

February 2016 Newsletter

MESSAGE FROM **THE CEO**

Dear Friends of the Epilepsy Foundation of Florida,

Last month, EFOF headed to the state capitol to honor legislative members who have dedicated themselves to elevating and advancing our organization's advocacy efforts to the more than 400,000 individuals impacted by epilepsy in Florida. We also had several successful meetings with legislators to discuss policy and the importance of statewide epilepsy program funding during our annual Day at the Capitol, where we were joined by several members of our board, staff and clients. As the lead advocate for the rights and needs of people with epilepsy and seizures at the local, county and state level, advocating for effective public policies and community support is critical to EFOF's ability to provide educational assistance to those who need it most.

Looking forward, we're gearing up for our Walk the Talk events which will take place across the state in March and April. Our first walk will take place in Hollywood on March 6 with the final walks taking place on April 17. For a full schedule of the walks and our new registration structure for 2016, please see the Walk the Talk section below. We hope to see you at one of these events!

Best wishes for a great month!



*Sincerely,
Karen Basha Egozi*

*Chief Executive Officer
Epilepsy Foundation of Florida*

Purple = Red + Blue



EFOF honored six Florida lawmakers with the Champion of the Heart Award on January 20 for their individual efforts to help residents and families impacted by epilepsy at the annual Purple = Red + Blue reception in Tallahassee.

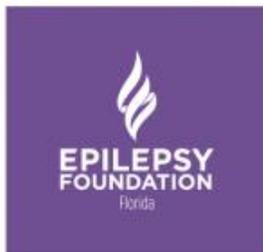
Lawmakers honored with the Champion of the Heart Award by EFOF include:

- Senator Rob Bradley
- Senator Oscar Braynon II
- Representative Richard Corcoran
- Representative Janet Cruz
- Representative Jose Felix Diaz
- Senator Eleanor Sobel

A full album of pictures from the reception can be seen here: [Purple = Red + Blue Photo Album.](#)

Capitol Day

CAPITOL DAY



On January 21, 2016, staff, board members, clients and volunteers visited with over 20 legislators in our state capitol to discuss policy and the importance of funding for epilepsy programs across the state. The legislators were extremely receptive to hearing personalized stories from our visitors with epilepsy and were very supportive of the Foundation's mission and goals. Thank you to all who participated in our annual Day at the Capitol - it was a great success!

Walk the Talk for Epilepsy 2016

WALK *the* TALK for Epilepsy 2016



UPCOMING WALKS

HOLLYWOOD

Sunday, March 6
North Beach Park

PALM BEACH

Sunday, March 13
Carlin Park

PENSACOLA

Saturday, April 16
Blue Wahoos Stadium

MIAMI

Saturday, March 12
Tropical Park

DAYTONA

Saturday, April 2
Mary Bethune Park

GAINESVILLE

Sunday, April 17
University of Florida

TREASURE COAST

Saturday, March 12
Tradition City Hall

JACKSONVILLE

Saturday, April 9
Jacksonville University

NAPLES

Sunday, April 17
North Collier Regional Park

Registration is at 8:00am. Walk Begins at 9:00am

To Register go to

www.EFOF.org/upcoming-events

or call us at

1-877-55-EPILEPSY

1-877-553-7453



<https://www.facebook.com/EpilepsyFLA>



<https://twitter.com/EFOF>



<http://www.efof.org/>

Don't miss out on our early bird specials:

Registration Fees:

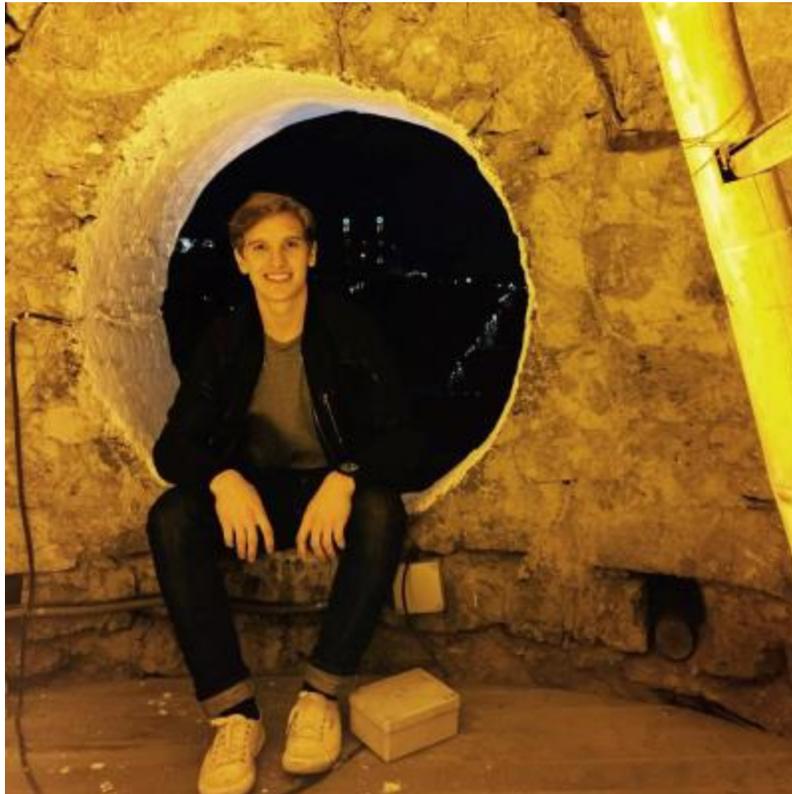
- Now through February 15: \$20 for adults; \$10 for children
- February 16 through Thursday prior to each walk: \$25 for adults; \$15 for children
- Purchase at the door: \$35 for adults; \$20 for children

*Adult - Ages 13 and older

*Children - Ages 12 and under

[Click here to register for a walk near you today!](#)

Clayton Feig Legacy Fund - Faces of Epilepsy



By: Arturo Vinueza

I was diagnosed with epilepsy my first semester at college when I was 18-years-old. Before then I thought I was invincible. I didn't have a care in the world, especially regarding my health. I was a high school athlete with no physical or mental disabilities. Everything seemed to be going well until I started college.

My first seizure occurred while crossing the street during mid-term exams. I was taken to the hospital and many of my friends told me I had

convulsions. I told them I was most likely mentally exhausted and needed to get rest from studying. The doctor strongly recommended that I have an EEG exam when I went home for the holidays. Sure enough when I came back to Miami the EEG showed I had epilepsy and by the description of my episodes it was determined that I had grand mal seizures. I would lose consciousness and wake up in pain without knowing what happened and my entire body would be exhausted.

Being a naïve 18-year-old, I refused to believe I had epilepsy and decided not to take my medication routinely for the next four years. Needless to say I had countless episodes all induced by lack of sleep and stress. Upon graduating I began working and embraced my diagnosis.

After doing some extensive research and talking to my doctors, I stopped drinking and taking any medications that may induce seizures. I go for checkups routinely and try to get eight hours of sleep every night.

I have been seizure free for over four years and I am fortunate enough to have found the correct medication to suppress my episodes. Thanks to the advances in medication and the awareness of this foundation and many others like it, I have been able to lead a perfectly normal life.

Good luck to my fellow sufferers and I am certain you, too, can find a way to not let this condition take over your life!

For more stories - check out our [Faces of Epilepsy](#) Blog.

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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