Newsletter of
the Foundation
for Faces of
Children

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FACING THE FUTURE

FFC 2024 Scholarship Program

Starting January 2024, FFC will be accepting applications for our 2024 Scholarship Awards. Visit our website for details. Since its inception in 1999, the FFC scholarship awards program has distributed 93 scholarships totaling $279,000. The program awards post-secondary education scholarships to promising students born with a facial difference who are residents of New England (Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont).

2024 FFC Scholarship Awards

Application deadline is March 1, 2024.

The Foundation selects award recipients based on their academic performance, extracurricular activities, and community service.

Paces for Faces Walk Family Picnic

The threat of rain wasn't going to stop FFC from gathering for our Paces for Faces Hybrid Walk Along! It turned out to be a beautiful day on Lake Quannapowitt where the sun was peeking through the clouds, the music was playing, the snacks were abundant, and our families were connecting – and there were bubbles, lots of bubbles!

On the lower common beside the lake, 125 people gathered in person to enjoy music by DJs Joanne & Jethro Mills and strolling entertainment by our friends from Circus Dynamics – you couldn't miss them, they were the ones on stilts!

The Kona Ice Truck of Newburyport was also a huge hit with "pour-your-own flavors" in fantastic color-changing Paces for Faces souvenir cups! Thank you to owner Nikki Vazeos.

Another 20 participants walked "virtually," completing the hybrid part of our Walk Along. Thanks to your help, we have raised almost $30,000! The website will be active until October 31 so it is not too late to DONATE!

Congratulations to our Smile Striders teams: Smiles for Maya, Team Dhruv, Team Matthew, Gankse's Family, Team Lacey, Team Nora, Team Norah!, Brooklyn's Crew, and Team Elan!

Your fundraising efforts help support FFC programming such as informational events; sponsorships for families to attend the CCA Kids Retreat; Camp Reflections sponsorships; Paces for Faces Walk and Family Picnic; Mother's Brunch Program; and the FFC Cares Grant — all for children and families — and of course, our annual student Scholarship Awards.

This year's walk committee was chaired by Olivia Oppel and included Vice-President Ann-Marie Rogers, Board member and Programs Coordinator Monir Sakha, and Board member Ursula Costigan, along with Liz O'Keefe, Meera Oliva, and Emily Rogers. We are very grateful to the FFC Board of Directors and many additional volunteers who donated their time on walk day to ensure its success.

Visit our social media for walk pictures, videos, reels and stories that were uploaded throughout the Paces for Faces Walk:

@foundationforfacesofchildren

@Foundation for Faces of Children – FFC

facesofchildren.org/pacesforfaces

If you are interested in volunteering for next year's walk, or any other FFC event, please reach out to communications@facesofchildren.org. A huge thank you to our wonderful community of family, friends and supporters!

Pictured on the morning of the Walk (L-R) merchandise table volunteer Robin Ronca joins Walk committee members Liz O'Keefe, Ursula Costigan, Meera Oliva, Ann-Marie Rogers, Emily Rogers, Monir Sakha and Olivia Oppel.

Many Thanks to Outgoing President and Board Member Jack Condon!

FFC would like to thank John "Jack" Condon for his years of service as Board Member and for his role as Interim President over the past year. His support and guidance have been greatly appreciated.

We wish Jack well.

Our Unforgettable Experiences at CCA Retreats

Their faces say it all! Eva and Jeremy Nicholas with son Cameron and daughter Cassidy at Red Sox vs. Twins in Target Field, Minneapolis.

The 2023 CCA Retreat in Minneapolis this past June was an event we will not forget! We had looked forward to it from the moment we returned home after the 2022 retreat in Dallas, and eagerly awaited the destination reveal for 2023.

Last year, we fell victim to severe weather along the eastern seaboard and ended up being delayed over 24 hours before arriving in Dallas. We missed out on the educational seminars and our luggage had been lost along the way! Thankfully, families at the retreat really stepped up for us, helping to supply necessities until our bags finally arrived the day before the retreat ended. Just the same, we left Dallas with dreams of going to the 2023 retreat.

Minneapolis seemed the perfect location as we had never been there and are always up for a new adventures. We were eager to see our daughter Cassidy meet up with friends she had made in Dallas last year. While we missed some families who didn't make it to Minneapolis, we were very happy to connect with first-time attendees and families who had been to prior retreats that we could not attend. This year we met a very nice family from Iowa with a daughter who also has Treacher Collins Syndrome. Along with another girl Cassidy had met at the Dallas retreat, a trinity of BFFs was formed! It shouldn't go unmentioned that Cassidy's little brother, Cameron, had the time of his life, as well.

Minneapolis was a destination with so much to do! We caught our hometown Red Sox versus the Twins at Target Field, explored the downtown area, went to the zoo, visited Minnehaha Falls and even made the trek to the Mall of America.

The educational symposium was especially helpful for us this year. We were able to learn about MED EL, an alternative hearing aid that might benefit Cassidy. We also attended the Distraction Osteogenesis seminar hosted by Dr. Jo Barta from Gillette Children's Hospital. We are approaching the threshold of having to plan for Cassidy's imminent jaw distraction surgery.

