



2017

A N N U A L R E P O R T

SPECIAL BUDDIES FOR SPECIAL CHILDREN



## A Message from our Director

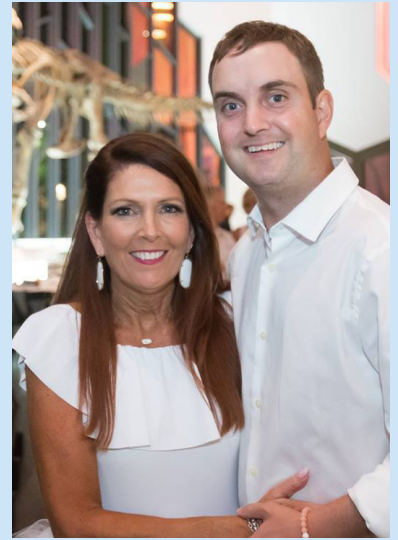
Treatment options and hospital facilities are becoming increasingly more sophisticated. With each passing year in the United States, children and adults have access to more effective treatments and better medications. The good news is that more patients are surviving diseases, injuries and conditions that were previously incurable. The bad news is that these patients rarely receive treatment for the psychological and emotional effects of undergoing the challenges of illness.

As the mother of a child born with multiple congenital birth defects, I can personally speak to the importance of emotional well-being during the healing process. My son Miles has undergone more than 42 surgeries, and together, we have spent countless nights in the hospital. Despite his trials, Miles has maintained a sunny, positive outlook on life, even when life wasn't easy for either one of us. Every parent of a medically challenged child shares that moment of feeling out of control of the situation, and I will never forget mine. Miles was only four, and after a very difficult surgery, I found myself hovering over his still body, desperate for a sign that he would be okay. Hope comes from the most unexpected sources, and I remember the sheer joy I felt when, from beneath the hospital sheets, his little thumb emerged to give me the all-clear. Thumbs up, he was saying, it's going to be okay.

Thanks to supporters like you, 2017 marked another successful year of providing hope and joy to children in need. We hosted a number of great events, including our successful 22nd Annual "Scoring a Victory for Children" hosted by Sporting KC Defender, Matt Besler and his beautiful wife, Amanda at PrairieFire Museum. We are proud to continue our mission of charity and hope! As always, our supporters make all the difference to us. We hope that you will continue working with us on our mission to provide Shadow Buddies to all children who need them in the coming years!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marty Postlethwait".

Marty Postlethwait,  
Co-founder & Executive Director



Marty Postlethwait, Director & Co-founder, with Miles Postlethwait, Co-founder

## Our Mission of Charity and Hope...

The Shadow Buddies Foundation is dedicated to providing support and knowledge to children with severe illnesses and disabilities. The Foundation accomplishes this through unique programs designed to enhance the lives of children and adults by fostering compassion and awareness of differences with our line of 31 condition-specific "Shadow Buddy" dolls. Crafted from muslin and carefully researched to represent a child's medical or emotional condition. Shadow Buddies offer seriously ill or medically challenged children the companionship of a friend "just like me." Each year we deliver approximately 40,000 Shadow Buddies worldwide with 5,000 of the buddies staying here locally in KC.



# 9th Annual SHADOW BUDDIES GOLF CLASSIC

Shadow Buddies returned to the breathtaking Shadow Glen Golf Course again this year. A BIG THANK YOU to all of our sponsors for helping make our tournament such a success! Together we raised \$28,500 for our Summer Backpack Program!!! A special thank you to Dom Dwyer and Connor Hallisey of Sporting KC for joining us on this fantastic day! Thanks to everyone who sponsored, volunteered and golfed in our tournament! Together we are Spreading Miles of Smiles Around the World!!!



*A special thank you to Dom Dwyer and Connor Hallisey of Sporting KC for joining us on this fantastic day!*

## Light the Night in White Gala "Scoring a Victory for Children"



*Matt Besler, Sporting KC Defender with his wife Amanda, and Marty Postlethwait, SBF Executive Director*

Our 22nd celebration of "Scoring a Victory for Children" was a huge success! We raised **over \$89,000** to help spread Miles of Smiles!!! We can't thank you enough for your support to our foundation! A special thank you to Klein & Walker Orthodontics, Matt & Amanda Besler, PrairieFire Museum, the Nigro Bros. and all of our sponsors and volunteers!!! *Our dear friend and Shadow Buddies Board Member of 22 years, Felix Baz-Dresch, received the Miles Award.* We truly miss his friendship and the tremendous impact he had on our community. **Tickets are on sale now for our 23rd Annual "Scoring a Victory for Children" Wild at Heart - A Safari Adventure on Friday, September 22, 2018.** This year's event will be held at the DoubleTree by Hilton in Overland Park with live entertainment by *The Sneakers!* We welcome back our co-hosts Matt and Amanda Besler, our emcee will be Donna Pitman of KMBC9 News. Don't miss our silent & live auction and other surprises we have in store! Save the Date and purchase your tickets at [shadowbuddies.org](http://shadowbuddies.org).



