Newsletter of
the Foundation
for Faces of
Children

Summer 2021
Vol. 32, No. 2

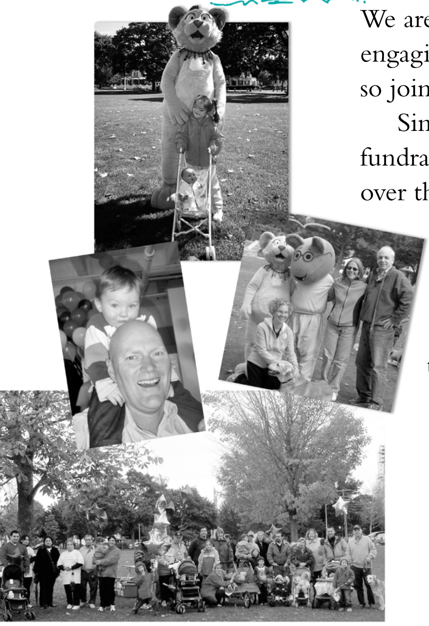
FACING THE FUTURE

SEPTEMBER 18 & 19, 2021

Paces for Faces WALK ALONG

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS OF FUNDRAISING WALKS

The walk began as a modest gathering which grew over the years to the large-scale event last hosted in person in 2019. We look forward to the day when we can once again gather under the big white tent to share experiences and lots of smiles.



2021 marks the 25th annual Foundation for Faces of Children fundraising walk! As we reflect upon the past 24 years, some may remember that the walk started with a handful of families and a picnic in a church recreation room. Over the years, it has grown to upwards of 450 people, and has adapted to the times with a virtual 5K. We are grateful to the FFC community for your commitment to us and our mission.

In another year of navigating life with COVID-19 and the ever-changing guidelines around us, the FFC remains committed to protecting the safety of our FFC community, so after careful consideration, our ***2021 Paces for Faces Walk Along will remain virtual.*** We are better than ever at virtual participation, engaging remotely, and staying creative to have fun, so join us again for our virtual walk along.

Similar to last year, participants will register, fundraise, and commit to walking a 5K some time over the weekend of September 18-19. Anticipate friendly competition, awards, and fun ways to engage on social media.

We continue to be impressed each year with the lengths our participants go to fundraise. This year, we plan to honor you go-getters with new Smile Strider level recognition!

Introducing Smile Strider levels

Meet the following fundraising goals by September 19 to secure your Smile Strider status:

AMOUNT RAISED	SMILE STRIDER STATUS
$750	Smile Strider
$1,500	Smile Strider GOLD
$3,000	Smile Strider PLATINUM

Watch our social media accounts for special shout outs to our Smile Strider levels. Plus, NEW Smile Strider gifts will arrive on your doorstep after the walk.

Engage your family and friends, near and far, and pull together a team for our 2021 Paces for Faces Walk Along. Keep informed about the walk by checking for updates on the social media sites listed below and on our website. We look forward to seeing you out and about walking in your favorite spots.

For updates, follow us on Instagram @ **foundationforfacesofchildren** and FaceBook **@Foundation for Faces of Children – FFC**, or visit **facesofchildren.org/pacesforfaces**

> "Stay tuned for all of the virtual fun to come!"
> *– Olivia Oppel, 2021 Walk Chair*

2021 FFC Scholarship Award Recipients
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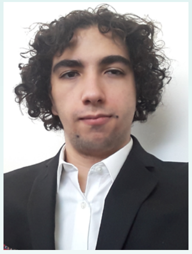
2021 FFC Scholarship Awards Program

FFC is proud to award scholarships to six very accomplished, talented, inspiring students, all academically successful, talented in sports and committed to giving to their communities. Meet this year's recipients:

The Dr. John B. Mulliken Scholarship

Awarded to those who demonstrate excellence in academic scholarship and leadership. This scholarship honors Dr. Mulliken for his decades of expert care for our children.

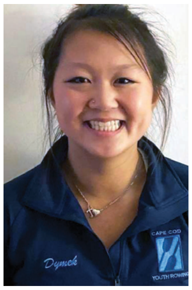


Diego Alonso had his initial medical treatment in the Dominican Republic where he was born. He immigrated to the U.S. when he was 10 yrs. old. Diego will graduate from George Washington University in 2023 with a BS in Systems Engineering, minoring in Computer and Organizational Sciences. He received numerous achievements and honors in high school and maintains a 4.0 GPA at George Washington University where he has remained on the Dean's list since December 2019. Diego hopes to earn a Ph.D. in philosophy and is interested in becoming an entrepreneur.

Jessica Hu graduated from Brookline High School in Hollis, New Hampshire, where she was involved with Student Body Government for all four years, serving as vice president last year and president this year. Jessica was inducted into the National Honor Society and the International Thespian Honor Society. She is a gifted artist—both taking art lessons and teaching art. She was selected to participate in the All-State Choral Festival and has been heavily involved in theatre and performing arts, earning a place in the Music Honor Society. While in the Spanish Club, Jessica taught Spanish to students in China. She will be attending Williams College in the Fall.

