



THE MICHAEL H. FLANAGAN FOUNDATION

*The purpose of life is not to be happy. It is to be useful,
to be honorable, to be compassionate, to have it make
some difference that you have lived and lived well.*

-Ralph Waldo Emerson

Spring 2011 Volume 9

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.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.

Dear Friends,



It is amazing that we are coming up on our 10th anniversary of the Foundation, established in 2002. In speaking with others who have established foundations, such as The Cam Neely Foundation for Cancer Care, we discussed how Foundations can take on a life of their own and the energy spreads as more and more work is done. This past year has been a year of so much positive energy. We had a beautiful and successful benefit in September, rebuilt our website, partnered with the B Positive Project, created our own Facebook page, and most importantly, continued to grow as a resource for leukemia and bone marrow transplant patients and families. We are so proud of our ability to provide immediate funds to requests made to us by our team of social workers at RI and Boston hospitals. Not only have our Comfort Bags grown in their contents and distribution, but our financial grants continue to bestow sighs of much needed relief as a small burden is lifted off some very stressed shoulders.

I am so grateful for your continued support and on behalf of all those to whom we bring some degree of comfort, thank you.

Take care,
Christine E. Griffin, Director

OUR SEVENTH EVENING UNDER THE STARS



On Saturday, September 18th, the Foundation hosted its seventh Fall Benefit at the Mt Hope Farm in Bristol, a fun and festive baseball themed evening for over 200 guests. Many people came out to see how fast they could throw a baseball, bid on the fabulous silent auction items, taste the delicious food, watch the sun go down over the bay and listen to music. There wasn't a dry eye in the house as Christine and her sister Lara shared their thoughtful words

about how the foundation has touched so many lives. For the first time, we had an event committee of 19 dedicated and enthusiastic volunteers who doubled our sponsorships and raised close to \$35,000, every dollar of which will go directly to help families touched by leukemia. The monetary and in-kind donations were an integral part of the evening's success and we are truly thankful to those who were so supportive.
-Kirsten Davis and Kate Lentz



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www.mikesfoundation.com



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Mike Flanagan
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For Further Information Please Contact:

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

★“COMFORT” IS THE KEY TO SUCCESS

“Comfort” is the key to success. The Flanagan’s know this personally. When their beloved “Michael” was going through a bone marrow transplant on North 8, they immediately identified that being away from home for a long period of time and going through intense chemotherapy caused patients a great deal of distress. They immediately thought of items that would make a patient stay during the transplant more comfortable. The foundation began distributing “Comfort Bags” to the patients who were admitted for a bone marrow transplant. When a patient receives a “comfort bag” from the Flanagan Foundation, a smile immediately comes to their tired, anxious face. The highlight of my day is to deliver the bag to the patient and go through the “goodies” in the bag with them. They are in awe at the wonderful, thoughtful items that are placed in the bag. The patient’s will remark that they “never thought of bringing soft toilet paper.” It may seem like a small, unimportant item, but to a patient who will be visiting the hospital for several weeks, using hospital grade toilet paper is not very comfortable.

Whether it is the inspirational book or the soft hat to keep them warm, each item is thoughtfully placed in the bag. Now the Flanagan’s have done it again. They have identified a very important need for the patients. Each transplant room currently has a chair that the patients can sit in. The patients are encouraged to get out of bed daily to keep up their strength improve their health. The chairs in each room have a straight back with no option to put their feet up. They are not very “comfortable”. The Flanagan Foundation has very generously donated recliner chairs for each transplant room. Through this donation, each patient will have the opportunity to get out bed and sit in a comfortable chair that will help in their overall wellbeing. One patient commented on how “comfortable” the chairs were and how they had their family sleep over when they were not doing well. The chair made it possible for family to stay overnight, which in turn, improved their care. Whether it is the “comfort bags”, the chairs or the many other generous, thoughtful grants the Flanagan’s provide, the main focus and concern is the patient. They have made it “all about the patients” and for that, North 8 as well as the patients who receive their care here, say “Thank You”.

-Julie Sherman, RN Nurse Manager, Tufts Medical Center BMT Unit

★NOTES OF THANKS

Notes of Thanks from those we have been able to help... thanks to you!

Thank you so much for all your help. When you feel so down and stressed out and you don’t know where to turn, something so kind happens to you. It lifts your heart.

-Stephen R.

We want to thank you for your generous grant to our son Tim who has leukemia. He has been in and out of the hospital and is due for a transplant in about a month. It was so thoughtful and kind of your foundation to help our family.

-The Allison Family

Thank you to your family for starting The Michael H. Flanagan Foundation, for all you have done and continue to do to make very difficult times more comfortable for others.

-Carrie C.

First off thank you so much for your very generous grant which has helped my family pay for medical and miscellaneous expenses like parking and gas which really adds up. Over December I went through a transplant at Mass General Hospital. During my stay there I received a bag full of items from your foundation and I think I used everything inside. I am so thankful for your generosity and for making my stay at MGH that much more comfortable. I continue to use the Cetaphil everyday as it keeps my skin protected especially in these dry winter months. Thanks again.

