emPower
A Family Scholar House Magazine
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THE CAREER ISSUE
CHANGING LIVES, FAMILIES & COMMUNITIES THROUGH EDUCATION
**PRESIDENT’S PERSPECTIVE**

True Confession: I have a love-hate relationship with ice-breaker activities.

Sometimes they are hokey and while they may break the ice, they don’t do anything more than that to help people get to know each other. Other times, they are very meaningful and it seems a shame that they must end so the group can get on to the ‘real’ activity.

One such ice breaker is the game where you **list three words that describe you.** Not four. Not more. Just three. Unfortunately, the pressure is on whoever goes first but only that person is done quickly and can actually take in the words of the others. Everyone else is so busy thinking of their own words, hoping that no one else uses them first, and flipping through a mental thesaurus to find the synonyms (just in case), that they miss the chance to learn about their peers. We can file this activity under the heading ‘best laid plans.’

At Family Scholar House, we have recently had the **chance to choose ten words** that define us and our graduates. Thanks to the writing gifts of Pam Platt, the eye of photographer Scott Utterback, and the sponsorship of our friends at PNC, our **first book** of graduate experiences and successes, **Stories That Define Us**, was released last fall. We are indebted to the graduates who not only shared their stories but also trusted us to help them on their journey to the success they have realized as students, employees, parents, and community members.

In our book, the reader is introduced to graduates who embody these words: **Courage, Community, Commitment, Achievement, Work, Resilience, Persistence, Love, Hope and Legacy.** While these are not the only words that we believe characterize us – more are to come in the next book – each chapter tells you a great deal about our special graduates, Family Scholar House as the family that embraces and empowers them, and all of us together as a community. Each story is unique; and yet, each story is part of the collective. At the end of each chapter is a page for the reader’s reflections because if we can see these as community stories, we have the opportunity to use what we learn. Unlike the ice breaker that ends too quickly, we have the chance for these stories to **break down barriers, build relationships**, and help us work together to **provide new opportunities and fresh starts** for those in need and deserving of them.

**None of these stories would have been possible without you,** our loyal donors, supporters and advocates. **Thank you** for bringing these successes to life.

Cathe Dykstra  
Chief Possibility Officer  
President & CEO

P.S. If you have not yet gotten a copy of **Stories That Define Us**, please let us know. They are free as a gift with any donation of $25 or more. We would be glad to put a copy in the mail to you today. Please be sure to let us know what you think by sharing your thoughts on social media using #StoriesThatDefineUs.

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Cover Photo: FSH graduate, Janine Hogan, shares how FSH helped her graduate and provide a better life for her children.
UPCOMING EVENTS

MARCH

WINE, WOMEN & SHOES
Friday, March 2, 2018 – The Henry Clay
6:00 to 9:30 p.m.

GE Appliances, a Haier company, presents FSH’s 5th Annual Wine Women and Shoes event. With Media Sponsor WLKY TV and Vicki Dortch as our Mistress of Ceremonies, this is the place to be and be seen. In our fifth year, you can expect new and innovative spins on the fabulous exclusive evening – women of the Louisville community have come to expect when attending Wine Women and Shoes. The evening will feature wine and bourbon tastings, live and silent auctions, a Von Maur designer fashion show, and a marketplace of shoes and accessories. Be sure to purchase a Key to the Closet Raffle ticket, sponsored by Churchill Downs, to win a $10,000 shopping spree. This is the perfect event for women who enjoy fine wine, great style, and camaraderie – all to support the important work of Family Scholar House. Learn more about this year’s event on page 5.

APRIL

MAYOR FISCHER’S GIVE A DAY – WEEK OF SERVICE
April 14-22, 2018

Plan now for the Mayor’s Give a Day Week of Service in April. Choose from a variety of individual, group or workplace activities to support FSH’s mission and the special families and youth earning their education and preparing for careers. Whether you enjoy reading with children, writing Eggfirmations, organizing a donation drive or landscaping, we would love to have you as a volunteer at FSH. Contact us at GetInvolved@FamilyScholarHouse.org or 502.813.3086 for more information.

MAY

MOTHER’S DAY
Sunday, May 13, 2018

Each year, more than 3,000 single mothers seek help from FSH because they want a better life for their children. Mother’s Day is always a special time for us! Be on the lookout for volunteer activities to be posted on our Facebook page or in our e-blasts. You can also support FSH when you order flowers or gifts from Nanz and Kraft Florists at www.nanzandkraft.com. Through the Helping Hands program, you can select Family Scholar House to direct $2 for each online order to our program.

Above: Our youngest scholars added their own special touch to one of the unique auction items featured at Wine Women and Shoes.

Participant Whitney Cowin, and her daughter, Khloe, age 6.
ON MARCH 2, 2018, GE APPLIANCES, A HAIER COMPANY, PRESENTS THE 5TH ANNUAL WINE WOMEN AND SHOES (WW&S) EVENT TO BENEFIT FAMILY SCHOLAR HOUSE.