The Dorothy MacDonald Scholarship

Awarded to those pursuing a career in a health profession, this scholarship honors our own Dotty MacDonald who spent the bulk of her nursing career assisting Dr Mulliken in the care of our kids at BCH's Cleft and Craniofacial Center.



Teagan Dymek graduated with high honors from Barnstable High School. She is the Founder of *Greenwood Gives Back*, a program that collects eyeglasses and hearing aids and donates them to individuals in need. Teagan earned the title of National Female Youth Athlete of 2020 and has served as a Bay State Games Ambassador since 2019. She will be a member of the Women's Rowing Team at Sacred Heart University in Fairfield, Connecticut, where she will major in Speech Pathology and Communication Disorders. She hopes to earn a Ph.D. in language pathology one day.

The Jane C. McDaid Memorial Scholarship

Awarded for strong community service, this scholarship honors the memory of the community-minded FFC president, Jane McDaid.

Annabella Pizzi graduated from Braintree High School with high honors, maintaining a 4.01 GPA. She ranked in the top 10 percent of her class and earned inductions into National Honor Society, Spanish National Honor Society and National Art Honor Society. Annabella received the Mary Tantillo Award, the University of Rochester Frederick Douglas and Susan B. Anthony Award and the Massachusetts Seal of Biliteracy with Distinction in Spanish. Annabella is also being recognized for her extensive community service. She will be attending St. Anslem this fall. Annabella hopes to eventually earn a doctorate in American history and become a curator at the Smithsonian National Museum of American History.

Fiona Zokou graduated with high honors from Natick High School. She hopes to earn a degree in Human Rights from the National University of Ireland, Galway, where she has been offered one of just 20 spots in the bachelor's program. Involved with the Girl Scouts of America for over nine years, Fiona also served as part of the Natick High School Key Club. She is a figure skater, as well as a figure skating instructor. Fiona plays the Cello and the Concertina. She plans to one day work for UNICEF or the UN High Commission for Refugees, or help other disadvantaged people. Fiona has demonstrated extensive community involvement and service.

The Barbara Seltzer Memorial Scholarship

Awarded to a young adult with cleft lip/palate who is active in the arts. This scholarship is named for the past president of Prescription Parents, a support group for parents of children with cleft lip/palate, and who was very active in the cleft community.

Catherine Souza graduated from North Andover High School, maintaining a 3.8 GPA. Inducted into the National Honor Society, Catherine was also an active member of the Drama Guild and captain of the Color Guard. She was the lead flautist in the marching band and symphonic band, and sang in the Concert Choir. She received National and Regional recognition for her performance in the Honors Treble Choir. Catherine participated in the National Student Leadership Conference and has also volunteered in several community activities and services. In the fall, she will be attending University of Vermont, studying Animal Science. Catherine hopes to someday be a zookeeper or a wildlife conservationist.

Virtual Parent Support Group

Supporting families and connecting parents is one of the most important elements of FFC's mission. For several years FFC provided in-person support groups and started an annual gathering called "Lessons Learned", which was a great success. After the COVID-19 Pandemic restrictions made in-person gatherings impossible, FFC reached out to families and held our first virtual support meeting in November 2020. Since then, our parents' participation has created a welcoming, inclusive, and supportive virtual group including families nationwide. New parents and families that have been with FFC for a long time have been enjoying meeting each other and providing information regarding their family's journey and experiences. In a very relaxed environment, parents are welcome to share or only listen. We hope to continue these sessions at least every other month alternating either on Tuesday or Thursday. Usually, we will also invite medical professionals/specialists to join and offer their insight.

Liz, a Mom from Hawaii, told us what the support group means to her: "At first I wasn't sure if I would fit in since Mackenzie is a 23-year-old but being able to interact and sometimes just listen to the other parents of the older children has been very helpful. I am very thankful for the people associated with the foundation because by being able to attend the meetings, it allows us as parents to share and learn from each other. One of my favorite parts of the group is just being connected to others that have been through some sort of medical challenge with their child. We can empathize with each other and offer support in a way that sometimes does not happen when interacting with families who do not experience medical issues as we do. If someone is hesitant to join in because they may be a little uncomfortable talking about their feelings or experiences, there is never any pressure to participate. Sometimes just listening to others is helpful!"

The support group welcomes parents of ALL craniofacial conditions and across all ages nationwide. The next meeting will be August 12th at 7 pm. Click here to register.

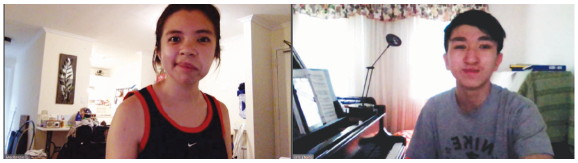
Virtual Art Workshop

On April 23rd, FFC partnered with Mrs. Nancy Johnson, a New Bedford public school art teacher, for our first virtual art workshop. She guided the participants to create a flower theme painting. Mrs. Johnson started the workshop with a fun educational video. With a step-by-step approach, she showed the students how to utilize their art supplies and provided educational points. She encouraged the participants to keep their own style. The workshop was about an hour and the participants enjoyed it very much and create their artwork just in time for Mother's Day.

