

Spring 2014, Issue 5

## **THANK YOU FROM OUR CHAIRPERSON**

May 19, 2014

Dear Friends:

On behalf of the John Patrick Flanagan Foundation (JPFF), I am pleased to present our Spring 2014 newsletter that provides an update on our activities and successes over the past year.

Through the kindness and generosity of hundreds of individuals and families, we've provided more than \$85,000 to support a variety of programs and organizations that help disadvantaged children and families in our region since our inception in 2009.

With your help, JPFF has enabled more than 2,000 kids from Bridgeport to go on field trips to the Audubon Society in Fairfield as part of the John Patrick Flanagan Trailblazers program. We've funded programming and college preparation assistance for inner city teens, helped economically-disadvantaged immigrant women and children learn English and life skills, supported children affected by HIV/AIDS, sponsored volunteer attorneys who work to place children in safe permanent homes and given scholarships to children who have a financial need as well as children who have lost a parent to cancer.

JPFF remains a living testament to the life and spirit of John Flanagan. We are proud to be working with so many organizations that are improving the lives of children and families in need throughout Fairfield County.

Thank you again for your generosity and support for the John Patrick Flanagan Foundation.

Sincerely,

Amanda Flanagan  
Chairperson

**2013 Grant Recap**

## **\$28,500 granted to six local organizations in 2013**

In December of 2013, The John Patrick Flanagan Foundation voted to award \$28,500 in grants to a six local nonprofits that help disadvantaged children and families in our communities.

The most recent grants awarded are:

- CT Audubon Society Center at Fairfield (\$8,000) – to fund the cost for the “JPFF Trailblazers Program,” which enters its fifth year and provides Bridgeport public school students with transportation to the Nature Center for field trips focused on nature and science. Since the program began, more than 2,000 students have participated in the Trailblazers program.
- United in Hope Scholarship Fund (\$5,000) – to fund a scholarship for graduating college-bound high school seniors who have lost a parent to cancer. This grant is jointly founded with the Chad A. Jacobs Memorial Foundation.
- Commence College Counseling (\$3,000) – to support the organization’s efforts to enhance their website. Commence helps highly motivated students in Bridgeport apply to college and navigate the scholarship and financial aid network.
- Wakeman Smilow-Burroughs Clubhouse in Bridgeport (\$7,000) – to help fund teen counselors who provide programming at the Clubhouse in Bridgeport, including an afterschool job program, community service program, and high school and college prep support.
- Caroline House (\$4,500) – to fund a nutritious snack program for the children in their preschool program.
- High School Scholarship of Fairfield (\$1,000) – to fund an annual scholarship to a college-bound, high achieving student with economic need from Fairfield Warde High School.

## Thoughts of John

*By Chris Riley*

In early 1994, I was looking to get involved in politics in Connecticut after living in Washington, DC and was directed by then-Attorney General Richard Blumenthal to get in touch with John Flanagan from his office.

John and I spoke a few times and I helped out with some small-scale events during the early part of the year. He was easy to talk to and always very entertaining to be around.

That summer, as the Democratic State Convention approached, John asked if I could help him and a few other folks prepare the Blumenthal presence in the basement of the Hartford Civic Center and I was happy to assist.

With the Convention on Saturday, the preparations had to be completed on Friday evening. And with so many candidates vying for a range of offices, space in the convention area was pretty limited. One of the odd convention rules stated that campaigns could not use anything 'extra' to post their materials up on the walls— you were not allowed to use ladders or chairs to get their posters and placards higher than any other candidate's.

Always the innovator, I watched John hoist a very attractive girl onto his shoulders to put the orange and blue Blumenthal posters higher than anything else in the room. They moved along the wall, talking, laughing, and positioning themselves to cover as much ground as they could.

As they moved toward me, the very attractive girl lost her balance and jumped off John's shoulders, and landed on my foot. As I expressed my discomfort, John and the very attractive girl laughed for what seemed to be an hour.

Then John said to me, motioning toward the very attractive girl, "Chris, have you met my sister Caitlin?"

I had not, and suddenly, my foot didn't hurt so much.

Five years later (after a bit of patience on my part...) Caitlin and I were married with John and his brother Matt joining my four brothers as ushers at our wedding on October 9, 1999.

So if it were not for John, I would not have met Caitlin, the love of my life and the mother of my incredible kids. My life would have gone in an entirely different direction and I cannot imagine I'd be as happy as I am today.



## Thoughts of John: UCONN's Double National Championship

I'm sure many of you thought of John as we all watched the UCONN men fight their way through the tournament and unexpectedly go all the way! He would've been so incredibly psyched!

UCONN men's basketball played a large part in our courtship as I was a UCONN undergrad and John was at UCONN law school when we started dating in the days of Scott Burrell, Ray Allen and Kevin Ollie. I've got so many great memories of going to games together over the years. The most fun games may have been at the Big East tournaments.... The good old days!