-Chris O.

★THANK YOU MADISON

My name is Madison Hamblett and I am a 16 year old junior in high school. Almost a year ago, I became involved in the Michael Flanagan Foundation. At first I was not sure what it was all about. My school and parents were telling me to get involved and to start giving back. I have to admit I was a bit reluctant. My mother told me to “like” the Michael Flanagan Foundation page on Facebook to learn more. My first reaction was –cool- they are on Facebook. Then, after reading their mission statement and learning more about the foundation did, I immediately wanted to get involved.

My projects range from organizing paper work, helping out at the Annual Fundraiser (which had a baseball theme this year), and recently creating an activity book for the kids whose parents are getting treatment. Hopefully it will bring them some happiness and distract them from tough situation they are in. After attending “An Evening Under the Stars”, hearing members of the Flanagan family speak, and witnessing the party-goers, it reminded me what a great organization this is. I hope to visit the family room at Tufts Medical in the near future- and be able to witness first hand, one of the proud accomplishments of this amazing organization.

-Madison

★A POSITIVE CONNECTION



doing something positive.

B Positive Mission. The b Positive Project is a socially responsible t-shirt and apparel company that gives back 25% of their proceeds via online sales to one of their charitable-projects. Their mission is to turn consumers into philanthropists without affecting their budget or their lifestyle. Live your life with a purpose by

B Positive Products. Whenever you see someone wearing the ‘b’ it means they are doing good for someone else. By purchasing b positive gear you have the option to support charities, non-profits, or causes. Inspire and motivate your *mind, body, soul,* and *heart* when you wear our gear.

As one of the designated b Positive charities, **we benefit in two ways.** We have created our own b Positive shirts for ladies, guys and kids with all proceeds going to the MHFF **and** we receive a percentage of proceeds from online sales of all the other b positive shirts that are sold. Not bad! The shirts are super comfortable and canvas tote bags also available... white with blue handles and logos.

Check them out at www.mikesfoundation.com

★2010 MILESTONES

These are our accomplishments of 2010 that would not have happened without your support. Thank you!

65 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 Florida and Maine. This reflects a 20% increase from 2010. We also created several Junior Comfort bags for pediatric BMT patients.

31 financial grants were funded, over \$15,000 distributed for assistance to patients and families. Parking coupon booklets, gas and grocery cards and Neely House accommodations are small examples of little things that make a big difference.



Nine additional Infusion Recliner Chairs were purchased for the BMT rooms at Tufts. *Julie Sherman, Nurse Manager writes* “I wanted to let you know that the chairs are in the rooms and they are awesome. Words cannot express how beautiful they are. They fit very nice in the rooms, they are not too big and they are very comfortable. Not only is it comfortable for the patients to get out of the bed into the chair, but it will improve outcomes by encouraging patients not to stay in bed!!! I can’t thank you enough and I can’t wait for you to see them!”

Thirteen individual music libraries booklets were created by board member Tyler Borges so that each

BMT room at Tufts would have a selection of music to listen to with a range unique to each room.

We had a donation of fleece fabric from Polartec that is 99% bacteria free after 100 washes. We had the fabric made into blankets and packaged them. These blankets have been handed out to patients in outpatient for them to keep and maybe bring them back when they have treatments to keep them warm and comfortable. We also supplied winter hats for those leaving the hospital after outpatient treatment and needing warmth after chemotherapy effects.



Distributed over 100 Teddy bears and books that social workers at The Miriam Hospital and RI Hospital hand out to children of patients as they prepare them and explain leukemia to the children.

Funded and distributed books for teens on grief that social workers had on their wish list at RI Hospital. Continued to supply titles that could be handed out to families for children of all ages.

Delivered Christmas morning presents to patients at Tufts Medical Center who were spending Christmas week in the BMT unit. Thank you to the nurses working that day for distributing the gifts- a cozy scarf and gloves to let them know someone cared.

Purchased a Mobile Storage cabinet for the Infusion Center at Miriam Hospital. Last year we had purchased the 15 personal dvd players and this gives the nurses a convenient and secure home for the equipment when not in use by patients receiving their treatments.

Replenished rug, toys, games and art supplies 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. It gets a lot of use!

**HARBOR
WALK & RUN**

HARBOR WALK & RUN

Interested in walking/running in the 2011 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

BE THE MATCH

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

www.mikesfoundation.com

Our website has been under reconstruction and is now officially up and running thanks to the dedicated team of Beth Vetromile and Joanne Judge. Many, many hours were spent fine-tuning the various updates and we are thrilled with the results. Not only can you stay updated about the foundation, purchase shirts, hats and cards, but you can also make a secure donation via PayPal. A special thanks also to SVM for their support and guidance in the world of website design.



In addition to the website, we also decided to create a Facebook page... check it out and Like us. You never know who we can help...spread the word!