

THE COMPASSION CHRONICKLES

THE TURN-A-FROWN AROUND (TAF) FOUNDATION, INC.

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Photography by Michael Greene

Wacky Walkathon to End Loneliness

The Turn-A-Frown Around Foundation is ecstatic to have held the first annual Wacky Walkathon to End Loneliness on the Montclair State University campus on October 26, 2012. The Halloween themed event brought compassionate friends and souls from all over to celebrate the first successful Smile Station to date at Montclair State, including Montclair's mayor, Robert Jackson (pictured above)!

The evening was filled with wackiness as walkers dressed in Halloween costumes circled the gymnasium in support for the end loneliness movement. Contests, incredible theater, dance, and musical performances, food, prizes, Zumba and Drumba, crazy comedy, and an arm wrestling championship were only a few of the best moments of the night.

Chelsea Durocher, Public Relations Officer for the MSU Smile Station says, "My personal favorite was the 'who can give the most hugs in two minutes contest where everyone ran around in a frenzy to get the most hugs in. If only we spent our days trying to "squeeze in the most hugs" maybe there would be more smiling faces around us." •

The Consumer Corner

Sweet A Takes on the Reigns of TAF,
By: Jacqueline Stearns

Sweet A, a graduate student at Columbia University, hopes to become a clinical psychologist. "After I get my masters, I will go on to get my PhD."

Sweet A, who is of Indian descent, was born in New York, and has spent her life in the city and in Bergen County, NJ.

Sweet A met Drew Horn at Montclair State University, at a meeting of the campus's Psychology Club. She also ran into Drew in Washington D.C. at the August 2011 American Psychological Association's annual convention, and since then, has decided to **own** the mission of ending loneliness.

Sweet A has become the new administrator for TAF. She reports that she "oversees fundraising and publicity," along with Smile Station and Forever Friend Management.

When asked if she believes TAF has a viable future, Sweet A said, "Definitely! I wouldn't be working here if I didn't think so. We just need a structure that's easy to follow. I want volunteers and people who join the foundation to feel like they're part of something bigger than themselves." •

TAFAs History



Drew Horn & an Amsterdam Nursing Home Resident

A Letter from the President

“Take up one idea. Make that one idea your life - think of it, dream of it, live on that idea. Let the brain, muscles, nerves, every part of your body, be full of that idea, and just leave every other idea alone. This is the way to success.” – Swami Vivekananda

I had to fill out a form asking for the goals of TAFAs. I crossed out the “s” and wrote only one: END LONELINESS. For the last 11 years, my only fear for TAFAs success is that we take our eyes off the ball of ending loneliness by in-fighting or distraction. I ask you: how much more heart wrenching validation does TAFAs mission need than that the distorted and disturbed thinking of recent mass murders came from loners?

A nurse demonstrating unconditional love for over 25 years in a VA short-term mental health hospital told me that if she could give everyone who came into her ward a friend, she probably would not see two-thirds of them ever again. So according to the Swami, TAFAs is on the way to success, but mark my words: the day TAFAs gets seriously funded to hire the “match makers” that will help manage this benevolent match.com, TAFAs will succeed much faster and so will the ending of loneliness.

Sincerely,
Drew Horn, W.C (World Changer)

They told us we were crazy. We told them that we are crazy enough to care.

Having suffered - and subsequently overcome - homelessness, three failed businesses, two failed marriages, multiple stays in psychiatric wards, and two suicide attempts, compassion and love saved TAFAs co-founder Drew Horn’s life and he now is trying to bring this same compassion to others. Drew is a motivational, inspirational, therapeutic comic and clown. In order to keep a promise to his daughter that he would never attempt suicide again, Drew began to pursue comedy which gave him a reason to get up each morning. Eventually, Drew realized that he wanted to do more than entertain - he wanted to end loneliness for individuals isolated because of their disabilities, living in an institution, or falling through the cracks of society.

Since its inception in August 2001, the Turn-A-Frown Around Foundation, Inc. has brought love and laughter to those in nursing homes, psychiatric wards, and related facilities. A staggering 50% of nursing home residents and 75% of psychiatric patients will die without a friend each year. TAFAs realizes that this problem is too major, and the solution too simple, to ignore. TAFAs mission is to assist people living with psychiatric and physical disabilities who have lost hope or feel isolated and friendless, by connecting them with a Forever Friend. Forever Friends develop friendships through personal visits, phone calls, and even email.

TAFAs vision is to populate the world with Smile Stations, gatherings of Forever Friends whose sole mission is to end loneliness, one friendship at a time. Smile Stations are thriving and gaining popularity across the country. Contact us to set one up today and become part of the fad that will never fade! Help us end loneliness. •

Become a part of the end loneliness movement.

Visit www.turnafrownaround.org for information on setting up a Smile Station, or e-mail tafafoundation@gmail.com.

Performances

Drew has been invited to speak at nursing homes, psychiatric facilities, college campuses, and conferences. He has spoken about being happy when you are not, the power of praise, the secret to non-stop happiness: gratitude, learning to embrace sufferings, not being defined by illness, unconditional love, and becoming a Forever Friend.

At a recent New Point Behavioral Health Care's IFSS meeting in Glassboro, NJ, Drew spoke in front of 40 family members and friends of those who suffer with mental illness. The performance received rave reviews. "You've given me so much hope that my son can get better," one parent said.