... And the acorns don't fall from the tree – our kids were totally into their brackets, loved watching the wins on both the men's and ladies' sides, and basked in the glory the double championship!! Go Huskies!!



UCONN Men's game Feb. 2008



UConn Football Tailgate Fall 2007

John Keenan: “I thought of John during the UConn run and thought he might have had a hand in engineering the outcome. I also think of him every time his wristwatch alarm goes off. I kept the alarm as is. Thanks again for that gift. It is one of my most meaningful possessions. It reminds me to appreciate each day like John did. “

## **JPFJ Grant Recipient Profile: Commence! College Counseling**

*By Beth Posner, Commence!*

Students working with Commence are seeking maximum financial aid and need strategic guidance to build college lists and tell their stories in compelling applications.

These students, mostly immigrants, children of immigrants, first generation to college, or raised in non-English speaking households lack an experienced family or any kind of support to help them through the selective admissions maze.

With Commence, these students, often served by overworked school staff, benefit from personalized mentoring and specialized guidance.

Commence College Counseling has been guiding highly motivated Bridgeport students through the selective college admission process for over seven years. Students like Joey, a daughter of Chinese immigrants who speak little English, worked tirelessly at Central Magnet, taking rigorous classes and succeeding. But, with parents who work seven days a week in their Chinese

take-out restaurant and lack knowledge of the college process, she was completely overwhelmed at the prospect of applying to college. Beginning in her junior year, week after week Commence worked with Joey one-on-one guiding her through testing strategies, college choices and multiple drafts of essays and the application. In her essays, Joey wrote of her hopes:

*“I will go beyond the shameful cycle of illiteracy where sarcasm cannot be understood and where the oblivious rudeness of a customer stings. I will leap away from poverty to obtain the education that my parents could not.”*

Today, Joey is a junior double majoring in Economics and Psychology at Cornell University....and succeeding! For a kid who confided in us that she had never been more than an hour’s drive from Bridgeport before we took her to see Cornell, now Joey has traveled to China with her Mandarin House, and Texas with her Tzu Ching Buddhist Club, where she is an officer. This past summer she co-managed the EEG section of her psychology lab, responsible for hiring and training research staff. This year Joey has moved off campus to Collegetown with friends and is currently looking for a summer internship.

Commence is proud to now be working with Joey’s brother, Sam. Stay tuned for Sam’s college plans!



## United in Hope Scholarship

The Chad A. Jacobs Memorial Foundation and the John Patrick Flanagan Foundation have jointly founded the United in Hope Scholarship for students who have lost a parent to cancer. Graduating high school seniors who attend school in Fairfield or Westport are eligible to apply. Criteria for the scholarship include:

- Loss of Parent to Cancer
- Financial Need
- Attends High School in Fairfield or Westport, Connecticut
- Character of Applicant
- Academic Goals and Performance

Karen Jacobs, Chairperson of CAJF, commented on the scholarship, “Losing a parent to cancer is devastating enough, but adding the financial burden often incurred by this disease and the death of a parent can be debilitating to a family. Our goal in creating the United in Hope Scholarship is to provide financial support for students heading to college to help them be all they can be.”

Scholarship Recipients to date are as follows:

- Luke Donahue – 2013 graduate of Fairfield Ludlow H.S. – attending George Washington University.

Karl Rodriguez-Perez – 2013 of Notre Dame H.S., attending University of New Haven.

- Kelly Rotondo – 2013 of Fairfield Ludlow H.S., attending Western CT State University.

For more information, please visit <http://www.jpff.org/scholarship.html>



2013 United in Hope Scholarship Award Reception (Mac Jacobs, Taylor Jacobs, Karen Jacobs, Luke Donahue, Kelly Rotondo, Karl Rodriguez-Perez, Bridget Flanagan, Amanda Flanagan, Emma Flanagan)

## 2013 Holiday Book Drive

The John Patrick Flanagan Children’s Corner at Bridgeport Hospital was replenished with new books and games donated by many generous individuals to the JPFF holiday book drive.

Thank you to Bridget Flanagan and Caroline Crawford for organizing the book drive and ***thank you to all our book drive donors!***



Pictured (l-r) with some of their recent donations are Amanda Flanagan; Oncology Nurse Manager Susan Tenney; the Flanagan children, Emma, Jack and Bridget; and Bridgeport Hospital Foundation President Steve Jakob.

## 2013 Financial Report:

Total amount granted out by JPFF since inception (2009-2013) = \$85,165

Current JPFF Endowment (May, 1, 2014) = \$ 452,000

2013 Fundraising Income = \$64,758.47

2013 interest, dividend and capital gain income = \$ 9,756.69  
(All 2013 operating costs were covered by our investment income.)

2013 Operating Costs = \$ 6,888.42

Our operating costs included web site hosting fees, credit card processing fees, P.O. box fee, accounting and bookkeeping fees, event planning and fundraising



costs, printing, postage and other minor costs. All other operating costs, including legal work, graphic design, website design, and all managerial and administrative costs were donated. JPFF is an all-volunteer organization.