*Our dear friend and SBF Board Member of 22 years, Felix Baz Dresch, received the Miles Award*



*Marty Postlethwait and Amanda Besler share a photo with these beautiful, young girls at our 22nd Annual benefit dinner.*

# Our Programs...



## Pink Party

Launched in 2010 at the Children's Healthcare of Atlanta-Scottish Rite, the Pink Party is quickly becoming one of our most sought after programs by Child Life Specialist and pediatric hospitals throughout the United States. Currently Pink Parties are being held in Kansas City and hosted by Sporting KC. Each year we continue to host parties in Atlanta and Phoenix. The day is all about pampering girls who are in the hospital or receiving treatment in outpatient facilities. We don't forget about the mothers, grandmothers, sisters, aunts or any other caregiver who are always by the girls side, they get pampered too! Hosted by the wives of professional athletes, the day includes a makeup station, a hair & wig station and a nail polish station! Each girl is given her very own Pink Party Buddy complete with a pink tutu handmade by our wonderful volunteers! To find out more about the Pink Party program, please contact Marty Postlethwait at [marty@shadowbuddies.org](mailto:marty@shadowbuddies.org) or 913-642-4646.

## Holiday Hugs

In October of each year we kick off our annual "Holiday Hugs & Toy Drive Program" that provides toys, Shadow Buddies and dinner to hundreds of Kansas City metro families. We team up with local businesses and restaurants to collect toys for the holidays that will then be distributed to local families, shelters and other like-minded non-profits that are passionate about helping children. As part of the toy and gift distribution, The Shadow Buddies Foundation staff along with the Board of Directors and volunteers visit a Kansas City shelter to make dinner, hand deliver the toys and spend time with the children and families utilizing the services of the chosen organization. If we are lucky, Santa himself will stop by to surprise the kids!



## Summer Backpack Program

Each year, we provide more than 1,000 Backpacks to special needs camps around the country. Shadow Buddies are used at specialty camps to help ease the first day jitters by welcoming the special campers! Endorsed by camp counselors and nurses at the camps, the Buddies are used to teach children about their medical condition and promote a positive image. Shadow Buddies Backpacks are loaded with camp supplies, fun activities, and of course, a condition specific Shadow Buddy! Each child takes a Buddy home and has something to share with their family and friends. A year-long reminder of the new friendships they made at camp!

## Books & Buddies

The Books & Buddies Program offers middle school students volunteer opportunities during the school year that focuses on seniors, an under-served group of the community. The program was introduced in 2005 by long-time supporter and NFL legend Tony Gonzalez, who saw a need to for our youth to get involved with seniors in nursing homes within their community.

The students take two field trips each school year, one in the spring and one in the fall, to a local senior living center and spend time with the residents. The student volunteers participate in a number of activities that may include reading, crafting or singing and playing music with the seniors. Of course, we can't forget about the Senior Shadow Buddies! Each student is given a Senior Buddy to hand out to the resident of their choice. This is a moment cherished by both the senior and student.





## Rescue Buddy Program

The Rescue Buddy entails supplying a Buddy to every child who comes in contact with EMS personnel through illness, injury or who are simply scared due to an emergency situation. The rescue workers use the Buddies to extract information from the child and help explain the extent of injuries/illness. They also use the Buddy to give the child reasonable expectations of what will happen upon arrival to the hospital. The Rescue Buddy will provide comfort, act as a companion and a partner that understands what they are going through. The Rescue Buddy comes with a soft blanket to help comfort that child. The Buddies quickly calm the child and allow them to focus on their Buddy which makes it easier for the EMS to make their assessment. Overall, the workers feel that the Rescue Buddy gives them a unique tool to improve pediatric care right from the beginning.

## Super Hero Program

In 2015, The Shadow Buddies Foundation celebrated our 20th anniversary and to commemorate 20 years of Spreading "Miles of Smiles" to children everywhere, we launched the Super Hero Buddy program. Every Shadow Buddy delivered, donated, shipped and ordered in 2015 came with a Buddy sized super hero cape and mask. Working with children for so long has taught us how important it is for a child newly diagnosed with an illness, living with a disability or experiencing an emotional situation to feel like a Super Hero. In our eyes, they are real super heroes! The Super Hero Buddy program was so successful that we decided to expand the program into 2016 to incorporate the children who are going through treatment.



## Tony Gonzalez & Celebrity Buddies Program

Tony Gonzalez has made the Shadow Buddies Foundation his charity of choice since 1997. Adopting Shadow Buddies his rookie year, over 72,000 Tony Gonzalez Buddies have been distributed throughout the United States. He also sponsors a senior Shadow Buddies program helping thousands of senior resident in nursing homes. Over 8,500 Senior Buddies have been distributed to date. The Tony Gonzalez Buddies are all medium skin toned boys dressed in a Shadow Buddies t-shirt with his name and number 88 screened on the back.

With the help of Tony, we have been able to expand our Celebrity Buddy Program to include fellow current and former NFL stars, Ryan Succop, Matt Cassel, Dustin Colquitt, and Tony Richardson. We welcomed our latest super star, Kansas City Chiefs Tight End, Travis Kelce to the family in September 2015!



In 2014, The Shadow Buddies Foundation teamed up with Major League Soccer's Sporting Kansas City's Dom Dwyer and his teammates. Dom Dwyer personally delivered Buddies to several different children's organizations in Kansas City.

We were proud to partner with Royal's Charities in 2015 and were blessed to work with the World Series Champions, The Kansas City Royals, handing out Buddies to children at Children's Mercy Hospital. Spreading Miles of Smiles throughout the year has been an absolute blast and we have been very fortunate to share the smiles with celebrities like these!



# Shadow Buddies Board of Directors

## Board of Directors

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Co-Founder

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Kansas City Chiefs

Mr. Ryan Succop  
Tennessee Titans

Mr. Matt Cassel  
Tennessee Titans



*The Texas Rangers Wives hosting their Annual Pink Party and supporting Shadow Buddies!*