

Wings OF HOPE

A chance for a better life.

Hope Rising Gala

Save the Date
October 3



Watch your mailbox in mid-August for your invitation to our Hope Rising Gala, which will celebrate Wings of Hope's 20th anniversary. This year's Gala will feature live entertainment from Think Big, who joined us a few years ago with rave reviews. These six men joined forces in 2002 to play music ranging from classic rock and dance tunes to Motown and everything in between. Get your tickets as soon as your invitation arrives, and plan to enjoy all the fun!



Sponsorship Matters

Our Gala sponsors play a critical role in our success. In fact, sponsors are one of the major reasons Wings of Hope has made such an impact in the lives of at-risk young people. If you or your business would like to consider a sponsorship this year, please visit our website, WingsofHope.net/events, and select the Sponsor Benefits link to learn about the various sponsorship levels and benefits.

Celebrating 20 Years

It's hard to believe that it has been 23 years since our lives changed forever when our son, Brian, passed away from injuries sustained in a car accident. This overwhelming tragedy led to the creation of Wings of Hope as a way to remember our son's compassion to help give others a chance for a better life. For 19 years, businesses, professional colleagues, family and friends along with hundreds of volunteers and thousands of event attendees, have helped us donate more than \$1.47 million to help children and teens in our community who have no safe place to live or parents to love and care for them. It is our true hope and desire that you join us this year as we celebrate Wings of Hope's 20th anniversary. Your support through the years has helped us reach incredible milestones and touch many lives in a positive way. It fills our hearts with joy knowing that Brian lives on in the thousands of young people we have helped through Wings of Hope.



WingsNet's Impact

On the front lines of caring for abused or neglected teens who find themselves with no family and living in group homes, Eric Losciale, a program manager at Children's Home Society of Florida, has seen it all.

The director of the group homes in Volusia County for 19 years — as long as Wings of Hope has been giving funds — he has dedicated his entire 35-year career to helping children in various capacities: runaway prevention programs, child abuse investigation, adolescent drug/alcohol treatment, foster care, child protective services, and residential care and treatment. Eric raves about what WingsNet does for residents of Destiny's House, Brian's House and Sunshine House.

"WingsNet has had a tremendous impact on our residential programs," Eric said. "Our teens' attitudes toward their school work have changed. Since we started WingsNet, our residents have increased their GPAs by almost 75 percent, and their school attendance has dramatically improved. We see much less absenteeism."

Runaway behavior has been a way of life for some of the young ladies who come to Destiny's House, but incentives offered through WingsNet also have changed those attitudes.

"We have seen a dramatic reduction in runaway behavior at our girls home because of the 'Pay to Stay' program that WingsNet subsidizes," he said. "We are so grateful for Wings of Hope, WingsNet and their many contributors and sponsors. They literally turn lives around."

Group Homes Get Needed Upgrades

For years, Wings of Hope has helped teens in group homes get better grades, learn to budget and save money, and develop behavior and life skills that will help them throughout their futures. Your generosity also enables Wings to provide items that improve their quality of life.

New living room furniture at Destiny's House has created a more homey feel for its residents, many of whom have shared that they have never had anything new or nice before.

"Everyone is very excited about it," said Adrian, a house staff worker. "The girls are working hard to keep the furniture in great condition. It's teaching them responsibility for when they have their own homes."

A new heavy-duty Maytag washer and dryer and upgraded flooring have improved living conditions for the eight teenage boys who reside at Brian's House, a Volusia County residential group foster home that is operated by Children's Home Society of Florida and named in our son's memory.

The appliances allow residents to wash and dry larger loads in less time, and energy-efficient technology has cut the home's electric bills.

Vinyl laminate wood flooring in the home's bedrooms and office areas has replaced carpeting that had seen better days. The young men's raves ranged from "the floors are so much nicer and easier to clean" to "my bedroom is much cooler at night with the new floors" to "we love the floors, and the house looks much cleaner and brighter."



Pictured are some Destiny's House residents and their heartfelt gesture of gratitude for your support. (Because they are minors and in state custody, we are not able to show their faces, but they have BIG smiles!)

Stories From the Young People We Help

Since its founding, Wings of Hope has helped thousands of young people. Each one has a story, a struggle and dreams for the future. Here are a few we helped together this year.

Like many of the children Wings of Hope helps, **Brooklyn** passed through many systems and foster homes. Despite her unfortunate personal life, Brooklyn cares deeply for others and wants to help others after graduating from high school. She has been accepted into a local college's social work program and is determined to make her career dreams come true.

Alex dropped out of high school at age 16 because he was behind academically and struggled to make friends each time he changed schools. At age 19, he earned his GED, got a part-time job as a security officer, found a roommate and moved into his first apartment. As he transitions into independence, he has set his sights on pursuing further academic goals.

Lora and her two younger siblings came into care for abuse and neglect 3 years ago. Lora's brother and sister were placed with relatives, but Lora was separated because she acted out. After cycling through multiple placements, Lora landed in Destiny's House, where she has become a positive example to other girls as she plans for her future and works toward her goals. Before she turns 18 this year, she will complete her GED and plans to attend college.

Your Support is Changing Lives

WingsNet encourages young people to become self-sufficient by providing incentives for academic achievement and developing good work habits and independent living skills.

- 70% of WingsNet participants — compared to a 40% national average — maintain employment for at least six months
- 25% of WingsNet participants — compared to 3% of youths leaving foster care statewide — are enrolled in vocational or college studies
- WingsNet participants who open and maintain a savings account have increased 25%
- WingsNet participants who drop out of school or delay enrolling as a result of financial emergencies have dropped 25%



Wings of Hope New Mailing Address

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To date, your donations have enabled Wings of Hope to give more than \$1.47 MILLION to help youth in need.