A special thank you to:

- ICR, LLC for donating the infrastructure, management and administrative services to enable JPFF to keep our operating costs so low.
- Tim Bishop, Esq. for his pro-bono legal advisement and for donating the Team Flanagan 2013 race t-shirts.
- Dif McGeough for donating her website development services.
- Priscilla Igram of The Studio for donating her graphic design services.

## Remembering Judge G.Sarsfield Ford



In May of 2013, we were all saddened to learn of the passing of Judge G. Sarsfield “Judgie” Ford, the long-time neighbor and dear friend of the Flanagan family.

The Ford family generously asked that in lieu of flowers, contributions be made to the JPFF in memory of Judge Ford. This very kind gesture raised more than \$2,000 for the JPFF in the weeks and months following Judge’s

death.

Throughout his life, Judge Ford took a very keen interest in the health and well being of youths and teens. We are grateful that the funds raised in his name will support organizations in the region that share his commitment.

## Come Run With JPFF This June in the Fairfield 5K and Half Marathon

Please join the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual TEAM FLANAGAN as we run together to honor John in the Fairfield 5K Race Saturday, June 21st and Fairfield Half Marathon Sunday, June 22<sup>nd</sup>.

There are two easy steps to joining Team Flanagan 2014:

- 1) Email Team Captain Maura Almy at [mauraalmy@gmail.com](mailto:mauraalmy@gmail.com) or go [http://www.firstgiving.com/jpff/2014\\_JPFF\\_fairfield5k\\_halfmarathon](http://www.firstgiving.com/jpff/2014_JPFF_fairfield5k_halfmarathon) to and sign up for our team.

2) Register online at [www.fairfieldhalf.org](http://www.fairfieldhalf.org) to get your bib number for either the 5K or the half marathon.

**PARENTS AND KIDS RUNNING TOGETHER** --- We put a special emphasis on encouraging parents and their kids to team up for the 5K. This truly keeps in the spirit of our organization's mission which is to help children and families. It's a great way for you and your kids to stay fit and help less fortunate children of Connecticut.

If you would like to make a donation to JPFF in sponsorship of a runner, please visit our team website [http://www.firstgiving.com/jpff/2014\\_JPFF\\_fairfield5k\\_halfmarathon](http://www.firstgiving.com/jpff/2014_JPFF_fairfield5k_halfmarathon)

Please email Team Captain Maura Almy at [mauraalmy@gmail.com](mailto:mauraalmy@gmail.com) or Amanda Flanagan at [amanda.flanagan@icrinc.com](mailto:amanda.flanagan@icrinc.com) with any questions.

On behalf of our board, thank you so much for your support and participation!



**JPFF MISSION:** The mission of the John Patrick Flanagan Foundation is to help vulnerable children and families by supporting charities that provide the direction, education, and healthy environment that vulnerable children and families need to have the opportunity to reach their full potential. We will give special consideration to supporting Connecticut children and families. Charities

interested in applying for a JPFF grant, should visit [jpff.org](http://jpff.org), and download our grant application.

*John Patrick Flanagan Foundation*

*www.jpff.org*

*amanda.flanagan@icrinc.com*

*P.O. Box 818, Southport,*

*CT 06890*

## **Thank you to our 2013 contributors:**

The John Patrick Flanagan Foundation gratefully acknowledges the generosity of the more than 300 individuals, companies and organizations for their donations in 2013. JPFF understands there are many organizations worthy of your support and we are appreciative of your choice to endorse the work we are doing in CT to help children and families in John's name.

Abt, Beverly J.

Adair, Timothy & Heidi

Agonis, Susan P

Agustin, Hermenegildo & Rosario

Alex, Paul

Allen, Greta

Almy, John C. & Margret M.

Almy, Maura

Assunto, Michael

Auriemma, Vincent

Baldyga, Ken & Jan

Baumgartner, Neil

Beggan, Christine

Beggan, Melinda & Paul

Beliveau, Lynne

Bellis, Stephen & Barbara

in memory of Hon. Lawrence Hauser

Bernier, Mark & Robin

Biggs, Charles

Bishop, Tim

Blumenthal, Richard & Cynthia

Boo, Maria

Boyle, Edward & Ringel, Ellen

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DiTrapano, Katherine F.  
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Flanagan, Matthew & Alison  
Flanagan, Walter and Ann  
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Ford, Sean & Noara  
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Jacobs, Karen  
Jacobs, Mac  
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Jay, Loretta  
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Johnston, Scott  
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Khonora, Rishikesh  
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    in memory of Leonard C. Morris  
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Mullane, David John & Sarah A.  
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Murphy, Robert J & Margaret M  
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Nelson, Matt  
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Paynter, Nathaniel  
Paynter, Sally  
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    in memory of John and Chad  
Stotler, Kelly  
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Yedid, Robert  
Yongyod, Salisa  
Zima, William  
Ziskind, Cory  
Zrenda, Joe

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