



Mark Rothko

HOPE, HEART & HOME

4th Quarter 2025

NEWSLETTER



WHO WE ARE !

HOPE, HEART & HOME IS A FAITH-BASED COMMUNITY COALITION RECRUITING VOLUNTEERS FROM OUR CATHOLIC AND INTER-FAITH COMMUNITY TO SUPPORT FOSTER CHILDREN IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY.

WE **SUSTAIN AND RETAIN FOSTER FAMILIES** BY PARTNERING IN LOCAL EVENTS AND BY SERVING AS **FOSTER PARENTS,**

RESPITE PARENTS, MENTORS, GUARDIAN AD LITEM, PANELISTS, AND CAREPORTAL FIRST RESPONDERS.



WE HOST MONTHLY VIRTUAL MEETINGS ON THE **SECOND MONDAY OF EVERY MONTH** WITH EDUCATIONAL GUEST SPEAKERS THAT INTRODUCE OUR CHILD ADVOCATES TO EVERY FACET OF **OUR CHILD WELFARE COMMUNITY.**

Visit us at www.hopeheartthomeministry.com



HOPE
HEART
HOME



HHH CHILD ADVOCATES HONORED!



Hope Heart & Home Ministry and the **Kiwanis Club of Miami** are pleased to announce that two of our Child Advocates have received notable honors.

Bernadett Horvath was named the National Quality Parenting Initiative (QPI) Champion of the Month, acknowledging her outstanding efforts in supporting medically fragile youth and birth parent advocacy. As the founder of **BDW & More**, she manages field operations in Northern Dade for HHH's Random Acts of Kindness Campaign.

Dr. Alecia Rodriguez, President of the Florida Counseling Association and active in the Florida FAPA, received the AASECT Book Award and delivered a keynote address in Las Vegas. She signed her book at the Miami Book Fair in December, having published articles in the Family Journal. Dr. Rodriguez will also speak at Columbia University in NYC early in 2026.



Champion Profile: Bernadett Horvath
QPI Champion, Miami, Florida, Class of June 2024

Bernadett, a birth parent and QPI Champion from Miami, Florida, has devoted her advocacy to improving outcomes for medically fragile youth in care. Since graduating, she has become a leader in birth parent advocacy—showing how strong partnerships between birth and foster parents can transform the care and stability of children.

Her personal experiences drive her commitment to changing the system from the inside out. Bernadette works to build understanding, trust, and collaboration, ensuring that families are not sidelined but rather seen as vital partners in caring for children with complex needs.

Impact highlights

- Leads outreach with **faith-based communities** to raise awareness of the importance of partnering with birth parents.
- Uses her lived experience to **train and educate professionals, parents, and community members** on the value of collaboration and child-centered relationships.
- Advocates for **medically fragile youth in care**, ensuring families and caregivers have the knowledge, resources, and support needed to meet children's unique needs.

In her words:

"I use my lived expertise to make change through by sharing QPI principles and approaches with my community. It's about showing people that birth parents, foster parents, and caregivers can come together around what matters most—the well-being of children."

[Learn more here](#) about what it means to be a QPI Champion Advocate.



Dr. Rodriguez is a highly credentialed psychotherapist with dual PhDs in Metaphysical Science and Clinical Sexology, a Master's degree in Counseling specializing in Clinical Mental Health and Marriage and Family Therapy, and licensure as a Marriage and Family Therapist and Professional Counselor. A Certified Sex Offender Therapist, Dr. Rodriguez addresses complex and often misunderstood aspects of human sexuality. Her groundbreaking book challenges societal perceptions of alternative sexual interests. Through research and clinical insight, Dr. Rodriguez advocates for destigmatization, fostering an understanding of the positive aspects of consensual paraphilic conduct.

