

Kristi House News

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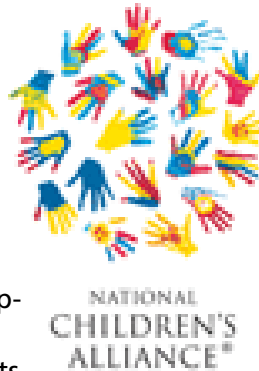
SUMMER/FALL 2009

Kristi House wins three national grants for programs

Kristi House was awarded three major grants by the National Children's Alliance for program initiatives this year, sweeping all three categories for which we were eligible to apply. We were one of just three Children's Advocacy Centers in the country (there are 600 in the U.S.) awarded an *Urban Initiative* grant, and our therapy expansion program won support for the third year in a row, in another competitive category in which 20 to 30 grants are awarded annually.

The *Urban Initiative* grant was given for our ground-breaking work in developing a community response to the commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC). This \$150,000 award enables Kristi House to provide case management, therapy, prevention, street outreach and a drop-in center for girls entrapped in the life of prostitution, pornography and pimps.

Often escaping sexual abuse in the home, some girls in the program are as young as 11 or 12 years old. Ensnared, bought, sold and controlled by adults, an important part of the initiative, supported by a



Working Group of some 35 agencies, is transforming society's view of these children as victims instead of criminals.

Two other grants were awarded for Kristi House's therapy program: one to expand services in the South satellite office located on U.S. 1 and 152 Street, and the other to establish an assistant clinical supervisor position to help oversee the department of 12 staff members and interns. Each therapy grant was for the highest award amounts of \$30,000.

The National Children's Alliance Executive Director Teresa Huizar traveled to Miami to meet Kristi House Board and Multidisciplinary Team partners in January. Follow up meetings and close tracking of project results, particularly for the *Urban Initiative*, will help inform the field on what many communities are recognizing as an overlooked, underserved population of child victims.

(More on Kristi House's CSEC program below; more on the Therapy program in President's Message on page 3 and in Staff Spotlight on page 11.)

Commercially Sexually Exploited Children Kristi House leads first-of-its-kind program for Miami

Kristi House's program to coordinate a community response to commercially sexually exploited children (CSEC) has made significant strides since its inception in 2007, including national recognition, pilot project funding and the opening of a drop-in center.

The program is underpinned by a community-wide collaboration called the CSEC Working Group. These partners include federal,

state, and local law enforcement agencies and prosecutors; the Florida Department of Children and Families; Miami's community-based care provider, Our Kids of Miami-Dade/Monroe, and their seven subcontracting agencies that make up the privatized out-of-home care



Miami CSEC Working Group members at their spring meeting.

system; youth shelters and NGOs that provide services to at-risk youth; and survivors of violence and trafficking survivors in Miami. These Working Group members —

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Leadership

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

From the Executive Director

Each summer I travel to Washington, DC to meet with other directors of Children's Advocacy Centers across the country at the National Children's Alliance Leadership Conference. It is a wonderful opportunity to exchange ideas and cultivate best practice program development. This year I had the added treat of meeting with the other two Urban Initiative grant recipients from Oakland, California and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Whether networking at a luncheon, meeting in a group, or attending a seminar, the one central theme that runs through NCA meetings is collaboration.

Children's Advocacy Centers are only as strong as the strength of their collaborative partnerships, both locally and nationally. So, as Kristi House continues to expand and establish its national reputation, I look back and realize how fortunate we are to have had our local Multidisciplinary Team partners.

Some Centers struggle to have even one prosecutor designated to handle their cases. At Kristi House we have a team of dedicated and trained sexual battery attorneys on site. Katherine Fernandez Rundle maintains the caliber of this unit and of the forensic interviewers who are so critical to the success of the Center. The University of Miami Child Protection team has been determined to follow best practice and move the medical exams on site with the interviews. Only through the determined leadership of Dr. Walter Lambert, has this transition occurred. Major Cindy Buckholtz at the Miami-Dade Police Department has single-handedly changed the attitude of law enforcement in Miami Dade toward sexual battery victim-centered protocols. Miami Police Chief John Timoney has never refused a request for support from Kristi House; having established Child Advocacy Centers in other cities, Chief Timoney "gets it." Of course, we would not be here at all were it not for the continued tenacity and vision of recently retired Guardian ad Litem Director Joni Goodman. The GAL have continued to be the staunch advocates for the Multidisciplinary Team.

