

FROM THE BOARD CHAIR FAST FORWARD *by Tim Wayman*



After two years of pandemic-related challenges, **FamilyForward is ideally positioned for success in 2022 and beyond!** While many families served by our two-year program suffered illness, job loss and extraordinary financial struggles during this period, most have regained their footing toward reaching program objectives. They are making progress, encouraged and empowered every step of the way by the volunteer mentors and staff at FamilyForward.

We have also formalized and expanded our short-term financial-assistance program. Originally centered on those facing pandemic-related challenges, more families now qualify for this short-term help (usually lasting 1-2 months). Working in coordination with other agencies, we are helping these families get back on track.

Our executive director, Erica Chianelli, brings energy, creativity and fresh perspectives to her new position. Erica is leading the charge to increase outreach efforts to identify more in-need, qualified families as well as new sources of income.

For the first time in 11 years, FamilyForward will host a golf outing, on June 2. Our annual **Giving Hope** fundraising event will be held in person rather than virtually, on October 2. Additionally, we are seeking to expand our board of directors with community leaders and advocates for low-income families while creating a separate advisory board to attract new ambassadors to our cause.

Of course, none of this is possible without you — the townships, churches, foundations, businesses, individuals and other entities that provide financial support. **A huge thank-you for your continued generosity and commitment!**

CONNECT WITH FAMILYFORWARD

WE'RE NOW ON INSTAGRAM! *Follow us on social media*



Help spread the word about FamilyForward by following us on Instagram and Liking and following our Facebook page! Find us @FamForward. Subscribe to our YouTube channel as well (search for FamilyForward). With your help, we can reach more people and assist more families!

Hover your smartphone camera over this code for instant access to FamilyForward news and events!



SELECT FAMILYFORWARD FOR **amazon**smile DONATIONS

We hope you will consider designating FamilyForward as your AmazonSmile charity. It is a simple, no-cost way to support our important work to help families every time you shop on Amazon. Visit smile.amazon.com or scan the code above to get started. **Be sure to select the Arlington Heights FamilyForward.** You can also activate your selection on your Amazon app on your phone (Settings or Programs & Features menu). Reach out if you need help! You must be logged in to smile.amazon.com when you do your shopping. **AmazonSmile will donate 0.5% of your eligible purchases to FamilyForward. Thank you!**

MISSION STATEMENT

Strengthening northwest suburban families to achieve financial stability and independence through mentoring, rental assistance and support services.

STAFF

Executive Director
Erica Chianelli

Program Manager
Sarah Harte

Case Manager
Pam Van De Walle

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Tim Wayman

Vice-Chair
Greg Ford

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Lou Walton

FAMILYFORWARD

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Special thanks to Elk Grove Township, Palatine Township, Schaumburg Township, Wheeling Township, and the Village of Arlington Heights for providing significant financial and other assistance to our client families.

FAMILY SUCCESS STORY

HOUSEHOLD BUDGET HELPS MOM REDUCE DEBT



Stock photo from Pexels

into her apartment, Vicky began weekly meetings with her volunteer mentors.

Vicky's mentors helped her make a list of all her bills and their due dates. Looking at bank statements and credit card bills, Vicky's mentors helped her identify where her money was going and where savings could be had. This was the first time in her life that Vicky created a household budget. Next Vicky was ready to tackle the job search. Like many single moms, her employability was restricted by her childcare. With ongoing guidance and encouragement from her mentors, Vicky eventually secured a new job earning \$4 per hour more than when she entered our program. Moreover, the new job offered a consistent, reliable schedule.

Vicky's mentors also helped her develop a plan to take advantage of the FF rent subsidy and use that money to pay down her debt. When she graduated from our program, Vicky's debt was almost totally eliminated, her credit score improved, and she was earning enough to pay all her bills on time.

FamilyForward helped Vicky achieve financial stability, and that stability benefited the entire family unit. When they entered our program, Vicky's family was in crisis. After two years of hard work, they have a plan for a brighter future. *This story has been abridged. Read the entire article at family-forward.org/blog.*

WE LOVE OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY!

The support of these and other local businesses helps strengthen our ongoing mission to equip parents to build a better future.



We are grateful to **Kilwins Arlington Heights** (16 W. Campbell St.), for selecting FamilyForward for its February month of giving! Kilwins donated \$144 from its sales of ice cream quarts throughout the month (\$1 for every quart). Additional thanks to **Navigant Law Group, LLC** (navigantlaw.com), for the matching contribution, and for rounding up to \$200!