Her book offers a transformative perspective on sexual interests, encouraging individuals and couples to explore their desires through an informed, nonjudgmental lens. Reframing alternative sexual interests as valid expressions of identity promotes acceptance and challenges societal stigma. It emphasizes consent and mutual pleasure, empowering readers to authentically embrace their sexual identities, fostering self-awareness, reducing shame, and encouraging healthier relationships with sexuality. For couples, it serves as a valuable tool for open communication about sexual preferences and fantasies, providing a framework for safe, consensual, and informed discussions that can enhance intimacy and trust. It critiques the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders for pathologizing common sexual fantasies, calling for a shift in societal and professional perspectives to focus on the positive aspects of consensual paraphilic conduct. By addressing the disconnect between societal norms and individual experiences, this book highlights the need for a more inclusive and affirming understanding of sexual expression, with implications for sociology, psychiatry, and psychology.



TRUSTEES MEET



Wrap-up '25 Uncork 2026

October 4. The Annual Trustees meeting of **Hope Heart & Home** Ministry Child Advocates and partners showcased exemplary collaboration and informative presentations.

The meeting was highlighted by **Valerie Van Ostran's** review of the **CAREPORTAL** team's assistance to 100 kids, **Bernadett Horvath** presenting on the Random Acts of Kindness Campaign's support for 130 bio & foster families, and **Dr Alecia Rodriguez** updating on **Sadie's Daughter's** Teen programs and sports initiatives.

We are grateful for the warm hospitality of **Holy Rosary-St. Richard Church** and the enthusiastic participation of our partners, including **Liz Anon** (His House), **Marta Torres** (Citrus FCN), **Kele Stewart** (First Star Academy), **Panos Kourtesis** (Explore Foster Miami), **Alex Alvarez** (Lucas Alvarez LA6 Foundation), and **Brytanny Stringer** (Community Based Care Alliance - CBC).







KIWANIS CLUB OF MIAMI *Inducts Hope, Heart & Home* *Child Advocates*

On October 6, the **Kiwanis Club of Miami, Florida** held an induction ceremony, where the Board of Directors welcomed five new members from Hope Heart & Home Ministry.



Pastor **Lavern Harvey**, **Maria Rey**, **Kevin Ballard**, **Dr. Michelle Witherspoon**, and **Deacon Peter Calhoun** were honored with their new Kiwanis pins.

Congratulations to these new Kiwanis!

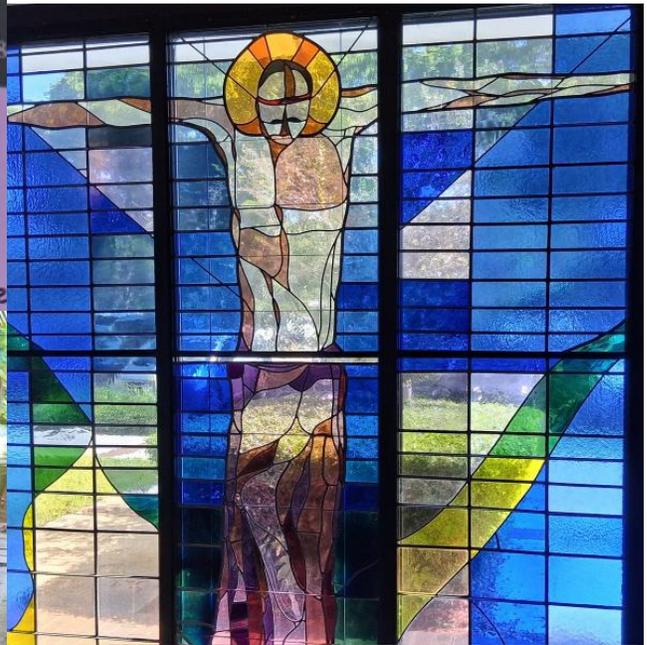
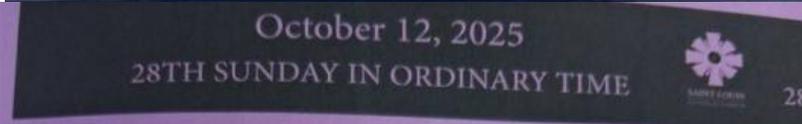


HHH RECRUITS AT ST. LOUIS



Hope Heart & Home Ministry's recruiting day at St. Louis Catholic Church yielded impressive results, with the ministry actively seeking volunteers to serve in various capacities, including foster parents, guardian ad litem, mentors, panelists, CarePortal first responders, and Random Acts of Kindness volunteers.

