

justdream

e-news from your Children's Board

March 1, 2011

KIDS WITH 'NO LIMITS'

In this edition:

- Danny Glover's Surprise Visit
- County Honors Valerie Goddard
- Dixon Heads Children's Services

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Cover Story/Achieve the Dream: Youngsters Show No Limits at Shriners Hospital Sports Event

Shriner's Hospitals for Children-Tampa held an annual sports event for children with disabilities, "No Limits," on Feb. 12 at People's Life Center on East Sligh Avenue with paralympic athletes and youngsters getting their first taste of wheelchair sports.

The 50 or so youngsters got to try sports ranging from basketball to archery. Many had spent time as Shriners patients. Hospital spokeswoman Beth Demas said the events aim to introduce disabled children to activities they may never have thought themselves capable of doing — and perhaps boost their physical and mental health in the process.

Valerie Baker, 18, a Wharton High School senior who uses a wheelchair, is a swimmer; friends say she swims like a dolphin. Baker hopes to attend the University of South Florida or Florida Gulf Coast University in Fort Myers. She credits her success in the pool with pushing her forward in life. "Before I started swimming, I couldn't do much for myself," she said.

Kenjy Asin loves to play basketball. A double amputee, Asin, 23, does all his dribbling and shooting from a wheelchair. He showcased his hoop skills when he took to the court. Asin said his years of playing sports have helped make him the independent, confident person he is today. He works as a medical assistant and is studying at Hillsborough Community College.

"You have friends here," Asin said of wheelchair sports. "And that gives you the courage to talk to people in the outside world."

See <http://www2.tbo.com/content/2011/feb/13/PMNEWSO3-youngsters-show-no-limits/>.

Pictured: Shriners Hospitals for Children-Tampa hosted the "No Limits" sports event to help children with disabilities gain confidence. Photo by the St. Petersburg Times.



Actor Danny Glover Makes Surprise Presentation to Just Elementary Students

You can do it. Teachers say that all the time to students at Just Elementary in West Tampa. On Feb. 25, Hill had a secret weapon. Hollywood actor Danny Glover, a friend of a friend, had come to inspire the next generation. He didn't disappoint.

"You are the future," he told the awe-struck students. "You are going to make an important contribution. I am proud to be here with you." On the spot he recited a Langston Hughes poem from memory. "I wouldn't have known this poem if he hadn't written it down," Glover said. "Writing is important. And you can't write without reading."

He wondered aloud how many students had ever heard of him. But students said they knew all about their famous visitor. Eleven-year-old Connisha Grinder said she'd seen *The Color Purple*. "I'll probably see him in another movie now. I think he's a good role model," said Connisha, who plans to be a lawyer, teacher and model when she grows up. "I think he should go on doing that and never stop."

Richard Gouraige, 12, who wants to play professional football, basketball, or perhaps become a doctor, was impressed by all the talk about the importance of school and community service. "He'll inspire me," Richard predicted. For their elders, Glover's visit resonated on a completely different level. "I went with my mom to see *The Color Purple*," said a beaming Maryam Muhammad, 36, a math resource teacher. "That was 25 years ago." She said the visit provided a crucial boost for the school serving low-income families. "It said that we are important, we mean something," Muhammad said. "It does a lot for our community and our spirit."

See <http://www.tampabay.com/news/education/k12/danny-glover-impresses-students-at-hillsborough-school/1153840>.

More Achieve the Dream Stories

Young Attendee of Brandon FSRC Events Earns Young Innovator Recognition

Rishi Nair, who attends Lincoln Elementary School, received an Honorable Mention by the University of South Florida's Young Innovator Competition for his Rosin Violin Applicator invention.

Nair – soon to be 7 – has attended events the **Children's Board**-funded Brandon Family Support & Resource Center (FSRC) since he turned 2 years old. He participated in many of the early childhood programming the FSRC had to offer: Kindermusic (which inspired Music and More); Free Play; Family Events; Parent / Child Preschool Time; Little Amigos, Music and More; Arts & Crafts and Creative Learning.

The FSRC is proud of him and those involved in fostering his creative spirit, director Maria Negron said.

Mackinnons Named Outstanding Citizens of the Year by Civitan Club

On Valentine's Day, the Tampa Metro Civitan Club named Sandy Mackinnon and his wife, Dottie Berger Mackinnon, co-citizens of the year at the Governor's Day Luncheon at the Florida State Fair. Berger MacKinnon is battling cancer of the bile duct, and family members said she has outlived doctors' predictions.

