
CIRCLE OF FRIENDS MINISTRY, INC.

2023 ANNUAL REPORT



By Crystal Higbee

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT/CEO

Dear Friends,

God has been gracious, once again, to Circle of Friends Ministry. I am pleased to share the details of our organizations' progress through this 2023 Annual Report.

The Circle of Friends is entering its 25th year of providing resources for special needs families in Polk County. These resources include our Proclaiming Our Potential day program, support group, respite, and community activities. These resources are necessary for personal growth, education, and community education and inclusion. We continue to welcome clients to our day program, participate in and support of other nonprofits, and have added to our community volunteer work. Although we have moved outside of the downtown area we have continued to patronize and promote our community restaurants and businesses.

We are making progress in our effort to become Med Waiver Resource Providers. We encourage our families who have enrolled loved ones into the P.O.P. program to apply for the Med Waiver resource. Having the Med Waiver financial resources to assist with life skills development programs is financially advantageous for our clients and their families.

We continue to grow and look forward to beginning our next phase of planning as we begin taking steps towards the development of our supported living community, *Friends Village*.

Thank you for your continued support of the Circle of Friends Ministry, Inc. It is only with your support that we can continue to serve the growing needs of our community.

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Crystal H. Higbee
President/CEO

WHO WE ARE

The Circle of Friends Ministry, Inc. is a nonprofit 501(c)3. The Circle was incorporated in 1999 with the mission to equip, empower, and provide inclusion to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. We serve individuals with, and families of those with disabilities through our Proclaiming Our Potential (P.O.P.) day program, family support group, and inclusion activities. Clients receive independent skill-building lessons, inclusion activities, advocacy, vocation training, community building opportunities, and practice of the Arts, Culinary, Therapeutic, and Performing. Our vision includes the provision of supervised housing. The area we serve is Lake Wales and the greater Polk County area which includes Winter Haven, Bartow, Frostproof, Auburndale, Dundee, and Haines City.



WHY WE ARE IMPORTANT

The Circle of Friends is the only adult day program for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities in Lake Wales and only one of three adult day programs offering similar services for the intellectually and developmentally disabled available in Polk County. The Circle offers equal opportunity for program enrollment regardless of income which has provided access to dozens of disabled adults since its' founding in 1999. Polk County is home to 10.3% of disabled individuals under age 65 and has a poverty rate of 15.6% which reflects our disproportionate 100% discounted and scholarship enrollment of clients into our day program. The median rent is now \$1,200.00 for an individual dwelling coupled with the fact that there are not even half of the housing units available needed to meet the demand of our county's current population. Our success in building supervised affordable housing is vital to the health of our community.

Facts taken from the following resources.

[Disability & Socioeconomic Status \(apa.org\)](https://www.apa.org)

[U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts: Florida](https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fl)

2023 HIGHLIGHTS



\$57,454.54

Total Grants



\$47,794.74

Total Program Revenue



\$13,744.52

Total Donations



\$194,347.24

Miscellaneous Revenue



\$15,927.25

Total Fundraising Revenue



\$72,396.65

Total Admin Expense



\$130,596.35

Total program Expense



20

Total Scholarships Granted



2,896

Total Volunteer Hours



\$227,423.40

Total 2023 Expense



\$194,347.24

Total 2023 Revenue

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

2023

CHAIRPERSON

Rafael Unzueta

VICE CHAIRPERSON

Curtis Gibson

SECRETARY

Deborah Alderman

TREASURER

Susan Harding

DIRECTORS

Susan Burden

Erin Floyd

Dr. Taccara Grubbs

Linda Pai

Scott Thompson

ADVISORY BOARD

Pam Kneer

Rob Quam

Silvio Fazzini

Tina Nelson

STAFF

2023

PRESIDENT/CEO

Crystal Higbee

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

Nicholas Bique

Sabrina Clark

BOOKKEEPER

Stephen Jolley

PROGRAM INSTRUCTORS

Reagan Adkison

Lauren Brown

Cortney Grunder

INSTRUCTOR ASSISTANTS

Terry Jenkins

Addie Odom

VOLUNTEER INSTRUCTORS

Jada Townsend

Martha Bruce

Sandy Wallace

2024

PRESIDENT/CEO

Crystal Higbee

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

Sabrina Clark

BOOKKEEPER

Stephen Jolley

PROGRAM INSTRUCTORS

Reagan Adkison

Lauren Brown

Emily Walker

INSTRUCTOR ASSISTANTS

Addie Odom

VOLUNTEER INSTRUCTORS

Mary Morosky

Martha Bruce

Sandy Wallace

PROCLAIMING OUR POTENTIAL PROGRAM

Proclaiming Our Potential Students Enrolled = 30

Attending by Scholarship = 20 Attending at Discounted Rate =10

Set Monthly Tuition= \$400.00/month or \$40.00/day

Average Monthly Tuition = \$200.00/month

TOTAL TUITION REVENUE= \$45,040.00

STUDENT ACTIVITY REVENUE= \$2,499.80

TRANSPORTATION REVENUE= \$2,105.00

TOTAL PROGRAM REVENUE= \$47,794.74

TOTAL PROGRAM EXPENSE= \$130,596.35

STUDENT PERFORMANCES/ENGAGEMENTS

-Lake Wales Women's Club -Tower Lakes Chapel -Church of the Good Shepard

-Pioneer Days - Rotary on the Ridge - New Hope Church -Lake Wales Junior Women's Club

