

FALL-WINTER 2022/2023

# UPDATES

RELEVANT · RESPONSIVE · RELATIONSHIPS

## Making Spirits Bright!

### FOSTER CARE & ADOPTION

After two years of virtual events, our Foster Care team enjoyed an in-person holiday party with food, music and an appearance by none other than Santa! Thanks to the support of our community, the children in our program were all given gifts provided by donations from our Star Tree. It was a great way to celebrate the year with our foster families and children.

This holiday party was generously sponsored by **Atlantic Bay Mortgage Group**.



### TEAM UP MENTORING

With the help of our long-time partners Aramark, Monarch Dining and Social Current, Team Up threw an amazing holiday party for our mentors, mentees and their families. Over 100 guests enjoyed the holiday spirit with a 360-photo booth, a dynamite DJ that kept everyone on the dance floor, delicious food, gingerbread houses, cookie decoration stations and lots of FUN. Thanks to Aramark, our mentees were also able to select hygiene kits, toys, board games, and art supplies as gifts at the party.

It takes a village to put together these events and we are so thankful for ours!

### STAFF HOLIDAY PARTY

With five locations throughout Hampton Roads and some team members working virtually, we prioritize our Staff Holiday Party where we can all get together. This year's event was held at the Waterside District in Norfolk and included games, great food and a festive holiday spirit! The holiday party also kicked off TUC Cheer week, where we dressed up in different holiday themed attire each day of the week. After a year of hard work, we enjoyed getting together as a team and celebrating each other and the work that we do.



# BANK OF AMERICA

We are honored to be recognized as one of Bank of America's 2022 Neighborhood Builders Grant Award Winners. This award includes flexible funding and leadership training to help us develop a highly skilled workforce of mental health professionals. The Up Center was selected for our long-standing commitment to providing outstanding mental health services and addressing the shortage of mental health counselors in the area.



**“Our new strategic plan includes the launch of a Center of Excellence in Behavioral Health and Wellness to develop the next generation of well-trained, community-oriented, licensed mental health professionals. This generous funding and leadership training from Bank of America comes at a pivotal time in the development of the Center, which will help us increase access to high quality mental health services in our local community.”**

— Tina Gill, President and CEO of The Up Center

(pictured left to right)

Hans VonKruger, Bank of America Senior Vice President, Market Executive; Jim Forrester, The Up Center Past Board Chair; Kari Vincent, Development Manager; Ed Ladd, The Up Center Board of Directors; Lauren Rucker, Development Manager; Jean Lamkin, The Up Center Board of Directors; Peggy Barney, The Up Center Board Vice Chair; Kevin Ferguson, Grants Manager; Andrea Long, Chief Program and Strategy Officer; Tina Gill, President & CEO; April Green, Steven A. Cohen Military Family Clinic at The Up Center Director; Sara Bishop, Special Projects Manager

## MISSION MOMENT: MATCH 40

This year our mentoring program has a goal to match 40 youth in our community with a caring adult mentor. In January, Team Up received an interest form from a gentleman who applied because he saw our program advertised on a billboard, becoming one half of Match 40 for the year.

Flashback to this past fall... The mother of a young man waiting for the right mentor to come through our doors donated digital billboard space to The Up Center to help recruit mentors, especially males, for youth in our community who need an adult role model. This young man is the other half of Match 40.

This special gift from a program mom came full circle and is an example of how partnerships play a crucial role in how we give our families the best support possible. Team Up currently has a total of 90 matches, with over 100 youth still on our waitlist. To get involved, visit <https://theupcenter.org/team-up> or contact [TeamUpMentoring@theupcenter.org](mailto:TeamUpMentoring@theupcenter.org).



Keep a lookout for our billboard the next time you're out for a drive!

## ANNUAL THANKSGIVING TURKEY DRIVE

Just days before Thanksgiving, our team gathered together to hand out turkeys and Thanksgiving fixings for the annual turkey distribution at our Portsmouth office.

For many years, this holiday meal distribution has been partially funded by a grant from Food Lion Feeds Charitable Foundation, and this year was no exception! We are so thankful for their continued support, as well as donations from individual donors, and support from our generous staff who donate money, gift cards, canned food, non-perishables, frozen turkeys and hams year after year to help feed our Portsmouth community!



## ANNUAL MEETING 2022

THE FIRST IN-PERSON SINCE THE PANDEMIC!

In October, after two years of virtual events, we held our first in-person annual meeting since before the pandemic. Community partners, current and past members of the Board of Directors, staff and clients joined together at the Towne Point Club to celebrate the past year of success for our clients. After remarks by outgoing Board Chair James Forrester and Suffolk Police Chief Alfred S. Chandler Jr., we presented videos telling the stories of families from our Foster Care and Team Up programs, as well as from our Mental Health Counseling program staff, sharing why the work they do is so important and needed in our community.

To hear these amazing stories, check out our YouTube channel, linked on our website at <https://theupcenter.org/>.



**We are committed to partnering with children, families, and communities to improve lives and outcomes through prevention, intervention, and support services.**

## STAFF MILESTONES

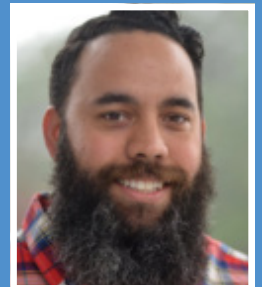
Congratulations to our staff members who achieved their licensure this past season!



**Edica Gonzalez**  
Cohen Military Family Clinic  
at The Up Center, Clinician



**Rebecca Gregory**  
Outpatient Clinician  
and Group Facilitator



**Terry Kenworthy**  
Outpatient Clinician



**Sharon Reams**  
Director of Youth Services



**Adrienne Smith**  
Outpatient Clinician



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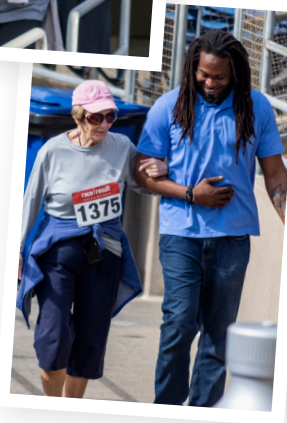
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**SAVE THE DATE**



# REGISTRATION IS OPEN



**MAY 13, 2023 • HARBOR PARK**

**GET YOUR STEPS IN!**

We're back again and want you to join us!  
Bring your team out to the Tides Stadium to climb together.



OR GO HERE: [BIT.LY/STEPUPFORTHEUPCENTER](https://bit.ly/stepupfortheupcenter)