Last week, she had a park renamed for her and a statue dedicated to her, but to be honored side-by-side with her husband was especially touching, she said. "To be able to share it with Sandy, it's very special," she said after the ceremony. "It's not just me — we absolutely are a team."

See <http://www.tampabay.com/news/humaninterest/mackinnons-surprised-by-shared-hillsborough-county-citizen-honor/1151616>.

A Tampa Tribune editorial praised the Mackinnons. "Both have done extraordinary work, on their own and together, and the recognition was well deserved." On Valentine's Day it was fitting to see honored two selfless individuals who have never tried to hide their affection and respect for each other. Dottie and Sandy MacKinnon set a sterling example for commitment to community and to marriage."

See <http://www2.tbo.com/content/2011/feb/15/MEOPINO1-citizens-of-the-year/news-opinion-editorials/>.

Local News

Children's Board Chair Valerie Goddard Honored at County Ceremony



Valerie Goddard, chair of the **Children's Board** and a former director of Helping Hand Day Nursery, was among those honored by Hillsborough County officials on Feb. 11 in a ceremony at Chillura Park as part of a Black Heritage celebration for Tampa's longest black-owned businesses. Helping Hand Day Nursery has been in business for 86 years. Among other businesses honored was the Florida Sentinel-Bulletin.

(Valerie Goddard is pictured on the right next to Sunday Taylor, administrative assistant for Helping Hand Day Nursery. Helping Hand has been in business for 86 years. Photo by Dan Weisberg.)

Don Dixon of CBHC Named as Head of Children's Services in Tampa

Hillsborough County commissioners have hired Don Dixon of the **Children's Board** as the new head of the county's Children's Services Department. Dixon, who also previously worked for the state Department of Children and Families, is being brought in by county administrators as a consultant on a one-to-two-year contract. Dixon's job will be to make recommendations on how county government can collaborate with other county agencies, both governmental and non-profit, to better provide children's services in the new era of fiscal austerity. "The common agenda for us was the need to find ways to work together more efficiently knowing that financial resources will continue to decline," Luanne Panacek, chief executive officer of the **Children's Board**, told commissioners. See <http://tiny.cc/u8dcy>.



Gorski Commentary: Importance of Oral Health

The **Children's Board's** Dr. Peter Gorski has a commentary about the importance of oral health care and how tooth decay is the number one chronic disease among children. To read the commentary, go to http://www.childrensboard.org/on_call_dr_gorski.aspx. Also see Gorski's tips for good dental care in the St. Petersburg Times at <http://www.tampabay.com/news/health/article1153673.ece>.

CBHC's Gorski, Amos Quoted in Story: 'When Child Goes Wrong, Parents Torn by Decision'

The **Children's Board's** Peter Gorski and Arlinda Amos were quoted often in the St. Petersburg Times story "When Child Goes Wrong, Parents Torn by Decision," about whether parents turning in a child who does wrong is the right act. The story was in response to the recent slaying of a St. Petersburg police officer by a 16-year-old male.

See <http://www.tampabay.com/news/health/nicholas-lindseys-parents-faced-dilemma-of-what-to-do-when-child-goes-wrong/1153467>.

San Francisco Radio Station Interviews Gorski About Teen Punished by Wearing Sign

Peter Gorski was interviewed by KGO Radio in San Francisco about the story of a male teen who was forced by his mother to wear a sign advertising his bad grades at various locations in Tampa.

Listen to the KGO Radio podcast at <http://www.kgoradio.com/Article.asp?id=2120121&spid=25697>.

Check Out This Week's CBHC Radio Programming Schedule On the Web -

http://www.childrensboard.org/cbhc_radio.aspx

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

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

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

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

Events and Training 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, in chronological order.

FSRC Events - Go to www.familysupporthc.org to access all of the Children's Board-funded Family Support & Resource Center calendars.

Children's Board Heart Gallery of Tampa on Facebook - Go to www.facebook.com/HeartGalleryTampaBay and see the latest postings.

You Can Now Access the Children's Board Family Guide to Services on Kindle - The **Children's Board** Family Guide to Services, which contains information about **Children's Board**-funded agencies and programs, is now available on Kindle. This link will take you to the page for the Kindle apps:

http://www.amazon.com/gp/help/customer/display.html/ref=sv_kinc_9?ie=UTF8&nodeId=200127470.