Our gratitude to this great team that nurtured and grew Kristi House. Only as a team we will reach the vision of ending the epidemic of child sexual abuse. ♥



Trudy Novicki
Executive Director

MISSION Kristi House provides a healing environment for all child victims of sexual abuse and their families, regardless of income, through prevention, treatment and coordination of services with our community partners.

VISION Kristi House strives to end the epidemic of child sexual abuse in Miami-Dade County by healing those who have been victimized and breaking the cycle of abuse for future generations.

VALUES Kristi House is dedicated to respecting, protecting, and healing the children and families that pass through its doors.

SERVICES Case Coordination & Case Management • Information & Referral • Advocacy • Therapy • Parents' Groups • Criminal Justice Support • Education • Emergency Assistance • Transportation • Community Outreach • Comprehensive Behavioral Assessments

Message from the President

When Xiomara Sanchez began as a therapist at Kristi House in December 2000, three people made up Kristi House's clinical staff. (See *Staff Spotlight* on page 11.) Since that time, our therapy practice has grown to a staff of 11 full-time, masters-level clinicians, one support position and three interns. More than 400 clients are served annually with therapeutic interventions considered "best practice" for effectively treating child victims of sexual abuse. Services are provided in four offices spread from the south to the north ends of our county.

As the staff has grown, honed their practice, trained other providers and participated in national initiatives, Kristi House has achieved the reputation as the expert agency in Miami-Dade for treating children traumatized by sexual abuse.

This we know by the national support our therapy program has received from the National

Children's Alliance for expansion not one, but three years in a row. (See cover story.) While the NCA grant awards don't cover all the costs of a new satellite office or master's level position even for just the first year, the recognition and being chosen among the hundreds of U.S. CACs is significant.

We know we have the reputation as experts from the foundations and individuals who have also been there to help us better meet community needs. The Blue Foundation, Peacock Foundation, Allegany Franciscan Ministries, Paul Palank Foundation, Boston Scientific, Hector Family Foundation, Kennedy Family Foundation and others have demonstrated their confidence in our program through their grant support.

We know we have the reputation as experts when we hear testimonials like those at our annual Breaking the Silence luncheon in April from survivors and parents of children who have overcome the trauma wrought by child sexual

abuse with the help of Kristi House.

We know we have the reputation as experts when we ask a room full of Kristi House friends at our annual Touch a Heart Dinner & Auction to support a therapist position for a year...and they do it, receiving no goods or services for their dollars, just the satisfaction of knowing they are enabling life-saving help.

We know we have the reputation as experts from the ever-increasing number of referrals we receive for services each month from other professionals in all sectors of the community.

And finally, we know we have the reputation as experts when we tell parents that it might take four to six weeks to initiate therapy services as we await an opening in a therapist's schedule, and they tell us, "I'll wait. I only want to come to Kristi House." ♥



Fred Bredemeyer
President

Board salutes 10-year veteran and welcomes new members

At its May Annual Meeting the Kristi House Board of Directors welcomed three new members and recognized Lindy Colson for 10 outstanding years of Board service.



LINDY COLSON has been a driving force behind Kristi House's fundraising and advocacy efforts. She helped establish the Touch a Heart

Dinner & Auction as a mainstay of Kristi House's fundraising and as a

favorite among Miami's social set. Lindy's board participation will be missed, but we are fortunate she will continue to be a part of Kristi House's Touch a Heart Dinner event, Breaking the Silence and said she will always "help Kristi House in any way I can." She's a member of Kristi House's newly forming Advisory Board.

