

## HICKEY FIRE SERVICE AWARD

The 2016 Joseph Hickey Fire Service Award was presented to GFBF in recognition of its visionary and dedicated service to the burn community. This award is presented annually, in partnership with 11 other organizations representing the fire service; it was established to honor an individual firefighter or Firefighter Burn Foundation that provides assistance to burn survivors, demonstrates a commitment to improve burn care through all phases of recovery, and works to carry on the mission of the Phoenix Society and local burn community.

The enduring focus of GFBF on providing services and support to burn survivors, fire service and local hospitals has long been evident. The foundation served as local host to over 500 attendees for the Phoenix Society World Burn Congress in 1999, which was held in Metro Atlanta and comprised of burn survivors, families, healthcare practitioners, firefighters, and others from the local burn community. The unwavering commitment to provide emotional and financial support to burn survivors/families has helped many thrive again.



We are extremely grateful and humbled by the tremendous honor of being recognized by peer agencies for providing visionary and dedicated service to the burn community and also leading the way in enhancing public awareness and the field of life-long recovery.

This award really represents the amazing partnership between GFBF, the GA Fire Service and other corporate friends who keep us inspired and have been unwavering in their commitment to supporting us during our long history of growth and transformation.

## PROJECT R.E.A.C.H.

### RECYCLING EVERY ALUMINUM CAN HELPS

There are many reasons to recycle other than the good feeling you may get from doing it. Recycling saves landfill space, conserves resources, saves energy and saves water. Recycling can also help GFBF. Recycling your aluminum cans at one of our drop off locations helps ensure that GFBF can continue providing much needed programs in Georgia.



For a list of drop off locations, please visit [gfbf.org](http://gfbf.org).



## SAFETY TIP

It is best to use interconnected smoke alarms. When one smoke alarm sounds they all sound. [www.nfpa.org/education](http://www.nfpa.org/education)

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- |         |                                   |
|---------|-----------------------------------|
| 3/24    | Spring Belli Scholarship Deadline |
| 4/7-9   | Spring Family Weekend             |
| 5/1-30  | Give Burns The Boot® Kickoff      |
| 5/11-14 | Young Adult Burn Survivor Retreat |
| 6/3-9   | Summer Camp                       |
| 9/22-24 | Fall Family Weekend               |



Help, hope, and healing  
beyond the burn

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[gfbf.org](http://gfbf.org)



GEORGIA FIREFIGHTERS  
**BURN**  
FOUNDATION

Help, hope, and healing  
beyond the burn

**35**  
Year Anniversary

WINTER 2017  
**Newsletter**



## 35 YEARS & COUNTING

The Georgia Firefighters Burn Foundation is excited and incredibly grateful to be celebrating a major milestone... 35 years of amazing accomplishments... 35 years of providing numerous invaluable program service offerings... 35 years of impacting people and communities throughout the state.

GFBF cherishes the fact that this agency was founded by a group of remarkable firefighters, who displayed a tremendous "spirit of service" and a desire to make a positive difference beyond responding to emergency situations; and even though the growth of this agency may not resemble that early definition of helping, we strive to honor and build upon the legacy of making a positive difference through continuous improvement to our service to the community.

It is an unpleasant fact that the devastating effects of fire have touched countless lives over the years, and that fire occurrences will continue

to cause property loss, trauma, injury and death—all of which take a tremendous emotional and psychological toll on individuals and families. In response to this sad reality, GFBF remains passionately committed to developing and sustaining meaningful programs and service offerings.

Our deep ties to mission and our values of commitment and compassion are what drive this organization in helping burn survivors through every step in their journey of recovery. We are determined to provide the best possible assistance to anyone in need of help or connection to an understanding peer network of others who share similar experiences. Authenticity and empathy are so important in the overall recovery

from each individual's unique experience of burn injury, and we strive to remain connected with this ever-growing population in a way that is not only supportive, but also promotes a message of HOPE!

GFBF is extremely grateful for an extraordinary cadre of volunteers working selflessly over the years towards the overall wellbeing of those we serve. Support is more important than ever, as we continue to rely on the generous contributions of work, wealth and wisdom to sustain this good work.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, staff and those we serve, sincere appreciation is expressed for the countless examples of people demonstrating the "spirit of service" upon which this organization was founded.