Thank you, **Lorenzo Cosio**, **Mary & David Hamel**, **Paul Czekanski**, and **Rosie Perez-Lacayo** for all your efforts in engaging St. Louis parishioners! (October 12, 2025)



Random Acts of Kindness

The last 3 months of 2025 were incredibly uplifting, filled with appreciation for all the opportunities that allow partners, **Hope**, **Heart & Home**, **BDW & More**, and **Random Acts of Kindness** to fulfill their missions. Throughout this time, our team's dedication has been evident as we supported deserving families by providing vital resources like diapers, backpacks, toys, clothing, furniture, groceries, and gift cards—showing faith put into action. These photos represent only a fraction of the remarkable work done in our community.







random m

act of kindness





LET'S Play BALL

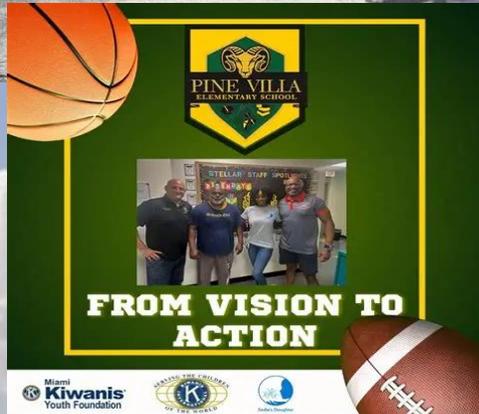
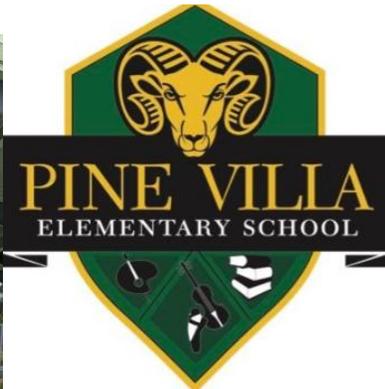


Football and basketball fever gripped **Pine Villa Elementary** fields in Homestead, as teams of young flag football and basketball enthusiasts faced off in spirited games and scrimmages. Donning brand new uniforms and equipment supplied by the **Kiwanis Club of Miami, Florida**, the coed teams enjoyed fun-filled seasons.



Many thanks to **Hope Heart & Home Ministry's** and **SDI - Sadie's Daughter, Inc. Dr. Alecia Rodriguez** for securing the grant and HHH's **Peter Calhoun** for sharing his coaching prowess.







Collaborating with CAREPORTAL



Hope Heart & Home Ministry remains committed to its outreach initiatives within the child welfare community, fostering partnerships with **CAREPORTAL** and the **Kiwanis Club of Miami**. This quarter, **Valerie Van Ostran** of HHH, successfully led teams of "champions" in providing vital assistance to foster families in crisis, orchestrating collection drives to procure essential items such as school uniforms, shoes, and groceries.

In December, HHH and **CAREPORTAL** Florida teamed up once again to provide necessary items to children in foster care. Led by Valerie, HHH assisted a youth at Genesis Hopeful Haven with culinary purchases, a child with multiple disabilities clothing, a 3 year-old with food essentials, and a family who lost their SNAP benefits. The HHH teams closed out the year with deliveries of gift cards to purchase groceries.

We appreciate Valerie's leadership in addressing these priority requests and the generous support from the **Kiwanis Club of Miami**.





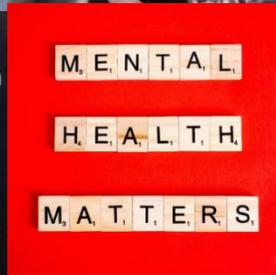
HIS HOUSE CHILDREN'S HOME IS SPECIAL!

Genielle Burrows delivered an insightful presentation to **Hope Heart & Home** Ministry, showcasing the innovative programs offered at **His House Children's Home For Children** in foster care.

