

Healing Hearts



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"Why I Run" by Hannah Licea

The 2018 Chevron Houston Marathon was my first experience participating in a full Marathon. For four years previously, I had been involved with the Half-Marathon. However, my involvement with the Chevron Houston Marathon extends far past my more recent experiences. I grew up watching my mom run the marathon every year. I remember getting up so early, running to catch my mom at the next mile marker she was supposed to reach. I would have a giant sparkly poster in one hand, so she couldn't miss us, and a supply bag in the other full of gum, aspirin, and GU. She and my father met by chance while running the Chevron Houston Marathon. Most people don't consider marathons to be a particularly romantic experience to encounter a future spouse, but when it's meant to be, it's meant to be.



Twenty something years later, there I was watching the news on my first day of school for my Junior year of college (Harvey had hit Houston and the flood waters were rising). I couldn't help but call my mom every few hours to make sure our house was still dry. I felt so helpless being so far away. It's astounding; you know it doesn't take much to make us vulnerable. There are so many experiences that can happen in a heartbeat, take twenty-six point two miles, fifty-one inches of water, or just one heart attack. The first experience of true vulnerability I encountered in my life occurred when I was just six years old. My father had a heart attack. His death changed the course of the rest of my life as the shape of my family shifted and adapted to its new roles. I had to learn a few things about grief and resiliency early on to allow myself to experience and appreciate the rest of my childhood. Later on with Harvey, I had to find a way to grieve with my city being far away physically but very close emotionally as I constantly stayed in touch with my family and gave them all the strength and hope that I could. It was in these moments of despair, I decided to do something and Run for a Reason. I had heard about this program many times as I visited the expos with my mother, cheered her on from the sidelines, and even received occasional encouraging emails. It wasn't until this

time though that I felt compelled to give back all that I could to the City of Houston and my family. Familiar with the amazing services of Bo's Place that I experienced after my father's passing, I knew I had to run for Bo's Place.



Team Bo's Place was so inviting and helpful on those first days after signing up to run my first ever marathon. I created my own profile with the Run for a Reason program and was quickly able to start my own fundraising page. I wrote out my story for the first time connecting my love of family with my love of running in the biography section, so people knew the passion that was the backbone for this fundraising program. Throughout my training, I frequently shared my progress with pictures or a little blog post with an attached link to my fundraising page. Before I knew it, I surpassed my personal goal and created a new one. It was so inspiring to see so many individuals in my life give during this process that it continued to spur me on through those particularly grueling days of marathon training.

The morning of January 14th came quickly though and somehow through the hard work of training, the great generosity of friends, and the legacy of my father, I was able to fundraise over \$500 and run my first marathon just under a 4:30 time. The human spirit is more resilient than anything you can ever imagine. Running 26.2 miles is nothing when you allow yourself to be vulnerable enough to experience life at its fullest and give back to others with your greatest. Run Team Bo's Place!



Back to School Wish List Drive

Just as children stock up on supplies to prepare for the school year, Bo's Place stocks up on supplies for our fall grief support programs. Please consider visiting our Amazon Wish Lists. Your donations help us continue to provide grief support services to our community free of charge. We are currently seeking items for several projects and programs, so click each box to see our current needs:



Redecorating
Activity Rooms

Our
Programs

Camp Healing Hearts/
Campamento Sanando
Corazones

By purchasing directly from the Wish List, Bo's Place will receive your donation in the mail. Please add your name and address in the memo/gift receipt so that we can acknowledge your purchase.



hearts of hope
BO'S PLACE LUNCHEON 2019

The annual Hearts of Hope Luncheon is an opportunity to share with the community at large just how impactful the grief support provided at Bo's Place is to bereaved families. What we know is that "grief only exists where loved lived first." Co-Chairmen **Courtney and Jeremy Brynes** and **Claudine and David Hartland**, along with the Bo's Place staff and Board of Directors, are excited to share with you a glimpse into some of these incredible love stories. Mark your calendar and plan to join us on February 12, 2019 at the Royal Sonesta.

At the event, Bo's Place will also honor **Kathy O'Neil** with the Robin Bush Award for her tireless support of children's causes throughout the years. Bo's Place has been fortunate to have Kathy be a part of our story for many years. Kathy has served in a variety of roles from Development Director to serving as a member of the Capital Campaign Committee and member of the Board of Directors. We are delighted to be honoring Kathy at this year's luncheon.

In addition, this year's speaker will be **Will Reeve**. Will is a commentator for ESPN and a member of the Board of Directors for the Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation, the leading organization in finding a cure for spinal cord injuries and providing care for individuals living with paralysis.

Having lost his parents, Christopher and Dana Reeve, by age thirteen, he will share candid insights on his experiences and how they have shaped him, and how grief has the power to unite and fortify us all.

We hope you will join us and reserve your ticket or table today!

