

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!



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Achieving the Dream

Rays Star Inspired by Courage of Girl with Brittle Bone Disease

They met during the 2009 season at GameWorks in Tampa, the major-league pitcher with the million-dollar arm and the little girl from Lutz born with osteogenesis imperfecta, also known as brittle bone disease.

Leigh Dittman was three weeks old when she broke her wrist and fractured a bone in her arm. "I think it was me just trying to hold her," said Leigh's mother, Ellen. All told, Leigh has broken 29 bones, had seven surgeries and worn a total of 40 casts on her legs, arms and hands. She has rods in both femurs and in one tibia.

Leigh had one leg in a cast the day she met Price at a function for Tampa Bay Rays season-ticket holders. Her dad, David, a captain with Tampa Fire and Rescue, inched her wheelchair to the front of the line as Price signed autographs. Leigh looked up at Price with her sparkling blue eyes and 1,000-watt smile.

"I saw her and I instantly



Leigh Dittman with David Price of the Tampa Bay Rays. (Picture courtesy of the Dittman family as published in the St. Petersburg Times.)

knew she was somebody I was going to be friends with," Price said.

"Some players will ask why you're in a wheelchair," Leigh said. "David didn't seem to notice that." They spent the rest of the afternoon playing video games, skee ball and air hockey. Price didn't know that day his new friend was a bigger star in the world of the Shriners Hospital for Children than he was in the world of baseball.

At a ceremony in July at the Shriners Hospital in Tampa, where Leigh has been a regular patient since she was less than a month old, a bronze plaque was placed on the hospital's wall of fame in recognition of her fundraising efforts. Beginning with her fourth birthday, Leigh has raised more than \$375,000 for Shriners.

"She is," said Bethanne Demas, director of public relations, outreach and marketing for Shriners in Tampa, "an incredible kid." Leigh has traveled the country to attend fundraisers for Shriners. She was

an honorary captain at the East-West Shrine Game. She is comfortable speaking in front of crowds of more than a thousand.

"She has every reason to complain about her situation," David Dittman said. "But she doesn't. Instead of feeling sorry for herself, she'll motivate people."

See <http://www2.tbo.com/sports/rays/2011/nov/23/for-prices-pal-feeling-down-is-not-an-option-ar-327049/>

Nominate an Everyday Hero

The Tampa Tribune is looking for nominees for Hometown Heroes, everyday people who help others, in ways both big and small, motivated only by kindness and a desire to make the community a better place.

Send your nominee's name and a brief description of his or her selfless acts to trib_news@tampatrib.com (put Hometown Hero in the subject line) or mail to Hometown Hero, Tribune Newsroom, P.O. Box 191, Tampa, FL 33601.

Local News

Children's Board Posts Requests for Proposals Info Sessions, Deadlines

Request for Proposals (RFP) RE 2012-13 Funding:

Information Sessions (only attend one)

Date: **Tuesday, November 29, 2011 from 2:00 – 4:30 p.m.**

Address: Children's Board of Hillsborough County
1002 East Palm Avenue
Tampa, Florida 33605

Date: **Wednesday, November 30, 2011 from 9:00 – 11:30 a.m.**

Address: Children's Board of Hillsborough County
1002 East Palm Avenue
Tampa, Florida 33605

Date: **Monday, December 5, 2011 from 1:30 – 4:00 p.m.**

Address: Bloomingdale Regional Library
1906 Bloomingdale Avenue
Valrico, Florida 33596

Date: **Wednesday, December 7, 2011 from 1:30 – 4:00 p.m.**

Address: Town N' Country Library
Community Room
7606 Paula Drive, Suite 120
Tampa, Florida 33615

Letter of Intent to Apply Due:

Thursday, December 15, 2011 by 4:00 p.m.

Final Date for Submission of Proposals:

February 17, 2012 by 4:00 p.m.

At: Children's Board of Hillsborough County
1002 East Palm Avenue
Tampa, Florida 33605

Number of Copies: One original with signature (unbound) plus four (4) complete copies and one copy on a DVD or USB.

SUMMARY:

The Children's Board of Hillsborough County (CBHC) has approved the release of this competitive Request for Proposals (RFP). The purpose of this RFP is to focus Children's Board program funding for more measurable impact and to expand the Early Childhood System of Care that the Children's Board has been building over the last 15 years. The primary result this RFP is intended to address is: Children are healthy and have acquired the developmental foundations needed to succeed in school and in life. The system we envision would promote a widely shared focus on results: children are born healthy and are developmentally on track; children are ready to learn and succeed; and children have families that are supported and supportive. While the Children's Board is involved in supporting all children in our community, through this RFP we intend to target our programmatic funding to prevention services for pregnant women and young children aged 0-8 and their families.

