



Gloria and baby Leah

Families Helping Families 2024



WHY I DONATE TO FHF

Our guest contributor today is Naperville resident, Susan Elizabeth Phillips, the #1 New York Times bestselling author of 26 novels.

I'm cheap. Or, as my mother used to say, "thrifty." I want value for my money, whether I'm buying a new computer or a pack of gel pens. When I make charitable contributions, I want that money to go to a fiscally responsible organization with a mission that supports families and kids.

I also need to pay up. Not out of guilt, but gratitude. I was raised in a solidly middle-class family with parents who loved me. I've never been a single mom struggling to find childcare that won't wipe out my paycheck and yearning for a college degree that would allow me to make a living wage.

I want to give to an organization that requires compassionate accountability from its clients. The kind of accountability that provides lifelong tools to help break the cycle of poverty and abuse. Founder Vicky Joseph says, "There is nothing easy about our program.... We impose lots of rules and always say 'free housing isn't really free.' The outcome can be life changing."

The long-term success of so many FHF clients proves the truth of Vicky's words. I've been privileged to witness the justifiable pride the clients feel for their hard-earned achievements. These amazing women inspire me.

My donations to FHF are a thank you to my good fortune and also my tribute to the amazing volunteer mentors who put in the time and do the hard work I'm not. Instead, I do the easy part. I write checks. I invite all of you to join me with your own "gratitude donation."

Susan Elizabeth Phillips
Proud FHF Donor



On gratitude...

How lucky are we to have bestselling author Susan Elizabeth Phillips write a message for us?

Susan's beautiful letter, *Why I Donate to FHF*, invites us all to consider how we can pay forward our own good fortune.

Susan reminds us of the importance of gratitude. We all know how good a truly sincere thank you feels. It's how we feel when we receive a note like this one from recent graduate, client L:

I was hopeless and depressed, then FHF saved my family and changed my life. I will be thankful for FHF forever!

This thank you is for you, our generous donors and community. You are the reason we have been able to do this life-changing work for 30 years!

Since 1994, FHF has helped over 150 families move from surviving to thriving. Today, we assist twelve families at a time in our two-year program through the devoted service of over 40 volunteer mentors, donations coordinators, and dozens of extraordinary community professionals providing their services pro bono to the families in our program. We truly have so much to be grateful for. Gratitude is our brand! That is the FHF mantra. This year, we invite you to answer Susan Elizabeth Phillips' message with your own "gratitude donation."

With deep gratitude,

Suzanne

Executive Director, Families Helping Families of Illinois
suzanne.thibeault@fhf.care



Do You Have a DAF?

Families Helping Families is grateful for all donations! Donor-advised funds are the fastest-growing charitable giving vehicle in the United States because they are one of the easiest and most tax-advantageous ways to give to charity. Please let us know if you'd like to donate to FHF through your DAF.

♥ From Our Families

C: After leaving an abusive relationship, I didn't have many options for care of my children and myself. God sent FHF to welcome my family with open arms.

I was in a large amount of debt due to my previous relationship, and I can say that 95% of that debt has been paid off!

My mentors are not just here to guide me through the program process. They have become family as well. They attend my children's activities and one mentor even accompanied me to court for my divorce proceedings and helped me process those feelings.

Thank you so much for looking out for other people! May God bless you all!



Y: Thanks to your encouragement, I have been able to face and overcome difficult situations which has allowed me to grow and develop both personally and professionally. Not least I appreciate your help and support with my daughter's studies and in providing support for both my daughters.

It is a privilege to have people like you in my life and in my family's life, and I hope to be able to reciprocate in the same way in the future!



V: Our wonderful mentors, two of the kindest people I know, became our teachers, advisors, and part of our family. They help us with everything: writing resumes, how to interview for a job, how to build a credit score, how to find car insurance and doctors for our kids. Thanks to FHF, I can drive my favorite blue car!

Here at FHF, I have true friends with whom I can share my happiness and sadness and feel at home.



N: Words cannot express how much your help means to my family. I want to extend my heartfelt gratitude to FHF and the community. We are grateful for your willingness to help. Your support is vital to our success, and we are honored to be a part of FHF!

From graduating client G: I have no words to describe my gratitude towards FHF! I love each of you for opening this door for me and my daughter. My dear mentors, thank you for not giving up on me despite our ups and downs. I have grown and learned so much that I will be walking out of this program transformed and ready to chase my dreams. Look at me today, so proud and confident! Thank you!



Thank you so much for welcoming my son and me and giving us hope! I look forward to working on my future with everyone at FHF!



SAVE THE DATE!

New Season—New Venue
Same Great Cause!

ANNUAL FHF BENEFIT DINNER

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2025

6PM – 11PM

Meson Sabika

Live and silent auctions, dinner,
open bar, friends, and tons of fun!

SEE YOU THERE!

The Bruce Terlep Memorial Education Fund

Bruce Terlep was an enthusiastic supporter of FHF. Sadly, he passed away in 2017. His wife, Ginger, who is an FHF mentor and board member, and their three sons established this fund to help FHF moms and their kids go to college. Please let us know if you'd like to direct your donation specifically to education.

We are grateful for all donations!

\$35 Provides housing for a family for 1 day.

\$245 Provides housing for a family for 1 week.

\$1050 Provides housing for a family for 1 month.

To make a secure online donation go to famhelpingfam.org.

Or please mail this form with your credit card info or check to:

FHF/P.O. Box 8, Naperville, IL 60566

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State/Zip _____

Phone _____

Email address (needed for emailing your receipt):

Donation: (Check made out to Families Helping Families)

\$ _____

Donation to Bruce Terlep Memorial Education Fund

\$ _____ (If your company offers to match your donation, please

include this information with your check.)

Visa/MasterCard (circle one):

Verification Code

_____ Expiration: _____

Name on Card _____

Authorized amount to charge \$ _____

THANK YOU!

HOW CAN YOU HELP?



Monetary Donations: To pay housing and utility costs. See above.

Mentors: Volunteers interested in coaching our families toward reaching self-sufficiency. Training provided.

Cars: Our families need serviceable cars to get to school and work. Your donation is tax deductible.

Service Projects: If your group is looking for a service project, we would welcome the opportunity to discuss it with you: famhelpingfam@gmail.com.

Other donations: Join our LINK email list to see what our clients need and to offer donations of clothing, furniture, etc.: fhflink@gmail.com.

Professional Services: We are always in need of help from the community. Let us know if you can provide services to our families, such as dental care, orthodonture, legal advice, and more.

Printing generously donated by
VISOgraphic visographic.com