

Choose Sofia's Hope for AmazonSmile

AmazonSmile is an easy way to support Sofia's Hope year-round! Sign up online or through the mobile app and choose Sofia's Hope as your charity of choice, then just always shop through AmazonSmile and start generating donations. To date, Amazon Smile has donated approximately \$1,500 to Sofia's Hope!



It's So Easy to Help Fight Against Childhood Cancer

Would you like to join the fight against childhood cancer? Sofia's Hope can really use YOUR help to collect the following items:

- Fun Band Aids
- Blankets
- Dum Dum Lollipops
- Masks
- Playing Cards
- Tablets
- Tissue Boxes
- Travel-sized Toiletries
- Small Toys
- Wash Cloths
- Hand Sanitizers
- Disinfecting Wipes

Interested? We can provide tools to help the collection effort. Please reach out at info@sofiashope.org.

Thank so much!



SPRING 2021 EDITION

GRATEFUL for Your Continued Support!



Outside of our Annual Kickin' It for Cancer tournament, all other 2020 events were either cancelled or converted to virtual formats. Events typically account for over half of our annual revenue, so we were simply overwhelmed by the outpour of support we received for the 2020 Virtual Week of Hope and other special initiatives. Between our Wine & Cheese Online Auction and the Reason to Run Virtual 5K and 13.1 we raised nearly \$50,000.



Sponsors:

DryZzz
Garcia Family
LCL McDonald's
Nicklaus Children's Hospital
Cancer & Blood Disorders Center

Premier OB-Gyn
Remos Family
Sandra Bruno, MD
The Big Cheese



Sponsors:

Dolphin Mall
Florida Blue
Masson Family
Palmetto Ford
Team Foot Works
The Big Cheese

A special shout out to Jamie Doherty from R2 Unified Technologies and Board Vice-President for his end of year fundraising campaign. Not only did he match each donation dollar for dollar, he led a grassroots campaign that raised over \$20,000 for our scholarship program! A big thanks also to Nina and Tiffany Fonseca for yet another successful Sweet Hearts fundraiser, with Treat Boxes that sold out in record time, they raised nearly \$15,000! A nod of thanks to Lissette Monzon from LillyBe for her creation of the BeHope essential oil perfume and Monica Granados from MCharms for the beautiful Hope stackable bracelets. A portion of sales of these items were donated to Sofia's Hope! It truly takes a village to support the childhood cancer community, and we are so very grateful that YOU are a part of ours!

Pediatric Cardio-Oncology Webinar Lecture Series

While the First International Pediatric Cardio-Oncology Conference is now set for 2022 disseminating information and collaboration remains paramount to our mission. As such, throughout 2021 we will be co-sponsoring several webinars with the Heart University at Cincinnati Children's Hospital. The first webinar was held Wednesday, December 16th with over 200 healthcare industry professionals registered. Dr. Steven Lipshultz remarked that "Never before have so many come together to learn about pediatric cardio-oncology...from all over the States, South America and Europe."

The next webinar, "Surveillance for Cardiometabolic Disorder in Children and Adults Survivors of Childhood Cancer", is scheduled for Tuesday, April 13th at 11:00 am. This session is not just for medical professionals. For more information and to register, please go to www.sofiashope.org/events.

Gamin' It For Childhood Cancer Game-A-Thon

Join us Saturday, May 15th for our all-new Gamin' It for Childhood Cancer event! Play your favorite game(s) and fight childhood cancer. It's only \$20 to register per player and your family and friends can create teams! Registration includes automatic entry to our raffle where you could win a \$250 MasterCard giftcard, and more.

Service hours are provided for fundraising efforts, and your registration is refunded if you raise at least \$100. All funds raised will support our Treasured Moments program that offers a helping hand to families in need and celebrates small every day experiences to create memories that last a lifetime. To sign up, please visit: www.sofiashope.org/gamingit.