Complete RFP available on our website: www.childrensboard.org/rfp.aspx

Children's Board of Hillsborough County (813) 229-2884

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Children's Board
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY

Dreams Worth Growing

Gift-Givers Needed Through Dec. 16 for the Children's Board Foster Angel Tree



The **Children's Board Foster Angel Tree** will be in the first floor lobby through Dec. 16. Those interested in providing a gift for a foster child can keep one of the foster angels in exchange for purchasing a gift from among several choices and leaving the gift and tag at the Board, 1002 E. Palm Avenue, Tampa.



Child Abuse Council Seeks Presents for Its Annual Holiday Gift Store by Dec. 10

In an effort to help make the holiday season a little brighter, the Child Abuse Council (CAC) will open its doors and host its annual Holiday Gift Store for client families. During this event, parents and caregivers will "shop" for their children's holiday gifts. All toys are free of charge and gift wrapped, providing families with that final festive touch.

Christmas may be a financially difficult time of year, placing strain on many families within our community during such a joyous time of the year. The Child Abuse Council wants to ensure that children will wake up with something they can unwrap and enjoy. Last year, 546 children and 277 families visited its Holiday Store to select new toys for their loved ones.

The Child Abuse Council seeks your help to spread Christmas cheer and collect toys for children ages 0 – 12. All toys are due by Friday, Dec. 10. Contact Jessica DuChene to arrange for drop-off details; (813)673-4646, ext.224 or jduchene@cachillsborough.com.

Volunteers are welcome and needed to help make the Holiday Store a big success. We need help with set-up, clean-up, toy sorting, wrapping and more. The Holiday Store will be open from Tuesday, Dec. 14 through Thursday, Dec. 16. Hours of operation include two different shifts per day; 9 a.m. – 2 p.m. or 1 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. Please contact Jessica DuChene to sign-up and get involved; (813) 673-4646, ext.224 or jduchene@cachillsborough.com

Since 1977 the Child Abuse Council has been helping thousands of families in Hillsborough County through prevention, education and treatment programs. Our mission is to build stronger families in the Tampa Bay region through child abuse prevention and family education programs. We envision a community where children grow up in nurturing families that are free from violence and abuse. For more information on the CAC, please visit the Web site at www.childabusecouncil.com.

Metropolitan Ministries Helps the Homeless, Keeps Families Together

On any given night, 18,000 people in the Tampa Bay area are homeless, one-fourth of them children. Metropolitan Ministries, which offers housing, child care and other services to homeless families in Tampa, has announced plans for a \$23 million project to house 300 residents every day, more than twice the current number, and give families in need more services.

See <http://www2.tbo.com/news/opinion/2011/nov/25/meopino1-reaching-out-to-the-needy-ar-327187/>

Metropolitan Holiday Project Encourages Children to Picture Their Dreams -

<http://www2.tbo.com/news/faith/2011/nov/18/holiday-project-encourages-children-to-picture-the-ar-325413>

Hooper Column: Brink Family To Match Food, Toy Donations to Metro Ministries

From Ernest Hooper of the St. Petersburg Times: Charles Brink and family established a foundation that focuses on helping children and low-income families, and it's currently advocating for more equity in the education system. Now, for the second consecutive year, the Brink family has established a matching program with Metropolitan Ministries through its Brink Foundation — and even agreed to increase the offer. It will match every pound of food donated this season up to 45,000 pounds (an increase from 25,000 pounds). And it will match the pounds of toys left at the tent up to 2,500 pounds. It's Metropolitan Ministries' version of buy one, get one free.

See <http://www.tampabay.com/news/humaninterest/hooper-want-to-feel-fulfilled-learn-how-to-give/1202125/>

Kids Enjoy Holiday Concert Courtesy of Steinbrenner Family

About 1,800 children got a taste of the Florida Orchestra, ballet dancers and more at the annual Children's Holiday Concert at the Straz Center sponsored by the Steinbrenner Family Foundation and the New York Yankees. (Picture by the St. Petersburg Times. See <http://www.tampabay.com/news/humaninterest/florida-orchestra-and-santa-help-set-holiday-mood-for-hundreds-of/1204039>).



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www.ChildrensBoard.org



Children's Board Links to Jobs, Events, Facebook, Twitter

Go to www.facebook.com/MyCBHC and see the latest **Children's Board Facebook** postings.

Follow the **Children's Board** on **Twitter** at www.twitter.com/MyCBHC.

Jobs & Volunteer Opportunities - Go to the Children's Board website at http://www.childrensboard.org/jobs_volunteer_opportunities.aspx and click on the top link for updated postings in Hillsborough County.

Calendar - Go to <http://www.childrensboard.org/calendar.aspx> to access the upcoming community and provider calendar. Click on the top link for the latest events and trainings, in chronological order.

