



A dark purple ribbon graphic with a 3D effect, featuring a central white banner. The banner contains the text "MESSAGE FROM THE CEO" in a white, bold, sans-serif font.

Dear Friends of the Epilepsy Foundation of Florida,

Happy spring!

We're in full swing with our Walk the Talk events being held across the state, and I'm pleased to report that our first five walks - held in Broward, Treasure Coast, Miami, Palm Beach, and Daytona - have been successful and full of great energy and participation! I look forward to our remaining four walk events in Jacksonville, Pensacola, Gainesville, and Naples, and hope you can join us as we continue to support Florida's citizens impacted by epilepsy.

Just recently passed, on March 26, many of us around the world enjoyed

celebrating [International Purple Day](#) by wearing the color purple to spread awareness about epilepsy. If you plan to attend one of our four upcoming Walk the Talk events, please wear the color purple to help collectively amplify our message of finding a cure and fighting the stigma.

I also wanted to take a moment to highlight the two excellent online Facebook support groups that we have available for individuals living with epilepsy and their families. If you or someone you know is interested in joining please visit the "[Everyone's Epilepsy Group](#)" and "[Epilepsy Parent Support Group](#)" pages and click the join button.

Thank you for your continued support of our organization, and I hope you have a wonderful month!



*Sincerely,
Karen Basha Egozi*

*Chief Executive Officer
Epilepsy Foundation of Florida*

Merger Results in Positive Changes



Epilepsy Resource Center, Pensacola Advisory Board (From left to right) John Peacock, Carly Borden, Lewis Bear III, Barry Cole, Pamela Homyak, Quint Studer, Pam Frank, Laverne Baker

Over two years ago, our organization merged with the Epilepsy Society of Northwest Florida so that we could expand resources to people with epilepsy and to avoid duplication of services in the area. The result has been stellar! Thanks to a strong local advisory board, we have built the Epilepsy Resource Center brand in Pensacola. The Center serves as a library of epilepsy information and a meeting place for those with epilepsy and their families.

Fast-forward to the present - the ERC, located in the center of the city on a main traffic artery (accessible through public transportation for clients and their families), now serves over 160 clients. With the strong support of 10 advisory board members, the Center has become the first-stop, one-stop location for assistance for those with epilepsy and seizure disorders.

Chairman Quint Studer said, "The Epilepsy Resource Center Advisory Board is a dream team. They are a group of diverse community leaders with a shared passion to make a difference...we all believe in the mission of the Epilepsy Foundation of Florida and are committed to making our Resource Center an invaluable asset to our clients and our community. "

If you are interested in building such a team in your area, please contact your local office.

Walk the Talk for Epilepsy 2016

Past Walk Event Photos



Team Annie B
Largest team at the Miami Walk



Clayton Feig Awardee David Ostroff cutting the ribbon at the Broward Walk



Jonathan Anderson, Board President at the West Palm Beach Walk with Team Cousins 4 A Cure



Aerial Elite Dance Troupe showing spirit in Treasure Coast!



Clayton Feig Awardee **Maegan Haganey** with Ericka Mckinney.

To see more photos from the walks, please visit our [online gallery](#).

Upcoming Walk the Talk Events

JACKSONVILLE

Saturday, April 9

Jacksonville University
2800 University Blvd N.
Jacksonville, FL 32211

Registration 8:00am
Walk begins 9:00am

PENSACOLA

Saturday, April 16

Inside Blue Wahoos Stadium
351 W Cedar St.
Pensacola, FL 32502

Registration 8:00 - 8:45am
Walk begins 9:00am

GAINESVILLE

Sunday, April 17

University of Florida
Gainesville, FL 32611

Registration 8:00am
Walk begins 9:00am

NAPLES

Sunday, April 17

North Collier Regional Park
15000 Livingston Road
Naples, FL 34109

Registration 8:00am
Walk begins 9:00am

Clayton Feig Legacy Fund - Faces of Epilepsy



By: Justin Tyler Millares

My name is Justin Tyler Millares; I am a senior at Mater Lakes Academy High School. I am a firm believer that a person's true character shows in the moment and in life trials, and how you handle everything that gets thrown your way molds you into the person you are or becoming.

Throughout the course of my life, I have had several experiences that made me question who I was as a person. One in particular has influenced my decisions and aspirations throughout high school. During my freshman year, I began to feel sensations that my family and I would eventually call "episodes," and not one physician could provide a medical explanation. After a year undiagnosed, I began to question whether I could continue to play baseball in high school or even become a doctor in the next two decades.

Fortunately, half way through sophomore year, we were referred to one of one of my doctors, Dr. Rodriguez from Cleveland Clinic. Just after our initial appointment, she was

assured they were seizures. They decided to admit me for further testing, and within days they confirmed my diagnosis as epilepsy – frontal lobe seizures and prescribed the proper medication to control it. Because we were beyond the point of believing that there was anything wrong, knowing my sickness came as a relief; it was the fear of the unknown that was slowly killing my passion to become a doctor.

After I was diagnosed with epilepsy, I knew what field of medicine I would want to pursue: Neurosurgery. With all these challenges, I knew I'd have to adhere to some changes to be able to achieve all I hope to become. I know my journey is just beginning. Everything from learning about my background to having life changing experiences to identifying, who I am as a person, has influenced my determination to study medicine. Fifteen years from now I picture myself in Dr. Rodriguez's shoes; the only difference will be that instead of prescribing medicine, I will be performing a self-invented surgery that will rid my patient of epilepsy.

Note: Justin will be representing EFOF this year at the Teens Speak Up! program in Washington D.C. from April 12-14. Teens Speak Up! is a program that provides opportunity for teens with epilepsy to visit the nation's capital, receive advocacy training, meet with their legislators, and tell their personal stories.

Clayton Feig Award Winners

David Ostroff	BROWARD
Steven Ippolito	TREASURE COAST
Courtney Dipersico	WEST PALM
Maegan Haganey	DAYTONA
Joy Mayfield	JACKSONVILLE
Jasmeen Ullah	PENSACOLA
Johnny Dale	GAINESVILLE
Hayden Moneghan	NAPLES

SUPPORT YOUR EPILEPSY FOUNDATION OF FLORIDA

No one can prepare for a seizure as it can happen at the most unexpected time. There are currently more than 400,000 individuals who suffer from epilepsy across Florida with more than 89,000 of those sufferers being children. Prevention and education can better prepare those impacted by the disease. The Epilepsy Foundation of Florida (EFOF) is here to help provide services and resources to those needing it most, and to those seeking more information.

EFOF offers extensive and supportive services and programs to individuals, families, friends and the community at large including:

- Educational presentations
- Current epilepsy resources and information
- Medical services
- Support groups
- Sponsorship & Volunteer Opportunities
- Summer Camp
- So much more!

To become a client and for more information about the organization, the individuals it serves and the resources provided to those in need, visit www.epilepsyfla.org or call 1-877-553-7453.

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Marcela suffered from epileptic seizures and medication side effects. After careful observation in Memorial's advanced Epilepsy Monitoring Unit, Tarek Zakaria, MD, Neurologist, diagnosed her seizures, ruled out surgery and prescribed a medication to improve her quality of life. Now, Marcela lives extraordinary every day.

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