Letter from the President

Dear Friend,

There is no simple way to sum up the past year. Tumultuous, frightening, wearisome. Resilient, heroic, hopeful. I think we will choose to proceed with hopeful!

Regardless of the events going on around us, Sofia's Hope was undeterred in our mission to support children with cancer and their families. We quickly pivoted our programs to virtual platforms, "Zooming", and making use of FaceTime and WhatsApp like never before. We extended the deadline for our program to give applicants more time and awarded a total of six scholarships. We adapted our equestrian program to offer one-on-one, private sessions for patients and their siblings versus camp. We were even able to expand our patient and family programing by offering a free, virtual tutoring program, Study Buddies.

And we have to acknowledge our program sponsors starting with The Kirk Foundation who not only maintained their level of support of our art programs but increased it. And to Baptist Health South Florida/Miami Cancer Institute for their ongoing commitment to our Equestrian and Zoo Field Trip programs. Support for our Newly Diagnosed Family Kits was provided by a grant from the Coral Gables Community Foundation as well as the Awesome Foundation. We also received grants for our Treasured Moments program, specifically for gift cards, from Spotlight Miami and The Kirk Foundation.

The Miami Foundation, the Office of the Mayor of Miami-Dade County, Miami-Dade County Board of County Commissioners and the Miami-Dade County Department of Public Housing and Community Development funding, made possible from the federal Coronavirus Relief Funds, was used to cover business interruption costs, reopening, and other expenses related to COVID-19. Without the support of all these partners, Sofia's Hope would not have been able to provide the support we did in 2020!

So, while 2020 was not what any of us were expecting, it has made us realize that like kids facing childhood cancer, we are tougher than we think we are. Patience is, indeed, a virtue, but so is persistence and open mindedness. For 2021, we expect to continue moving forward with even greater optimism and hope. We look forward to the day we can go back to in-person programming and events, to being able to celebrate the Sofia's Hope community, face to face, and say thanks!

Until then, please stay safe by continuing to wear your masks and maintain social distancing. Get your vaccine as soon as your eligible and able. We will persevere!

Best regards,

Mark Blanco

Marta Blanco
President & Founder



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Twitter @sofiashopeNPO

Calling all DAFs

Hot off the press...Sofia's Hope is proud to announce we have now partnered with DAF Direct. Donor Advised Funds (DAFs) allow donors to make a charitable contribution, receive an immediate tax deduction, and then recommend grants from the fund over time. Grants made to Sofia's Hope through DAFs can be designated to use wherever the need is greatest or aligned with thematic areas that match your interest.

Clients of Fidelity Charitable, Schwab Charitable, and BNY Mellon can easily make a designation through the DAF Direct window on our website at: www.sofiashope.org/donor-advised-funds. Do you have a DAF? If you make a grant to us and commit to spending down half of your DAF fund by September 30, we'll be eligible to receive up to \$100,000 in matching funds. Details at www.halfmydaf.com.



Become a Hero for Children Fighting Childhood Cancer
Join Heroes of Hope & Make an Impact TODAY!

Heroes of Hope are members of a special giving circle who play a critical role in supporting children and their families in the fight against childhood cancer. In 2020, amidst the pandemic, our Heroes of Hope donated almost \$10,000. They stand hand-in-hand with Sofia's Hope for our mission to bring awareness and education that children die every day waiting for promising treatments, to fund research, and to provide patient and family programs that enhance the quality of life of children in the battle TODAY.

With a monthly gift of only \$10 or more, Heroes of Hope support Sofia's Hope, making a difference year-round.

\$10 A week brings five (5) Newly Diagnosed Family Kits to help patients and families at the beginning of their cancer journey.

\$25 A quarter provides a child with an Adopt-an-Animal crate complete with stuffed animal, adoption certificate and free family membership to Zoo Miami.

\$50 A month helps support the important work of Dr. Steven Lipshultz, MD and advances in pediatric cardio-oncology research.