"The His House model is distinct from many other residential programs," Genielle informed the child advocates gathered to hear her presentation. "Every home is staffed with nurturing caregivers who make every effort to create a beautiful and cozy home environment where children feel safe and loved." She then outlined how HHCH has established a comprehensive approach to meet the emotional, physical, and educational needs of their children.



Thank you, Genielle, for your commitment to advancing these best practices.



"Lions and Tigers and Bears, Oh My!"

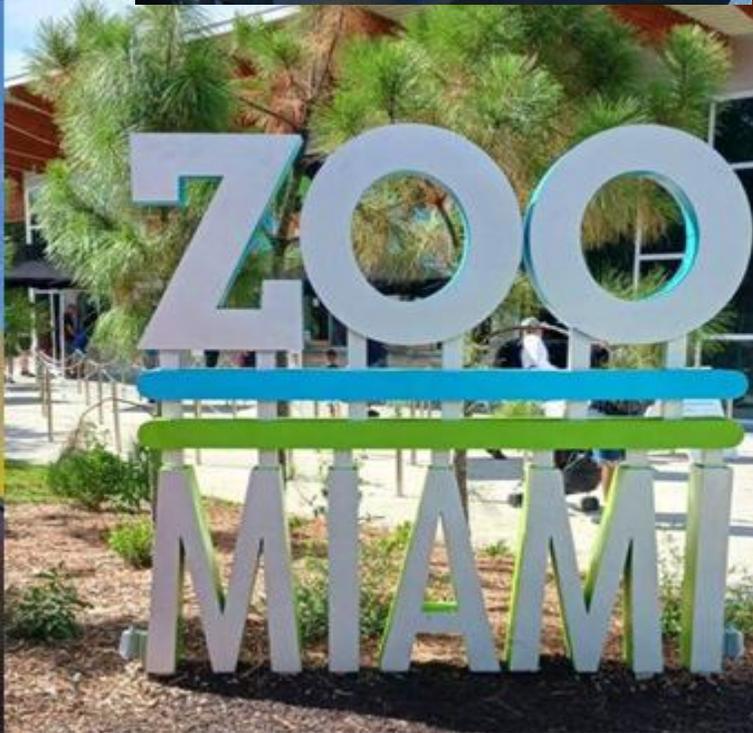
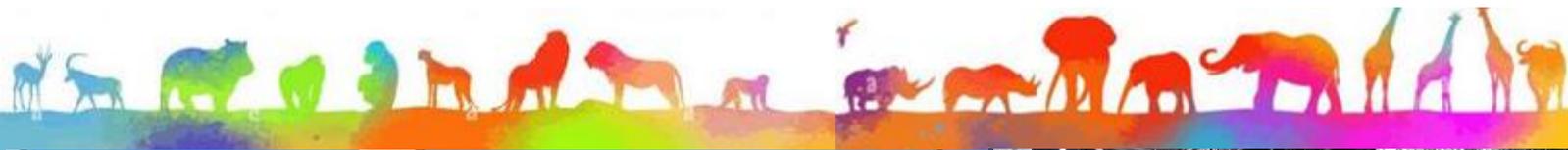


The beginning of a long day as we watched the sun come up over the **2025 ZOOMIAMI ZooRun** starting line at 6 AM November 2.

Our ten intrepid race entrants enjoyed an exhilarating experience navigating the 5K course around the animal exhibits and mingling with 5000 other participants, thanks to the **Kiwanis Club of Miami, Florida**.

We are grateful for the organization & encouragement provided by Zoo Miami's **Stefan Schwindeman** and **Nadine Rolle & Marta Oliva Torres** of Citrus Family Care Network.







HOPE, HEART & HOME AND KIWANIS CLUB OF MIAMI

SAIL INTO SERVICE!

Sixty youth from **Miami Bridge**,
Sweethome Missionary Baptist

Church, and **Chapman Partnership** enjoyed a glorious day of fishing off Blackpoint Marina, courtesy of the **Kiwanis Club of Miami** and 14 captains from the Tropical Anglers Fishing Club and Florida Sport Fisherman's Club.



