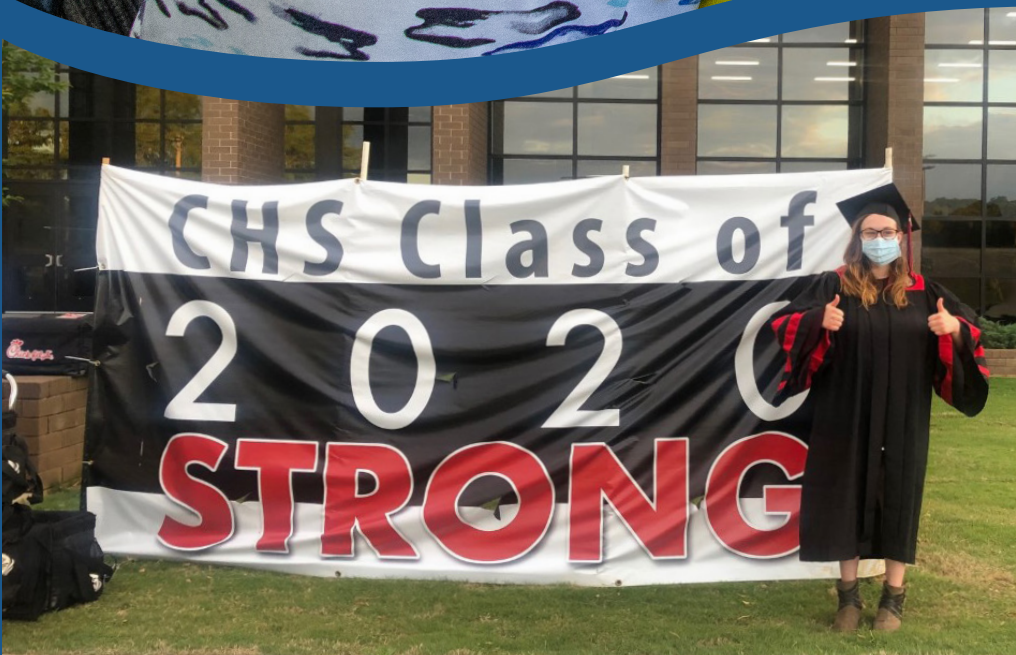




Murphy-Harpst

2019-2020 Impact Report

Fall 2020 Newsletter



Successes

High School Graduates

Services

Animal-Assisted Therapy

Support

COVID-19 Safety



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Our Mission

Provide a safe and nurturing environment where severely abused and neglected children and teenagers can thrive and heal toward a goal of re-engaging with society and leading productive lives.


Contact Us

Harpst Campus (main office)
740 Fletcher Street
Cedartown, GA 30125


Advancement Office
1561 McLendon Ave NE
Atlanta, GA 30307


Murphy Campus
(foster care office)
130 Grady Road
Cedartown, GA 30125

Questions about this
newsletter? Contact the
Advancement Team:
advancement@murphyharpst.org

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 [MurphyHarpst.org](#)

 770.748.1500

Murphy-Harpst is an Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer

A Letter from Scott

Who would have ever thought our lives would have changed so much since our last Newsletter! Although our world feels upside down, I know God is with us and cares for us as we care for each other.

I am under no illusion that things are perfect in the world around us. Our society is reckoning with systemic racism that must be condemned and corrected. The Coronavirus pandemic rages on around us, and it feels like there is no end in sight. Many are struggling to make ends meet while keeping their loved ones healthy and safe. Yet, I still have a spirit of optimism about our future.

What if 2020 is the year we change the world for the better? What if 2020 is the year people care more for others than they care for themselves? I have seen the way our supporters care for our children—children they have never met and may never meet. This care—this kindness extended to a stranger—this sacrifice of personal comfort for another—might be exactly what our society really needs right now.

By supporting Murphy-Harpst, you are not just changing a life—I believe you are changing the world. You are changing the life of a child who will go back into the community healed and hopeful. You are changing the life of a family who will survive 2020 to thrive in the future. You are changing the life of a child who might grow up to be a state legislator, a scientist, a change maker, a philanthropist, a friend.