\$100 A quarter secures four (4) families in need of a helping hand gift cards for basic necessities, like food, transportation, medicine and more.

\$125 A month secures one (1) scholarship to either a survivor or sibling.

\$250 One-time gift provides a Treasured Moment to a family in need.

We are thankful we can provide these programs but doing so requires year-round support. That is why we would like to ask you to join Heroes of Hope this year! Recurring donors are the backbone that sustain our work. For more information or to sign up, please visit www.sofiashope.org and/or return the enclosed envelope.

Let's stand together to fight childhood cancer with HOPE!



IN THE COMMUNITY

With Lemonade and Brownies, a Young Lady Makes a Difference

This beautiful young lady decided to set up a lemonade and brownie stand in her front yard, raising \$500!! She did not want to keep the money or buy something for herself, she wanted to donate it and help other children. We are both honored and grateful that Camila decided to donate the proceeds to us. Her donation will help us continue to support kids and families facing a childhood cancer diagnosis. Way to go, Camila!!



Get Fit with Sofia's Hope

Due to the success of our first Get Fit event in January, we are now offering a monthly exercise regimen! Mark your calendars for every third Saturday of the month at 10 am via Zoom. Next class sessions are: April 17th, May 15th, and June 19th. Join us for a 45-minute Total Body Plus class (no equipment is needed other than a mat or a towel) led by Leah Blanton, fitness expert. Registration is a minimum \$10 donation. Interested? Reach out to us at info@sofiashope.org.



Celebrating HOPE in 2021

Sofia's Hope created t-shirts and hoodies in a variety of colors for purchase. HOPE swag proceeds benefit our overall programs and services, and every product sold helps our community spotlight the fight against childhood cancer year-round. Overall, we sold 87 items and fundraised \$1,043 for the cause!



Christopher Columbus High School's Support Never Waivers

With the support of Debra Martinez, Service Hour Coordinator at Columbus, students at CCHS have been able to earn service hours through three collections of fun band-aids, tissue boxes, DumDum lollipops, disinfectant wipes, hand sanitizers, and/or small toys for clinic Treasure Chests.

Two of these collections were coordinated through the CCHS Angler's Club, led by Mr. Michael Dukes. These collections resulted in distributions to all the Hem/Onc clinics at the four local children's hospitals. AND even with remote learning CCHS boys still bought almost 100 Go Gold ties during Childhood Cancer Awareness.

And on April 17th the They Can Too student group is hosting their Inaugural Virtual 5K Run/Walk/Bike Ride. It's just \$25 to register and 60% of the proceeds benefit Sofia's Hope. For more information visit <https://runsignup.com/tct5k>. Way to go, CCHS. Adelante!!



2020 at a Glance

2,000

Children/Families Served



224

Virtual Program Sessions

0

Programs Cancelled
Due to COVID
Yes, ZERO!



PROVIDED:

125

HEALING ARTS
SESSIONS



300

FACE MASKS



86

FACE SHIELDS



100+

Study Buddies' Hours



70

KITS
for Newly Diagnosed
Families



6 College Scholarships
2 Honorable Mentions

\$16,600
TOTAL VALUE



40

Adopt-an-Animal
Care Packages
WITH
Zoo Miami
Family Memberships

\$13,000
IN GIFT CARDS
115%↑ vs 2019

PROGRAM EXPANSION:



386
POSTS

138 138 110
Childhood Cancer Facts

6,750
FOLLOWERS

1,504 5,164 98

53
MEMBERS



200%
INCREASE
Grants Received



540
DONORS



week of
Hope



204
Reason To Run
Participants

103
Auction
Bidders

= 307
Week of Hope
Attendees

78

Wine & Cheese
Auction Items

THANK YOU!

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

A Doll's Journey Partnership and 2021 Expansion

Since 2019, Sofia's Hope has partnered with Muriel Rivero and A Doll's Journey to bring over 30 young girls their own American Girl "Truly Me" doll. These dolls have been very well received as they help remind these warriors that their beautiful bald heads are badges of honor to be worn with pride.

