



ADOPT-A-FAMILY
OF THE PALM BEACHES

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Adopt-A-Family is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit charitable organization established in 1983. Our mission is to strengthen families with children in their efforts to achieve stability and self-sufficiency by providing access to all-encompassing services.



Newsletter

HOLIDAY 2025

41st Annual Tree Lighting Celebration



**Honorary Chair Lisa Swift and
Chair Heather Ferguson**

The 41st Annual Tree Lighting Celebration will take place on December 2 in Palm Beach, a night that promises to foster holiday goodwill and community spirit. Since our founding, this event has been our most significant annual fundraiser, with all proceeds funding our efforts to help local families in need.

Adopt-A-Family is honored to have Heather Ferguson serve as event Chair. Heather has been a dedicated board member, supporter, and volunteer for over three decades, including chairing Tree Lighting in 1995. In recent years, Heather has worked tirelessly behind the scenes at every Tree Lighting to manage

the silent auction room. We are grateful for her willingness to step into the lead role for this year's celebration.

To further underscore the longstanding significance of Tree Lighting, one of the agency's first board members, Lisa Swift, is the event's Honorary Chair. Lisa helped guide Adopt-A-Family in its early years, and Heather and Lisa served on the board together in the 90s. The ongoing involvement of these two women speaks to the deep roots and enduring impact of our mission.

The Tree Lighting Committee has been working hard all year to craft an unforgettable evening. Guests will be welcomed to the venue by the King's Academy Choir. During cocktail hour, attendees will browse the curated items in the silent auction, including the event's signature orchid display. Guests will enjoy a gourmet dinner, a testimonial from a current agency client, and an opportunity to bid on unique items during the always-exciting live auction, led by longtime Tree Lighting auctioneer Neil Saffer. *(Live Auction preview on page 2).*

As we eagerly anticipate the upcoming celebration, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to the event's benefactors, sponsors, and dedicated Committee. Tree Lighting is a labor of love for a multitude of agency supporters, and we thank each of you for ensuring this beloved tradition continues to equip Adopt-A-Family to provide housing and hope to families in our community.

Young Friends Committee

Adopt-A-Family is thrilled to announce the creation of a new Young Friends Committee, organized by a dynamic group of local women eager to make a difference. Led by Co-Chairs Jessica Swift and Victoria Racanati Feinberg, the committee builds on the legacy of past groups while bringing fresh enthusiasm for our mission. In addition to lending their full support to the Tree Lighting Celebration, the committee also hosted a shopping benefit and contributed to several holiday initiatives. Their passion and commitment are evident, and the committee has several exciting projects in the works for the year ahead.

Adopt-A-Family sends our deepest gratitude to our Young Friends Committee: Victoria Racanati Feinberg (Co-Chair), Jessica Swift (Co-Chair), Savannah Bennett, Dusty Dodge, Arsine Kaloustian, Cara Mantovani, Marissa Murphy-Adriaanse, Ashley Kepping Pearson, Lindsay Slifer, and Jaclyn Torey.



41st Annual Tree Lighting Celebration: Live Auction Preview

The Tree Lighting and Young Friends Committees curated an exciting selection of one-of-a-kind items for this year's Live Auction. Enjoy a sneak peek, with a few surprises saved for the big night.



• **Porsche eBike Sport:** Take a ride on a sleek Porsche-designed, carbon-fiber, full-suspension electric bike that fuses luxury performance with cutting-edge engineering.

• **Golf Foursome with**

Lunch at Apogee Golf Course: A unique opportunity to play at a world-class course designed by some of golf's greatest architects. Includes caddy and lunch in the clubhouse.

• **Ariana Grande Live in Concert:** Secure four exclusive box seats at Ariana Grande's July 3, 2026 tour stop at Amerant Bank Arena. VIP parking included.

• **New Jersey Beachfront Condo:**

Enjoy a 7-night stay in a beautiful two-bedroom beachfront condo in Margate, New Jersey featuring a private balcony with ocean views and direct beach access in a prime location just steps from shops and restaurants.