After the Advancing in Recovery Conference in Bucks County, PA, CFST Coordinator Laurie Pepe expressed, "So much of what we hear in lecture halls, committee meetings, webinars, seminars and trainings has all been echoed first by you."

At West Bergen Mental Health Care's Partial Care Program in Ridgewood, NJ, Drew is a popular speaker. After a performance earlier this month, Donna Marinaro, director of the program, shared that for the consumers, Drew "really boosted their self-esteem and that there is still a greater road for them to down." •



Donna Marinaro, MSW, Director at West Bergen Mental Healthcare's Partial Care Program & Drew Horn

Call us at (973)746-7353, or e-mail
tafafoundation@gmail.com
to request a performance.



The Delaware Valley Smile Station & Drew Horn
Advancing in Recovery Conference

Smile Station Central

A Smile Station is a gathering of Forever Friends whose main purpose is to bring Forever Friendship to those suffering from loneliness. Smile Stations are recognizable, safe spaces where Forever Friends maintain and recruit a reservoir of other Forever Friends to help us reach every lonely person in need.

Forever Friendships are **one-on-one**. What separates a Smile Station from any other organization that visits facilities is that we're creating true friendships between two people. A friendship is a special connection that can truly end loneliness.

The first successful Smile Station was founded on the Montclair State University campus in Montclair, NJ in April 2011. The current executive board president is Danielle Ferriola, a senior studying psychology, GLBTQ studies, criminal justice, and child advocacy.

Recently, Delaware Valley College opened up a Smile Station as well! The college is under the leadership of Sarah Stout and Dr. Audrey Ervin, an Assistant Professor of Counseling Psychology at the college. Dr. Ervin expressed that the Smile Station was a "great opportunity to create a win-win for residents and students."

Recently, compassionate souls in both Illinois and Connecticut have expressed interest in setting up a Smile Station. Nisha Patel in Naperville, IL reports, "I believe everyone deserves one good friend that you know will never leave your side. I want to be there for people who think they don't have anyone to rely on."

Smile Stations are not confined to just universities. They are simply gatherings of Forever Friends who plan to build Forever Friendships. This can be in churches, civic groups, or the local bar and grill. Why not start one in your community? •

The Compassion Theater Company

"We arrive as entertainers, but we leave as friends."

The Compassion Theater Company (CTC) is a performing arm of TAFa, reaching into the community. CTC recruits talented people and those who are honing their craft to perform in their own local nursing homes, psychiatric hospitals, or related facilities. The entire world should benefit from inspirational entertainment and learn the power of unconditional love.

What makes CTC's approach to entertainment unique is that it uses a variety of talented performers (playwrights, speakers, musicians, actors, etc.) to inspire hope and joy by interweaving principles of how to be "happy no matter what" into our show. This form of innovative entertainment has been highly praised. "When you infuse the arts with inspiration, the audience not only enjoys a great performance, but leaves with lasting hope and happiness," says Drew Horn. We put a strong emphasis on spending extra time before and after the performance to interact with the audience to build bonds of friendship and unconditional love.

CTC formed with the much appreciated help of four college freshman at Montclair State. They first performed at the Wacky Walkathon to End Loneliness and were a huge hit.

Ideally, people all over the world will join CTC so that their local communities will benefit from unconditional love. TAFa is currently compiling acts for any CTC member to choose from to perform but of course encourages creativity in developing their own acts. We welcome any creative ideas that you might have, and we'd love to share them with the world. ●

To join the Compassion Theater Company or to help us build our collection of inspirational acts, contact us at tafafoundation@gmail.com!

Do you need a friend right now?

Loneliness does not discriminate. TAFa wants to end your loneliness by offering compassion through the love of a Forever Friend.

To get in touch with a Forever Friend today, contact us and we'll connect you with someone as soon as possible. There is no charge to end your loneliness.

Contact us at tafafoundation@gmail.com or call (973) 746-7353.

Visit our website: turnafrownaround.org

Find us on Facebook: [TAFa Foundation](https://www.facebook.com/TAFa-Foundation)

Follow us on Twitter: [TAFa Foundation](https://twitter.com/TAFa-Foundation)

Get Involved

Volunteer for any of the positions below:

- Forever Friend/E-mail Friend/Phone Friend
- Ambassador to the President (Create a Smile Station)
 - The Compassion Theater Company
 - Publicity and Marketing Efforts
 - Join the Administration

We can never have too many volunteers.
Make TAFa your cause. Own the mission.

The Smile Station Express

The Smile Station Express travels from town to town, setting up Smile Stations to turn your frown around.

Who will love the loveless?

Who will be a friend?

Who will seek and find the lost?

Who will bring loneliness to an end?

Will it be the worship house?

Love is what they teach.

Or the local bar and grill?

With beers within your reach.

Elk clubs, moose, and lions,
any animal will do.

Kids from grammar school to college,
it could even be your friends and you.

So climb on the Smile Station Express
as we gather each Forever Friend.

Start a Smile Station right now,
is the message that we send.

Just think about the lonely
and how they will come alive.

Just think about the forgotten
whose soul you will revive.

So will you become a Forever Friend?

Don't make us wait or guess.

Please bring your unconditional love
and join the Smile Station Express.