



# children's flight of hope

WE FLY FOR THEIR LIVES



**Home** is where we hope for a  
healthier tomorrow.

2020 Annual Report

## Our Mission

Children's Flight of Hope offers hope and healing to families by providing air transportation to children in need of specialized medical care.

“

CFOH has allowed us to continue to receive uninterrupted, top of the line medical care for our little girl and has taken a huge financial burden and worry off of our plates. We are forever thankful to CFOH for what they provide for our family and families like ours.

— Tamarin, Gabby's mom



*Gabby flies from North Carolina to Boston Children's Hospital.*

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## Dear Friends of Children's Flight of Hope,

At the end of 2019 we were flying high. We closed the books on our best year ever and saw limitless possibilities in the year ahead.

While 2020's possibilities took a sudden and sharp turn, we still have much to celebrate. We celebrate that in a year like no other, we flew at least one mission each day. We celebrate that we were able to honor requests from children such as Jonas, Amelia, and Zeke, whose stories are highlighted in the pages ahead. We celebrate that when families facing sudden financial hardship needed us, we welcomed them to CFOH. And while some children could not fly due to COVID-19 circumstances such as border closings, hot spots, and increased risk, we celebrate that every family knows we are standing by, eager to bring hope and healing to their medical journey.

Perhaps above all, we celebrate the incredible community of support that stands up for our children. That support allows us to fly children and their families to much needed critical care and back **home** again." Our gratitude for you is endless. As we reflect and learn from a difficult, yet immensely rewarding year, we celebrate our 30th anniversary of flying for their lives. As we move forward, every lesson, experience, mission completed, child's story, and word of appreciation motivates us to do more.

Thanks to you we are wide-eyed with excitement for the possibilities ahead. Thanks to you we stand strong for our children, their futures, and the future of Children's Flight of Hope.

With hope,



Pat Nelli  
Executive Director



Jennifer Wade  
Board Chair



Jenn and Pat



## Our Board of Directors & Staff

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Executive Director

**Stephanie Thompson, MS**

Director of Mission Delivery

**Lori Smith, M.Ed.**

Sr. Director of Development  
& Operations

## Our Year in Review

In a year filled with obstacles, we flew an average of more than one mission per day. We are proud of the impact each flight had on each child.

### Mission Stats

**39**  
destination  
hospitals

#### Top Five States

North Carolina  
Florida  
Texas  
Alabama  
California

#### Top Five Hospitals

Boston Children's Hospital  
Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center  
Shriner's Hospital for Children—Boston  
Shriner's Hospital for Children—Galveston  
Cincinnati Children's Medical Center

**392**  
total flights

**137**  
children  
assisted

International

29%

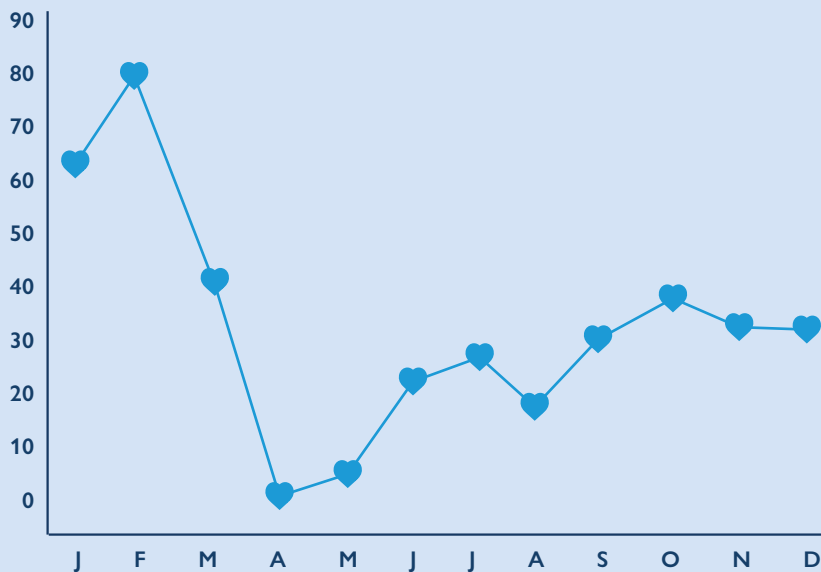
71%

Domestic



## 2020 Monthly Flights

Overcoming COVID-19 impact



# Individual & Corporate Donors

Generous individuals and corporations help bring our mission to life. With their support, we are able to purchase tickets on commercial airlines so our families can travel to treatment as directly, safely and comfortably as possible. When our most medically vulnerable children are unable to fly commercially and as resources allow, we also arrange private flights. We maximize efficiency and impact with gratitude to the companies and people who support our mission.

