

UpDATES

RELEVANT • RESPONSIVE • RELATIONSHIPS

FALL/WINTER 2020

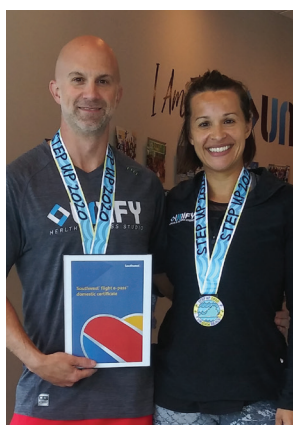
Thankful...

FOR COMMUNITY

Stepping Up to Help Families

Like many things in 2020, Step Up looked a little different this year. With options to participate virtually your own way or in person at Harbor Park Stadium, 93 participants stepped up to help families in need despite the many challenges of life during a pandemic. Many thanks to WAVY, WTKR and Entercom radio for helping us spread the word!

This year's event raised over \$63,000 for critical services, including telehealth delivery of mental health counseling for under and uninsured children and families in South Hampton Roads.



FOR PARTNERSHIPS

Coming up with innovative ways to give Step Up participants an experience that would fit what each person was comfortable with would not have been possible without our amazing partners.

We are thankful for all our partners who helped make this year's event a success amid a global pandemic: The City of Norfolk, Unify Health + Fitness, Norfolk Tides and Seven Venues.

Melissa and Brian Wilson, owners of Unify Health & Fitness, hosted a virtual workout for registered participants and won two tickets on Southwest Airlines for raising the most money this year.

FOR SPONSORS

Year after year, we are blown away by the steadfast support of our Step Up sponsors. Thank you to all of our 2020 Sponsors!

ECPI University, 360 IT Partners, Southern Bank, PRA Group, Wells Fargo Advisors, Apprentice School Student Association, Armada Hoffer Properties, Kaufman & Canoles, P.C., Mutual of America Life Insurance Company, Pender & Coward, Prevalance, S.L. Nusbaum REalty Co., The Residences at The Westin Virginia Beach, Towne Bank, Unify Health + Fitness, Wall Einhorn & Chernitzer, Wegmans, Williams Mullen, Seven Venues, The City of Norfolk, Norfolk Tides.

PRA Group, a 2020 sponsor, fundraised as a group in addition to their generous sponsorship of the event. Their team received a wine tasting for 6 at Tinto Everyday Wine for raising the second largest amount of money.



Thankful...

FOR SERVICE

Time sure does fly! It seems like just yesterday we were celebrating the grand opening of The Steven A. Cohen Military Family Clinic at The Up Center. We reached our one year mark this August and to celebrate the occasion, we held a drive-up event, handing out baskets filled with self-care items and board games in appreciation of all the support we have received.

Since opening, our Military Family Clinic has provided mental health services to nearly 500 clients, including 100 children, and provided more than 3,500 hours of counseling to veterans and military family members.



More than 50% the clients currently receiving services are military family members and 45% of the veterans seeking support services are women.

Over half of our clients received services from licensed counselors who are military family members themselves.

We are so thankful for all our supporters and community partners for helping us provide so many necessary services to an underserved population in our first year.

FOR FUN

Getting in the Spooky Spirit

The pandemic has been pretty spooky for everyone, but that didn't stop us from celebrating Halloween with our clients and their families. Last month, The Steven A. Cohen Military Family Clinic hosted a Trunk-or-Treat drive-up event where our staff and community partners passed out candy to the kiddos!



FOR COUNSELING

At 55 years old, *Mr. W** has been renting all his adult life and always had a desire to live “The American Dream” and own his own home, but was unsure where to start. During a conversation with his coworker, who had utilized The Up Center previously for financial counseling, he was informed about all the Housing and Financial Counseling services provided at The Up Center, and *Mr. W* quickly reached out.



When he walked through the doors for his first counseling session, he was ready to make the commitment to start making an investment in himself and was excited to take the steps to make his goal of owning a home a reality. Preparing a budget every month and sticking to it was the first step to success. Together, the counselor and *Mr. W* prepared a sustainable budget that allowed him to pay down debt as well as save money. To his surprise, after 6 months of work, *Mr. W* had raised his credit score by nearly 200 points, paying down debts and using his credit responsibly.

With the support of The Up Center, *Mr. W* was approved for a loan and is currently looking for his new home.



FOR FAMILY

*Marcus** entered foster care three times before finally finding his permanent home this year. He first entered foster care in 2016 for short periods of time before being placed with biological family members. He entered foster care with *Mr. G** for the third and final time in 2017 due to a history of chronic homelessness, unemployment, domestic violence and untreated mental illness in his biological family. *Mr. G**, a single male educator became an approved resource parent with The Up Center in 2017 and was successfully matched with *Marcus* after his initial placement was disrupted.

Marcus has taken many trips with *Mr. G* and his family to the Eastern Shore, Sea World, the Bahamas, Coco Cay Island, Howard University and many more. *Marcus* and *Mr. G* enjoy bowling, going to the movies, and dining out. *Marcus* even earned his green belt in karate this year.

Marcus is most proud to call *Mr. G* “dad” and “pops.”



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Thankful...

FOR YOU

2020 has been a challenging year to say the least and The Up Center has been a lifeline for vulnerable children and families in our community. Many families struggling with unforeseen difficulties are reaching out to us for the very first time. Our dedicated staff thank YOU for the difference you have made in our ability to continue to provide very necessary services to those who need it most.

To make a donation today to The Up Center, please contact Lauren Rucker at lauren.rucker@theupcenter.org or 757-965-8684.