At the May Annual Meeting President Fred Bredemeyer announced the new Board members who bring a wealth of experience in business and the South Florida community:



LOURDES LEON is Director of Leon Medical Centers Network and Senior VP of Leon Medical Centers Inc., dedicated to serving people on

Medicare. Managing new ventures, strategic planning, operations and development as a Medicare Advantage provider, Ms. Leon oversees all activities of the Service Assessment Department and is responsible for maintaining the

continued on next page

Board

New Board members (continued from previous page)

LMC "Service of Excellence" to over 30,000 members. She is a graduate of St. Thomas University and holds a degree in Business Management. She is a founding member and major supporter of Kristi House's Breaking the Silence program, along with her parents, Silvia and Benjamin Leon, her brother Benjamin and sister-in-law Lisa Leon, and her sister Silvia and brother-in-law Albert Maury.



TIMOTHY DUNFEY, ESQ. is owner at Alhambra Compliance Consultants. He started his banking career with First Union (now

Wachovia) and gained valuable experience with companies such as Morgan Stanley and American Express before attending law school. Founder and Managing Editor of the Intercultural Human Rights Law Review and member of the International Moot Court team at St. Thomas University, after law school he returned to banking as a Deputy BSA Officer for Great Florida Bank. Mr. Dunfee has worked with numerous domestic and international financial institutions to assist them in meeting compliance requirements. He holds his JD from St. Thomas University School of Law and is admitted to practice law in the State of Florida.



WILLIAM PLASENCIA is a writer, editor, entrepreneur, media consultant, project manager and technology advisor specializing in magazine and online media with extensive experience in U.S. Hispanic and Latin American markets. He is currently Managing Editor at *Latin Trade*, the premier pan-regional business magazine published monthly in English and Spanish for 15 years. In the past he served as Principal at WPA Media Group and Editor & Publisher for *South Florida CEO Magazine*. He is a graduate of the University of Florida. ♥

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Representatives from Boston Scientific present Kristi House with a \$15,000 check representing a grant for Kristi House Therapy Program.



Special thanks to the Office of Miami-Dade Mayor Carlos Alvarez, Business & Community Liaison Carolina Sivoli (left) and Senior Advisor Luis Gazitua (back row) who arranged the donation of a flat-screen TV for Kristi House's North satellite office, given by Jose Colon, Store Manager of Best Buy (right) pictured with Kristi House's Dawn Thompson and Michelle Hernandez.

"Kristi's Kitchen" focuses on healthy eating

Kristi's Kitchen is a new volunteer-led program to help our girls and teen groups learn to appreciate the nutritional value of food while enjoying tasty dinners during evening programs. Aimed at promoting healthy eating and with the notion that kids will "like it if they try it," volunteers prepare healthy meals with dishes often new, but not unappreciated, to the

children and adolescents in our programs.

Special thanks in helping getting this program going goes to Lauren Diamond who was assisted with donations and help from Soroptimist International of Coral Gables, Perricone's Market Place and Café, Whole Foods of Pinecrest, Eddy Neam of Fresh Market of Coconut Grove, Marilyn

Mitchell of Hirni's Wayside Garden & Florist, Carla Loyd, Margaret McCaffery, Jacquelyn Packer and Carlene Packer.

If you would like to volunteer to prepare or purchase a meal for one of the groups (maximum 10 people, we'll pick up and deliver), please contact Lauren Diamond at laurendiamond1@aol.com. ♥

Programs

CSEC Program (continued from front page)

71 professionals representing 35 organizations — have guided the development of Kristi House's CSEC program since 2007.

Along with filling service gaps, a major challenge remains to change the view and approach to these high risk, severely victimized and traumatized children and adolescents who are being misidentified as juvenile delinquents and punished for the crime that is being committed by adults against them.

Shared Hope International released a study in July on Miami-Dade and Broward in which they documented more than 500 juveniles arrested for prostitution in Miami-Dade County in the past 10 years. Child victims of sex trafficking are being misidentified due to a lack of training for social service providers and first responders, the report finds.

The report also notes the groundwork Miami-Dade and Kristi House have laid, following the model of a highly successful program, GEMS, in New York, which has received international recognition for its approach to helping girls and young women escape the streets.

