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90th Anniversary Family Reunion: A Tour Through the Evening



Guests peruse auction items during the reception.

The night started off with a silent auction showcasing items such as artwork by local artist Juan Rojas, gift certificates to local restaurants, passes for museum outings, a Swim with the Dolphins at Miami Seaquarium, and specialty jewelry from Caballero Jewelers. Guests mingled and shared stories about their connections to FCS while they cast their bids.



David Lawrence, Harve Mogul, and Victor Alonzo chat before dinner; Board member Esther Castiglia engages in a lively conversation.

Dinner followed the Family Reunion theme with tables including a mix of past and current Board members, sponsors, staff, Family of the Year award honorees, and clients, and dinner was served family style. A warm invocation was given by Rabbi Marc Labowitz of Temple Adath Or and Father Jamie of St. Matthew Episcopal Church, neighbor and landlord of FCS' new location on Sunset Drive.



Rabbi Marc and Father Jamie give the Invocation; Guests dine at the United Way table.



Guests including former Board member Elvira Dopico (left) and employees of Holland & Knight (right) enjoy the dinner.

Guest speaker David Lawrence spoke on behalf of the Children's Trust, emphasizing the importance of civic duty in ensuring organizations that aid children can continue. Family Counseling CEO Felicia Adler Mayer and Board Director Raul Cosio spoke about the rich roots and legacy of FCS. "Considering how long we have been around, it is very often that I meet people in social services and they tell me that they either worked for FCS or did an internship here at some point in their careers. While most people never look back after leaving a job, I find that we have a strong network of continued support that has grown over time" Mayer said.



FCS CEO Felicia Adler Mayer; Guest speaker and Chairman of the Board for The Children's Trust, David Lawrence



FCS President of the Board Raul Cosio

Cosio also spoke of the "Money Tree" centerpieces on the tables and how they are said to bring good fortune to those that nurture and care for them. "Tonight we are renaming them 'Investment Trees,' because while money is necessary to provide the resources to keep non-profit organizations going, it is also necessary to have the people who invest their commitment to the organization's mission," Cosio said.



Our "Investment Tree" centerpieces

Sponsors of the event were acknowledged and thanked for their generous contributions. They included presenting sponsor Washington Mutual and supporting sponsors Baptist Health of South Florida; Holland & Knight; Greenberg Traurig; Dade Paper; United Way of Miami-Dade; Esther and Buster Castiglia; Rachlin, Cohen and Holtz; the Health Foundation of South Florida; Langford Insurance; and the Mayer/Adler/Levine Family.

Other contributions represented relationships that have developed over the long life of the organization, including one with the Junior League of Miami, which has played a role in FCS history since 1936. Several members of the Junior League volunteered their time throughout the dinner.

The highlight of the evening was the premiere screening of an informational [video](#) about Family Counseling Services which was made possible by a generous donation from the Health Foundation of South Florida. The video gives an overview of the organization and shows riveting client and staff testimonies about how FCS has been instrumental in the path to healthy lives and relationships.



Guests watch the premiere of the FCS video

Many of the clients featured in the video were in attendance at the dinner, looking brave and proud. Moved by what they saw, guests draped their arms across the chairs of their spouses or the shoulders of their children, and a few honored the video with a standing ovation. "The whole night was about bringing together everyone who does this work in an intimate, family atmosphere," said Grace Jimenez, Program Manager for Family and Schools Together, an FCS prevention program for children in local pre-schools.



The Mayer-Adler family and Rabbi Marc Labowitz smile for the camera

After the video, guest emcee Michele Gillen, Investigative Reporter for CBS 4, committed to increasing coverage of The Children's Trust and vowed to help raise the profile of FCS in the community. Gillen had previously interviewed Family Counseling clients for a piece on human trafficking.



Guest Emcee and CBS 4 Investigative Reporter Michele Gillen; A. "Buster" Castiglia (President and CEO, BBU Bank), Michele Gillen (Guest Emcee and Investigative Reporter, CBS 4 News), and Modesto Abety (President and CEO, The Children's Trust)

Latin Grammy winner Angie Chirino ended the night with a soothing acoustic set. Once the music stopped, people walked away with the "Investment Trees" that had adorned the tables, each one a reminder of their devotion to the children of Miami, a tradition that continues to flourish.

For more information, call 305-740-8998 x144



Past Board President Morris Hollander with wife Irene Hollander

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