

# Healing & Hope News

"The work will continue..."  
— Father Edward J. Flanagan,  
Founder of Boys Town

## Annual Youth Awards Banquet Recognizes 20 North Florida Boys Town Citizens



of honor. With cameras flashing and cheers echoing, they proudly walked the red carpet.

The evening featured an uplifting speech



Left: Dr. Christopher Small

Boys Town North Florida hosted its annual Youth Awards Banquet, embracing the theme "Bloom Where You're Planted." The celebration honored youth in the Family Home Program, who arrived dressed in tuxedos and gowns, ready to shine in the spotlight. As the banquet began, each youth was introduced and welcomed as the guests

from Dr. Christopher Small, Executive Director at Florida State University Schools. With warmth and wisdom, he shared his personal journey of perseverance and hope, encouraging every Boys Town youth to believe in their dreams and never give up.

Following a delicious dinner, the heart of the event unfolded: the awards ceremony. Applause filled the room as 20 remarkable youth were sworn in as official Boys Town Citizens, signifying a commitment to their personal development and community. Each youth received special

awards recognizing their individuality, achievements, growth and the unique strengths they bring to the Boys Town family. Among the awards were the prestigious honors of Youth of the Year, Ambassador of the Year, and the James Dahl Spirit of Youth Educational Award and Scholarship recipient.

These awards served not only as accolades, but as affirmations of each young person's resilience, character and promise.

The night concluded with an electrifying dance party,

where DJ Chelsea from Amplify kept the energy high and the smiles wide. With music flowing, the celebration continued with joyful dancing and a true sense of togetherness.

Boys Town North Florida is grateful for the community partners that made this celebration possible. More than a banquet, this night was a tribute to the resilient young lives blossoming through adversity. It reminded them—and everyone in attendance—that no matter where you start, you can grow, thrive and bloom!

*Bloom  
Where You're  
Planted*





## Wilson Named New Chair of the Board of Directors for Boys Town North Florida

Boys Town North Florida is proud to welcome Sevin Wilson as the new Chair of the Board of Directors. A Tallahassee native, Sevin brings not only professional expertise as an insurance broker and tech entrepreneur, but a lifelong commitment to serving others—a value rooted in his upbringing as the eldest of eight siblings.



What drew Sevin to Boys Town was more than just the mission, it was the heart behind it. “Giving kids a real chance to grow, heal and thrive,” he says, is what inspired him from the start. After visiting the campus and witnessing firsthand the incredible resilience and potential of the youth—often beyond what they believed possible—he felt a calling to be involved. Over the past two years, his belief in the Boys Town model has only grown stronger.

“The youth at Boys Town feel like family to me,” Sevin said. “It’s an honor to support a place that truly changes lives.”

When the team approached Sevin about the board chair role, he was honored and genuinely excited. He knows he has big shoes to fill. Stepping into this leadership role, Sevin is focused on advancing Boys Town North Florida’s mission in meaningful ways. His top priorities include:

- » Supporting staff and providing programs with the tools they need to succeed
- » Expanding Boys Town’s reach by cultivating new partnerships and engaging more supporters who wish to make a difference
- » Strengthening long-term sustainability and community engagement while keeping the mission at the heart of everything

“Every child we reach is a win,” Sevin says. “I’m honored to help move things forward.”

Outside of his professional life, Sevin enjoys traveling, staying active and spending time with his wife, Morgan, and their dog, Kodak. The Wilsons are also eagerly anticipating the arrival of their first child—a new chapter that makes Sevin’s commitment to helping children and families even more personal.

For more than 40 years, Boys Town North Florida has been a pillar in the Tallahassee community—helping to save children and heal families. Sevin shared his goal is to help ensure the next 40 years are just as impactful, if not more.

To our incredible supporters, Sevin shares this message: “Whether you’ve volunteered, donated or offered services, thank you! Boys Town wouldn’t be where it is today without you. Last year alone, nearly 1,000 children and families were positively impacted thanks to your support. I’m committed to helping grow that number and ensure every child in our community has the opportunity to thrive.”



## Boys Town North Florida 6th Annual Book Fair

*“The book fair is more than just an annual event—it’s a doorway to learning and hope for our youth. Each book represents a step toward a brighter future.”* - Executive Director, Marcus Lampkin

Reading remains one of the most powerful tools in a child’s development—fueling imagination, strengthening language skills and laying the foundation for lifelong learning. On Friday, June 13th, Boys Town North Florida celebrated its 6th Annual Book Fair.

This year’s theme, Summer Reading Stars! brought the glitz and excitement of the movies to life. The event was designed to make every child feel like a star stepping onto the red carpet. From theater-inspired décor to classic movie-time snacks, the fair recreated the full experience of a night at the movies—only this time, the stars were the kids, and the featured attractions were their books.



A beloved tradition with a twist in the plot, this year’s fair again had diverse books from an array of genres available for browsing and selection, but also invited youth from campus and community programs to submit personalized book requests ahead of time. As a result, every child received a story that reflected their specific interests and reading level, creating a unique and meaningful experience tailored just for them. The joy of choosing a book that feels like it was made for you is something every child deserves, and this event delivered just that. One youth shared, “this is always one of my favorite summer events.”

The Book Fair was co-chaired by Marcus M. Lampkin, Jr., alongside Dr. Latara Lampkin, who organized and planned the event. Special thanks to BTNF staff members Gwyneth Monterroso, Daria Longley, Katie Raab, Loma Garland and Dr. Ellyn Scanlan for their support. The shared vision of celebrating reading through creativity, joy and community continues to shape this tradition into something truly special.

We are also deeply grateful to our 2025 sponsors, Eduprehd Research & Development Partners, Color in STEM and the Florida Center for Reading Research, whose generous contributions helped make the event a success. Their support reflects a shared commitment to literacy, education and empowerment.

This event is more than just a festive gathering—it’s a key part of Boys Town North Florida’s Literacy Initiative, an ongoing effort to foster a love of reading, improve academic outcomes and ensure that every child in our care has access to the stories that can change their lives.



# Terrence's Journey: A Celebration of Perseverance and Promise

What began as a celebration of completing Boys Town's Successful Futures program transformed into an unforgettable moment of recognition for Boys Town North Florida youth, Terrence. The program is designed to prepare students for independent living through essential life skills—from seeking employment to housing security.



When Terrence and his Family-Teachers, Wayne and Aiysha Longley, received an invitation to the main campus in Omaha for an awards ceremony, they did not anticipate the magnitude of what was to come. Accompanied by his Family-Teachers, Terrence embarked on a two-day experience that would leave an unforgettable memory in their lives.

The Omaha campus welcomed them with open arms, embodying the true spirit of “One Boys Town.” Every staff member created an atmosphere of genuine warmth and belonging. A local campus family hosted Terrence, allowing him to connect with fellow youth and experience the broader Boys Town community.

The awards ceremony proved to be the highlight of their visit. In front of an auditorium filled with cheering youth and Family-Teachers from various sites, Terrence received three prestigious awards:

- » The Overcoming Adversity Award, including a \$500 prize
- » The “Can You Hear Me Now?” Award, providing an iPhone with three years of paid service
- » The prestigious Monsignor Hupp Scholarship, granting \$3,000 per semester for three years

“These awards mean a lot, because they were a reflection of more than academics,” Terrence said. “Your true character will always reveal itself. To be recognized for my daily effort to better myself is humbling.”

For the Longleys, watching Terrence receive such acclaim was a profound “proud parent moment.” As they observed the entire auditorium celebrating Terrence's achievements, they saw firsthand the rewards of perseverance. “Terrence got to see what happens when you don't give up,” they shared. “Working hard and completing the process brings good things—the three awards were just the icing on the cake.”



The visit included meeting with Robby Simard, Boys Town Vice President of Youth Care, whose personal congratulations

added another meaningful layer to their experience. Terrence was particularly moved by seeing Father Flanagan's mission in action throughout the campus. The Successful Futures committee's meticulous planning ensured every aspect of their trip ran smoothly, demonstrating the organization's commitment to youth and their support system.