Thank you for supporting us throughout the whirlwind that has been 2020. I constantly pray for the health, safety, and provision for all our supporters, staff, and children. Again, I still have a spirit of optimism about 2020, and it is because I believe in our ability to change the world together.

Best,



M. Scott Merritt | President & CEO

2020-2021 Board of Directors

Martha Carroll, Chair
Atlanta, Georgia

Barbara Brown-Cooper
Rome, Georgia

Scott Elder
Atlanta, Georgia

Steve Powell
Milton, Georgia

Scott Campbell, Vice-Chair
Cumming, Georgia

Rev. Richard Chewning
Dahlonega, Georgia

Jo Cranford Hodges
Atlanta, Georgia

Linda Young, Secretary
Atlanta, Georgia

Annalisa Bloodworth
Decatur, Georgia

David Dorton, Treasurer
Atlanta, Georgia

Scott Merritt
Cedartown, Georgia

Scott Brown
Atlanta, Georgia

Bruce Elder
Atlanta, Georgia

Myron Newman
Atlanta, Georgia

Ex-Officio Board Members

Cindi Hicks
Cedartown, Georgia

Sue Raymond
Atlanta, Georgia

Tryphenia Speed
Decatur, Georgia

Rev. John Pinson
Dalton, Georgia

Bobby Solomon
Rock Spring, Georgia

Board Member Spotlight Jo Cranford Hodges



Jo Cranford Hodges joined the Murphy-Harpst Board in the 2019-2020 Fiscal Year and immediately stepped into a position of leadership as our Advancement Committee Chair. As the owner of her own consulting business, Jo has an accomplished track record in helping corporations and non-profits maximize their potential with clients and supporters. In addition to supporting Murphy-Harpst, Jo serves on various Boards and Advisory Committees in Atlanta.

Jo is a Metro Atlanta native; she was born and raised in Hapeville, attended Agnes Scott and lives in Atlanta with her husband Kevin and their kids James (10), Mary Charles (5), and Virginia (3). Jo and Kevin are high school sweethearts—they met while attending Woodward Academy, where two of their children attend school now! The Hodges first learned of Murphy-Harpst from Peachtree Road UMC. "I love how personalized the programs are for each child," says Jo. "We work to meet every need they have to be loved, educated and cared for. I am honored to serve on the Murphy-Harpst Board!"

What's New COVID-19 Safety Measures

In the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, our Coronavirus Task Force enacted safety measures to protect the children in our care. While some restrictions are loosening, we continue to observe strict sanitation protocols, hand washing and sanitizing, mask wearing, and social distancing.

Many employees worked from home and continue to limit nonessential visits to campus. Visitors and volunteers were not allowed on campus for several months; now all visitors undergo wellness screens before interacting with our kids.

Thanks to these protocols, we have safely transitioned 28 kids into our care and 39 back into the community. When a child comes to Murphy-Harpst, they receive comprehensive health screenings from our capable Nursing staff, including COVID-19 screening. Our facilities team has converted a space to be a comfortable, welcoming isolation apartment for anyone who contracts the virus.

As of this writing, we are delighted to report that none of our residents have been infected with COVID-19! Thanks to the hard work of our entire team, we have kept our residents, foster families, and staff healthy and safe!