• **Designer Tree Project:** Bring the magic of the holidays to your home when an exclusive Palm Beach designer sets up and decorates a one-of-a-kind Christmas tree. Featured designers are Elizabeth Gray Homes, Amanda Lindroth, and GLDN Events.

• **The Macallan Whiskey Tasting:** Twelve guests can enjoy a guided private tasting of four whiskies in your home by The Macallan's Florida brand specialist Jente "Goose" Gees.



Tree Lighting Committee Party



Beth Hennessy and AAF's Layren Calvo

The Tree Lighting Committee and our Board of Directors gathered at the Hennessy home on September 25 for a wonderful evening celebrating the rich history and lasting impact of our annual Tree Lighting Celebration. The cocktail party featured drinks, hors-d'oeuvres, and dinner, creating a festive atmosphere that captured the spirit of the season.

As excitement builds for the upcoming event on December 2, the evening offered a meaningful opportunity for our dedicated Committee members to take a break from their preparations to connect with one another and reflect on the joy their work brings to our community year after year. A heartfelt thank-you goes to longtime Tree Lighting



AAF CEO Matt Constantine and Tree Lighting Chair Heather Ferguson

Committee member and cherished agency friend Beth Hennessy for graciously hosting this special gathering.

Young Friends Gathering

On October 16, Adopt-A-Family celebrated the launch of the new Young Friends Committee with an exciting kickoff party. Lisa Swift, Honorary Chair of this year's Tree Lighting Celebration, graciously opened her Palm Beach home for the event. It was a family affair, as Lisa Swift is the mother-in-law of Jessica Swift, who is serving as Co-Chair of the Young Friends Committee alongside Victoria Racanati Feinberg.

The party served as the first combined gathering of the 41st Annual Tree Lighting Committee and the new Young Friends Committee. The atmosphere was one of shared purpose and anticipation for their partnership through the upcoming holiday season. We thank our generous host, Lisa Swift, for her longstanding commitment to our agency and the families we serve.



Jessica Swift and Victoria Racanati Feinberg



Trent Swift, Jessica Swift, Lisa Swift, and AAF CEO Matt Constantine

United Way Campaign



From October 13-17, Adopt-A-Family proudly celebrated the incredible work United Way of Palm Beach County does to strengthen our community and encouraged our team to give back to this indispensable local partner. This year's annual employee fundraising campaign brought agency staff together throughout the week for activities

including an all-staff breakfast, trivia, a scavenger hunt, a painting session, and a team outing to Fun Depot.

We're thrilled to announce that 100% of our staff pledged a donation. Adopt-A-Family thanks United Way of Palm Beach County for their partnership and commitment to ensuring that everyone in Palm Beach County has access to quality education, a place to live, financial stability, good medical care, and enough to eat.

Neurology Series at the Youth Success Program



Students in the Youth Success Program are exploring the fascinating world of neurology with the MobileMinds team from Florida Atlantic University's Stiles-Nicholson Brain Institute. Through an ongoing series of hands-on sessions, the teens are learning about the inner workings of the human brain by designing helmets and even dissecting a sheep brain, which mirrors human brain anatomy.

Beyond the science, this partnership is giving students the chance to connect with college mentors, hear about their academic journeys, and imagine new

possibilities for their own futures. Adopt-A-Family extends our thanks to FAU's dedicated team for inspiring curiosity and bringing this learning experience to our middle- and high school students.

Apartment Renovations

As one of Palm Beach County's largest providers of truly affordable housing, Adopt-A-Family is committed to maintaining safe, high-quality homes for the families we serve. In July 2024, the agency completed a full assessment of the 112 units in our

housing inventory using a detailed scoring system to identify those most in need of renovation. Thanks to a generous foundation grant and the use of agency reserve funds, at least ten units will be renovated this year, with plans to update between six and eight more each year. Improvements may include new flooring, windows, bathroom fixtures, and full kitchen renovations – completed by our talented maintenance team as well as professional contractors. These updates ensure the apartments remain welcoming spaces that offer families comfort, stability, and a fresh start.



Staff Sidebar

This recurring column allows our community to gain insight into agency operations through the unique perspective of agency staff members.