Listen to This Week's Programs on CBHC Radio

Listen to this week's programming on CBHC Radio, the Internet radio station of the Children's Board. Click "Launch Player" at http://www.childrensboard.org/cbhc_radio.aspx3. For mobile media, go to: <http://icy2.abacast.com/childrensboard-radio-32.m3u>. See <http://www.hillsboroughkids.org/fosterparent/Pages/FosterResources.aspx>.

Tampa Celebrates National Adoption Day with Courthouse Ceremonies



Hillsborough County celebrated National Adoption Day on Nov. 18 with Judge Katherine Essrig, a member of the **Children's Board**, presiding over some of the ceremonies. In Hillsborough, 2,000 youth have found adoptive homes during the past three years. There are 306 children available and waiting for adoption and 180 youth over the age of 11 available for adoption. Pictured above: Reese Hoffa, an Olympic shot-putter, stands in front of a **Children's Board Heart Gallery** of Tampa Bay photographic display as he talks about his own adoption. See the picture and story by the St. Petersburg Times at <http://www2.tbo.com/news/breaking-news/2011/nov/19/menewso3-forever-and-ever-ar-325832/>

The Children's Home Seeks Donations for Kids in Care

The Children's Home, Inc. has a number of activities going on to raise awareness and money for its children in care; among them:

Listen to 98 Rock FM on Dec. 10 and 11 for The Children's Home Auction. Bid on amazing auction items from featured artists, entertainers, and tickets to upcoming events! It is your chance to be the envy of your friends or secure the coolest gift this holiday season. All proceeds benefit The Children's Home.

Creative Loafing is hosting its 3rd Annual Online Auction to benefit The Children's Home. Last year, Creative Loafing raised more than \$18,000 for the children residing on the Children's Home's healing campus. This year's auction will be better than ever with vacations, private dinners with top chefs, shopping sprees to spa treatments, VIP museum tours and year-long concert passes. Bid online at http://auction.cltampa.com/?utm_source=E-Newsletter&utm_campaign=5f21f35f8a-The+Children%27s+Home+Inc.%2C+Nov.+2011+E+Newsletter&utm_medium=email

From now until Jan. 31, 2012, 10 cents from every 32-ounce bottle of Noble Juice sold in the Tampa Bay Area will be donated to The Children's Home. Last year's promotion raised over \$11,000 for The Children's Home. Noble Juice can be purchased at Publix, Sweetbay, WalMart and Whole Foods stores in the area. See http://www.hillsboroughkids.org/fosterparent/FP%20Newsletters/2011_FPCconnection_11.pdf

Read the entire Children's Home e-newsletter for more news and events at <http://us1.campaign-archive1.com/?u=d66ed8fb9129191ebc929f4e0&id=5f21f35f8a&e=321d7154f3>

Boys & Girls Clubs of Tampa Fundraiser Nets \$180,000 -

<http://www.tampabay.com/news/humaninterest/amy-scherzers-diary-boys-amp-girls-clubs-steak-dinner-pavilion-xx-vi/1200777>

Boy Scouts Fundraiser Gains \$18,000 -

The Gulf Ridge Council of the Boy Scouts of America hosted an event with wine tasting, cigars and an auction in November that raised \$18,000 for the scouts and its Learning for Life Program.

Children's Movement Has 'Book and Cookies' Event at HCC Child Care Center

The Children's Movement of Florida sponsored a "Book and Cookies" event on Dec. 1 at the Hillsborough Community College Ybor campus Child Care Center.

Special guest readers to the pre-school children were (left to right):

- Dave McGerald, CEO, Early Learning Coalition of Hillsborough County
- David Lawrence Jr., chair of The Children's Movement of Florida, nationally recognized children's advocate, and retired publisher of The Miami Herald.
- Sandy Murman, Vice Chair, Hillsborough County Board of County Commissioners.



Some Charities Trim Fundraising Events to Reflect Economic Reality -

<http://www.tampabay.com/news/humaninterest/charities-trim-fundraising-events-to-reflect-economic-reality/1201259>

Gap Grows Between Rich and Poor in Tampa Suburbs

Elizabeth Kneebone, a researcher with the Washington-based Brookings Institution, has been studying recent trends in poverty. Using census estimates, she determined the Tampa metropolitan area, which includes Hillsborough, Pinellas, Pasco and Hernando counties, has nearly 423,000 residents living in poverty, 69 percent of them in the suburbs. That comes close to the suburbs' share of the overall population, 75 percent, meaning their economic profiles are moving closer to those in the cities. "Since the collapse of the housing market, poverty has been growing, particularly in the suburbs," Kneebone said. It's a pattern playing out nationwide.