Kristi House has hosted trainings for the Miami community from GEMS Director Rachel Lloyd as well as from a Dallas police unit that has an impressive track record for their approach to high risk victims. The next Kristi House-sponsored training will be two days on Motivational Interviewing, a technique for working with high-risk, reticent youth, under the direction of Dr. Linda Sobell, an international expert in the practice.

Other milestones in the CSEC program:

- ✓ The CSEC program, working with youth representatives, adopted a name that resonates more with the girls involved than the unwieldy "commercial sexual exploitation of children project." The new name, Project GOLD, sounds positive to the girls and as well as meaningful as it's an acronym for Girls Owning their Lives and Dreams.
- ✓ Shared Hope International and St. Thomas University School of Law conducted a Leadership Summit in July where Kristi House's Program Manager Sandy Skelaney served as a panelist and at which Kristi House's program was widely recognized for its progress and promise.
- ✓ Kristi House's Trudy Novicki, Sandy Skelaney, Therapist Tawanda Spaulding and a Kristi House program graduate are featured on a training video developed by Shared Hope for national distribution to service providers.
- ✓ Sandy Skelaney was invited to present at the 10th National Conference on Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation Prevention hosted by the National Children's Advocacy Center in New Orleans in August 2009.
- ✓ Sandy Skelaney was chosen as one of 15 delegates from the United States to join nearly 3,000 people from five continents in Brazil for the World Congress III against the Sexual Exploitation of Children last November.
- ✓ A *Miami Herald* features reporter is working on an article about Kristi House's program at the time of this printing.



This report on Miami-Dade and Broward County released in July by Shared Hope International and co-authored by former Kristi House intern Kara D. Franker, a founding CSEC Working Group member, found that 500 juveniles were arrested for prostitution from 1998 to 2008. The report makes specific recommendations on steps South Florida providers and law enforcement can take to improve outcomes for these victims

Kristi House extends its appreciation to Women's Fund of Miami-Dade, World Childhood Foundation, Dade Community Foundation and Junior League of Miami for their seed funding and confidence in our program to address his complex, often misunderstood issue. ♥

School Program Funding Renewed

Kristi House was fortunate to receive renewed funding from The Children's Trust for its Education and Outreach program to the 15 schools in the Miami Jackson and Booker T. Washington feeder patterns. During a time of cuts across the board for providers, Kristi House received the smallest cut among agencies at just 10%, determined based on application scores and high marks for past performance. ♥

Support

Year 3: More pledge to help Kristi House Break the Silence

More than 260 friends of Kristi House turned out for Breaking the Silence on child sexual abuse April 30 at our third annual luncheon for the community initiative. More than \$320,000 was raised in gifts and pledges to help children who have been sexually abused in Miami-Dade County at the event underwritten by Leon Medical Centers at the lovely Grove Isle Hotel & Spa. Nearly two-thirds of guests in attendance gave gifts and multiple-year pledges.



"We launched Breaking the Silence because we believe that now, as a society, we are finally seeing widespread recognition of child sexual abuse as the public health epidemic it is," Kristi House



Lisa Leon, Alexandra Maury, Lourdes Leon, Silvia Leon and Silvia Maury.

Executive Director Trudy Novicki said. "We are at the brink of a sea change in understanding, and are experiencing an emergence of those willing to speak out, seek solutions, and break the silence."

Guests heard a testimonial from an adult survivor of child sexual abuse who told of being sexually abused by her uncle as a young girl and harboring her secret for years. Now a wife and a

mother of a 12-year-old daughter, she has broken her silence and urges others to speak out. A teenage girl receiving therapy services from Kristi House spellbound the crowd as she played the guitar and sang *Somewhere Over the Rainbow*. And testimonial was given from another mother, a prominent business leader, who talked about the trauma her young daughter underwent being sexually abused at the age of 4, and how Kristi House has helped her heal.