The dine-and-share event at **Lou Malnati's** was a success on March 8, bringing in nearly \$155. Heartfelt thanks to all who participated, and to the three Lou Malnati's locations that donated 20% of their sales to help FamilyForward families!



MENTORS INSTILL CONFIDENCE, ENCOURAGE STABILITY



Mentors Tim Thompson and Susie Pierce

When discussing their work with Samantha, both mentors visibly reflect their supportive attitude of encouragement toward their client. “When Samantha puts her mind to things, she can be very effective at getting things done,” said Susie. Tim added, “Samantha has faced some significant, unexpected financial challenges that, on the surface, seemed overwhelming. However, by helping to organize her finances, we were able to create a realistic plan to work through these challenges in a few short months.”

Support and flexibility yield results

Being a mentor does not come without challenges. Gaining a client’s trust is vital. Without trust and transparency, this transformative process is difficult. Honest, open communication is critical. It also takes commitment — not only from the mentor, but also from the client. Susie and Tim are huge assets to FamilyForward. Their patience, perseverance and dedication to our mission and their client are remarkable. “Everyone can help someone,” Susie said. “I felt I had the life experience to work with FamilyForward clients to help them become more independent.” Tim echoed that sentiment. “At FamilyForward, I believe we are there to assist our clients to build the necessary skills so that they can manage on their own.” And that is what FamilyForward is all about. Investing in people and transforming lives, one family at a time. *This story has been abridged.*

Read the entire article at family-forward.org/blog.

FamilyForward’s unique two-year program to support low-income, working families in the northwest suburbs is only possible because of our dedicated volunteer mentors. Susie Pierce and Tim Thompson are two of those dedicated mentors.

Together, they have been mentoring “Samantha” to support her on her journey toward financial stability and independence.

FamilyForward provides training to volunteer mentors when they begin, and ongoing support from our professional case managers throughout the two-year period. Susie and Tim were partnered up to work with Samantha based on their individual talents. Their differing gifts and styles complement each other well and are very much aligned with the ultimate goal of helping Samantha choose healthier behaviors to make better personal life decisions to become more financially independent.

THANK YOU, WOMEN OF ST. JAMES!



Women of St. James Leadership Team

supporting them not just monetarily, but with words of encouragement like Mother’s Day cards and prayers. Holding these families up is a true blessing while they journey towards future independence.”

FamilyForward is sincerely grateful to have the support of so many faith-community groups and institutions. Their continued generosity has enabled us to fulfill our mission to help working families in financial need.

FamilyForward is grateful for the committed generosity of the Women of St. James over the years. The WOSJ is a community of Catholic women from St. James Parish in Arlington Heights who are committed to growing and sharing their faith through sisterhood and service. FamilyForward has been the beneficiary of such service for many years, as the WOSJ has annually donated thousands of dollars in gifts and gift cards for Christmas to our families. WOSJ volunteers also write Mother’s Day cards to our families with lovely, encouraging messages that we give to clients in early May along with gift cards.

Said Sandra Chaplin, WOSJ ministry lead, “The Women of St. James is humbled to support such a wonderful community resource like FamilyForward!

It fills our hearts to know that we can help families in our community by

FamilyForward

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COMING EVENTS

FamilyFOREward Golf Outing

THURSDAY, JUNE 2

Old Orchard Country Club | 700 W. Rand Rd., Mt. Prospect, IL 60056

Gather your foursome now and get registered for an exciting day of golf (scramble format) for a great cause. All are welcome, from expert golfers to novices. This day will be all about fun, with proceeds directly impacting the lives of FamilyForward families! See you on the links!



SCHEDULE

10:00 AM: Check-in Begins
11:00 AM: Shot Gun Start
4:00 PM: Program, Prizes & Buffet Dinner

REGISTRATION

Foursome: \$600
Individual Golfer: \$160

Register by May 20!



Register today! Scan this code with your smartphone or visit family-forward.org/golf-outing.



SAVE THE DATE

Giving Hope is coming! Please plan to join us:

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 2 | 12:30 - 3:30 PM
Chevy Chase Country Club, Wheeling

This is our biggest event of the year — an afternoon of fundraising and fun, all to help further our mission to strengthen local low-income, working families. Stay tuned for all the details.