This link will take you to the Family Guide to Services 2011:

http://www.amazon.com/Family-Guide-Services-2011-ebook/dp/B004LX0FCU/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&m=AG56TWVU5XWC2&s=digital-text&qid=1298570853&sr=1-1.

Operation Hug-A-Hero's Daddy Dolls Help Children of Deployed Military

Operation Hug-A-Hero provides free dolls showing pictures of parents deployed abroad. The nonprofit also helps children of fallen police.

See http://www.tampabay.com/news/humaninterest/dolls-help-military-children-keep-deployed-parent-close/1151597?utm_source=web&utm_medium=twitter.

(Photo of Army Staff Sgt. Brian Dorr's daughter, Paisley, with Hug-A-Hero by the St. Petersburg Times. Staff Sgt. Dorr is stationed in Afghanistan.)



Community Development Block Grant Program Funding Applications Available

Community Development Block Grant Program Request for Proposals Funding Application for Fiscal Year 2011-12 is available as a pdf document on the Hillsborough County website.

Go to <http://www.hillsboroughcounty.org/affordablehousingoffice/resources/publications/2011/HillsboroughCountyCDB-GRFP201112.pdf>.

Crisis Center of Tampa Bay Cup of Compassion Fundraiser Brings in \$250,000 -

<http://tiny.cc/r4o1217d24f835c90000012e71bb67fc&u=http%3A%2F%2Fblog.crisiscenter.com>.

Children's Board Pictured at Federation of Families 10th Anniversary Celebration



The Federation of Families recently celebrated its 10th Anniversary in Ybor City. The Federation is an organization that advocates and supports families and youth with behavioral, mental health and emotional needs.

The Federation is an affiliate of the National Federation of Families and is funded by the **Children's Board**.



*Pictured, at left: Al Duchnowski, left, president of the board of Federation of Families, and Larry English, far right, Federation of Families executive director, thank Luanne Panacek, second from left, CEO of the **Children's Board**, and School Board member April Griffin for their support of the Federation during its 10th Anniversary gala in Ybor City.*

*Pictured, at right: **Children's Board** member Pete Edwards, left, chats with Ozepher and Jetie B. Wilds. Photos by St. Petersburg Times.*

See <http://www.tampabay.com/news/humaninterest/article1150378.ece>.

Neighborhood News

Children's Board Central Tampa FSRC Celebrates Diversity

The **Children's Board** Central Tampa Family Support and Resource Center had a Celebrating Diversity event on Thursday, February 17, featuring Kuumba Dancers and Drummers, black history and food from local food vendors in the community.



Valrico Guild Makes Quilts for Kids at Joshua House & A Kid's Place -

See <http://brandonnews2.tbo.com/content/2011/feb/21/blankets-for-foster-kids-quilted-with-love/>

Advocacy

Keep Title IV-E Funds in Florida for the Safety of Children

Commentary by Jackie Gonzalez, executive director of the Southeastern Division of Children's Home Society of Florida: In this new year, Florida's legislators are once again challenged with guarding the safety of vulnerable children while balancing the state's budget. In recent years, our legislators have wisely chosen to secure Florida's success in finding forever families for foster children and for keeping children safe at home, thanks in part to a federal funding program that allows child-welfare professionals to focus services on at-risk children and families.

Florida's Title IV-E pilot program reduced the number of children living in foster homes and group care by 32 percent and, in its first year, cut re-abuse of children by half within six months of their cases being closed. With this success, workers have more manageable caseloads, allowing them to focus on adoption for children in foster care. The result has been record numbers of adoptions over the past three years.

In 2003, almost 32,000 Florida children were in foster care. That number decreased dramatically by 2009, with just more than 19,000 children living in foster care. An impressive decrease of 40 percent -- amid a national movement to reduce the numbers of children residing in foster care, which resulted in a national decrease of only 19 percent in the same time period. While it behooves Florida legislators to meet their responsibility to maintain the state's federal funding, we must ask our state and federal representatives to work together to extend Florida's Title IV-E pilot program beyond 2012, securing a more permanent program that will ensure that Florida's most vulnerable children are safe, healthy and prepared for life. See <http://www.miamiherald.com/2011/01/19/2022548/keep-funds-for-states-children.html#ixzz1C3URZSVr>.

Latest Issue of Capitol Connection Comments on Gov's Budget Proposals -

<http://www2.tbo.com/content/2011/feb/02/PMENWSO1-lightning-giving-10-million-gift/>.