## American Airlines

American Airlines is our primary corporate partner, donating an incredible 30 million miles to our mission in 2020. We also work together to administer their “Miles for Our Well-Being” program and bring children from other countries to charitable medical partners in the United States. Day after day, year after year, the generosity American Airlines shows toward children with medical needs elevates our mission to greater heights.

“

By supporting CFOH, we care for hundreds of children who may not have otherwise received support. We are proud to have provided the opportunity for CFOH to expand its impact internationally so that children all over the world can benefit and be able to receive treatment no matter their geographical location. Together we are changing lives and bringing hope to children across the globe.

—Griffin González  
Head of Global Charitable Initiatives, Corporate Giving & Cause Marketing





Southwest Airlines donated 400 one-way vouchers towards our mission in 2020 through their annual Medical Transportation Support Grant. Their generous contribution gives us even broader reach for families needing flight assistance.



We have children who travel for medical care many times a year. Children’s Flight of Hope makes our trips seamless, so that travel is the least of our worries when we have to travel for appointments or surgeries. People always ask me how we do it all and certainly our relationship with CFOH is a huge factor in this—they are essential to our family and the health of my children. We wouldn’t know what to do without them in our lives!

—Brittan, Molly’s mom



*Paul and Jennifer Mills  
Donors*



*Rob and Elizabeth Gooding  
Donors*

## Amelia, 18



**Home:** Kissimmee, FL

**Place of Care:**

Memorial Sloan Kettering  
Cancer Center, New York, NY

**Treatment For:**

Malignant Hepatocellular  
Carcinoma (liver cancer)

31

total flights  
in 2020

Amelia was our most  
frequent flyer in 2020,  
traveling every three weeks.

**Feb. 2020** After two major surgeries, Amelia's cancer returned in a rarer form, requiring specialty treatment 1,000 miles from home.

**Mar. 2020** Amelia's first flight with CFOH.

**Dec. 2020** Amelia's doctors shared the good news that her treatments were working and the disease was finally stabilized.

*Amelia continues to fly every three weeks in her battle against cancer.*



At first we were unsure if we were able to handle this, but thanks to CFOH, we have been able to meet with her physician every three weeks. We are eternally grateful for the assistance and warm help we experienced working with CFOH.

—Steven, Amelia's dad





## Jonas, 2

**Home:** Cartegena, Colombia

**Place of Care:**

Shriner's Hospitals for Children – Cincinnati

**Treatment For:**

Burn injuries

We were able to accomplish more than we initially expected for Jonas. In large part due to his extended stay, we were able to offer him additional procedures. Referred to us by INTI, a Colombian organization that supports burn survivors, it's unlikely that Jonas would have been able to receive the services he received at Shriners had he remained in Colombia.

—Lori Boerger, Social Worker/Case Manager



**Feb. 2020** 15-month old Jonas and his mother traveled more than 2,000 miles for treatment after a house fire injury.

**Mar. 2020** Due to COVID-19, international borders in Jonas's home country of Colombia closed.

**Aug. 2020** Jonas completed his designated treatment, but travel restrictions prevented a return home. His extended stay allowed him to receive additional treatments for scar tissue as he grew.

**Nov. 2020** After multiple attempts to secure travel, Jonas and his mother finally returned home just before his second birthday.





## Zeke, 10

**Home:** Naples, FL

**Place of Care:**

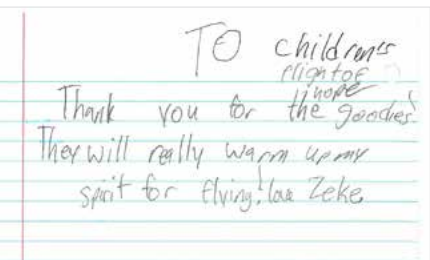
Texas Children's Hospital  
Houston, TX

**Treatment For:**

Pylomixoid Astrocytoma  
(brain tumor)



**Zeke's family traveled every two months for two years, completing 34 flights in 2019 and 2020.**



**2014–2017** At 3-years old, Zeke had his first brain surgery to remove a dangerous tumor. After continued growth, he had another brain surgery at age 5, followed by chemotherapy.

**Feb. 2019** With narrowing treatment options, Zeke was admitted to a clinical trial 900 miles from home. Zeke and his dad began travel every month for treatment.

**Jun. 2020** Zeke completed his clinical trial, successfully beginning to shrink his tumor.

*Zeke will continue to fly quarterly for the next five years for monitoring and treatment.*

We so appreciate the assistance you provided to make Zeke's clinical trial for his brain tumor possible. The trial proved successful in stabilizing his tumor and your flights made that a possibility. I can't state how appreciative we are for how you have come alongside of our family. You are such a blessing and make the cancer journey just a little easier.

–Derek, Zeke's dad



**For the children we serve, many advocates make the path to treatment and back home possible.**



***Parents***

Tirelessly seeking the best for their children.

***Medical Providers***

Turning hopes for healing and recovery into reality.



***Airline Partners***

Generously taking our mission to new heights.

***Social Workers***

Connecting families to us and verifying need.



***Volunteers***

Supporting our daily work and events.

***Donors***

Ensuring that children keep flying so hope never fails.



***Board of Directors***

Leading us with purpose and direction.



## Our Fiscal Responsibility

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With COVID-19 affecting both our vulnerable children's ability to fly and key hospital partners' ability to receive them, mission delivery and the associated expenses were understandably lower in 2020. However, for the nearly **400 missions** for **143 families** who could not pause care, the impact of our mission was immeasurable.

The pandemic also significantly impacted our traditional revenue streams, with most fundraising activities either limited or cancelled. However, our largest fundraising event of the year – Denim and Diamonds – shifted to virtual and our supporters shifted with us! Gross revenue nearly set a record and with reduced expenses, net profit surpassed that of 2019 and mitigated the impact of a financially challenging year.

In addition, we jumped quickly on the first round of PPP funding, receiving a relatively modest but meaningful loan which has been forgiven. We also received new grant and foundation funding and strategized on continued diversification of our funding streams. As is always the case, we remained committed to a high level of fiscal responsibility. Our FY 2019 audit reflected that commitment with **overhead spend at 19%**, well below the industry best practice benchmark of 25%.

Important lessons were learned in 2020 and we are taking those forward with a strong vision and commitment to endless possibilities. Our ever-expanding CFOH family is counting on us, and with our incredible community of support, we will continue to move forward together.



**Pat Nelli**

Executive Director  
*pat@cfoh.org*



**Lori Smith**

Senior Director of  
Development & Operations  
*lori@cfoh.org*



**Stephanie Thompson**

Director of Mission Delivery  
*missions@cfoh.org*

**Home is where we work to give  
our kids a better future.**



## Fundraising Events

### 2021 SAVE THE DATE

Sunday, May 2 & Monday, May 3  
North Ridge Country Club  
Raleigh, NC



For the past 20 years, the CFOH Golf Classic has been a cornerstone event. While our 2020 Wheels Up party and golf tournament were canceled due to COVID, we look forward to the safe return of our tournament on May 3, 2021, at North Ridge Country Club. Our Wheels Up party is scheduled for the evening of May 2; please check our website for updates or contact the CFOH staff.



### 2021 SAVE THE DATE

Saturday, September 18  
North Hills Midtown Park  
Raleigh, NC

Hops for Hope hit its peak in 2019 when the large-scale festival moved to North Hills Midtown Park. Records were set with attendance and ticket sales, and new components such as a VIP area, live music, food trucks, and vendor village were added to this much-loved and family-friendly event.

In 2020, with crowd restrictions in place and breweries hit hard, Hops for Hope was re-imagined. For the first time, all brewery partners sold their teams'



# DENIM & Diamonds HOME EDITION

## 2021 SAVE THE DATE

Friday, November 5, 2021  
The Pavilion at the Angus Barn,  
Raleigh, NC

Although we couldn't gather in the beautiful Pavilion at the Angus Barn in 2020, our Denim & Diamonds Home Edition virtual event was a huge success. The impactful stories of Justin, Aubreigh, and Yash reminded us that not only does CFOH transport children to medical care, but we also return them home to heal with their loved ones. Our sponsors, online raffle and auction, and appeal raised more than \$530,000 – an astounding show of support by our generous donors.

Denim & Diamonds 2021 will reflect on three decades of impact and look forward to what lies ahead. You won't want to miss it!

beers in their own taprooms, then generously donated a percentage of sales back to their teams. Together with our sponsors, brewery partners and corporate teams, an incredible \$91,000 was raised for CFOH! In 2021, we anticipate returning to North Hills Midtown Park for Hops for Hope's 7th Anniversary on September 18, and we hope to see you there. Visit [www.trianglehops4hope.org](http://www.trianglehops4hope.org) to find out how to participate!



The "Incredible Beer Makers" team from IBM at their partner brewery, Compass Rose.



## Our Donor Support

### **Admirals**

American Airlines  
Southwest Airlines

Barbara and Abel Zalberg  
Joe Elphick  
Tara and Mark Rein

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3C! Packaging  
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Jane and John Lewis  
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Gordana and Tomislav Vujec

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Adwerx  
American Airlines Kids are  
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Apex Sunrise Rotary Foundation  
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Duke Children's Hospital & Health Center

Enterprise Holdings Foundation  
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IBM Employees  
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### ***In-Kind Donors***

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Deborah and Harold Nunn  
Scharme and Lee Prevost  
Gordana and Tomislav Vujec



## children's flight of hope

*Thank you to all those who gave their time,  
treasure, and talent to Children's Flight of Hope  
in 2020. You kept our mission soaring.*

*As we celebrate our 30th year of impact in 2021,  
we invite you to join us on our journey to provide  
hope and healing.*

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