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**HOUSE**  
Foundation, Inc.

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WINTER 2014 VOLUME II ISSUE I



## FOJH – FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



**DeDe Grundel**  
Executive Director

Time flies when you are having fun. At least for me it does. That is not always how it is for a foster child. Imagine what it must be like to move from home to home, sometimes in the span of a few days or even weeks. I was recently doing an art project with some of the Joshua House children and teens. We were having fun. Lots of color was being applied to canvas, tables, and even the floor as we painted *Dream Trees* and *Sunsets*. We were having a good old time.

Then I noticed one of the girls did not look like she was having as much fun as the rest of the group. Carmen is a quiet young lady of about 13 years old. She was staring forlornly at her canvas. When asked what was wrong, she replied. "When I finish this will you keep it?" I told her it was for her to keep, her own personal dream tree. I thought that was what she wanted to hear. She only got more despondent and eventually left the room.

Just as we were finishing up our art project, Carmen returned to the room. She asked if I would stay to help her complete her painting. Of course I would! As we sat and talked she shared that Joshua House was her fourteenth home since entering foster care. She was afraid if she finished the painting and took it with her that it would eventually get left behind when she had to move again. She thought it would be safe if I just kept it for her. I could almost feel the full weight of her disappointing life pressing down on her. And she is only 13 years old.

She finished her *Dream Tree*. It is beautiful. Full of pink and orange leaves blowing in the wind. I convinced her to keep it, sincerely hoping she enjoys her tree for as long as she can...

I know one of the biggest challenges in foster care is maintaining a successful placement for many of these children. The fault does not rest solely on child welfare service. It is so much more complex than that. Many of these children are runners; racing away from their troubles. They have difficulty connecting with a new family because they cannot forgive their own families for the abuse, neglect or abandonment they have experienced; or they believe they are not worthy of love or acceptance. I get it. But "getting it" does not change my desire to help these children experience some joy, to enrich their lives with new adventures and opportunities.

Please join me in helping foster children and teens like Carmen. Consider a gift to Friends of Joshua House Foundation for your holiday or end of the year contribution. I promise you that we are passionate about helping these children have a better quality of life. Your gift will make a world of difference. Wishing you peace and joy during the holidays and blessings for the New Year.

## FOJH – FROM THE CHAIR



**Tracy Falkowitz**  
Chair

This year has brought many changes to Joshua House. Our children have enjoyed the harvest of vegetables and flowers of the gardening boxes that they have cared for. We are beginning the renovation of one of our houses to bring medically fragile foster children onto our campus so they no longer live in nursing homes without seeing other children. Our teen girls are learning how to believe in themselves and their own self-worth. Our boys are striving to be powerful young men without

the need for the violence that many have experienced. All of our children are achieving in their studies and deciding on their futures. Over the past 12 months, the staff of Joshua House have cared for pregnant teens, teens rescued from human traffickers and many children that have never known a safe and loving place prior to their arrival at Joshua House.

At this time of year, we reflect on the extraordinary generosity of our donors that have allowed us to care for these foster children. The continuing state of the economy has forced many to reduce or forego their charitable contributions. However, many have found new, rewarding ways to give to those less fortunate. We are sincerely grateful for every contribution of money, in-kind donations and time from all of our wonderful corporate and individual partners.

Friends of Joshua House Foundation is excited to continue to support the challenges of our children and those that will join our campus. We hope that you will continue to watch the success stories unfold with us. Please keep all of the children of Joshua House in your heart, your prayers and your thoughts throughout the holidays.

Happy holidays and a blessed new year!!!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tracy M. Falkowitz". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Tracy Falkowitz  
Chair



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# SAVE THE DATES

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2014**

**BOW TIES & CLUTCHES**

**8PM – 1AM**

[www.TheFashionMovement.com](http://www.TheFashionMovement.com)

**FRIDAY, APRIL 17, 2015**

**CHILD ABUSE AWARENESS LUNCHEON**

**TAMPA HILTON DOWNTOWN**

**11:45 AM - 1:30 PM**

**813-263-3469**

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