



Dear Friends of the Epilepsy Foundation of Florida,

Happy April! EFOF is in full swing working to improve the lives of individuals and their families affected by epilepsy and other seizure disorders.

In March, I traveled to Washington, D.C., along with other EFOF senior staff and past Board President Patricia Dean, ARNP, MSN, CNRN, of Nicklaus Children's Hospital, to attend the National Walk for Epilepsy held at the Washington Monument. EFOF's "Team Sunshine State" was joined by thousands of supporters from around the country who participated to spread epilepsy awareness and raise funds in the nation's capital. While there, we attended the national Epilepsy Foundation's annual conference to share ideas and stay current on issues surrounding epilepsy. Also in D.C., EFOF was well represented at the Teens Speak Up! Conference by Kayleigh Gallo, a truly inspiring young woman who has shared her story below in our Faces of Epilepsy section. The conference, hosted by the Epilepsy Foundation, gives teens from across the country an opportunity to travel to Washington D.C. to meet others with epilepsy, as well as share their story with legislative officials.

We are excited to share the news of our recent partnership with GotSneakers?, a shoe recycling organization that provides shoes to those in need. For every gently used pair of shoes donated, \$1 will also be donated to EFOF. So clear out that closet and bring a couple pairs to your walk or local office, now through May 31st!

Walk the Talk for Epilepsy events are now underway throughout Florida and once again we received overwhelming support and attendance at our walks in Gainesville, Daytona

and Naples. Look for upcoming Walk the Talk events in Pensacola, West Palm Beach, Miami, Broward and Jacksonville. I hope to see you there!

It is with a somber heart that I share the news of the passing of a great friend and supporter of the Foundation, Theresa Esman. She and her husband were the founders of the [Saul & Theresa Esman Foundation](#), a private family foundation established to provide philanthropic support for local non-profit charities. The Epilepsy Foundation of Florida is grateful to have been counted as one of their special charities and we all truly mourn the loss of an incredible woman.



Warmest regards,

*Karen Basha Egozi
Chief Executive Officer
Epilepsy Foundation of Florida*

In Loving Memory of Theresa Esman



R.I.P.



On Thursday, March 16th the Epilepsy Foundation of Florida mourned the loss of a dear friend and supporter of the foundation, Theresa Esman, who passed away peacefully in her home. She and her husband were the founders of the [Saul & Theresa Esman Foundation](#), a private family foundation established to provide philanthropic support for local non-profit charities. Over the years, their generous gifts have provided unconditional support and understanding to those living with epilepsy in South Florida. Our warm condolences to Murray Levin, the Executive Director of the Esman Foundation, who took care of Mrs. Esman with much love and respect. We share in this time of grief with him but also share in the love and memories of Mrs. Esman. May she rest in peace.

National Walk for Epilepsy



March 25th was a banner day in Washington as EFOF's "Team Sunshine State" joined affiliates, groups and individuals from throughout America to raise awareness and funding for the fight to overcome the challenges of living with epilepsy, accelerate therapies to stop seizures, find cures, and save lives.

The money raised from the National Walk for Epilepsy helps the national Epilepsy Foundation provide services for people living with epilepsy, awareness programs for proper seizure recognition and first aid, a voice to make sure health care options for people living with seizures remain strong, and much needed research toward better treatment options and ultimately cures.

Teens Speak Up!

Kayleigh Gallo and her mother Laura were chosen by EFOF to represent Florida at this year's Teens Speak Up! Conference. The program provides teens with epilepsy and their parents an opportunity to visit the nation's capital, receive advocacy training, meet with their legislators and tell their personal stories.

Kayleigh and Laura were joined by EFOF Vice President of Business Development, Mary Gomez, on Capitol Hill and met with nine legislative offices throughout the day in order to educate lawmakers about the issues surrounding epilepsy.



The group meets U.S. Representative Ted Deutsch who rocked the color purple in honor of epilepsy awareness!



U.S. Representative Brian Mast hosts Mary, Laura & Kayleigh!



Gallo and her mother with U.S. Representative Matt Gaetz and EFOF Vice President of Business Development, Mary Gomez enjoying the crisp D.C. weather.



The Teens Speak Up! representatives in front of the United States Capitol Building.