Commentary: Florida Needs Booster Seats Law

Commentary by Jose D. Jimenez, a pediatrician in Wesley Chapel, a board member of the Florida Pediatric Society: It is time Florida passed a booster seat law for children when they reach 4 years of age. Forty-seven states, concerned about the safety of their children, have enacted a booster seat law. Florida is not one of them. However, there is tremendous support in Florida for the passage of this legislation. A statewide coalition of more than 30 organizations — consisting of medical, child advocacy and law enforcement organizations — has been formed to help pass this safety law for Florida's children. Spinal cord damage, internal bleeding and death are more likely in auto accidents involving young children if parents do not use a booster seat.

See the full commentary at <http://www.tampabay.com/opinion/columns/florida-needs-booster-seat-law/1150546> .

Economist: Stop Investing in Stadiums, Start Investing in Kids

Minnesota Early Learning Research - the Rationale for Investing in Children: Art Rolnick, an economist and former research director at the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis, says there is a disconnect between our public priorities and the research that shows there's a high public return to making sure our at-risk kids start healthy and ready to learn at kindergarten, versus the research that shows that investing public money in entertainment and other private businesses has a very low public return.

See www.clevelandfed.org/Forefront/2010/09/ff_2010_fall_05.cfm

Alliance Opposes Federal Proposal to Cut \$100 Million in Afterschool Funds

Statement of Jodi Grant, Executive Director, Afterschool Alliance (The Afterschool Alliance is a nonprofit public awareness and advocacy organization working to ensure that all children and youth have access to quality afterschool programs.

More information is available at www.AfterschoolAlliance.org:

"The proposal the House Appropriations Committee has released includes a \$100 million cut to 21st Century Community Learning Centers – the chief federal funding stream for afterschool programs. If Congress were to adopt that proposal, over the course of a year, 100,000 students across the country would lose their afterschool programs...Instead, we urge the President to increase federal funding for 21st Century Community Learning Centers, and ensure that money is directed toward afterschool programs. Quality programs keep children safe, inspire them to learn, and help working families.

See the full statement by the Afterschool Alliance Executive Director at http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/press_archives/HouseReact_02142011.pdf.

State News

Budget Ax Poised at Services for Those in Need - Children's Services Cautious

When Gov. Rick Scott announced his austere budget proposal this month, kicked to the curb in his plan, and in that of the newly released Health & Human Services bill, are services for the state's most vulnerable, the most maligned and the least sympathetic. Particularly irksome to social service advocates is a plan to gut the state's Medically Needy program, designed to help working families who aren't poor enough for Medicaid but face catastrophic, savings-draining illnesses such as cancer, kidney disease and AIDS.

Under the Senate's HHS bill, in which the Medically Needy program becomes the "Medicaid Non-Poverty Medical Subsidy," only physician care would be covered. Hospital services and medications no longer would be provided, nor would eyeglasses, hearing aids or dentures.

The HHS oversees state agencies such as the Department of Children & Families, Elder Affairs, the Department of Health, Veterans Affairs and the Agency for Health Care Administration. Few areas emerged untouched by cuts. The HHS bill is more specific than the governor's budget. In addition to eliminating benefits in an attempt to trim \$1.5 billion from the budget, the HHS allocation committee wants for-profit companies to provide Medicaid services. Scott has said such "privatization" leads to savings, but social service advocates say the need to make a profit erodes quality of care. They also say there is no proof that for-profit companies save the state money.

Rape crisis services at the Crisis Center of Tampa Bay also are at risk, said President David Braughton. Scott's budget transfers money from several trusts into the general fund. One of those trusts was earmarked to help sexually assaulted men, women and children at rape crisis centers statewide. The \$90,000 given annually to the Crisis Center of Tampa Bay pays for specially trained nurses and counselors. (The **Children's Board** is a funder of the Crisis Center.) Braughton fears that a state already in the hole will use those general funds for something else. "What happens in other counties is people who have been traumatized by rape have to go to the ER, where they'll sit there with a police officer for maybe 10, 13, 14 hours," he said. "Plus, many ERs aren't equipped to do the exams, creating the possibility of contamination, making the cases less strong in court."

Florida's children fare better with the budgets. "In the children's services arena," said Kristen Vallese, interim executive director of the Children's Services Council, which represents organizations such as the **Children's Board**, "we will be relieved to get out of this session with no more cuts."