See <http://www2.tbo.com/news/breaking-news/2011/nov/25/menewso1-rich-poor-gap-grows-ar-327247/>

Hillsborough Civil Citation Plan Targets Recidivism of Youths -

<http://www2.tbo.com/news/politics/2011/aug/05/menewso3-tide-has-turned-for-williams-park-ar-248519/>.

Neighborhood News

Children's Board KidzCreate Art Will Gallop from Sulphur Springs to Australia

During six classes held over two weeks, Sherri Lundquist guided about 30 Sulphur Springs students in the creation of a multi-panel collage that will find its way next year to a gallery in New South Wales, Australia. Along the way she engaged their imaginations and expanded their vocabulary.

The Sulphur Springs' project – "Horses, Horses, Horses" – was funded with a state grant awarded to the **Children's Board** KidzCreate Gallery of Children's Art through Florida's Division of Cultural Affairs and the Florida Council on Arts and Culture.

The **Children's Board** partnered with Parents and Children Advance Together, or PCAT. The after-school program began nine years ago in the cafeteria of the Sulphur Springs Elementary School. PCAT recently settled into classrooms at All Nations Outreach Center at 8405 N. 11th St., where it continues to provide tutoring to Sulphur Springs' children. The program's director, Christene Worley, recently created a nonprofit to support the program, PCAT Ministries, Inc.

Lundquist said nine other artists have worked with students from other counties on similar projects. Before reaching Australia's shores, the art work will be on display, probably by spring, at the **Children's Board** KidzCreate Gallery of Children's Art as well as libraries in Hillsborough, Pinellas, Polk, Pasco and Manatee counties."

See <http://www2.tbo.com/news/news/2011/aug/28/menewso1-number-of-hispanic-kids-growing-rapidly-i-ar-253551/>



*Sulphur Springs students think about what they're going to do next on the collage project for the **Children's Board** KidzCreate Gallery of Children's Art through Florida's Division of Cultural Affairs and the Florida Council on Arts and Culture.*

Advocacy

Letter from Former Foster Child: Support Teens in Foster Care

A letter published in the Tampa Tribune by Constance Trojanowski, a former foster child, urges members of the community to support teens in foster care this holiday season:

“As a person who spent two years in foster care, much of it at the Children’s Home, I can still feel the conflict between excitement and sadness that the holidays brought out in me. Excitement, because I knew that I might be getting a special gift; sadness, because what I really wanted was to be just like every other kid — enjoying a holiday dinner with my family, shopping at the mall with my friends, doing all the things that “normal” kids do.

“I am a foster-care success story. After aging out of care, I took advantage of every opportunity I was given and am now proud to say that I have completed my MBA and am a licensed CPA. But my proudest accomplishment is volunteering my time and expertise to improve the foster system in which I was raised.

So please join me in sending a message of love and hope to our community’s teens in foster care by donating to the Hillsborough Kids holiday gift card campaign. For more information visit <http://www.hillsboroughkids.org/> and click on the link under “Help bring joy to a child in care.” Our teens are depending on you.”

To read the entire letter go to <http://www2.tbo.com/news/opinion/2011/nov/25/meopino1-support-teens-in-foster-care-ar-327184/>

DCF Secretary Opinion: Legal and Moral Obligations to Protect Children

David Wilkins, Florida Department of Children and Families secretary, recently wrote a column published in the Tampa Tribune about spotting signs that a child is abused or neglected, and calling the Florida Abuse Hotline to report it.

See <http://www2.tbo.com/news/opinion/2011/nov/20/vwopino1-the-legal-and-moral-obligations-to-protect-ar-325744/>

State News

Study: More Kids in Florida - and the Nation - Have Health Coverage -

<http://www2.tbo.com/news/opinion/2011/nov/20/vwopino1-the-legal-and-moral-obligations-to-protect-ar-325744/>

National News

Lower Birth Rate Tied to the Economy -

<http://www2.tbo.com/news/nation-world/2011/nov/17/1/lower-birth-rates-for-young-women-tied-to-economy-ar-325355/>

Johnson & Johnson Will Remove Harmful Chemicals from Baby Products -

<http://www.kcby.com/news/consumertips/133996593.html>

Rapid Early Growth is Precursor to Childhood Obesity -

<http://www2.tbo.com/news/nation-world/2011/nov/08/t2news01-rapid-early-growth-called-precursor-to-ch-ar-301478/>

Report: Foster Children Medicated Often, Heavily -

<http://www.tampabay.com/news/health/us-report-finds-foster-kids-get-high-rate-of-psychotropic-drugs/1204401>

NIAAA Releases New Teen Alcohol Risk Screening Guide -

<http://www.niaaa.nih.gov/Publications/EducationTrainingMaterials/YouthGuide>

Study: Kids of Deployed Troops Are More Violent -

<http://www2.tbo.com/news/nation-world/2011/nov/01/t2news04-study-deployed-troops-kids-more-violent-ar-299697/>