So much so, that this year we will be expanding the program to offer young boys (and girls) their own Timeless Teddy Bear from Build-A-Bear. All of our young warriors are our heroes and inspiration, and we hope these new friends bring them joy and comfort now and always.



Study Buddies: A Free Tutoring Service

Our Study Buddies tutoring program was established in 2020 to help children with cancer, survivors and their siblings with their math and science schoolwork. Many children affected by cancer develop learning disabilities due to treatment and many have to leave school. We want to help them stay on track with their studies and help them succeed.

To ensure safety and maintain social distancing rules, all tutoring will be done through Zoom or FaceTime. The program idea was brought forward and is now lead by Maria Mantero, who has worked as a tutor for five years, helping 10 families and 15 children with their math and science courses.

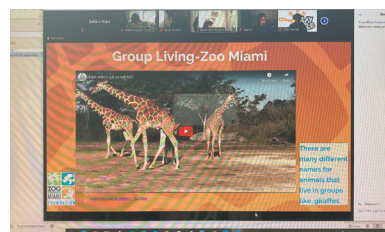
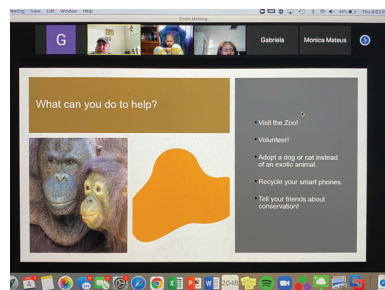
For more information and to sign up your child for this free service, please email info@sofiashope.org.



Virtual Visits to Zoo and ClayWorld Art Projects A Success

Our bi-annual field trips to Zoo Miami became interactive virtual sessions where patients, their siblings and other family members learned about various animals from Grant Fischer, Education Program Manager at Zoo Miami.

Our first session in December was all about the Florida Panther, the silent predator that almost went extinct and is slowly making a comeback through conservation. In January we learned about giraffes and last month about apes. We also added sessions of clay art fun with Jorge Cruz from ClayWorld so that each participant could make their own, unique clay animal souvenir. Overall, over 60 patients and their family members participated, some as far away as Los Angeles!



COVID Does Not Stop Equestrian Program!

In the past year, we have provided twenty-seven patients or siblings with individual, private horseback riding lessons at Whispering Manes Therapeutic Riding Center. Participants groomed their horse, learned about horsemanship and received horseback riding lessons.

Special thanks to The Miami Cancer Institute at Baptist Health South Florida for their continued support of this program.

"Thank you so much for giving us the opportunity to spend some time at Whispering Manes today!!! Makenzie truly enjoyed every minute of it! She definitely needed this!"

Makenzie's mom



Healing Arts Art Therapy Program

Eliane Cristian, our licensed creative art therapist, continues providing patients and siblings with a safe environment via FaceTime and WhatsApp for them to express their feelings and heal through art. Together they have done healing mandalas, drawn their spirit animals and feelings pictures, discussed Wish vacations, and so much more. While we would love for sessions to be done in-person, we continue to see the value of these virtual sessions which is why we now offer eight sessions a month, with two one Saturday a month.



Progress Update: 2021 Sofia's Hope College Scholarships

In mid-January, Sofia's Hope opened this year's application cycle for both the Sofia and Gabriela Blanco College Scholarships through a new online portal which offers students and the organization alike the ability to easily organize application information, and submit completed applications with a touch of a button.

We are offering six (6) total scholarships—three to patients/survivors and three to siblings. Each scholarship offers recipients \$2,000 toward tuition or room and board, along with a laptop (first-time awardees only), made possible through our partner, R2 United Technologies.

Over 140 applications were submitted by our April 1, 2021. The awardees will be advised by May 1st. Please help us spread the word, and if you plan to submit an application, good luck!