-Care Center Thrift Store -Fox 13 News

STUDENT VOLUNTEER HOURS

Student Volunteer Hours = 240

Lake Wales Care Center

- Bi-weekly Cleaning & Organizing at Thrift Store

Lake Wales Library

- Monthly Cleaning & Organizing

Freedom Tour

- Monthly Sorting, Packing, & Organizing

Yard work for elderly community members

- Clipping hedges, pulling weeds, raking, mowing lawn, watering plants

Nursing Home Visitations

- Water's Edge

Community Cleanup

- Picking up trash around Lake Wailes, downtown, Kiwanis Park, & Crystal Lake

STUDENT VOLUNTEER WORK HOURS/VOCATION TRAINING HOURS=

- Entourage Salon
- The Ranch Taproom & Coffeehouse
- Lake Wales Care Center
- On site

HOURS

VOLUNTEERS

Number of Volunteers =55

Volunteer Hours=1,456

RESPITE

RESPITE HOURS = 1,251

- **Support Group =12**
- **Community Activities = 7**
 1. Egg Hunt
 2. Summer Social
 3. Bark N/ Treat
- **Program = 1,232**

STUDENT COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER HOURS=240

- Community Cleanup
- Lake Wales Care Center
- Charity Support
- Needy Assistance
- Public Library

STUDENT VOLUNTEER WORK HOURS/VOCATION TRAINING HOURS=1,200

Lynette Brown - Entourage Salon

Erin Scarborough- Popeye's Restaurant

Mike Ortaliz - The Ranch Taproom & Coffeehouse

Melissa Biggs - Lake Wales Care Center

Christine Williams- Pizza Hut

FUNDS

FUNDRAISING EVENTS

- Mother/Daughter Tea - Bark N. Treat - Denim & Diamond Gala - Capital Campaign

TOTAL FUNDS RAISED= \$15,927.75

TOTAL FUNDRAISING EXPENSE= \$24,429.40

Fundraising Expenses \$6,986.33

Designated Fundraising Salaries- \$15,798.48

Employer PR Tax-designated fundraising salaries-\$1,336.98

8106 Workers Comp-designated fundraising employees-\$307.61

DONATIONS

TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS = \$13,744.52

GRANTS

TOTAL GRANT REVENUE = \$57,454.54

- Empower Polk
- Impact Polk
- Airboaters for Autism Awareness
- ER Jahna Foundation
- Florida's Natural Growers Foundation
- Votum Foundation
- Mountain Lake Community Service
- Dyer Difference
- Bell-Barnett
- Publix

BUILDING SALE (105 E. Stuart Ave) =\$194,347.24

BOUTIQUE = \$178.28 (Boutique is under planning and construction as of May 2023.)

ADMINISTRATION

ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSE = \$72.396.25

NETWORKING

Abilities Workshop

- Advertising

Candlelight Christian Academy

- Activities
- Student volunteer hours

Churches

- Church of the Good Shepherd
- First Baptist Church of Lake Wales
- First United Methodist Church of Lake Wales
- Freedom Tour Church
- IMPACT Church
- Tower Lakes Chapel

City of Lake Wales

- Mainstreet
- Wine Downtown
- Fundraising Gala-Made table centerpieces

Empowered Masters Commission

- Activities
- Volunteer Credits

Family Café

- Resource Fair
- Disability Workshops

Freedom Tour

- Community Resource Fair
- Program Supplies Donations

Lake Wales Care Center

- Empty Bowls
- Cleaning up/Organizing Inventory at Thrift Store

Lake Wales Highlanders School Football Team

- Game/Program Recognition
- Cooking Dinner for the Team

Networking cont.

Lake Wales Youth Leadership

- Hosting Information Workshop

Nathaniel's Hope

- Fundraising Activity

Removing the Barriers

- Fundraising Activities
- Stirring Waters Meeting
- Buddy Paddle

Rotary on the Ridge

- Activities

Triumphant Free Spirit Church

- Facility Use

Warner University

- Volunteer Hours Credits

Water's Edge

- Activities

Victory Ridge

- Resource Fair



Visit us on the web at <https://www.circleoffriendsministry.com>

Follow us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/circleoffriendsministrylw>

Find us on Instagram at [@circleoffriendslw](https://www.instagram.com/circleoffriendslw)

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Lake Wales, FL. 33853

Platinum Seal of Transparency Rating on GuideStar

Find us on Yelp and Google