All participants returned midday to savor a sumptuous **barbecue** prepared by **Eric Carpenter**, **Chuck Little**, **Mo Rodriguez**, and **George Cadman**. HHH/Kiwanis volunteers included **Dr. Alecia Rodriguez**, **Eric Schwindeman**, **Valerie Van Ostran**, **Peter Calhoun**, **Kevin Ballard**, and **Paul Czekanski**.

Key Clubbers from Somerset Academy, Columbus High School, and Palmetto High School provided meal service and distributed shirts and hats to attendees.



This event exemplified the outstanding collaboration the Kiwanis generate in support of local youth.





HOPE. HEART & HOME PARTNERS WITH TRINITY CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP CHURCH



Hope Heart & Home is delighted to announce its partnership with **Trinity Christian Fellowship Church** in Goulds, Florida. Pastor **LaVern Harvey** collaborated with HHH's **Bernadett Horvath** to gather and distribute essential items to families in need. We deeply appreciate Pastor Harvey's team joining our Random Acts of Kindness community outreach group and eagerly anticipate her continued support as a new member of HHH and the **Kiwanis Club of Miami**. Outstanding effort, ladies, especially during these challenging times this quarter!



“Trinity - Blessed To Be a Blessing To Others!”



HHH PARTNERS WITH COUGARS FOR HUMANITY

Hope Heart & Home continues to establish alliances as HHH activist, **Bernadett Horvath**, successfully united **Stephanie Dominguez** & the South Miami Senior HS, Division 26B Key Clubs, and **Cougars for Humanity** with Random Acts of Kindness and BDW & More for a collection of "cards & cans" to support foster & bio parents!



These bags of groceries and words of encouragement were timely responses to today's family challenges! God bless the generosity of these South Miami High School students! And congratulations to road warrior and **Kiwanis Club of Miami** activist, Bernadett Horvath for her successful partnership with local high school Key Clubs to feed and nourish foster and bio families in Dade County!



HARVEST BARBEQUE for FOSTER FAMILIES

Hope doesn't have to be a passive wish; it can serve as an active force that drives us forward!

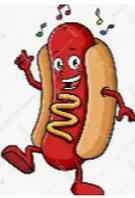
Hope Heart & Home Ministry's annual **Harvest Barbeque For Foster Families** took place on November 15 at the spacious **Holy Rosary-St. Richards** Hall, with 86 children and volunteers in attendance.

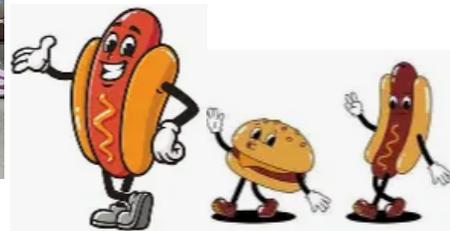
The children savored a sumptuous lunch prepared by Chef **Marcus Costa** of **BBQ Place**, enjoyed music by **Kathleen Smith's** choral group, and participated in games organized by **Mary Hamel**, all under the leadership of chairwoman **Rosie Perez-Lacayo**.



The event was made possible by the support of Citrus Family Care Network and generous sponsors BBQ Place, **Kiwanis Club of Miami**, **Lucas Alvarez LA6 Foundation**, **Leanna Roberts**, and **St. Louis Knights of Columbus**.

Each family left with a gift card and an armful of Teddy bears. What a joyous day of celebration together!





HAPPY
Thanksgiving

TURKEY
WITH ALL THE
TRIMMINGS!



Genesis Hopeful Haven's Thanksgiving celebration arrived early for 120 youth and staff, thanks to the charitable efforts of HHH partner, the **Kiwanis Club of Miami**. The Kiwanis's generous sponsorship enabled youth from GHH to enjoy a festive Thanksgiving luncheon with all the trimmings on November 11.

Kiwanis and HHH members **Peter Calhoun**, **Dr. Alecia Rodriguez**, **Kevin Ballard**, and **Eric Schwindeman** took part in the event, greeting the children and enjoying the festive treats. A special thank you goes to **Fritzie Saintorie**, **Mariah Vargas**, and the GHH team for making the afternoon so meaningful!



Director **Fritzie Saintoiry** expressed heartfelt appreciation, saying, "The Kiwanis Club's support is invaluable to our community, and we are especially thankful for their kindness during this holiday season."