continued on next page

Breaking the Silence 2009 Donors

\$2,000-\$2,500	Amy Halsey	Leon Dancy	Lisa Newman	Belkis Cruz
Josie Alvarez*	Rosie Herrera	Cindy Darley	Eliana Poveda	Lourdes Cuevas
Carlos Nuñez*	Liz Hogan	Christine Darley	Dee Quintero	Maria Enriquez
Rosie Vargas*	Linda Howard*	Donna Diston	Eric Ray	Zelde Espinel
	Glenn Huber	Michael & Lori Dribin	Julio Rodriguez	Noelle Galperin
\$1000-\$1999	Joseph Lawrence	Lydia Fernandez	Eneida Roldan	Thomas Hill
Annelies Da Costa Gomez*	Susie Lorie	Marioly Fiandor	Virginia Rosen	Susan Kasen
Anonymous	Beverly Mendoza	Monica Fitzgerald	Natalie Rosen	Shari Liu
Ellie Ganz	Vicki Miller	Sandy Giblin	Chuck Runge	Jennifer Lowe-Nasradi
Marcia Koo	Eugenio & Susana Ochoa	Virginia Gomez	Michael Soppelsa	Lynn Mitchell
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Libby Witherspoon		Florence Hecht	Elizabeth Vainder*	Jennifer Piedra
		Susan Irarrazabal	Suzanne Viana	Valeria Prado-Ali
\$500-\$999		Anne Jackaway	Zuly Viera	Melissa Reina
Martha Alamo*	100-\$499	Louise Jeroslow	Robert Watson	Mary Richards
Suzanne Anderson-Ziskind	Melida Akiti	Elaine Katz	Maydaly Yanes	Claudia Riva
Sonia Beckelheimer	Missy Azrack	Betsy Klier		Kathleen Rohan
Gloria Bodin*	Nancy Batchelor	Laurie MacKnight*	UP TO \$99	Barbara Ronda
Jeanie Bonner	Molly Baumbarger	Gwen Margolis	Maria D. Acosta	Wendy Rothfield
Cheryl Camp	Jeannine Black	Adrianna Marrero	Joe Alicea	Vivian Serralta
Cynthia Corzo*	Bonnie Blaire	Jennifer McCloskey	Madeline Barrios	Kimberly Tate
Cristina Echavarria	Maria M. Blet	Phyllis McHenry	Gloria Burns	Haydee Valdes
Erica English	Anita Cachaldora	Lucille McKey	Caroline Candib	Maria Viera
Hugo Gomez	Helen Cardenas	Kabrina Means	Rosa Carrasquillo	Dawn Withrow
Dana Gryniuk*	Raquel Cohen	Gisela Moran	France Castillo	Maritza Zota
	Kimberly Criser	Patricia Myer	Ivenette Cobb	* = Multiyear Pledge



Rachelle de Moya and Maria Lopez



Silvia & Benjamin Leon and Trudy Novicki

Support

Launched three years ago, Breaking the Silence is aimed at building awareness and support from concerned and caring parents, business leaders and community supporters who want to assist Kristi House in its mission and who share the organization's vision of ending child sexual abuse in Miami-Dade.

The event was co-hosted by Rachelle de Moya, Glenn Huber of BNY/Mellon, Barbara Hinterkopf and Judy Zeder. Table Captains, pivotal to the event's success, included Lourdes Alvarez, Suzanne Anderson, Brett Barfield, Josephine Burke, Anita Cachaldora, Anita Cava, Mona Chanouha, Raquel Cohen, Lourdes Cuevas, Nelson David Diaz, Alina Fernandez, Maureen Gragg, Liz Hogan, Joy Intriago, Anne Jackaway, Bobbie Jones-Wilfork, Marcia Koo, Richard Langhorne, Lourdes Leon, Edie A. Murphy, Laura Cava Northrop, Jeanette Nuñez, Zandra Rucker, Mercedes & Barbara Saewitz, Rima Shahin, Sue & Fernando Tamayo and Marielena Villamil. ♥



Nelly Baker, Adriana Marrero, Courtney Olakenye, Suzanne Anderson Ziskind and Phyllis McHenry



Bobbie Jones-Wilfork, Mary Richards, Zandra Rucker and Lonnie Lawrence



Glenn Huber



Judy Zeder and Barbara Hinterkopf.

