



Dear Friends of the Epilepsy Foundation of Florida,

Every day, I'm inspired by those who choose to invest in the future of the Epilepsy Foundation of Florida – those who help keep the flame of hope burning for thousands of people in our state with epilepsy and seizures. Over the past month, I've been especially moved by the generosity of so many who have passionately invested their time and resources in support of our mission.

To everyone who has participated in one of our Walk the Talk for Epilepsy events (or plans to participate in our upcoming [Pensacola walk](#)), thank you. Walking in unity with you in our quest for a cure brings hope and transformation to thousands of children, men, and women living with epilepsy.

To our board member Jeff Klauk, thank you. As a tireless advocate for our cause, you've consistently gone above and beyond to ensure our mission is top of mind not only at a statewide level but nationwide, most recently when you hosted the 2nd Annual Million Dollar Shootout in partnership with the Epilepsy Foundation's Athletes vs Epilepsy program.

To the Florida Blue Foundation, thank you. Your recognition of the impact of our Healthcare Navigation program as a 2018 Sapphire Awards program finalist, and a resulting \$30,000 financial award, will help lift our organization to new heights as we strive to meet the medical and social needs of all people with epilepsy.

Collectively, we dream of a world free from epilepsy – a world free from the anxieties that come from not knowing if or when a seizure might strike. This month – and always – I look forward to continuing to work with you to help make this dream a reality.



Sincerely,

Karen Basha Egozi
Chief Executive Officer
Epilepsy Foundation of Florida

Last Chance to Walk the Talk!

Join us on Saturday, May 19 at Vince Whibbs Sr. Community Maritime Park in Pensacola for our final Walk the Talk for Epilepsy event in 2018!

Featuring a DJ, glitter booth, children's play area, smoothie bike, activity table from Home Depot, raffle items, and special presentation by the Navarre High School ROTC and Pensacola Roller Gurlz, you won't want to miss out!

Register today!



Your walk registration and funds raised through this event will provide critical medical and case management services for those in need, educate the public about this disorder, and help improve the lives of those who are living with epilepsy.

Gainesville, Naples, West Palm Beach, Miami, and Broward - Thank You!

Thank you to everyone who joined us for our Walk the Talk for Epilepsy events in Gainesville, Naples, West Palm Beach, Miami, and Broward!



Gainesville

With 140 participants, this event laid the groundwork for an overall amazing day full of community and unity.

Naples

The Southwest Florida area came out in full support of the Naples walk, exceeding their goal and spreading awareness of the recently opened Epilepsy Resource Center.

West Palm Beach

This event saw 600 participants, a beautiful day, and a lot of family-friendly fun!

Miami

More than 1,100 participants made this event tons of fun! Thank you to Commissioner Javier Souto for kicking-off the event and The Children's Trust for sponsoring our Children's Corner.

Broward

Inclement weather couldn't hold us down! This event saw more than 800 participants and included a special appearance by Mayor Josh Levy.



A special thank you to the [Nicklaus Children's Hospital Brain Institute](#), our exclusive pediatric partner and title sponsor for all of this year's Walk the Talk for Epilepsy events!

EFOF Awarded \$30,000 by the Florida Blue Foundation for Excellence and Innovation in Community Health

On May 3, EFOF was honored as a Sapphire Awards program finalist by the Florida Blue Foundation during its 2018 Sapphire Awards, a highlight of the Florida Blue Foundation's annual Community Health Symposium. As part of the recognition, EFOF was presented with a \$30,000 financial award.

A finalist in the program category, the Foundation was honored for our [Healthcare Navigation](#) program which provides underserved, previously-uninsured populations with access to health insurance and the knowledge to successfully use it. The \$30,000 award will be used to continue providing programs and services to meet the needs of the more than 400,000 Floridians living with epilepsy and seizures across the state of Florida.

Thank you to the Florida Blue Foundation for recognizing the impact of our Healthcare Navigation program in our Florida communities!



2nd Annual Million Dollar Shootout



Last month, in partnership with the Epilepsy Foundation, EFOF board member and former professional golfer Jeff Klauk hosted the 2nd annual Athletes vs Epilepsy Million Dollar Shootout golf tournament at the Palencia Club in St. Augustine.

During the April 9 event, qualified golfers participated in the tournament's signature one-million-dollar shootout, \$10,000 "Hole-in-One" contests, putting contests, and more. All proceeds from the event were shared between EFOF and the Epilepsy Foundation's Athletes vs Epilepsy program.

"As someone who lives with epilepsy, I know first-hand what it is like to live with uncontrolled seizures. We desperately need more money for research, education, and awareness to help the lives of all people living with epilepsy. I am honored to host this event to bring hope to the many people impacted by this condition." – Jeff Klauk

Jeff, you serve as an endless source of inspiration to the Foundation. Thank you for all you do in your role as an epilepsy ambassador to raise funds and awareness in support of our mission!

Clayton Feig Legacy Fund - Faces of Epilepsy



Ella was six-years-old when she had her first absence seizure. Prior to this, she had been a normal, healthy child. After her first seizure, she developed myoclonic seizures.

Days, weeks, and months passed, and the seizures persisted. Ella just wanted to be “her old self” and would attempt to play outside, but now she couldn’t ride her bike because she could have a seizure and seriously injure herself. She loved to swim, and one afternoon while swimming with her mom, grandmother, and sister she had a massive seizure and almost drowned. She was rushed by ambulance to the local hospital where they administered more medications. Epilepsy was robbing Ella of all she loved and her family was desperate to help her heal.

She saw numerous physicians, traveled to an academic center, and was hospitalized five different times that year as the doctors tried to stop her seizures. At one point, she was taking 12 different pills for seizure control and she was still having 30

seizures a day; despite this, she begged to go to school. She was living in a fog of seizures and medication side effects, but still loved to learn. Her handwriting, cognition, and demeanor deteriorated from the side effects of the medications and the non-stop seizures.

On her seventh birthday, Ella and her family traveled to the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, MN and learned that medications would not control Ella’s seizures and other therapies would have to be considered. The family was introduced to the Ketogenic Diet, a diet prescribed for medically intractable epilepsy that is high in fat and protein. Ella and her family returned to Pensacola and within a few weeks began the restrictive diet and slowly the seizures started lessening and finally stopped.

Ella shared her epilepsy journey with her classmates and wanted to raise awareness in our neighborhood by sponsoring lemonade stands with her friends to benefit the Epilepsy Foundation of Florida.

During the two years Ella was on the Ketogenic Diet, she had to give up all the foods she had loved – especially desserts. She showed remarkable discipline; she would ask to just smell dinner rolls, cupcakes, and other foods that were off-limits. She learned how to prepare and measure the foods that she ate, tolerating the different meals prescribed by her medical team. Her hard work and determination paid off and after two-and-a-half years and no seizures, she was given permission to wean off the Ketogenic Diet.

With the darkest days of Ella’s journey behind us, we can almost forget how frustratingly hard it was. We don’t ever want to completely forget, as it keeps our hope and courage alive for others who are suffering and praying for cures.

Check out more Faces of Epilepsy stories [here!](#)

Upcoming Events



Chick-fil-A Spirit Night

Jacksonville | May 17



Beast Feast

Vero Beach | June 30

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](#)