Connecting with other families and sharing stories and experiences was a life-changing event. It doesn't matter whether a family member has Craniosynostosis, Cleft Palate, Pierre Robin sequence, Pfeiffer, Treacher Collins or Crouzon syndromes —or any other craniofacial condition —we all "get it." We are part of something special that brings us together and the annual CCA retreat is a catalyst for that connection. We look forward to connecting with our "family" again in June 2024!

— *The Nicholas Family*

Award Nomination

FFC's long-time volunteer, Programs Coordinator and Board member Monir Sakha was nominated for the 2023 Children's Craniofacial Association (CCA) David Roche Excellence in Advocacy award. This prestigious award recognizes individuals who advocate for people with facial differences, going above and beyond to advance their status, promote acceptance and appreciation of appearance diversity, and challenge the stigma that surrounds physical differences. Monir's nomination is a testament to the Foundation's mission of providing support to craniofacial individuals and their families.

The award is named in honor of David Roche, a lifelong advocate for people with facial differences and a mentor to the staff of CCA.

On behalf of parents from the FFC virtual parent support group, Deb Breslow nominated Monir who is featured along with the other nominees during the September 18, 2023 award ceremony which may be viewed by clicking the link below.

Watch Video

It's not too early to plan for the holidays!

Support FFC while stocking up on gifts and supplies.

Visit FFC's fundraising page at Charleston Wrap for an extensive range of treats, decorations, candles, holiday wrap, kitchen goods, planters and most of all — great gifts!

All purchases made through FFC's fundraising link below will support the Foundation.

Don't miss FFC's Holiday bazaar:

Shop now

MANY THANKS TO OUR 2023 SMILE STRIDERS!

Paces for Faces
HYBRID WALK ALONG

PLATINUM	GOLD	SMILE STRIDERS
raised over $3,000	*raised over $1,500*	*raised over $750*
Brooklyn's Crew Team Elan	Team Dhruv Team Matthew Gankse's Family Team Lacey Team Nora Team Norah!	Smiles for Maya

Balloon duty!

The Scott family rocks the photo booth.

The Kona Ice truck with souvenir cups were again a huge hit!

Team Nico

Dr. Mulliken poses with the Young Adult Group. (L-R) Grace Hart, Lacey Clericuzio, Alexis Jones, Mackenzie Geers, and Eddie Wang.

Welcome to Kerry A. Morrison, MD, new Craniofacial Fellow at BCH

Kerry A. Morrison, MD, attended Columbia College at Columbia University, earning a Bachelor of Arts degree in Pre-Medical Sciences and History. She graduated Cum Laude, Order of Omega Honor Society, and was the Columbia College Campus Life Leadership Award recipient. For medical school, she graduated from Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons with Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Medical Society as well as the Doctor Allen O. Whipple Memorial Prize in Surgery and Glasgow-Rubin Achievement Award. During medical school, she completed a dedicated research year in plastic surgery at both Columbia University and Weill Cornell Medical College. For her basic science research, she investigated cell sourcing strategies for tissue engineering ear cartilage for microtia reconstruction, for which she was awarded the Gingrass Award by the Plastic Surgery Research Council. Her clinical research endeavors were focused on craniosynostosis surgical outcomes and carbon dioxide-filled tissue expansion for breast reconstruction, respectively. Subsequently, Kerry completed her six-year integrated plastic surgery residency training in the NYU Langone Wyss Department of Plastic Surgery, where she was inducted into NYU Langone Chapter of the Gold Humanism Society and was the recipient of the Blair O. Rogers Clinical Research Award. Currently, she is the Boston Children's Hospital Plastic Surgery Cleft and Craniofacial Fellow. Inspired by the wide clinical exposure to all aspects of pediatric craniofacial surgery from cleft surgery to vascular anomalies, and wonderful mentorship opportunities from esteemed faculty at BCH, she was eager to start fellowship and her final year of training prior to pursuing an academic pediatric plastic surgery career.


Kerry with husband Will…and Rory makes three.

On a personal note, Kerry hails from Fairfield, Connecticut, and has been an avid lifelong sailor, serving as Captain of the Columbia University Sailing Team in college and continues to race for New York Yacht Club to present. She is a true sports enthusiast, who also enjoys tennis, running, soccer, and golfing with her husband, Will Whiston. Most importantly, Kerry and Will joyfully welcomed their son, Rory Morrison Whiston, and became a family of three in August 2023.

Honoring the Ongoing Service of Michele Hudak

The Foundation for Faces of Children exists through the work of families and professionals who volunteer to make possible our mission of supporting the craniofacial community. FFC would like to honor one of our many wonderful volunteers.

FFC is grateful to Michele Hudak, an ASL interpreter who has been volunteering her time and expertise to our Virtual Young Adult group since its inception in 2022. Because of her, this group is accessible and inclusive.

Michele is a staff ASL interpreter at Boston Children's Hospital. Since 2021, she has worked in the craniofacial clinic where she grew to know one patient quite well. When this patient asked if she would be willing to interpret the FFC Young Adult Group each month, she found that she couldn't say 'no'. Over a year later, she feels that it is truly an honor to be interpreting the meet-ups.

FOUNDATION FOR
Faces of Children

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Connect with FFC Online

FFC is always looking for new Board members. Please contact us if you're interested in serving.

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.

Board of Directors