Clayton Feig Legacy Fund - Faces of Epilepsy

Kayleigh Gallo in her own words:

Sunday, April 20, 2014, was a game changer for me. I thought that I was suffering from the flu. A bath to cool my temperature seemed like a good idea, but after that I remember nothing until waking up in the hospital. My seizure was a big one. After spending three nights in a hospital bed, I left with a diagnosis of epilepsy. Later, my family was told that I tested positive for Influenza B and this, along with spikes on the left side of my brain, caused the seizure.

I returned to school and my school nurse started to question the rescue medication that I had been prescribed and instructed to administer in case I had another seizure like the first one during school hours. This led my mother to reach out to Nicklaus Children's Hospital in Miami, where I was given the diagnosis of focal cortical dysplasia epilepsy

Since then, my family and I have been lucky enough to attend a family retreat weekend at Westgate River Ranch in River Ranch, Florida, hosted by a non-profit organization called Deliver the Dream. I was also introduced to Camp Boggy Creek in Eustis, Florida. It was there that I met one of my best friends. I have gone to summer camp there twice and created a great book of memories. Both Deliver the Dream and Camp Boggy Creek came into my life because of my affiliation with the Epilepsy Foundation of Florida.

Thankfully, there has not been another powerful seizure. Yes, there has been the daily ingestion of medication, as well as regular visits to the neurologist; all of this in an attempt to stay healthy. Fortunately for me, I have been just that. I have lived a regular young kid's life. The truth is, I am just getting started. I have so much to do and much that I am looking to accomplish. While epilepsy is a part of my life, it does not control my life. The events of that Sunday in 2014 have made me a better, more compassionate, person. My understanding of the awkwardness one often feels when suffering from a condition like this has made me strive to help and advocate for those young people with epilepsy who feel ashamed and alone.



EFOF Partners with GotSneakers? for a Great Cause!



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**EPILEPSY
FOUNDATION**
Florida



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A Sneaker Recycling Organization

Together with GotSneakers?, the Epilepsy Foundation of Florida is collecting gently used sneakers for those in need.

For every pair collected, \$1 will be donated to the foundation.

Bring your sneakers to your nearest Walk the Talk Event or EFOF office now through the end of May.

Interested in setting up a donation site?
Contact Mary Gomez at mgomez@efof.org

Did You Know?



Did you know that AmazonSmile has the same vast selection and convenient shopping experience as [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com), with the added bonus that Amazon will donate 5 percent of the purchase price from your eligible purchases to your favorite charitable organization?

Please support the Epilepsy Foundation of Florida by shopping online through AmazonSmile and selecting the Epilepsy Foundation of Florida as your designated charity here: <https://smile.amazon.com/>.

Walk the Talk for Epilepsy



GAINESVILLE WALK

DAYTONA WALK



NAPLES WALK

Many thanks to the participants, sponsors, vendors and volunteers who helped to make the 2017 Walk the Talk for Epilepsy events in Gainesville, Daytona and Naples a huge success! A special thank you to this year's statewide sponsors: [Nicklaus Children's Hospital](#), [Sunovion Pharmaceuticals](#), [LivaNova](#), [Lundbeck Pharmaceuticals](#) & the Clayton Feig Fund for making it all possible.

We will be finishing up our walk season strong with upcoming Walks in Pensacola (April 8), West Palm Beach (April 30), Miami (May 6), Broward (May 7) and Jacksonville (May 20). **There is still time to sign up, create a team and donate, and we need your support to help us reach our goals - because "We're in This Together"!**

For more information, to register and donate visit www.efof.org/walkthetalk.

Healthcare Navigation

Questions about your Health Care Insurance Policy? We can help!

Licensed healthcare insurance navigators with the Epilepsy Foundation of Florida work year-round to help consumers throughout Florida understand and use their new health insurance policies. After the Affordable Care Act open enrollment period ends, navigators continue to work in the community to ensure consumers know about all of the benefits available to them.

Navigators can help you understand what your plan covers. Key terms like "deductible" and "coinsurance" are explained as well as how to make the most of a doctor's visit, identify key network providers, get a prescription filled or use emergency services. We're here to help! Call 877-553-7453 to get the assistance you need or visit www.efof.org/acanavigation.



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
- Patient Navigation
- 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.

[Make a Donation](#)



Everyday

Extraordinary Epilepsy Care

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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