Thank You from CYP Graduate, Brady Bloom

For those of you who don’t know me, my name is Brady Bloom. I’ve been a member of the AACY since the beginning of 6th grade, so over 7 years! To me, being a part of the AACY has been like being a part of a big family. You have all been here to support me, and assist me and my family through a lot over these years. This has been so very appreciated! Everything you have all done has enabled me to help assist at home, while having the support and encouragement to do well in school and beyond. I can’t thank the staff and volunteers of the AACY enough for all of these years by my side! You have made a huge impact on my ability to succeed, even during the challenging times over these last years. As caregivers, we all have different challenges other than being just a regular kid, but you have been there every step of the way to ensure we all have support, as well as fun activities. Thank you for that.

I have been a participant in many, many activities and events over the last 7 years and they have all been so much fun. I really loved the activities and also that someone was able to drive me back and forth so that I was able to enjoy them. And during COVID, I was happy that you were still able to continue doing great activities via Zoom. Thank you for caring for us while we all care for someone else at home. It means a lot and I’m sure I can speak for every youth caregiver here when I say this: Being a part of the AACY has truly been a huge part of being successful emotionally, scholastically, and beyond. The support you give us all helps us in so many ways; both small and really big. Thank you so much for all you do! It truly does make a difference! That being said, I look forward to still being with the AACY as an alumni. If I can make a difference for someone else, just like others have done for me, it would be my pleasure to do so!

Thank you.

Brady Bloom (pictured above with his mother and grandmother is a 2021 West Boca Raton High School Graduate who will attend FAU in the Fall to major in Biology)
As part of its ongoing, continuous mission to recognize, champion and support caregiving youth, AACY held its first ever VIRTUAL Caregiving Youth Institute (CYI) Conference on Thursday, April 22, 2021.

This mini preview to the planned in-person conference on November 4th, featured national and international experts in the areas of Caregiving Youth as it relates to the Institute’s four tenets of C.A.R.E.: Connection, Advocacy, Research and Education. More than 100 people registered to attend.

AACY President & Founder Dr. Connie Siskowski organized and facilitated the conference along with Dr. Ann Faraone, AACY’s Director of Education Services.

“Thanks to the support of presenting sponsors AvalonBay Communities and Schmidt Family Foundation, we were able to host a virtual conference that reached participants in three other countries, in addition to the dozens of national attendees,” Dr. Siskowski said.

Expert presenters for the Virtual Conference:
- Jodi O’Donnell-Ames, Hope Loves Company
- Hannah Hutler-Boyd, Camp Corral
- AACY North County Team Leader & Family Specialist Cinthia Joas, MSW, RCSWI
- Dr. Richard Lindsay, University of Virginia
- Legislative Aide Abby Ross from Senator Lori Berman’s Office
- Felicia Goldstein, J.D., District Chief of Staff for Congresswoman Lois Frankel’s Office
- Dr. Julia Belkowitz, University of Miami Miller School of Medicine
- Dr. Betsy Olson, UNC-Chapel Hill
- Dr. Melinda Kavanaugh, University of Wisconsin
- Dr. Mary Claire Mucenic, School District of Palm Beach County
- Tiffane Evans, Florida Department of Adolescent Health
- Kaylin Jean-Louis, a 10th grade Caregiving Youth from Tallahassee who founded Kaylin’s Caring Konnection

During the conference it was also announced that AACY along with Camp Corral, Hope Loves Company, Kaylin’s Caring Konnection, Inc. and Kids Are Caregivers Too, would host their First Annual USA Caregiving Youth Connect via Zoom on Friday, May 7.

USA Caregivers Youth Connect allowed us to connect youth from all over the country, and with one another so they can share their stories and support each other.

Stay tuned for more information on our next Caregivers Youth Connect event!

AACY in the News

We are so grateful for the recent coverage we have received from several different news outlets! See our most up-to-date AACY News, articles, coverage, etc. on our NEW website!

Ongoing Support

Here are a few ways you can support Caregiving Youth!

Sponsor a Caregiving Youth for $100/month or $1,200 a year. Please contact Stephanie Valery: stephanie@aacy.org for more information.
Our Youth Activities Manager Gaby Alvarez organized and hosted **AACY’s First Caregiving Youth Project (CYP) Alumni Event** via Zoom on May 27. It was wonderful to catch up with our alumni from all over the country and locally, and hear how they are doing.

Thank you to all our alumni who participated, and we look forward to connecting with them all again soon, and building our Alumni network!

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**Support for Surfside**

AACY is coordinating with others to make a difference in the lives of the families who need to start over as a result of the Surfside tragedy.

Please consider donating if you are able: checks (payable to AACY, with the notation “Surfside Recovery” in the memo line); cash; or goods: clothing (underwear, socks, shorts, sweatshirts); toiletries (deodorant, tooth brushes, toothpaste); bottled water, snacks, cell phone chargers, blankets, sheets, & pillows are some examples.

Donations may be mailed or dropped off to: AACY, 6401 Congress Ave. Suite 200, Boca Raton, FL 33487. For questions or more information, please email kelly@aacy.org

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**AACY Inaugural Community Caregiver Awards Breakfast on Friday, October 1**

AACY is proud to present the **First Annual Community Caregiver Awards Breakfast**, being held on **Friday, October 1, 2021, from 7:30 to 10 a.m.** at the Marriott at Boca Center.

The theme of this breakfast is "recognizing those who care for our community" AACY Board Member Dominique Renaud, Vice President of Access for Trustbridge, is the Event Chair.

The event will honor **Dr. Julie Belkowitz, University of Miami Miller School of Medicine; Comcast; and Stallone’s Italian Kitchen of Boca Raton**, for all of their contributions to AACY and our greater communities.

For more information on this very special event, please visit aacy.org!

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**Shop on Amazon!** Please consider signing up for the American Association of Caregiving Youth (AACY) when you shop on Amazon! Select AACY as your charitable organization and Amazon donates 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases. Sign up today at smile.amazon.com.
Thanks to funding partners, we continue to serve Caregiving Youth in Palm Beach County (33 middle and high schools, and counting!)

- Further the four pillars of the Caregiving Youth Institute (CYI): Connect, Advocate, Research and Educate
- Continue to educate legislators to include Caregiving Youth in legislation and policy

- Reach child caregivers in Military families
- Develop the AACY Network of national partnerships
- Create recurring revenue streams to support sustainability

This is just a few of the many tasks we are working on. We are excited to continue our work for AACY and all of the children and families we serve.

We are most grateful to our partners and sponsors: