

Notables

Society, Charity & Service



GL Homes Director of Community Relations Sarah Alsofrom, GL Homes President Misha Ezratti and Best Foot Forward Co-founder and Chief Executive Officer Donna Biase. Photo taken at Boca Bridges, a GL Homes community.
[TRACEY BENSON PHOTOGRAPHY]

Best Foot Forward ‘Decade of Change Redo’

It’s a decade of change — one more time.

While the pandemic sidelined Best Foot Forward’s (BFF) Annual Bash, celebrating a decade of change in 2020, BFF returns in virtual format on March 13. This “Decade of Change Redo” focuses on the future. It will challenge its students and the community to embrace excellence, education and equality. Young people who aged out of the foster care system will share their powerful, inspiring stories of academic and personal success during a live, virtual program.

Honorary Chair Wanda Moran, Chairs Lisa and Todd Orlando along with Rising Chairs Meryll and Ethan Bangsil will host BFF’s Bash Redo. They will be joined by Champion of Children Award recipient Gigi M. Tylander, who has served as a longtime mentor and advocate for BFF foster youth.

With support from devoted sponsors Laura and Shaw McCutcheon, Mainstreet Capital Partners, Polen Capital, Trend Capital Management LP, Anita Detert, GL Homes, JM Family Enterprises, Inc., Nelson Mullins Broad and Cassel, Zimmerman Advertising, and Cristino Fine Jewelry, Best Foot Forward can provide the right tools for these youth to graduate.

See BFF, 2D



Debbie Ellman, Todd and Lisa Orlando [CAPEHART]



NOTABLES COVER STORIES

highlight local businesses, philanthropies, charities and individuals. Stories are sponsored. To be featured, contact Notables Editor Krystian von Speidel at notables@pbpost.com.

The BFF team emerged from the pandemic crisis wiser, more resilient and more determined than ever to assist youth in foster care to graduate from high school and college. Despite an almost overnight switch to a virtual learning environment, the team made sure that all of their students had computers and internet access.

FAST FACT

Nationally, the high school graduation rate for children in foster care is 46%.

The high school graduation rate of students in foster care under Best Foot Forward's tutelage is 100%.

The nonprofit provides tutoring, educational planning, mentoring and support.

Part of that switch included BFF's mentoring program, which pre-pandemic, occurred face-to-face. Now staff and corporate partners share advice and career tips with students online.

When Florida International University student Mary Brown needed advice about a career in human resources, her advisers at Best Foot Forward connected Mary to GL Homes, one of the nation's largest homebuilders. GL Homes Talent Acquisition Specialist Jessica LaGrange had a virtual mentoring meeting with Mary to walk her through the steps she needs to work in this specialized field.

"Although life hasn't always dealt me the best hand, I've managed to get through knowing that people will always remember how you made them feel. Ms. LaGrange's kind words of wisdom have been ringing all day in my head. I love how patient she was and kind enough to offer help," said Brown.

"Results matter. Under Best Foot Forward's steadfast support, students defy the odds. There are so many obstacles placed in their way during their young lives, but this agency doesn't let them give up," commented GL Homes Director of Community Relations Sarah Alsofrom.

While the BFF Bash may be a do-over, there's no looking back for the agency's teens and young adults. Their moment is now. Best Foot Forward stands side-by-side with their students to make sure they shine.



Jessica LaGrange of GL Homes gives career advice to Best Foot Forward student Mary Brown. [CAPEHART]



Best Foot Forward student Mary Brown. [CAPEHART]



Wanda Moran and Gigi Tylander [CAPEHART]

EVENT INFO, CHAIRS, SPONSORS

When: Saturday, March 13, 6:30 p.m. preshow, 7 p.m. live broadcast

Where: Virtual

Website: BFFBash2021.com

Contact: Donna Biase, dbiase@bestfoot.org

Champion of Children: Gigi M. Tylander

Honorary Chair: Wanda Moran

Chairs: Lisa and Todd Orlando

Rising Chairs: Meryll and Ethan Bangsil

Charity Co-founders: Donna Biase and Debbie Ellman

Sponsors: Laura and Shaw McCutcheon, Mainstreet Capital Partners, Polen Capital, Trend Capital Management LP, Anita Detert, GL Homes, JM Family Enterprises, Inc., Nelson Mullins Broad and Cassel, Zimmerman Advertising, and Cristino Fine Jewelry