Breaking the Silence - 5 Year Pledges

GIFT OF HEALING

Joy Meason Intriago*
Silvia & Benjamin Leon
Lourdes Leon*

GIFT OF STRENGTH

BAC Florida Bank
Lisa Leon
Benjamin Leon, III
Silvia & Albert Maury

GIFT OF COURAGE

A.J & Rachelle de Moya
The de Moya Group, Inc.
Consuelo & Saul Diaz
Julie Valle
Probody Collision Center

GIFT OF HOPE

Lourdes Arriola*	Julio Mendez*
Bred Barfield	Lizzy Mesa
Gilda Baldwin	Suzu Moss*
Russell Beyer	Margaret Nee &
Fred Bredemeyer II	Fredric Saunier*
Cristina Brochin	Trudy M. Novicki*
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Gisel & Javier Cruz	Tanya Pages
Meg Daly	Premier Parking
Paula Echavarria	Consulting, Inc.*
Alejandro & Julie Espino	Cesar & Valerie Pazmino
David Evensky	Emily Ruiz-Sierra
Kathleen Fernandez	Barbara Saewitz &
Lisette Garrido	Mercedes Saewitz*
Maureen Gragg	Carolyn Simmons &
Amy Hernandez	Carlos L. de Zayas*
Barbara Hinterkopf*	Marty Steinberger
Kate Inman	Sandra Tamer
Lonnie Lawrence	Maida Torres
Patricia LeClair*	Leyani Trevin
Mayra Coto Lopez*	Lydia Touzet*
Rafael Mas	Westchester General
Judy McCleary*	Hospital
Robert McDaniel*	Maurice Wiener
Teresa Mederos	

*Founders Club Member

GIFT OF HEALING—\$10,000
GIFT OF COURAGE—\$2,500

GIFT OF STRENGTH—\$5,000
GIFT OF HOPE—\$1,000

Support

Touch A Heart Dinner & Auction raises \$300,000 for children

The 9th Annual Kristi House Touch a Heart Dinner & Auction was a sold-out success netting \$300,000 on November 7th at Miami's Four Seasons Hotel. Outstanding sponsors, 300 guests and an auction of exquisite wines, luxury gifts and exclusive getaways made this a spectacular fundraising evening in support of sexually abused children.

Hundreds of votive candles, white roses and hydrangeas — donated by Fresh Market and Sunburst Farms and arranged by Layne Tidwell — greeted guests with an ambiance of sparkling, understated elegance perfect for the five-course gourmet meal and wine pairings. Republic National Distributing Company and Ravenswood Vineyard were the Dinner's Wine Sponsors. Mike Bittel of Sunset Fine Wine & Spirits served as the event's wine expert, and American Airlines provided major sponsorship support, supplying First Class air travel to exotic getaways and exclusive, private vacation spots. Christopher Zoller assisted with compelling descriptions and expert insight.

Diane and Allen de Olazarra and the de Olazarra Family Foundation, Eliza and Hugh Culverhouse, and Swanee and Paul DiMare were the Honorary Chairs for the event. Trish & Dan Bell were Gold Heart Sponsors. Major corporate sponsors included American Airlines; Royal Caribbean International; BNY Mellon Wealth Management; Stearns Weaver Miller Weissler Alhadeff & Sitterson, P.A.; Explora; Northern Trust; Shook, Hardy & Bacon;



Courtney & Darryl Parmenter, Diane & Allan de Olazarra and Swanee & Paul DiMare

Timothy Haahs & Associates; Miami Parking Authority; White & Case; Worldwide Holidays, Inc.; and Galapagos. Silver Heart sponsors included Emma & Sia Afra, Katie & Eddy Arriola, Bunny Bastian, Julia & David Bianchi, Berta & Jim Blecke, Studie & Fred Bredemeyer, II, Debbie & Gary Burman, Lindy Colson, Consolidated Parking, The de Moya Group, Inc., Jodi & Bob Dickinson, Janet & Jimmy Ellison, Rachelle Fortner & Armando J. Demoya, Lynn & Brian Hart, Commissioner Sally Heyman, Barbara & Walter Hinterkopf, Leon Medical Centers, Lourdes Leon, Judy & George McCleary, Carol & Al Novak; Alison & Darryl Robinson, Stearns Weaver Miller Weissler Alhadeff & Sitterson, P.A., Susan & Chuck Vodicka and Judy & Jon Zeder. ♥