Your 2019-2020 Impact



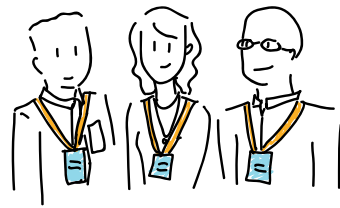
63

counties represented



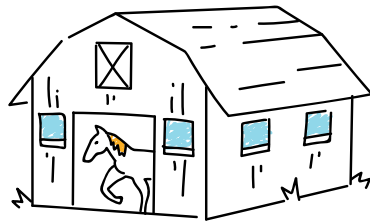
299

kids served across
all programs



158

full- and part-time staff



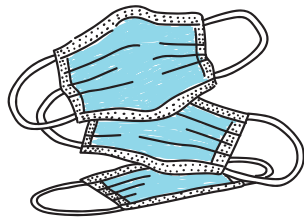
9

horses on campus



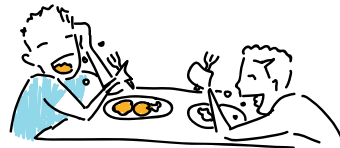
2,618

hours of individual
therapy



400

number of
masks donated



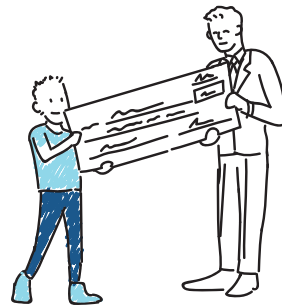
83,093

meals served



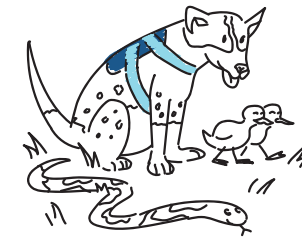
520

hours of group therapy



87

corporate sponsors



10

animals assisting
in therapy



31

foster families



15

sibling groups placed in
foster homes



24

adoptions and
reunifications



9

GED/high school
graduates



146

children receiving
Christmas gifts

1,909

donors



\$1.8M

raised in this
fiscal year

Call for Alumni Stories

The Murphy-Harpst Advancement Team is working with our creative partner, Station16, to curate a digital archive of our historical photographs and documents. We have dozens of scrapbooks and albums, including hundreds of newspaper articles, thousands of pictures of former residents, and more. But we need your help! So many of these photos are missing important details. If you or someone you know is an alumni of Murphy-Harpst or a former staff member, we want to talk to you! We need first-hand accounts and stories to accompany these memories, as well as consent to use certain photos.

If you're interested in helping with this archival project, contact Claire Wood
cwood@murphyharpst.org 404.783.1176





Miles of Hope from Home

The 7th Annual Miles of Hope event went Virtual this year! In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, we chose to celebrate and raise funds from a distance this year. Participants got creative with their miles (one participant took a road trip!) and their social media posts. While we were sorry we couldn't gather together, we enjoyed seeing the fun and unique ways our supporters got the word out for Murphy-Harpst.

Most Creative Post went to Katie Beth Fowler, a UGA Wesley member and Murphy-Harpst supporter. While home from College during the quarantine, she got her entire family to participate and even wave signs!

Most "Miles" Reported went to the Bremen First United Methodist Church and Bremen City Schools alliance. This team of students and grown ups joined forces to raise over \$600 as a team while raising awareness for our kids! Special thanks to Brittany and Jared Luke for spearheading this awesome crew.



Employee Spotlight

Mr. Ahmed Megahed & Mr. Ksun Manzano

Mr. Ahmed and Mr. Ksun are known as the "Dynamic Duo" on the Murphy-Harpst campus. Just like superheroes - whenever they are needed, Mr. Ahmed and Mr. Ksun show up and help find a resolution. Mr. Ahmed has been with Murphy-Harpst for 12 years and serves as the Cottage Leader for Thalia; Mr. Ksun has been with Murphy-Harpst for a year and serves at the Cottage Leader for Nellie . Although they lead separate cottages that share the same building, the Dynamic Duo views their cottages' success as intertwined. "Everyone knows we go together. If we succeed, we all succeed, if we fail, we all fail" says Mr. Ahmed.

This is the first time two cottages leaders are working together under the same umbrella. There is no competition between the staff, and they often share resources when needed. "We are like a puzzle," says Mr. Ksun, "two separate pieces, but you put us together and we're complete." In addition to helping our young men in their daily lives and times of emergency, Mr. Ahmed and Mr. Ksun have formed a personal friendship. "We ask each other, how is your day, how is your unit? No matter what's going on, we're having a good day."

In-Kind Pandemic Giving

Friends of Murphy-Harpst are finding creative ways to support our residents during the COVID-19 Pandemic. We have been unable to have volunteers or visitors on campus for several months now, which means no birthday parties, no Fun Fridays, no cookouts, and no opportunities to fellowship. But that didn't stop our dedicated supporters from bringing the fun to our campus while keeping their distance! Our relationship with Waleska UMC has grown tremendously during the quarantine. They have made several donations to keep our Point Store stocked, donated gaming consoles to keep kids occupied on the cottage, and frequently call to check in on our kids and staff. Here are a few of the other wonderful ways our kids received your love while on lockdown:

