

N 2X GAME CHANGERS NEWSLETTER

July-September 2021



FUTURE HEALERS PROGRAM IN FULL GEAR, EMPOWERING KIDS IMPACTED BY GUN VIOLENCE TO HEAL, LEARN, AND GIVE BACK



Chris with Future Healers and their parents and siblings on an outing to the Louisville Zoo where the kids enjoyed being around the animals and learning about their care. Thanks to Kosair Charities for sponsoring the outing and Zoo officials for their hospitality.

Future Healers connects kids ages 4-13 who have suffered because of gun violence to mentors in the medical field and a curriculum of fun, engaging, learning experiences. [This video](#) shows what Future Healers is all about.



A Future Healer listens to the heart of a medical student

The program, a partnership with the University of Louisville Hospital Trauma Institute, UofL Medical School and UofL's Student National Medical Association, kicked off in July at UofL Hospital.

Medical students teach the kids a fun, science-based curriculum, with monthly events at space donated by The Galt House. Kids also engage with surgeons on trips to UofL Hospital.

The younger kids have loved "play dough" surgery and the older kids, visiting an operating room, have been amazed at the tools and teamwork surgery requires. All the kids have been excited about wearing surgical scrubs



Dr. Keith Miller shows Future Healers the tools surgeons use in an operation

Future Healers will also participate in community service with students at The Kentucky School for the Blind and children at The Kidz Club, which provides pediatric care in a day-care like setting to children with medical conditions who also suffer due to exposure to violence.

Research has shown that kids exposed to violence can suffer from trauma and lifelong health impacts. Future Healers provides them with healing and learning opportunities to help them lead healthy lives and reach their potential.



Future Healers dressed to learn in their medical scrubs

CHRIS, GAME CHANGERS PARTNERS SPREAD WORD OF GUN VIOLENCE IMPACTS ON KIDS WITH FEDERAL, STATE LAWMAKERS

Chris and others affiliated with Game Changers and Future Healers traveled to Washington, D.C., and Frankfort to build awareness about the impacts of surging gun violence on kids in Louisville, and efforts to help victims.

At the invitation of U.S. Sen. Rand Paul, Chris and UofL surgeons Drs. Christopher Jones and Keith Miller were in D.C. in September where they met with Paul, and other Kentucky US congressional delegation members, Senate Minority Leader Sen. Mitch McConnell, and U.S. Rep. John Yarmuth.



Chris, parents Navada and Krista Gwynn, and Game Changers board members Josh Crawford and Russell Coleman informed the Kentucky legislature's Joint Committee on the Judiciary about impacts of devastating and surging gun violence in Louisville.

In July, Chris and others gave factual and at times emotional testimony before a Kentucky legislative committee. Lawmakers heard about Future Healers, and the secondary trauma of gun violence on kids. Just being exposed to gun violence, hearing gunshots in their neighborhood, knowing someone who was wounded or killed, can lead to emotional trauma in kids and make it difficult for them to focus and learn in school.

HELP AND HOPE FOR KIDS HIT BY GUNFIRE AS SHOOTINGS SURGE



Terrell Smith with Chris

We're helping scores of families and kids impacted by gun violence, connecting them to resources and providing support, and the numbers keep growing.

By the end of Sept. more kids under the age of 18 had been hit by gunfire than in all last year. So far this year, 83 under 18 have suffered gunshot wounds, and another 21 homicides have been reported of kids under 18. For the year, total homicides number 153, on pace to break last year's record 173 homicides.

We're pulling for the innocent, young gunshot victims, and proud of their resolve and involvement in Future Healers to learn and have a positive influence with others.

Future Healer and gunshot victim Terrell Smith Jr., 12, was in his home playing video games June 27 when bullets were fired through the walls.



Victoria Gwynn with Chris and UofL transplant surgeon Dr. Christopher Jones

He was hit in the leg and his left knee was shattered. He underwent surgery and has had physical therapy to address his physical wounds as he and his family struggle to deal with the aftermath of stray bullets that wounded Terrell and shattered the security and sanctity of their home.

Victoria Gwynn, 19, a volunteer ambassador leader with Future Healers, suffered the loss of her brother, Christian Gwynn, who was killed in a random shooting on Dec. 19 as he was walking home from a restaurant. He was also 19.

Then on June 7, she was hit by gunfire with wounds to her leg during a hail of bullets fired at 6:30 pm in Ballard Park. Her good friend, DaJuan Coward, was shot in the head and died from his wounds.

Victoria, who underwent surgery and physical therapy, said the shooting so soon after her brother's death left her younger sister, also a Future Healer, scared. "I want to give her hope that nothing's going to happen to her," Victoria said.



Sherry Ancrum, grandmother of Ocean Robertson, addresses media as Game Changers Deputy Director Christie Welch holds Ocean

Ocean Robertson was five months old when she was shot in the head during a drive-by shooting last December and suffers lifelong neurological and other medical conditions.

Chris has helped her family with housing needs, and our partners at the Kidz Club, which provides pediatric health care treatment in a daycare-like setting, have enrolled Ocean.

Ocean's mother, Molly Ancrum, 30, was killed in the shooting, and Ocean and her three young siblings are now under the care of their grandmother, Sherry Ancrum.

Since the shooting, Ocean has had numerous surgeries, cannot crawl, or walk, suffers seizures, and has a custom-made stroller to accommodate her physical disabilities.

CHRIS RECEIVES MAYOR'S SPIRIT OF LOUISVILLE AWARD



Mayor Greg Fischer presented Chris with the Mayor's Spirit of Louisville Award on Sept. 30 as part of the WLKY Bell Awards program that recognizes individuals who have demonstrated selfless volunteerism.

WLKY's news release said Chris "is committed to positively transform the lives of children and youth, end violence and make our neighborhoods safer through his nonprofit organization, Game Changers." Chris serves on the Mayor's Violence Prevention Work Group and "partners with local organizations, law enforcement agencies, schools and community leaders to promote early childhood education and parental involvement. Using his own story of transformation, he is a healing presence during times of strife, supporting victims of gun violence, and advocating for peace and justice."

The 2021 WLKY Bell Awards, presented by the Republic Bank Foundation, hosted private presentations due to the pandemic. A special one-hour telecast of The WLKY Bell Awards will air on WLKY Sat., Oct. 16 from 8-9 pm.

IN MEMORIAM, DR. J. DAVID RICHARDSON



Dr. J. David Richardson with Chris, Dr. Keith Miller, and young Future Healers

We join many others who will deeply miss Dr. J. David Richardson, a gifted surgeon, teacher, and leader who inspired and supported Chris and Game Changers. Dr. Richardson, 76, chief of surgery at UofL Hospital, lost a battle on Sept. 7 from complications due to a breakthrough Covid infection.

A giant in his field, Dr. Richardson authored hundreds of peer-reviewed studies and served in numerous leadership positions including president of the American Board of Surgery.

He possessed a natural ease and connection with people from all walks of life, evidenced in his treatment of gunshot victims under the care of the UofL Hospital Trauma Institute.

He was deeply concerned about the impact of gun violence on young people in our community and believed gun violence was a health care crisis. The definition of a servant leader, Dr. Richardson's good heart and deeds will live on in the many people he mentored, inspired, and helped.