Piano Lessons with Eric

FFC sends a big THANK YOU to **Eric Zhang** for volunteering to provide virtual piano lessons to our craniofacial community. Since February, Eric has been working with FFC to put this program together. Throughout the spring, he tutored two students (15-year-old Keerthana and 23-year-old MacKenzie) for four sessions each. MacKenzie commented:

"My lessons with Eric became one of the highlights of my spring! I was super excited when my mom told me about his offer. Our lessons have been informative and very enjoyable. I had a few music and piano skills, but never formal training. Eric was very patient with my painfully slow note reading and occasional difficulties coordinating my brain and hands. With his instruction, I feel more confident in my technique and finally have some structure to my practicing! It's been really nice to meet someone else with a craniofacial difference. Your face is the first thing people notice, and since I have met so few people who could relate on that level, I value each interaction. I'm really grateful that Eric offered to share his time and knowledge, and I'm happy to be getting some quality use out of my piano!"



FFC appreciates all of Eric's efforts to make this program a reality, from conception to lesson preparation and instruction via Zoom. This program wouldn't have been possible without him and we can't thank Eric enough for his generosity.

FFC Welcomes Doctors Balkin and Carver!

Daniel M. Balkin, MD, PhD, was born and raised in Madison, Wisconsin. He obtained his undergraduate degree in Genetics and Molecular Biology from Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois. Subsequently, he attended the Yale University School of Medicine in New Haven, Connecticut, where he completed a combined MD and PhD program. His PhD dissertation focused on unraveling the genetics and basic molecular pathways responsible for a rare x-linked disease called Lowe Syndrome.

Dr. Balkin completed residency training in Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery at the University of California, San Francisco, followed by a fellowship in Hand and Microsurgery at The Buncke Clinic in San Francisco, California. He pursued further fellowship training in Craniofacial and Pediatric Plastic Surgery at Boston Children's Hospital. While in Boston, Dr. Balkin took advantage of the unique opportunity to work with and learn from an exceptional skilled team of plastic and oral surgeons with broad expertise.

During residency and throughout his clinical fellowships, Dr. Balkin continued to pursue his passion for dissecting the molecular pathogenesis of disease through genetic discovery, applying the scientific method learned and practiced during his PhD research. Using next-generation DNA sequencing technologies and bioinformatics, he worked to identify the genes and pathways responsible for various congenital, craniofacial, and vascular anomalies: congenital ptosis, a severe syndromic craniofacial disorder, sacrococcygeal teratoma, segmental pyogenic granuloma, and an aggressive systemic lymphatic vascular anomaly. He hopes to leverage this knowledge of disease-causing genes and pathways into therapeutic opportunities. In addition to basic and translational investigations, during his fellowship at Boston Children's Hospital, Dr. Balkin also engaged in various clinical research investigations with Drs. John B Mulliken and John G Meara in craniofacial and pediatric plastic surgery. In addition, he coauthored cleft lip and palate-related chapters with Dr. Mulliken, and he has contributed surgical videos to accompany Dr. Mulliken's forthcoming seminal textbook on cleft lip and palate.

Dr. Balkin is grateful for the opportunity to remain at Boston Children's Hospital next year as a faculty member in the Department of Plastic and Oral Surgery and at Harvard Medical School. He will pursue an academic career integrating basic and translational research with his clinical practice.

Karen Z. Carver, DDS, MD, MPH, is originally from Buffalo, New York. She conducted her undergraduate coursework in biology and anthropology at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, OH before obtaining graduate degrees in both public health and dentistry from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Dr. Carver completed her medical degree from the University of Michigan School of Medicine and her residency in oral and maxillofacial surgery at Michigan Medicine. She follows Dr. Bonnie Padwa as the second Boston Children's Hospital craniofacial fellow trained in maxillofacial surgery. Dr. Carver has had the unique opportunity to learn from expert practitioners in both oral and plastic surgery and has truly enjoyed the chance to train in a multidisciplinary department. In addition to clinical training, Dr. Carver has participated in scholarly activity focused primarily on the area of alveolar cleft bone grafting under the guidance of Dr. Padwa. She has had the opportunity to participate in research examining outcomes of grafting with bilateral cleft lip and palate and has co-authored a textbook chapter describing current bone grafting techniques. At the conclusion of her fellowship, Dr. Carver is pleased to be returning to the University of Michigan where she will practice pediatric oral and maxillofacial surgery.

FOUNDATION FOR
Faces of Children

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Connect with FFC Online

Support FCC

The Foundation for Faces of Children (FFC) is dedicated to supporting the social, psychological/emotional, and educational needs of individuals, and their families, affected by craniofacial differences. We seek to improve the lives of children with craniofacial differences and inspire them to reach their full potential.

Our mission is to:

- Provide patients and families with the most accurate, up-to-date, and accessible information about facial differences.
- Advocate for the best care possible for children with facial differences.

We achieve this by:

- Collaborating with leading specialists.
- Endorsing the team approach to care.
- Partnering with individuals and organizations with similar goals.

We are a not-for-profit organization entirely supported by private donations, grants, and fund-raising initiatives. Please contact us if you would like to participate in or sponsor a fundraising event.