As Terrence approaches his graduation from Boys Town North Florida, his future is very bright. His plans include completing his barbering degree before pursuing culinary school with his scholarship. His story stands as a testament to the power of perseverance, hard work and the unwavering support of his Boys Town family.



## Boys Town North Florida Helps Families Prepare For Hurricane Season



Inside the Bucket

The In-Home Family Services team at Boys Town North Florida is committed to ensuring families are prepared, educated and connected to critical resources ahead of hurricane season. Specially trained Family Consultants work directly in parents' homes to help strengthen parenting skills, support families in creating safe and nurturing environments for their children and link them to community resources.

With hurricane season in Florida spanning June 1 to November 30, preparation is vital. The In-Home team collaborated to assemble Hurricane Buckets—large waterproof containers filled with essential emergency supplies. Each bucket includes items such as first aid kits, hygiene products, flashlights and rain gear. Staff also compiled a checklist of additional recommended supplies to help families stay safe and ready.

Every family receiving services is paired with a dedicated consultant who helps them develop a customized natural disaster plan. All new families entering the program receive both a Hurricane Bucket and a tailored safety plan. For those unable to evacuate due to lack of transportation, consultants work to identify nearby shelters, food banks and other crucial community resources. Additional recommendations are given to families living in less secure housing—such as mobile homes—by ensuring they know the location of the nearest evacuation shelter.

Now, families are taking the next steps by gathering non-perishable food items and securing their plans. At Boys Town North Florida, safety is our top priority—safety for the children, safety for their families and safety for our dedicated staff.





## Boys Town North Florida Youth Enjoy Summer Full of Activities

It was a summer filled with recreation and unforgettable memories at Boys Town North Florida. Youth in our Family Home Program enjoyed a range of activities, from local Tallahassee outings to exciting day trips that opened doors to new experiences.

To set the tone in May, Family Home Campus hosted its annual Summer Kick-Off—an exciting celebration featuring a giant slip 'n slide, swimming, water balloons, basketball, yard games and delicious food. The Family Home Campus joyfully embraced the season full of energy.

With support from our dedicated summer recreation staff, each week brought a thoughtfully crafted schedule designed to create lasting memories. On-campus activities included slip 'n slide kickball, arts and crafts at ART Town and plenty of outdoor fun. Off-campus, Boys Town youth ventured to places like District 850, Urban Air, local parks, bowling alleys, movie theaters and even took part in a scavenger hunt across Tallahassee.

Katie Raab from our summer recreation team shared how rewarding it was to watch the youth dive into activities with excitement and curiosity—embracing the joy of discovering new adventures close to home.

Fridays were reserved for something extra special: out-of-town trips that brought fresh excitement and opportunities to explore Florida's natural beauty. The youth enjoyed tubing at Ichetucknee Springs State Park, breathtaking visits to Ponce de Leon Springs

and Wakulla Springs and relaxing fishing excursions. A thrilling day was also spent at Wild Adventures Theme Park. Jacksonville Zoo also topped the list of memorable day trips for the youth.

One of the most inspiring moments of the summer came when Jeff Kupper, Director of Player Development and Operations at Florida State University, extended an incredible invitation to Boys Town youth. The entire Family Home Program spent a special day on FSU's campus, where the football team played indoor flag football with the youth, hosted a behind-the-scenes tour of the athletic facilities and gave a walk-through of the legendary Doak S. Campbell Stadium. Boys Town North Florida is deeply grateful for the FSU Football team's generosity and their investment in the lives of local foster youth.

Opportunities like these are made possible through the kindness and support of our generous donors. Thank you to everyone who helps make magic happen for our youth. This summer was truly one to remember!



### Upcoming Events

**Chords for Charity**  
**October 2**



SCAN NOW

**Christmas Classic Golf Tournament**  
**December 8**



SCAN NOW



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### For more great stories, visit **BOYSTOWN.ORG/north-florida**

The first of Boys Town's national sites, Boys Town North Florida has been serving children and families since 1983.

We partner with area agencies and businesses to constantly enhance the quality and variety of care we provide in the community. Every year, our services touch the lives of more than 5,000 people in North Florida.



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#### our mission

Changing the way America cares  
for children and families.