While our parent scholars are determined to put their best foot forward, our Spring event provides an opportunity for our supporters to do so as well. On the first Friday in March, FSH celebrates with an evening of fabulous wines, fashionable footwear, girlfriends and fun, with 100% of proceeds benefiting the programs that empower our FSH families. By joining us, you can help a young single mother prepare for her future and provide a better life for her children.

Wine Women and Shoes continues to be one of Louisville’s most exclusive events. In its fifth year, we will be taking it up a notch, expect new and innovative spins on what attendees have come to love about this event. Wine Women and Shoes features tastings of world-class wines and signature bourbons, a live auction including rare experiences and excursions, fun silent auction items, blind pulls from the Walls of Wine and Bourbon and so much more. Last year, a few of the shoe guys even graced the stage for a performance that set the stage for the night. The evening continues with a designer fashion show sponsored by Von Maur showcasing the hottest fashion trends in shoes, handbags, hats, accessories and more! Awards will be presented for Best in Shoe, so plan to wear your favorite sexy heels.

The Key-to-the-Closet Raffle, sponsored by Churchill Downs, will provide one lucky winner with a $10,000 shopping spree at Von Maur. Only 200 tickets will be sold.

You will also want to check out our “Shoe Guys” who will be working the crowd and showing off the hottest footwear of the season, all on silver platters, of course.

The 2018 event is sold out, if you missed your chance to attend, you can be first to buy tickets for WW&S 2019 by purchasing a Churchill Downs Key-to-the-Closet Raffle ticket now. $100 gets you a 1 in 200 chance at a $10,000 shopping spree. You don’t have to be present to win! To purchase your Key-to-the-Closet tickets, please visit: www.WineWomenandShoes.com/Louisville
One of the most distinctive and refreshing characteristics that is shared by our participants is gratitude. It is evident in how they speak of our program, how they reflect on the support they have received from the community and, most especially, in how they give back.

Graduation is a culmination of our participants’ educational journey and lends itself well to reflection on what they have accomplished, what they have learned, what hopes and dreams they have for the future – theirs and their children’s – and what the support of the community has meant to them.

Janine Hogan graduated in December with a Bachelor’s Degree in Elementary Education from the University of Louisville; however, the groundwork for her career as a teacher began when she was a little girl who loved to read. Reading fed her hunger for knowledge and information and stoked her imagination. Now, she wants others to experience the joy she found in learning.

Janine is passionate about helping students in situations similar to her own when she was looking for a positive light in an often difficult world. She wants to be that light for her students, telling them that they can overcome obstacles and encouraging them to reach their full potential. She is excited to be in the classroom and be the light some of her students so desperately need. She is eager to be the teacher, who is relatable and compassionate as someone who sees her students’ potential and helps them reach their goals.

As Janine looks back on her experience at Family Scholar House, she reflects on the changes she has made in her life and the many ways her twins have benefitted from the special environment that supports families transitioning from poverty to self-sufficiency. Living at the Louisville Scholar House campus and working with her family advocate and academic coach, Janine found stability support and encouragement for her goals and her children’s future. After overcoming many obstacles, she appreciates that Family Scholar House helped her “find the motivation to be the best mother, teacher, woman and leader possible.” Being a teacher is one way that Janine wants to give back to the community that helped her family and “pay it forward” by inspiring her students.

From Janine and all of us at Family Scholar House, thank you for being the compassionate community that embraced and empowered her so that she can model that for her students.
CAMPUS ACTIVITIES

With five Louisville campuses, a busy pre-residential program, and two outreach service locations, something is always happening at Family Scholar House.

MINDFULNESS IS A SUPERPOWER

Through a partnership with the Petrino Family Foundation, we have the ongoing opportunity to educate our scholars of all ages through our Head in the Game Mindfulness Program. Each December, we gather for a day full of fun, while participating in yoga, mindful eating, reading, taking a pledge to be more compassionate, and so much more.

Born This Way Foundation

Lady Gaga’s Born this Way Foundation, spent an afternoon in November at Louisville Scholar House, with several participants facilitating a workshop focused around positive identity development by incorporating reflection and art activities. The workshop was meant to bolster confidence among parent scholars, all of whom have faced homelessness, unstable housing, poverty and other experiences that weaken resolve and warp self-image. The workshop successfully helped our single-parent students establish positive, assured identities in the face of the adversity they have experienced, and demonstrate the importance of positive self-esteem in achieving success in school and life. Thank You to Lady Gaga and the representatives from the Born this Way Foundation for spending your day with us!
**PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE**

Family Scholar House participants are eager to learn from community members and cultivate the skills necessary to land career-track employment. Speed Mentoring takes place throughout the year and gives individuals from the community an opportunity to invest in our student parents. Individuals and groups donate their time and talents by providing guidance for participants, assisting with resume review, interviewing skills, work/life balance, and entering and navigating the workforce. To sign up as a volunteer or mentor, contact GetInvolved@FamilyScholarHouse.org

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**HOLIDAY FUN**

With the generous support of the community, our families had the opportunity to experience a joyous holiday season. Every family was adopted through the Adopt-A-Family program and received help providing “Santa” for their children. In addition, each campus had its own celebration with every child receiving a new pair of pajamas and bedtime story from Mrs. Claus. (She is a practical gift-giver.)