Kim Kulp, Dallas First UMC, and the Imperfect Stitchers made hundreds of face masks

Linda Young and friends donated hundreds of books for our library

Atlanta Emory UMW purchased pool items for fun in the sun

Trinity UMC in Austell gave much-needed hygiene supplies

To learn more about how you and your organization can volunteer with Murphy-Harpst, please contact: Pamela Kramer 404.376.2723 pkramer@murphyharpst.org



Volunteer Spotlight

Wesley Woods Imperfect Stitchers

The pandemic has presented us with many challenges. As mask-wearing became more important to quell the spread of COVID-19, it became clear that we needed a lot of face masks to keep our 75 residents and 150+ staff safe and healthy.

A fellow United Methodist-related nonprofit, Wesley Woods, recently advertised that their residents were making cloth masks. In the spirit of Connectionalism, we reached out to see if they could help. Within two days, the "Imperfect Stitchers" sewing group provided 250 hand-sewn face masks for our kids! The Imperfect Stitchers made three masks for every resident, with a few to spare! We are so grateful for the love and care sewn into these masks. One TLP resident said, "I feel like this mask was made just for me by a grandma who loves me!"

Learn more about Wesley Woods at www.wesleywoods.org.

To learn more about how you and your organization can volunteer with Murphy-Harpst, please contact: Pamela Kramer 404.376.2723 pkramer@murphyharpst.org



Graduation

Graduation is a rite of passage that many of us remember well. The excitement of picking up your cap and gown, the nerves before walking across the stage to receive your diploma. The Class of 2020 didn't get to have the "normal" Graduation rituals we took for granted until recently. Those rituals mean a lot, but they mean even more to students who overcame tremendous obstacles to graduate.

This year Murphy-Harpst is celebrating FIVE High School Graduations, including our first Transitional Living Program student graduating from a traditional high school! All five of our kids are heading off to college to continue their studies. Join us in congratulating these brilliant young scholars and wishing them a bright future ahead!

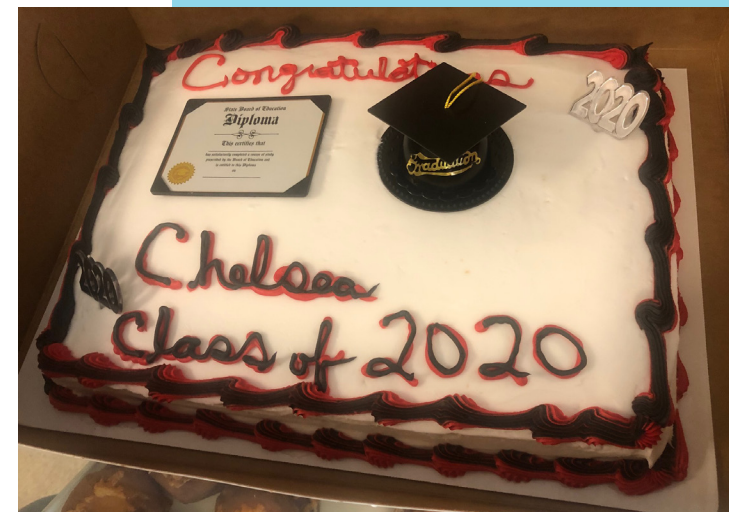
C: Cedartown High School
What's Next: Georgia Northwestern Technical College

H: Rome High School
What's Next: Georgia Highlands College

J: Douglas County High School
What's Next: Kennesaw State University

J: Rome High School
What's Next: Georgia Highlands College

R: Rome High School
What's Next: Chattahoochee Tech



Foster Care Updates

Sibling Groups in Foster Care

Murphy-Harpst’s Foster Care program has a unique specialty—placing sibling groups! When siblings enter state custody, it is extremely important that the family remain as intact as possible. The larger the sibling group, the more difficult it is to keep the children together in a foster placement. Murphy-Harpst is blessed to have foster homes welcoming sibling groups big and small! In 2019-2020, we placed 15 sibling groups! Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, our Foster Care Team continues to find homes for children in need.

