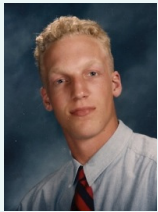




THE Michael H. Flanagan FOUNDATION *newsletter*

C O U R A G E * I N T E G R I T Y * F A I T H

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. Find out more at mikesfoundation.com

A single act of kindness throws out roots in all directions, and the roots spring up and make new trees. The greatest work that kindness does to others is that it makes them kind themselves.

~ Amelia Earhart

Precious Resources

Dear Friends,

One word spreads throughout this spring newsletter, **resource**.

Think of us as a:

Resource of **hope** when we distribute money for grants.

Resource of **comfort** when we create a Family Room and provide a massage table

Resource of **information** when we share ideas with others so that they can too spread comfort.

Resource of **knowledge** for children and teens to understand and cope with difficult matters.

The definition of RESOURCE is a source of supply or support that enhances the quality of human life. As I reflect back on how we have impacted the lives of others, the theme of this year has been MHFF as a resource. It is my hope that we brought not only comfort but also some joy to those experiencing the life changing diagnosis of leukemia and potential bone marrow transplant. Today I am at our second bone marrow donor drive that we proudly co-sponsor with Providence College. A blood drive is also occurring simultaneously – two awesome opportunities to give of yourself where the only cost is your time. Did you know that a pint of blood can save

up to three lives? Registering to be a donor is another opportunity to save someone's life. Awesome! You too are a resource.

Read inside about our milestones to learn how your support has made them a reality. I recently received a FB message from a recipient of one of our Comfort Bags in Ohio. She is feeling well and creating her own version of a comfort bag for a friend facing breast cancer, inspired by the comfort she received from MHFF making a difference!

Resources are important ...we do not want to run out and thanks to generous and consistent supporters we have a strong foundation! I hope that those who attended our 10th Anniversary celebration had a wonderful time! I was so happy to see each one of you there and thank you for coming! You are an important resource of a very special cause.

Best,

Christine

Benefit Sponsors

The Foundation is deeply grateful to our 10th Anniversary Celebration sponsors whose generosity helps defray the costs of the evening. The monetary and in-kind donations received are an integral part of the evening's success and we are truly thankful to those who have been so supportive!

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The Diagnosis

Dr. Nathan Connell, MD reflects on his work and MHFF

The diagnosis of acute leukemia comes as a shock to most patients. They visit their primary care physician or go to the local hospital emergency room feeling fatigued or sometimes with easy bruising. The symptoms may have been going on for months and they often attribute it to stress, working late hours, or old age.

One of the hardest things we do as hematologists is to meet a patient for the first time and, within a few minutes, explain that we are worried about leukemia. Patients and their families exhibit a variety of emotions ranging from anger and denial to grief and fear. This is compounded when they learn that the treatment will likely require weeks in the hospital with uncertainty along the way as to when fevers and infections may start to appear.

It is the uncertainty that comes to weigh the heaviest on many patients. Uncertainty as to whether the chemotherapy is working, uncertainty as to how many days are left in the hospital. Certainly, the financial concerns weigh heavily on patients, as they have to take

leave from work and find family and friends to help care for their home and other responsibilities. Often times, patients will not tell their physician when these issues are on their mind, preferring to focus on the medical aspects, and trying to keep a "positive attitude" in the face of overwhelming stress.

The Michael H. Flanagan Foundation works to address these uncertainties and provide comfort. While making rounds recently, I walked into a room and saw a Flanagan Foundation Comfort Bag on the table next to the patient. The contents of the bag were spread out on the bed and it brought a smile to my face to know that a needed distraction was there when patients needed it the most. By providing financial grants to those in need, the Flanagan Foundation helps relieve the stress of facing a difficult disease.

Nathan T. Connell, M.D. is a Teaching Fellow in Hematology and Oncology in the Department of Medicine at the Alpert Medical School of Brown University, and an MHFF Board Member

Recipe for a Comfort Bag

What are the ingredients of a MHFF Comfort Bag?

- Custom made canvas bag
- Gentle skin wipes
- Soft kleenex
- Soft toilet tissue
- Dove unscented soap
- Chapstick
- Ava Anderson Non Toxic baby lotion
- Gel eye mask, can be used cold or hot
- Journal with pen
- Light read, currently, *A Teaspoon of Courage*
- CleanRest sealed pillow and small blanket
- Playing cards
- Puzzle
- Stress ball
- Turtle Fur fleece cap
- Soft, colorful Gecko companion
- Soft toothbrush
- Calming Tea
- Queasy Drops hard candy
- MHFF Brochure
- Bananagrams

**When customized there are often CD players, toys, iTunes cards, t-shirts, pj's movies and other items added as well.*

Our 10th Anniversary Celebration

LAURA RAMSDEN

On Friday, September 21st, The Michael H. Flanagan Foundation celebrated the 10th anniversary of their fall fundraising event, a tremendous success by all accounts. Nearly 300 people enjoyed a memorable night at the Rhode Island Country Club. The evening featured diverse international food selections offered under the torch lit moonlight on the terrace overlooking Narragansett Bay. The 10th anniversary theme was evident throughout as tables glittered with 10s, including the 10 major accomplishments of the Foundation and Mi-

chael's Top Ten list, memorializing Michael, the true guest of honor. Both Dan Maclellan and Kathy Higginbotham were presented Hero Awards for their tremendous work. While much fun was had, the mission of the night was front and center as an amazing auction of 47 distinct items enticed the crowd to bid generously. Further generosity from a wide array of sponsors, donations of wine from Gasbarro's Wines of Providence and donated entertainment by Fat Free Bob helped keep expenses low and maximized proceeds. The Foundation

raised over \$50,000, directly benefitting patients through grants, comfort bags and capital expenditures designed to improve patients' lives during their hospital stays. The Michael H. Flanagan Foundation would like to thank everyone who participated in making our 10th Anniversary Celebration a huge success.