MORE THANKSGIVING CELEBRATIONS



Hope Heart & Home Ministry collaborated with its corporate partners, **SOLO Printing** and **Citrus Family Care Network**, to organize and deliver a pallet of Thanksgiving groceries to foster families in the community. We extend

our appreciation to HHH's **Lorenzo Cosio** for sustaining this annual initiative with the SOLO team and to **Meli Bustamante-Prieto** of Citrus FCN for coordinating the pickup. This contribution was both timely and impactful.





THANKSGIVING MORNING



On Thanksgiving morning, **Hope, Heart & Home** kept a 7-year tradition of starting the day with Mass, followed by picking up a box of Thanksgiving treats thoughtfully prepared by the **Knights of Columbus** Council 13369 @ **St. John Neumann Catholic Church**.



The dinner, consisting of a turkey with all the side dishes (and chocolate turkey cookies), was then delivered to a foster family in Cutler Bay as part of Hope Heart & Home Ministry's Random Acts of Kindness Campaign.



We greatly appreciate the kindness of Knight's team with **Anthony Ortego, Rene Mesa, and Paul Banaszak** for providing this wonderful dinner!



Knights of Columbus





KIWANIS CLOSE OUT CALENDAR YEAR

The Kiwanis Club of Miami wrapped up 2025 at their board meeting on December 1, showcasing a remarkable year of community service for children. The Club sponsored outings for children in foster care including backpack drives, field trips, barbeques, lunches, parental events, CAREPORTAL donations, Random Acts of Kindness deliveries, 5K road race, and a fishing tournament.



The Club's membership is multi-talented with meeting attendees comprising an Olympic track star, former collegiate basketball and swimming standouts, 3 PhD holders, 4 Guardian ad Litem, 2 college professors, 5 youth leaders, 4 mentors, 3 authors, and 3 foster parents. And the Club continues to grow!



Kudos to this outstanding Kiwanis team for their dedication to children's needs.





Welcome to the



EXPLORE FOSTER
MIAMI

Stakeholder Breakfast



December 3:
Another **Explore Foster Miami Stakeholder Breakfast** is in the books! **Hope Heart & Home** sent **Rosa A. Perez-Lacayo, Alecia Rodriguez, Eric Schwindeman, Susan Dingler, Kathleen Smith, and Liz Arquimbau & Tony Anon** to join 87 other faith-based advocates at this joyous seasonal event. Congrats to **Panos Kourtesis, Jessica Lancaster,** and **Bertha Pinos** for their organizational efforts!







MERRY CHRISTMAS

HOPE, HEART & HOME CELEBRATES WITH KIDS

The **Kiwanis Club of Miami** sponsored a festive holiday event at the **WOW Center** on December 5. In attendance were Kiwanis members **Dr. Alecia Rodriguez**, **Maria Romanek** and Family, and **Rosy** and **Eric Schwindeman**. Congratulations are in

WOW HOLIDAY VILLAGE



order for **Arlene Peterson**, **Lourdes Mattamoris**, staff and clients on the pageants and musical entertainment.



December 12 **HHH CELEBRATES with SFFAPA**

The **South Florida Foster and Adoptive Parent Association**, a partner of Hope Heart & Home Ministry, hosted a remarkable Christmas festival at the Gold Coast Train Museum this year.

In attendance were HHH Trustees **Ron (Santa) Wasserman** and **Patricia Wasserman, David Hamel & Mary Hamel**, and **Dr. Alecia Rodriguez**, who participated in the festivities with their families. Kudos to Minette Tosar Rivero and Denise Beeman Sasiain for putting together an outstanding holiday event!





SOLO PRINTING TOY DRIVE



The Legacy endures! **Lorenzo Cosio** from **Hope Heart & Home** and the team at **SOLO Printing** donate toys again this year to kids in foster care.

Citrus Family Care Network will make deliveries next week, spreading holiday cheer. Gratitude is expressed to SOLO Printing for their magnanimous gesture!