Hearts of Hope Luncheon
Tuesday, February 12, 2019
Royal Sonesta Hotel

RESERVE YOUR TABLE



Upcoming Training Opportunity

In the wake of events such as the Santa Fe school shooting, it is more critical than ever that we join together as a community and share information on childhood bereavement. Bo's Place is proud to partner with several local organizations to bring a conference to Houston this Fall specifically focused on supporting children and families after traumatic death.



Register now for this two-day conference, *Restorative Support for Families After Traumatic Death: Building a Bereavement-Informed Community*, which will be held on September 21-22 at Texas Children's Pavilion for Women. The conference lineup includes both national and local speakers and various panel presentations to cover topics such as: bereavement after suicide, community supports post-death, spirituality, cultural competence, and the integration of theory and practice with bereaved children. Bo's Place Program Director Marian Mankin, LCSW will participate on a panel: *A Continuum of Care for Youth Exposed to Traumatic Death: the Utility of Community-Academic Partnerships* and Bo's Place clinicians Cristina Flores, LCSW, and Flor Guebara, LCSW will participate on a panel: *Cultural Competencies in Working with Bereaved Youth Exposed to Death*. In addition, a live client interview with Dr. Ted Rynearson and experiential self-care session with Sandra López, LCSW, ACSW, DCSW will enhance the learning experience.

The intended audience for this conference includes: social service providers, nurses, funeral directors, victims' assistance workers, police, prosecutors, clergy, clinicians, students and physicians. There is also an opportunity for students and volunteers to attend the conference at a reduced rate in exchange for volunteer hours.

**Support for Families After Traumatic Death:
Building a Bereavement-Informed Community
Friday, September 21 - Saturday, September 22
Texas Children's Hospital Pavilion for Women**

REGISTER NOW



22nd Annual Symposium on Children's Grief

Bo's Place staff members were once again highly engaged in The National Alliance for Grieving Children's (NAGC) Symposium on Children's Grief in San Antonio on June 28-30, 2018. Bo's Place staff attended workshops to learn about new research, innovative programming, and best practices to help us continue to enhance our work with grieving children and families.



Executive Director, Mary Beth Staine, attended the NAGC Annual Board Meeting as a board member and also received special recognition for her hard work as president of the board in 2016 and 2017. Communications Director Courtney Varner and Program Director Marian Mankin, LCSW participated in a preconference presentation with StoryCorps, sharing information about our recent collaboration.

Clinicians Cristina Flores, LCSW and Flor Guebara, LCSW and Mary Beth Staine presented a workshop entitled *Becoming Bilingual: How to Implement Bilingual Grief Support Programs*. Clinician Lori Bokone, MEd presented a workshop entitled *Encouraging Desired Behavior in a Support Group Setting*. Marian Mankin also led the Program Director's Forum and Cristina Flores and Flor Guebara co-led the Spanish Speaking Programming Forum.

Bo's Place staff also shared three innovative activities in the Interactive Activity Sharing Showcase, which you can download here:

Snapshots
of Us

Día de los Muertos
Masks

Oh, the Places You'll Go
Suitcase

All Bo's Place attendees greatly enjoyed sharing ideas and making connections with others who work with grieving children from across the country.



Happenings

Thank you to everyone who supported Bo's Place by voting for us at **OKRA Charity Saloon** in May and continuing your patronage in June! On July 18, Bo's Place was the recipient of June proceeds in the amount of \$15,520!



On July 18, mothers and daughters from the **National Charity League** (Memorial and Houston Heart chapter) created decorations for our "Peace Out" event, helping to create the calming atmosphere of peacefulness and relaxation.

On July 18, Bo's Place families enjoyed our "**Peace Out**" event, relaxing their minds and relaxing their bodies physically with yoga, deep breathing, coloring, mindfulness exercises, and a guided imagery "walk on the beach" exercise.





Thank you to **Grand View Funeral Home and Memorial Park** for sponsoring and serving a meal to our families on July 24!

Rina Ocampo and Denise Garcia attended the 40th **Belle Blackwell Annual School Nurses' Conference** on July 25 and enjoyed sharing how Bo's Place is helping heal hearts!



July 26-27, Marian Mankin represented Bo's Place at the **Bluebonnet Council**, an annual gathering of children's bereavement organizations in Texas. This year's council was held in Austin and was hosted by The Austin Center for Grief and Loss and The Christi Center. Thank you to our Austin friends for the hospitality! See y'all next year!



Bo's Place Grief Support Services

At Bo's Place, we believe that enabling grieving families to share their experiences with each other helps these families navigate the grief journey and move towards hope and healing. We offer free Grief Support Groups in English and Spanish to families and individuals.

If you or someone you know would like information about Bo's Place Grief Support Groups for children, families, and adults, click [here](#) or call 713.942.8339.

Bo's Place exists to enhance the lives of those who have experienced the death of a loved one.
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