Honorary Chairs Eliza & Hugh Culverhouse with Founding Board Member Berta Blecke (center)



The Honorable Sally Heyman, Bill Johnson, Trudy Novicki and Bob Dickinson



Selim & Ashley Raad and Emma & Sia Afra

Royal Caribbean hosts a "Taste of Liberty" for child victims

Friends and supporters of Kristi House enjoyed an exclusive day on the deck of Royal Caribbean's *Liberty of the Seas* last fall while raising essential funds for sexually abused children.

Guests were treated to a sampling of great entertainment and the ship's finest libations and hors d'oeuvres with a cocktail reception, ice skating show and scrumptious luncheon. In addition to the one-of-a-kind day aboard the *Liberty of the Seas*, Royal Caribbean also donated a 7-night Caribbean cruise for raffle, and completely underwrote the entire day so that 100% of the proceeds raised — \$20,000 total — went toward services for child sexual abuse victims.

The event was chaired by Kristi House Board members Sarah J. Washburn of Wilson, Washburn &



Forster Insurance; Kate Inman of Opko Pharmaceuticals; and Juan Trescastro of Royal Caribbean International. Table sponsors included Eddy Arriola, Fred Bredemeyer, Lindy Colson, Kate Inman, Bobbie Jones-Wilfork, Lauren's Kids Inc., Edie A. Murphy, Margaret Nee,

Carol Novak, Jeanette Nuñez, Parkeon, Gail Scott and Sarah Washburn.

Event hosts were Nelson David Diaz of Becker & Poliakoff, Bobbie Jones-Wilfork of Miami-Dade Aviation Department, Edie A. Murphy of Wachovia Trust and Jeanette Nuñez of Jackson Health Systems. ♥



Carol Novak, Taylor Powell, Brett Barfield, Sudie & Fred Bredemeyer II



Rosina & Regis Cook; Michelle & Michael Kavur of Parkeon with their baby Zayd

Staff fills the gaps of unmet client needs

More than 200 friends of Kristi House raised \$18,000 for sexually abused children in March over cocktails and hors d'oeuvres at Avalon Café in Coconut Grove. Funds generated from the Heal a Heart Happy Hour were for client emergency needs and therapy, areas in need of additional support.

"This fundraiser is unique in that it is totally planned and executed by staff," Executive Director Trudy Novicki said. "They started this annual effort five years ago when they saw client needs without any public funding or support."

Select Vodka and Argenvine supplied specialty libations, DJ

Marc Leventhal spun the tunes and BP Media provided marketing support. Underwriters included Dr. Ary Krau, Michele D. Morales, Cinergy Health, West Broward Church of God, Florida House Representative Juan C. Zapata, Luuxury, and Oscar Levin of Greenberg Traurig, P.A.

Special thanks also to raffle donors for the event who supplied exciting gifts: The Catalina Hotel & Beach Club; Carpaccio, Bal Harbour Shops; Dr. Ary Krau; Bal Harbour Plastic Surgery Associates; Kung Fu Kitchen & Sushi; El Tropic Cuban Cuisine; Fisher's Seafood; Edward James of Aveda Concept Salon. ♥



Stephanie Benaim, Dr. Ary Krau, Maria Clara Rodriguez and Jessica Pfeffer



Miami Police Chief John Timoney, Irma Torres, Bianca Fernandez and Angel Calzadilla

Volunteers

Gifts of talent, time and treasure sustain Kristi House clients during difficult days



The University of Miami School of Law group, HOPE (Helping Others through Pro Bono Efforts) help make the holidays special for Kristi House kids.

▲ Organizers from HOPE and Family Law Society for the Halloween Party for Kristi House kids.

◀ Diana Sidlowski with the toys from the HOPE toy drive organized by Diana and Assistant Dean Marni Lennon.



▲ Community advocate and leader Nora Bulnes provides 200 turkeys to Kristi House families at Thanksgiving as part of a community-wide drive she personally undertakes to help Miami families.