DEC 23 **HOLY ROSARY - ST. RICHARDS CHRISTMAS DRIVE**

Lovely morning gathering toys, teddy bears & clothing from **Hope Heart & Home** partner **Holy Rosary - St. Richards** for Citrus Family Care Network & Catholic Charities to deliver to foster families before Christmas!



Thank you **Kathleen Smith** & Propelled In Christ Ministry for organizing this and the generosity of HRSR parishioners on this toy drive! Great to meet Danielle Anderson from Catholic Charities.



BRIDGE CHRISTMAS

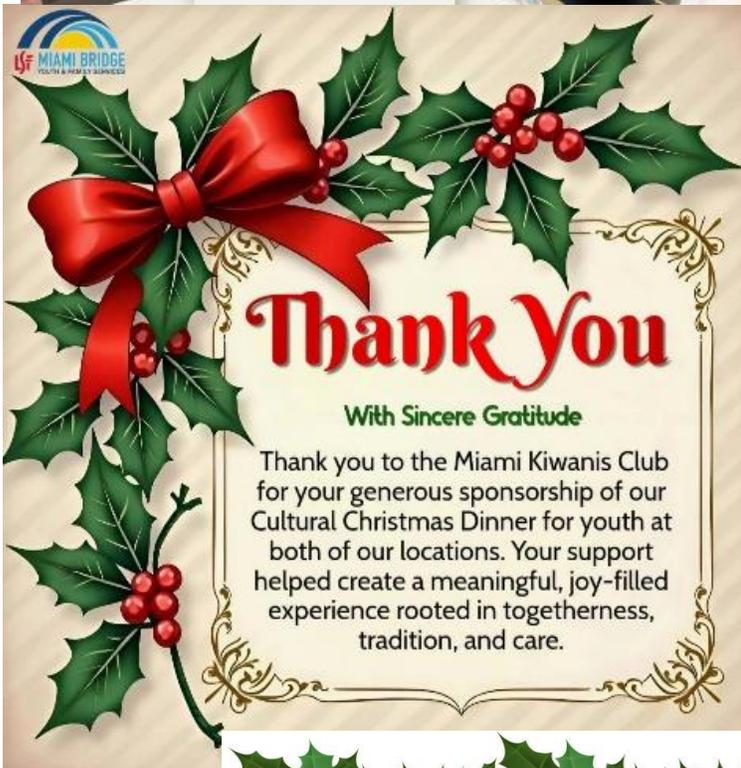


PARTY



Two wonderful year end celebrations with our children & families. Both sponsored by **Hope Heart & Home** partner, **Kiwanis Club of Miami**.

HHH and Kiwanis **Valerie Van Ostran** delivered Christmas gift cards to two families on the **CarePortal Florida** platform. HHH and Kiwanis **Dr. Alecia Rodriguez** organized a Christmas feast for 40 youth at two **Miami Bridge** locations in Miami-Dade. Many thanks to these dedicated holiday servants!



LAST VISITS OF 2025



The **Hope Heart & Home** Ministry's Random Acts of Kindness Campaign concluded 2025 on a high note, bringing festive cheer to families in Miami-Dade through the efforts of dedicated HHH teams.

Mary Walton's southern team,

comprising **Maria Romanek** and her family, successfully delivered Christmas joy to their own family. Meanwhile, **Bernadett Horvath** and her BDW team made multiple deliveries to bio families in the north.

Many thanks to our sponsor **Kiwanis Club of Miami** while we extend our gratitude to these ladies for their leadership, service, and kindness throughout the year.





HHH HONORS KIMBERLY LOPEZ

Hope Heart & Home Ministry benefited from a unique perspective on recent developments in child welfare on our December monthly virtual call, courtesy of **Kimberly Lopez**, Lead Foster Care Recruiter at **Citrus Family Care Network** and a long-standing HHH supporter.

Kimberly shared her personal story of trauma in care and the positive impact of being placed in a nurturing home. As a recruiter, she stresses the need for improved networking and collaboration to raise awareness about the demand for foster homes for teens and sibling groups.



We sincerely thank Kimberly for her twenty-five years of dedicated service to our community.



We appreciate you.

We appreciate the heck out of you!

