12% increase since last year.
- Fifteen personal DVD players and storage bins are now in place in the the Infusion Center at Miriam Hospital. This gives each patient receiving treatment (hours long) an escape.

Always needed: dvd's new or used, new puzzles and board games, new legos, wooden blocks, coloring books



Julie Sherman, RN and Dan MacClellan, RN Tufts Medical Center, BMT Unit

This is why we say “YES”. This is why we are proud to be able to offer comfort. Because of my brother, because many lives changed close to nine years ago, and because of you, we are all making a difference. What if one of these situations was your story? These are examples of why we are needed and what we are needed for.

“Patient M and her spouse live by themselves in Portsmouth. She is battling a new diagnosis of acute leukemia after successfully completing apml treatment ten years ago. Her husband works driving a school bus. He does not receive a salary when he is not driving (because of caring for wife) they are having difficulty making ends meet, especially basic bills and food. We are requesting a grant to assist needs until patient receives social security disability. Can you help?”

Patient T is 21 years old and was found crying in his room. When asked why he said he had financial worries because he could not work and does not want to ask his grandmother for money, as he has no other family. He worried that he would be thought of as lazy, even though he is limited to the hospital for several weeks. After trying to reassure him that his grandmother understands he has cancer and may be able to offer some help, I thought I would also check with your foundation to see if there was some assistance you could provide for his rent as I continue to work with him on other possible funds. He is such a young man to be so upset about finances while going through his BMT. Thank you for all you do for our patients.

“This is a request for the holidays on behalf of a patient who may be known to you. She had a matched unrelated donor transplant a while ago. She has had dramatic complications from graft vs. host disease. She has two young sons, seven and four. Unfortunately, she has been ill since 2006, and it is difficult to find sources of funding she has not already tapped into. I'm willing to bet that we have approached you before on her behalf. If you would be comfortable with a grant in the neighborhood of \$200.00, I could ask her where she could go to use a gift card to shop for her boys. I believe there are also gift cards that can be used in a number of outlets and stores that would also do. What do you think? Many thanks. This is a tough case.”

These are some of the “After” grant words of thanks.

“A year ago I was diagnosed with Multiple Myeloma at age 59. I live alone and in the past year have been met with a lot of paperwork and some financial challenges. Your generous gift allowed my family, and me, for several days, to stay at the Neely House, something that insurance does not cover. It made the roughest months of the year much, much easier. I cannot tell you how much I appreciate what the Foundation does for me and others. Thank you! S.G.

“ I am writing to thank you for the support your organization has given me. My deepest sympathy for your loss and you have my admiration for taking your tragedy and turning it into making it possible for so many others to be able to fight the battle of cancer. ...I am 45 years old

and have a wonderfully supportive family. I was diagnosed last year with lymphoma. I spent a week or better in turmoil in coming to the decision to make the trip to Boston from my home in south Florida for a stem cell transplant, not to mention figuring out financially how we were going to do this. Thanks to your organization's grant it is making my stay less stressful financially. Nine weeks away from home seems like a lifetime right now. I know that stem cell transplant gives me my best option to live the longest life I can. I am about halfway into the nine weeks at this point. I will be admitted for the stem cell transplant on March 17th. From the bottom of my heart—Thank you!”K.L.

“ I am very grateful for your generous grant to help cover my medical expenses. I had a bone marrow transplant five years back and have continued to have multiple treatments in Boston for graft vs. host disease. Everything is going pretty well with some bumps along the way. I deeply appreciate your gift and kindness.” L. R.

Dear Christine and Mrs. Flanagan, What a great pleasure it was to meet you today! Your generosity is remarkable and the quickness of your response to needs, large and small (but all "large" for patients and their families), is unparalleled in my long years of social work in hospital settings. Thank you again for all you do for patients and their families. _Mary Ann Donaldson LICSW, Social Worker _Hematology/Oncology/Blood and Marrow Transplant _Tufts Medical Center

★ A STORY OF THANKS



The Miriam Hospital's Cancer Center and its clinical social workers have been affiliated with The Michael H. Flanagan Foundation since its inception. In fact Michael Flanagan was our patient and we have a very special bond for that reason.

We have given out countless **Comfort Bags** and we always have several on hand. They are always received with grateful thanks by patients and families.

We have some new comforts for our outpatients at the Cancer Center— children's books geared towards cancer in the family, DVDs and players and other things are to come. We know we can count on the Foundation for assistance and our patients and their families truly appreciate everything. Here is one of their stories:

An elderly woman has a form of Leukemia and is being treated with a very rare medication. The co-pay for this medication numbers in the hundreds of dollars and this would be an obvious hardship for anyone, let alone someone on a fixed income. So...as social workers working with a couple, who do you call? The Flanagan Foundation, of course!

Within two days, one month's co-pay was generously subsidized by The Foundation. The couple's words were: “Thanks one hundred times over. I truly do not know what we would have done without the help of the Flanagan Foundation”

Our heartfelt thanks as well! Where would we be without you? Margaret Smith and Kathy Higginbotham Oncology Clinical Social Workers The Miriam Hospital.

Thank You

Thank you for your generous support. Our Campaign For Comfort was a success and raised over \$17,000 to be put to important use during 2010. This list includes gifts received and processed between April 1, 2009 and April 1, 2010. Gifts received after will be included in next year's listing. Great care has been taken to ensure accuracy of all names. If an error has been made, please let us know by calling 401.247.7763 or email christine@mikesfoundation.org and accept our sincere apologies.

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About Corporate Matching...

Corporate matching can make your gift go twice as far and is an easy way for people to increase the impact of their personal contributions to The Michael H. Flanagan Foundation. Check with your company about its matching gift policy. Many employers will provide a form for you to complete and send to us.

2009 EVENING UNDER THE STARS

Tagline explaining the image and explaining what the check presentation is for.
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HARBOR WALK & RUN

Interested in walking/running in the 2010 Harbor Walk & Run to benefit Tufts Medical Center and Floating Hospital for Children? You can be a part of this great day too, either by signing up to walk or run yourself, or by making a contribution.

You can do either (or both!) on line at: www.harborwalkrun.org



NATIONAL BONE MARROW DONOR PROGRAM

Interested in being a part of this program? email “Be The Match” at outreach@nmbp.org or call 1-800-MARROW-2

SAVE THE DATE:

Saturday, September 18th, 2010

OUR SEVENTH EVENING UNDER THE STARS

Mount Hope Farm
Bristol, Rhode Island • 6-9 pm

Cocktails, Fine Food, Music and Special Guest

- * Sponsorship Opportunities available in the evenings Program Booklet
- * Would you like to donate an item or service to the Auction?

Contact christine@mikesfoundation.org

Look for your invitation in the mail this summer!