▶ Special thanks to FIU's Alpha Xi Delta sorority for organizing and hosting a beautiful Valentine's Day party for Kristi House children.



▲ Special thanks to Junior League of Miami Provisionals who undertook painting this mural for Kristi House's North office to make the waiting area more child friendly.

▶ Volunteers Bibi Moghani and Stephanie Lassar make holidays special for Kristi House with homemade goodie bags for each child.



Xiomara Sanchez: Growing the expertise of Kristi House therapy

Clinical Supervisor Xiomara Sanchez has dedicated herself to healing child sexual abuse since joining Kristi House as a therapist nearly nine years ago. During her undergraduate studies she identified social services and helping people as her calling. She found her niche in child sexual abuse after experience working with people representing the spectrum of mental health and social service needs.

Xiomara worked with all ages and ethnicities during social worker internships in New York while obtaining her MSW from NYU. Upon returning to Miami—her hometown since the age of 6—as a therapist at Family Counseling Services her cases included traumatized children, domestic violence victims, truant adolescents and parents ordered for services by DCF. This diverse background has served Xiomara and the agency well, as Kristi House families are typically undergoing multiple stressors.

When she was studying and beginning her career in the 1990s, there weren't many therapists handling child sexual abuse cases. Xiomara saw it was a totally underserved population, yet the problem was pervasive.

"No one wanted to talk about it," she said, "and not many therapists felt comfortable or trained to deal with it. But I found that child sexual abuse is often the underlying problem for so many other problems, like drug abuse and eating disorders. That's where I realized I could have the most impact."

The Kristi House therapy unit has grown considerably during her tenure, now at 10 therapists and a support position in addition to her-

self. She became the unit supervisor in 2006 and has been a significant force behind the agency's growing expertise in Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, the best practice protocol proven to be effective for child sexual abuse victims. She has been the leader of Kristi House's work with a national pilot program of the approach for Hispanic families. She's been at the helm during the past three years of the agency's therapy expansion that opened satellite offices in the far south and north parts of Miami-Dade County so clients could get to appointments in locations closer to their neighborhoods.

"Expanding north and south has always been a dream of mine," she said, "Those locations have been a big success for clients."

In addition to weekly supervision of all cases with every therapist and two to three master's level interns, Xiomara also carries her own caseload of 13 clients.

Along with growing expertise, Xiomara has seen other changes in therapy at Kristi House, including more disclosures from adolescent males. She believes this is a result of growing awareness and better understanding among the population in general, and perhaps a reduction in the added stigma for sexually abused boys.

She's also seen the downside of the Internet and the unfettered connectivity it offers, easily bringing perpetrators in contact with innocent children.

"...we can really help children process what happened to them. The children *do* get better."

The online world has also helped to spread the availability and volume of pornography that easily finds its way to younger and younger children. Pornography, along with exposure to violence, are closely linked to child sexual abuse, she explains.

So, how does one cope with nine years of sad and horrific stories?—a question she gets all the time. Xiomara said that along with caring family and friends, a positive, supportive work environment is essential. She has built a sensitive, effective team that collaborates on difficult cases and provides vital support to one another.

"We all try to have a positive outlook despite the challenges because we see that we can really help children process what happened to them. The children *do* get better. That keeps us going." ♥



Xiomara Sanchez (seated) with her team of therapists.



KRISTI HOUSE SATELLITE OFFICE LOCATIONS:

South • 15321 South Dixie Highway, Miami, FL 33157

North • 18441 NW 2nd Avenue, Miami, FL 33169

Project GOLD • Miami-Dade CVAC, 2400 S. Dixie Highway • Miami, FL 33133

Suspected child abuse or neglect should be reported. Please call the 24-hour Florida Abuse Hotline Information System: 1-800-96ABUSE (1-800-962-2873) or contact your local law enforcement agency.

KRISTI



HOUSE

Kristi House, Inc. • Orlowitz-Lee Children's Advocacy Center

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For more details or to receive an invitation in September, please contact Bianca Fernandez at 305-547-6802 or bfernandez@kristihouse.org