Gloriene Claudio-King

Director of Coordinated Entry and Emergency Shelter

My passion for social services started early, inspired by watching my mother serve others at our church in Lake Worth. I had family members that struggled, and I witnessed firsthand the barriers that kept them from getting the support they needed. These early experiences inspired a lifelong commitment to serving others while promoting their dignity.

In 2012, I started working at Adopt-A-Family, after 12 years in the field and earning my Human Services degree. Today, I serve as Director of Coordinated Entry and Emergency Shelter at the Senator Philip D. Lewis Homeless Resource Center (HRC) – Palm Beach County's central point of access for anyone experiencing homelessness.

Homelessness in Palm Beach County isn't what many imagine. In addition to individuals on street corners, it's also families who can no longer afford skyrocketing rents despite working hard and maintaining employment. The parents we serve simply want stability for their children but face systemic barriers.

We work to prevent families from entering the homeless system whenever possible. Our team listens, assesses needs, and connects families with the right resources and creative housing solutions.

The HRC partners with law enforcement, schools, and outreach teams to provide comprehensive support. Behind the scenes, our passionate staff – navigators, case managers, housing specialists, data experts, the finance team, and leadership – work tirelessly and play a vital role in helping families achieve stability.

We're making significant strides in our efforts to address homelessness – improving policies, expanding shelter and housing options, and helping families pursue education, employment, and move toward self-sufficiency. I'm proud to serve the community through this work, giving back to the place that shaped me.

Fall Festival at Program REACH



Program REACH hosted its annual Fall Festival on October 16. Featuring pumpkin decorating, face painting, and a magic show, this event was an opportunity for the families in residence to come together to enjoy the season. The festivities also featured a celebration for all children with fall birthdays, who each received a gift to mark the occasion.



Since 2016, Adopt-A-Family has operated Program REACH as part of an innovative partnership with Palm Beach County. Program REACH is our 90-day emergency shelter, which provides temporary housing for families experiencing homelessness.

Events like the Fall Festival provide reprieve and offer a sense of normalcy for families working toward brighter futures.

Adopt-A-Family extends heartfelt thanks to the dedicated staff, volunteers, and supporters who helped create a night full of smiles, connection, and lasting memories for our families.

Trunk or Treat

Resident families celebrated Halloween at our Fifth Annual Trunk or Treat. Over 20 volunteers set up festive trunks and tables to hand out sweets to trick-or-treaters clad in costumes donated by our community of supporters. The event also featured face painting, cookie decorating, and a very popular bounce house.



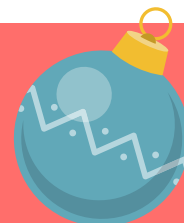
This celebration is a highlight of the year for agency residents, and Adopt-A-Family would like to thank the donors and volunteers who made this year's event possible: Raj and Emily Alva, Literacy

AmeriCorps Palm Beach County, Barclay Philanthropy Club, The Benjamin School, Nicole Calkin, Bill and Tara Cary, Jobita Crespo, John and Jaime Elder, Victoria Racanati Feinberg, Carla Fine, Denise Hand, Humana, International Materials, Literacy Coalition of Palm Beach County, Little Smiles, Marissa Murphy-Adriaanse, Denise Mutamba, Tequisha Myles, De Parmet, Rosarian Academy, Brenda Sabor and colleagues from Bentex, Saint Andrew's School, Lindsay Slifer, Alice Tarone, Mia Vila, Young Friends Committee, and the Young Lawyers Section of the Palm Beach County Bar Association.



It's not too late to deliver joy to the families we serve by supporting our 2025 holiday programs.

Scan the QR Code to learn more!



YES!

I would like to make a difference in the lives of families who are experiencing homelessness by contributing the following:

☐ \$25 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$500 ☐ Donor's Choice \$

Checks can be sent to Adopt-A-Family in the enclosed envelope or you can give online by visiting www.aafpb.org/donate or by scanning the QR code.

Name (please print): _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____



- ☐ Check Enclosed
- ☐ Visa
- ☐ Mastercard
- ☐ Amex

Credit Card Number _____

Exp. Date _____

CVV _____

Signature _____