Recently a sibling group of five came into our care, having been separated in their previous placements. Foster parents Melissa and Chris Chapman quickly agreed to provide a home for these children. Murphy-Harpst staff Amanda Walker and Brittany Harris purchased much-needed car seats and booster seats so the Chapmans could safely transport their foster children as soon as they arrived in their new home. The children came to the Chapmans’ home from previous placements in a COVID hotspot. The Chapmans didn’t skip a beat—foster mom Melissa immediately secured doctor appointments for all the kids to ensure their health and well-being. Thank you, Chapman family, for always accepting our largest sibling groups. Your commitment to children in need is astounding!



Interested in learning more about Fostering with Murphy-Harpst? Visit www.murphyharpst.org/foster or reach out to Agnetta Delancy, Director of Specialized Foster Care: adelancy@murphyharpst.org | 678-704-9291

Foster Family Spotlight The Steward Family

The Steward family has fostered with Murphy-Harpst since 2014. When a child is placed in their home, the Stewards rally around the child, working with birth families in an effort to increase the chances of children returning to their family of origin.

Foster parents Sherel and Kevin remain in constant contact with birth families, encouraging them to work their case plans in order to regain custody. During visitations, the Stewards gently assist the birth parents with strategies utilized in their home to manage behaviors and encourage them to do the same. Everyone plays a role in welcoming their foster children, including the Steward children. Through companionship and encouragement, the Steward kids empower their foster siblings to do thrive in school and at home.

After reunification, the Stewards often remain part of their foster kids’ support network. Birth parents call them for advice when crises arise at home. Weekend visits are frequent, and the Stewards assist with Christmas presents and school clothes if needed.

The Steward family is truly a representation of partnership parenting, and we are so proud to have such a committed and dedicated foster family working with Murphy-Harpst.

“
Animals give the kids self-esteem and relationship skills building”



Animal-Assisted Therapy

The Animal-Assisted Therapy at Murphy-Harpst continues to evolve to serve the children in our care. Animals have always been a part of the Murphy-Harpst story. From a dairy back in the 1950s to the establishment of our Equine Therapy Program in 1984 to present, our kids have learned the joys and responsibility of animal ownership. Livestock was an essential part of the operation of the Harpst Home; the dairy supplied milk to our residents and was sold to bring in proceeds for the home. In 1984 our Equine Therapy program began to help our children find therapeutic healing, and thus our relationship with animals shifted from ownership to companionship. Our Equine Therapy program has successfully taught horsemanship, horse care, riding, and life skills to thousands of children and youth!

In 2019, our Recreation Therapy Department decided to grow the program further by welcoming our first certified Therapy Dog, Rebel. Since Rebel joined our team, Animal-Assisted Therapy has taken off! The program now includes a team of 19 “therapists” from 7 different species! Here is a little about each one:

Horses

The Equine Therapy Program has 9 horses and is our banner Animal-Assisted Therapy offering. Horses are very intelligent and empathetic animals and often our children have their first therapeutic breakthroughs with a horse.

Rebel the Therapy Dog

Rebel is a blue heeler and lab mix and can be found on campus nearly every day. Rebel frequently comforts our kids by attending therapy sessions with them.

Noodle the Therapy Snake

Noodle the ball python is a favorite on campus! She teaches our kids bravery and confidence; and that there is more to someone than first impressions!

Herbert, George, and Shelley the Hermit Crabs

Hermit crabs? As therapy? Yes! Herbert, George, and Shelley prove that sometimes you have to come out of your shell in order to grow.

Bert and Ernie the Ducks

Bert and Ernie are two of our newest “therapists”, and our kids already love them! Many of our residents are learning construction skills by helping build a duck pen for them.

Foghorn and Leghorn the Cochin Chickens

Often referred to as “lap chickens,” the Cochin breed is known for their calm and gentle demeanor! The chickens show how rewarding a hard days work can be, especially when it comes in the form of a fresh egg!

Charmander the Crested Gecko

Reptile Therapy has been growing in popularity, and Charmander has been growing in popularity with our kids! In addition to being sweet and docile, Charmander shows our kids how pets (and people!) will thrive in a safe and loving environment.