We thank you! Thank you for your generous support. We raised over \$50,000 from our 10th Anniversary Benefit and donations throughout the year. This list includes gifts received and processed between April 1, 2012 and press time. 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.com and accept our sincere apologies.

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In Memory of
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2012 – 2013 Blessings

These blessings were a direct result of your support. Thank you!

Over 50 Comfort Bags distributed to patients at Tufts Medical Center, Boston, Rhode Island Hospital, The Miriam Hospital, Mass General, Dana Farber and as far away as Ohio and California. We also customized several Junior Comfort Bags for pediatric leukemia patients. Recently added Calming Tea and Queasy Drops to the contents.

37 Financial grants funded over \$17,000 for assistance to patients and families.

Celebrated our 10th Anniversary with over 300 guests on September 21, 2012 at Rhode Island Country Club and raised over \$50,000.



Planned our Second Bone Marrow Drive with Providence College on April 10, 2013. 95 New Donors are now added to the nationwide registry! Thank you PC!

Delivered Christmas morning presents to 15 patients at Tufts Medical Center who were spending Christmas week in the BMT unit. Thank you to the social worker and nurses working that day for distributing the gifts- a cozy scarf and gloves to let them know someone cared. Also provided 5 Holiday grants to needy families to assist in making holidays a little brighter.

Replenished a rug, toys, games, art supplies and added some silk plants for the MHFF Family Room at Tufts Medical Center. Every family room needs TLC and we like to keep it as clean, comfortable and welcoming as possible.

Received a tremendous donation of movies and series from HBO. With \$12,000 worth of multiple copies of series such as Entourage, Treme, Curb your Enthusiasm, The Sopranos and more, patients will have a variety of viewing options for some time. Thank you HBO!

Clean Rest and Gary Goldberg donated 100 individually sealed blanket and pillow sets that we include in our Comfort Bags. Thank you CleanRest and Gary!

Began using Ava Anderson Non-toxic baby Lotion in our Comfort Bags. A perfect, safe addition for patients.

Purchased a Massage Table, Headrest and Stool for the recently completed Wellness Room in the Fain Building at Miriam Hospital. Massage is a tremendous source of comfort for patients undergoing chemotherapy and trained Massage and Reiki therapists at Miriam are thrilled to have this important piece of equipment.

Opened a Family Room on 8A, the oncology floor, at Rhode Island Hospital. Now families have a place to be together, hold family meetings with doctors, or simply feel like they are in a comfortable space while dealing with the daily and often exhausting challenges that cancer presents.

We continued our partnerships with the b positive project t-shirts and the Just Be You bracelets and necklaces as a way to share knowledge to others about each organization.



Supplied materials for the first Kids Group at Miriam Hospital designed by social worker, Kathy Higginbotham. The goal is to provide a small group session once a month for children ages 5-17 to get a behind the scenes look at what their loved one is doing when they are at the hospital. There is an arts and crafts component along with refreshments. Kathy also uses many books, teddy bears and iTunes cards for transitioning topics with the various age groups.



Welcomed Alex Giannakos as our Technology Coordinator. He is in the process of website redesign, Mail Chimp messaging, and any other tech issues that come our way.

Looking forward to more time with our Barrington High School volunteer, Lily Broomhead.



Visit our Facebook page! Like us and spread the word. You never know who we can help!

Thanks for the Holiday Help

JUDITH KAHN

While the holiday season starting from Thanksgiving till New Year brings many occasions for joy and celebration, many of our Tufts families coping with illness or the aftermath of bone marrow transplant transplant are additionally stressed at this time. They have already had to make many adjustments to family life, and the holidays can be reminders of some unwelcome changes. In addition to the emotional stress, finances can be strained by the many extra expenses of medical care. I am grateful every year for the gracious help from Mike's foundation for our less fortunate families.

The North 8 nurses are so appreciative that they can nominate the families that come to their attention to receive generous gift cards from the Flanagan Foundation that provide gifts for the kids and food and decorations for the celebrations. Patients who may not be able to go into crowded shopping malls and their busy caregivers are grateful that they can use their cards to do their holiday shopping on-line.

In addition to the gift cards that go to patients at home, the Flanagan Foundation remembers those who are hospitalized, as well.

Every year Mike's family drops off beautifully wrapped presents to distribute to those who cannot be home with their families and friends. It is festive for those of us who work the holiday, too, to get to play Santa for the day and bring some cheer into the hospital room. Thank you to the Flanagan Foundation for your heartfelt kindness over the holidays and all year long !

Judith Kahn, LICSW, OSW-C, is a Clinical Staff Social Worker at Tufts Medical Center Hematology/Oncology/BMT

RIH Family Room

SUSAN GARLAND, LICSW AT RIH



The Flanagan Family Room located on the inpatient oncology unit at Rhode Island Hospital was officially reopened on May 7th, 2013. Thanks to the generosity of the Flanagan Foundation, this room is now a place of comfort, peace and healing for patients and their families when admitted to the oncology unit.

Game tables, comfortable furniture, resources and childrens' activities provide a welcome respite from the often difficult treatments oncology patients receive while admitted to the unit. Families can meet with the medical team privately in an uninterrupted setting. The celebration of the Flanagan Family Room was well attended by representatives throughout the hospital. All of the staff who work

on the oncology unit are especially grateful for this generous gift from the Flanagan family to Rhode Island Hospital.



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

To donate please visit our website at: www.mikesfoundation.com or contact us at P.O. Box 708, Barrington RI 02806

To inquire about financial assistance available through our grant program, please contact your social worker.