It's been a fantastic run over these past 35 years, and GFBF remains dedicated to continue enhancing our capacity to meet the unpredicted challenges the future shall most certainly bring. We respectfully request that you join us on the journey towards help, hope and healing beyond the burn.

Thank you for helping us help others!

## FOURTH ANNUAL FAMILY WEEKEND



acknowledging the voices of those who may not have experienced the physical burn injury but are closely connected to the suffering. Both children and adults who sustained burn injuries, as well as their spouses/partners, parents, siblings, and grandparents attended this year's program. Families arrived Friday night for a cookout, followed by night swimming in the pool, and finished up with a movie in the gym. After breakfast Saturday morning the group met for games and formal introductions, followed by activities of their choice, such as miniature golf, swimming, boating, arts and crafts, fishing, and rock climbing. After lunch

When considering burn injuries within the context of the family, it is reasonable to assume the injury will affect more than the person who sustained the physical injury. Therefore, the roots of trauma, whether burned as an adult or child, reach far beneath the surface of the individual experiencing the physical injury. For parents of children who experienced burn injuries, the traumatic incident is often complicated by physical absence from their other children, as family/friends provide care during, and sometimes after, acute hospitalization. Thus, non-injured siblings are often left in the shadows of the injury, sorting out their own emotional response with little attention afforded to them. Furthermore, parents have reported feelings of guilt, isolation, their own physical/emotional health challenges, marital challenges, and sibling tensions. Consequently, addressing the needs of the entire family is critically important to lessen the impact of burn trauma.

Recognizing this unique need for families, GFBBF hosted our fourth annual Family Weekend in partnership with Camp Twin Lakes Will-A-Way in Winder for eight families in September. This weekend provides a unique opportunity for all family members—burn injured and non-burn injured—to connect with others who share common experiences associated with burn trauma, while

the adults and kiddos participated in “talk time,” our formal peer support groups facilitated by trained professionals. After dinner, families enjoyed “minute to win it” style games on the lawn with a beautiful sunset over Fort Yargo. After a brief wrap up Sunday morning, followed by a few hours of activities and family portraits taken by a volunteer firefighter, families packed up for home. When asked what their motivation was for attending the weekend, one attendee with both a child and partner with burn injuries replied, “We knew we wanted to experience camp as a family since all of us are involved in this process. We were super excited to be part of family camp. We love all the activities, but we all take in camp in our own way too as individuals.”

All members of the family— as defined by each family, however they choose—are encouraged to attend, regardless of their burn injury status or age. We are excited to now offer the program twice a year, in the Spring and Fall.

If you have any questions or know any families who would like to attend please refer them to our website at [www.gfbf.org](http://www.gfbf.org) or contact Programs Director, Dana Dillard, via email at [ddillard@gfbf.org](mailto:ddillard@gfbf.org) or by calling (404) 320-6223.

## SUMMER CAMP 2016



What an exciting and adventurous week campers and volunteer staff had at Summer Camp 2016! The theme for camp was *Wild West: Courage is being scared and saddling up anyways*. Embraced throughout programs and activities, courage was a trait displayed by campers. Maybe it was having the courage to climb the high ropes course for the first time, learning to swim or ride a bike, or courageously sharing with new friends about experiences with burn injuries; regardless of the activity, campers met the challenge to embody courage! Our intention is for campers to take the skills they learn through programs and activities at camp and translate them into their day to day lives. Every day may not include high ropes, swimming, biking, or archery but it does include navigating challenges, relationships and emotions—including those connected to a burn injury.

In addition to serving campers with physical burn injuries, summer camp welcomed the siblings of those campers as well! We strongly believe in the value of connecting siblings to one another through

the camp experience and know the complexity of a burn injury impacts the entire family system, not just the person injured. Camp provides a unique opportunity for connection outside of daily family life and for siblings to explore their relationship with one another as well as bond with other siblings who have a shared story.

There is so much to share about camp that would not be possible without our fantastic volunteer staff! Our volunteers begin to prepare and plan long before campers arrive and work long after they leave—working together to create a meaningful experience! Volunteers say time and time again, “I receive more through serving” and it is true! We are so grateful for all our volunteers who make camp possible every year! To see the amazing work of our volunteers and to celebrate our campers, visit [www.vimeo.com/gfbf/summer16](http://www.vimeo.com/gfbf/summer16) to watch our camp video.

This year we will celebrate 25 years of camp and cannot wait to see how our programs continue to grow!