Questions about Murphy-Harpst’s Animal-Assisted Therapy Program? Contact Jessica McWilliams, Recreation Manager jmcwilliams@murphyharpst.org



Church & Community Partners

Murphy-Harpst relies on generous giving from our friends and supporters in order to provide Georgia's most vulnerable children with the childhood milestones that many of us take for granted. Thanks to individuals, congregations, groups, corporations, and foundations, we raised 1.8 million dollars this fiscal year to go directly towards serving the children in our care! In spite of the COVID-19 pandemic, our supporters' generosity at such unprecedented times overwhelms us with gratitude. We could not do the lifechanging work that we do without every gift!

Here are some of our top supporting churches, foundations, and corporations that helped make the 2019-2020 fiscal year full of memorable experiences for our kids.

Top 10 Churches by total giving

Peachtree Road United Methodist Church
Dunwoody United Methodist Church
Northside United Methodist Church
Roswell United Methodist Church
McEachern Memorial United Methodist Church

Due West United Methodist Church
Athens First United Methodist Church
Canton First United Methodist Church
Rome First United Methodist Church
Alpharetta First United Methodist Church

Top 10 Churches by per-member giving

Vinings United Methodist Church
Whitesburg United Methodist Church
Warm Springs United Methodist Church
Poseyville United Methodist Church
North Decatur United Methodist Church

Smyrna (Dallas) United Methodist Church
Center Point United Methodist Church
Prospect (Norwood) United Methodist Church
Cleveland United Methodist Church
Vann's Valley United Methodist Church

\$10k+ Foundation Sponsors

The Stratton Foundation
The Imlay Foundation
Thalia and Michael C. Carlos Foundation
Wilds L. Pierce Charitable Foundation
Clark and Ruby Baker Foundation, Bank of America, N.A., Trustee
Mary Allen Lindsey Branan Foundation

Patterson Barclay Memorial Foundation
Georgia Health Foundation
Georgia United Methodist Foundation
John and Mary Franklin Foundation
Milton M. Ratner Foundation

Top 10 Corporate Sponsors

Johnson & Johnson Family of Companies
Henderson Electric Co. LLC
John Gallup & Associates, LLC
Cheeseburger Bobby's
Jackson Healthcare, LLC

Oglethorpe Power
Foxglove Antiques & Galleries, Inc.
Goldman, Sachs & Co. Matching Gift Program
Lyons Bridge Beef
B & B Building Services, Inc.

Please contact James Waddey at jwaddey@murphyharpst.org or 404.512.7462 for more information.

Heroes for Hope

In the 2019-2020 Fiscal Year, Murphy-Harpst celebrated the third year of our Heroes for Hope Program! Heroes for Hope are donors who contribute \$1,000 or more in a fiscal year to Murphy-Harpst. Our Heroes for Hope provide a large percentage of all dollars raised each year and help make big dreams come true at Murphy-Harpst. The 2019-2020 Heroes for Hope class included 156 individuals and couples, generously contributing over \$675,000 in total.

Founder's Circle: \$20,000+

Wilma and Malcolm Coleman | Lynda and Morris Henderson | Belle and Wilds Pierce | Musette and Malcolm Powell | Nancy Wistrand

Chairman's Circle: \$15,000 – \$19,999

Heather and Bruce Elder | Jim B. Miller | Dee and Phil Scott | Whitney and Greg Watts

Trustee's Circle: \$10,000 – \$14,999

Marviene M. Brand | Philip Brewster | Linda S. Byars | Shannon and Scott Campbell | Cindy and John C. Ethridge, Jr. | Julie W. Galt
Frances and Nathaniel Hansford | Rev. Dr. Coy and Linda Hinton | Harold L. Machen | Mark Maynard | Amanda and Paul Murach
Betty and George Turk

President's Circle: \$5,000 – \$9,999

Nellie Z. Axelroad | Jackson L. Bone | Andrea and Lou Cataland | Karen and David Dorton | Brooke and Scott Elder | Virginia Harris Howard
Donna Joyner | Stephanie and C. Scott Martin | Charles D. Menser, Jr. | William Mitchell | Ena and Elijah Moore | Jennifer and Scott Reiser
Bethany and Richard Stoll | Kevin Torres | Lisa and Harold Wyatt