The governor's budget provides funding increases for the Voluntary Pre-K program, children's mental health services and community care services in juvenile justice. But it cuts funding for beds in juvenile facilities, leaving advocates to fear that more young people will be sent to adult prisons. Maintaining the same level of funding as in 2010-11 are Florida KidCare (health insurance for children), adoption subsidies, independent-living programs and substance abuse treatment. "It's really early in the process, though," Vallese said. See <http://www2.tbo.com/content/2011/feb/27/ax-poised-to-hack-services-for-needy>.

St. Pete Times Story: Governor's Budget Hard on the Homeless, Vulnerable -

<http://www2.tbo.com/content/2011/jan/24/SPBIZO1-cellphones-open-web-to-kids/>.

Sen. Negron Outlines Plan for Medicaid Reform -

<http://www.tampabay.com/news/health/state-senator-outlines-plan-for-medicaid-reform/1151798>.

Florida Ranks 47th in Child Health Indicators for States -

<http://tiny.cc/c0eqp>.

Story: Florida Deadly for Kids at Risk -

<http://www.wtsp.com/news/health/story.aspx?storyid=163673&catid=12>.

Florida Looks at Taking Textbooks Completely Digital by 2015 -

<http://www.tampabay.com/news/florida-deadly-for-kids-at-risk/1154239>.

National News

Important Federal Adoption Tax Credit/Refund Information -

Did you know that if you finalized an adoption in 2010, you may be eligible for a federal adoption tax credit of up to \$13,170 and if you finalize an adoption in 2011, you may be eligible for a federal adoption tax credit of up to \$13,360? Did you know that this tax credit is refundable for adoption finalized in 2010, and that if you adopted between 2005 and 2009 and have not yet been able to use the full amount of your credit you may claim the remainder as a refund on your 2010 federal taxes?

The health care reform bill made the U.S. federal adoption tax credit refundable for 2010 and 2011. New guidance from the IRS states that adoption tax credits carried forward from previous years will also be refundable, which means that families who adopted as far back as 2005 but who didn't have enough tax liability to use the credit in the past may be able to take full advantage of the credit with their 2010 return.

The North American Council on Adoptable Children (NACAC) has partnered with H&R Block to help adoptive parents determine whether they are eligible to receive additional benefits. In partnership with NACAC, H&R Block is offering adoptive families a free Second Look Review, involving an H&R Block professional reviewing your previous years' tax returns to see if there were any credits or deductions you missed and may still qualify for. They are also offering special pricing on amended returns and a \$20 discount on 2010 tax return preparation. For more information on this special offer for adoptive families, Josh Kroll at NACAC, Phone: 651-644-3036, Email: joshk@nacac.org, Web: <http://www.nacac.org>.

For more information on the Federal Adoption Tax Credit:

"Claiming the Federal Adoption Tax Credit for Special Needs Adoptions" (NACAC): <http://www.nacac.org/postadopt/tax-credit.html>

"Federal Adoption Tax Credit for Special Needs Adoption" (NACAC): <http://www.nacac.org/taxcredit/taxcredit.html>

"Tax Issues Related to Adoption Assistance and Adoption" (NACAC): <http://www.nacac.org/adoptionssubsidy/factsheets/taxes.html>

"Topic 607: Adoption Tax Credit" (IRS): <http://www.irs.gov/taxtopics/tc607.html>

Click Here for the Link to IRS Form 8839 for Qualified Adoption Expenses - <http://tiny.cc/05jyv>

TIME Magazine Feature Story: Concussions Are Clobbering U.S. Kids -

A TIME magazine special report shares how head hits are causing a concussion crisis for America's girls as well as boys. See <http://www2.tbo.com/content/2010/dec/14/PT2NEWSO2-new-law-takes-aim-at-childhood-obesity/news-nationworld>.

Study: Violence in Ads May Amplify Aggressive Thoughts in Kids -

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2011/02/110205141720.htm>.

Report: Kids, Teens Should Avoid Energy Drinks -

<http://www2.tbo.com/content/2011/feb/14/T2NEWSO3-report-kids-teens-should-avoid-energy-dri/>.

FDA OKs Drug to Cut Preterm Births -

<http://www.wtsp.com/news/health/story.aspx?storyid=163673&catid=12>.

Study: Fetal Surgery is Best for Spina Bifida -

<http://www2.tbo.com/content/2011/feb/10/PT2NEWSO3-fetal-surgery-best-for-spina-bifida/>.

Nation's Foster Children to Receive Free School Meals -

<http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/lanow/2011/02/free-school-meals-for-foster-children-announced.html>.

US News: Kinship Caregivers Receive Less Support Than Foster Parents -

<http://tiny.cc/r4o12>