Thanks to Just Be Claus our scholars of all ages made their very own Candy Canes. This event is always a huge hit. Thank you to everyone that made the holiday season so special for our families.
ANNUAL CELEBRATION OF EDUCATION

On September 21, 2017, Family Scholar House hosted the 20th Annual Celebration of Education Event at the Louisville Marriott Downtown. To celebrate the two decades of service and impact, we transitioned to an evening gala. WLKY’s Vicki Dortch served as our Mistress of Ceremonies and brought her enthusiasm to our event. This year’s celebration was another huge success, with over 500 in attendance. Special thanks to Honorary Chair, Robbie Valentine, our presenting sponsor The Marian Group and all of our generous sponsors (see page 10).

Each year, we present Community and Individual Lucy Awards to recognize community members who share Dr. Lucy M. Freibert, SCN’s commitment to post-secondary education, gender equality, and leadership development for women. This year’s Community recipient was Passport Health Plan and the Individual recipient was Frank and Paula Harshaw. We truly appreciate the unwavering support they provide for FSH and most importantly, for our families.

The evening featured a Brown-Forman sponsored cocktail reception, giving attendees a chance to sip on delicious spirits, while bidding on auction items. The evening continued with the program showcasing recent accomplishments at Family Scholar House and the excited glimpse into the bright future.

We released our first book, full of graduate stories and every attendee left with a copy and glimpse into the stories of ten remarkable graduates. Our keynote speaker, Wanda Durrant, affectionately known as Mama Durrant, “The Real MVP” was a great example of the power of perseverance and believing in yourself. Mama Durrant is a strong leader, advocate, and philanthropist whose passion is to help single mothers, women, and children. At the age of 21, Wanda became a single mother of two. Inspired by her young sons and knowing God would lead their way, she dedicated her life to her children’s formative years, ultimately sacrificing her own aspirations to ensure a solid foundation for her sons’ future success. After raising her sons, she realized her dream was to become an inspirational speaker, inspiring women, single mothers, and children to follow their dreams and set life goals. Her message resonated with our single-parent students, as they have committed their life to creating a better life for themselves and their children. This not only provided encouragement for our participants to continue on their path to success through education, but also rallied supporters to persevere in efforts to make Louisville a better community.

Several of the FSH participants in attendance commented afterward about how encouraged they felt after meeting Wanda. We believe our work at Family Scholar House echoes the efforts of individuals like Wanda, who has committed her life to advocating and encouraging women and children to reach their full potential.

This year’s Annual Celebration of Education Event elicited laughter and thoughtful reflection from those in attendance and encouraged them to take a fresh look at how we are changing lives, families and our community together. We invite you to consider the role you might play and join us in improving the quality of life for our entire community.

Plan Ahead: The 21st Annual Celebration of Education Event
September 21, 2018

After the success of our 20th Annual Gala, our Celebration of Education event will be held at the Omni Louisville Hotel in 2018. Mark your calendars now to join Family Scholar House’s participants, staff, Board of Directors & Trustees, community service partners, and supporters for this special annual event.
When our Chief Possibility Officer, Cathe Dykstra noticed there was an 8-month pregnant pre-resident anxious to attend a yoga class for her very first time, she grew a bit concerned. After speaking to her about her decision to attend the workshop, she realized that though she was not interested in yoga, she was so determined to get involved and acquire her pre-residential points that she would come to campus whenever she had the time and the bus could get her there.

This immediately got Cathe’s wheels turning... how could we make it possible for pre-residents like this one, and for that matter, all participants, to access workshops that met their needs and their schedules? She reflected on how critical it would have been for this young expectant mother to have been able to attend a new parent workshop, rather than a first yoga class, on that particular day.

From that interaction came the concept of FSH Academy, a new way of delivering workshops to participants, on demand and at their fingertips wherever, whenever. FSH Academy is a collection of online workshops that cover life skills ranging from academic success to financial literacy and career preparation. There are currently 70 videos and our connection continues to grow. Videos are no more than 5 minutes each and focus on various topics around a particular theme. This allows participants to easily watch videos on the go or between classes and easily revisit specific content, when needed.

FSH staff is able to support students in learning exactly what they need, when they need it by creating individual case plans using the online videos. Staff can view student assessment scores in order to provide differentiated support tailored to each participant’s needs. Pre-residents are able to complete their required workshops online as well.

We need your help as subject-matter experts. If you are interested in sharing your expertise through FSH Academy, please contact Helene Trager-Kusman HTKusman@familyscholarhouse.org Our scholars are eager to learn from you.
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