Patrons Circle: \$2,500 – \$4,999

Donna Autry | James L. Bell | Becky Brannan | Gaines R. Burnett | Michael Dozier | Denise and Thomas Gryder | Betty and Ray Hannah
James Hill | Jo and Kevin Hodges | Nina W. Jagers | Paul Jones | Meredith Kelley | Gina and Richard King | Tammy and Brian McElroy
Erin and Lee Sjostrom

Hero's Circle: \$1,000 – \$2,499

Tom and Sharon Armstrong | Dr. Charles and Tressa Baggett | Jeffrey and Jennifer Barnard | Nancy D. Barnes | John and Frances Barnes
Charles and Melissa Barron | Chris and Dorothy Candler Baugher | Bryan Benfield | Douglas and Melissa Biggs
Rev. Paula D. Billhimer and Dr. David Fernandez | Randy Blalock | Scott Bomar | Caroline and David Booker | David and Gwen Buller
Jerry and Emily Bullock | Ben and Janet Burns | Jen and Blake Campbell | Janet and Bob Campbell | Dianne Cannestra | Ken Carpenter
Martha and Ken Carroll | Rev. Larry Caywood | James and Caron Clark | Richard Cole | Raymon and Jeanne Marie Cox | Rev. Dr. Dan Crawford
Mark and Nan Creviston | Molly Cummings | Rev. Al and Lynne Cunningham | Dianne W. Davenport | Rev. Dr. Richard and Elaine Davies
Mike and Karen Davis | Jeffery Dean | Charlie Doerlich | Tony and Sue Dwiggin | Susi R. Edwards | Doug English | Tamarra Forre
Don and Pat Francis | Jack and Barbara Garrett | Mary Anne Godfrey | Don and Peggy Graab | Dale and Melinda Hajost | Tracy Hall | Bryan Hays
Robert and Edie Hewlett | David and Linette Heydinger | Harriet T. Holmes | Ellen H. Horner | Bernice S. Howard | Philip and Kathleen Howard
Mr. and Mrs. Aaron Hudson | Bob Hulsey | Ron Hutchins | Bradley and Jennifer Ingle | Richard and Gloria Kerns | Greg and Karin King
Anne J. Landers | Elizabeth Lathem | Billy and Lisa Laube | Joan Lavin | Larry and Robin Lewark | Doug and Michelle MacGinnitie
Kam and Debra Malone | Wade and Kelly Malone | Dr. Jeff A. Marcus | Robert and Joan Mathews | Michael and Julie McCrary
Anne M. McDaniel | Jennifer McMullen | Bill McNeeley | Robert and Jean Miller | Rev. David and Katherine Moore | Sean Morrissey
H. Stetser Murphy, Jr. | Tommy Ogletree | Anil and Anita Patel | Marvin Peden | Michael Pollitt | Bill and Susan Posey
James and Miriam Rhyne | Ruth W. Richardson | Kae G. Rivenbark | Paul and Lou Roth | Edith H. Roth | Jamie and Steve Safigan
Capt. Stephen and Elise Shankle | Reed and Holly Sheats | Diane W. Simmons | Robert and Judith Simmons | Ellis Caudle Smith
Garry Smithwick | Patricia C. Smolley | Cory Stephens | Mary Jane Stevens | Lisa and Bill Travis | James Benjamin Voyles
Remer and Don Waguespack | Frank and Laura Wartner | Hugh and Judy Weaver | Jack and Bette Whitley | Rusty and Becky Wilkes
Carol A. Winkle | Brent and Lynn Woodruff | Farris and Claire Yates

Visit murphyharpst.org/heroes or contact James Waddey, Vice President of Advancement, at 404.512.7462 or jwaddey@murphyharpst.org to learn more.



Murphy-Harpst Children's Centers
740 Fletcher Street
Cedartown, GA 30125

Help Give a Child a Merry Christmas

The holiday season is almost here—and we need your help!

Every year Murphy-Harpst provides Christmas presents to all the children in our Residential, Transitional Living, and Foster Care programs. In 2019, we were able to provide gifts to our community services clients as well—a record-breaking 146 children!

Visit our Facebook page for updates on our Christmas Amazon Wishlist this fall.

To discuss a donation drive sponsoring presents for our children, please contact: Pamela Kramer
404.376.2723 pkramer@murphyharpst.org

