



END OF YEAR 2025 NEWSLETTER

Our Volunteers Go Viral

Volunteering isn't just meaningful; it's officially trending. Teens everywhere are eager to create an impact, build friendships, and be part of something that truly matters. So this year, we decided our Volunteer Kickoff had to be next level.

And it was.

More than 105 volunteers, including teens from 21 schools joined us for our biggest kickoff in Friendship Circle history.

Volunteers teamed up in groups of three to take on a viral TikTok style challenge that let them step into the shoes of our special friends. Could you bake without hearing? Measure ingredients blindfolded? Decorate a cake without saying a single word? Our teens gave it their all.



There were moments filled with laughter, teamwork, frustration, and breakthroughs. Most importantly, this challenge helped our volunteers understand just how much effort and courage goes into everyday tasks for the individuals they support.

This year is all about dreaming bigger, pushing further, and creating a community where inclusion is lived every single day. Our volunteers set that tone beautifully.

Looking for a way to make a real impact?



***Sign up here to join our
volunteer family:***

friendshipfl.org/Volunteers



Business Training Across Las Olas

With our Life Skills and Job Training Program, which supports adults with special needs, now operating in two full classrooms, our participants are growing in ways that make us incredibly proud. Many who began with us last year have excelled at the Friendship Grill and are ready for new challenges and opportunities.

Thanks to our amazing community partners, we made it happen. The Friendship Grill is now one of three restaurants where our students train each day. The Floridian Restaurant and Baires Grill Las Olas have welcomed our students into their kitchens and dining areas. Staff members are grateful for the extra help, and customers have been touched to see true inclusion happening right in their neighborhood. The glowing feedback has been nonstop.

And there is more to come. Beginning January 2026, our students will train at B Ocean Resort in Fort Lauderdale. This partnership will open doors not only in restaurant work but also in hotel hospitality, expanding their confidence and skills in powerful ways.

If you have a business in our community and are interested in learning more about becoming a job training site, contact Erica at Erica@FriendshipFL.org



Share Your Success. Shape Their Future.



Friendship Circle is proud to invite local businesses to join our Business Ambassadors Program, a powerful way to support our Life Skills and Job Training students.

Every week, our program hosts Mentor Hour. Local professionals step into our classroom and share their career journeys, life lessons, and passion for their work. It is simple, meaningful, and often life-changing for our participants.

Last month, we had the honor of welcoming two amazing mentors, Judge Mindy Brown and Attorney Mari Blumstein, who showed our students what goes on in a trial and how to prepare for court. Judge Mindy spoke about her role in the courtroom and explained the importance of fairness. Our students then practiced real courtroom scenarios in a mock trial, with Judge Mindy presiding. Watching our participants apply everything they learned from both mentors was unforgettable.

We also welcomed Pablo Burgos Zayas, Vice President at Moss Construction, who reminded us that, "I can't do this yet" becomes "I am getting better every day" when you are willing to try.

If you own a business and want to make a difference, this is your moment. Spend one hour sharing your knowledge, host a visit, or open your workplace for a hands on learning trip.

Your story could inspire a future employee.
Your time could change a life.

Contact Nechama at
OutreachDirector@Friendshipfl.org

THE FRIENDSHIP LIFE SKILLS AND JOB TRAINING PROGRAM

2026 Summer program

7-week program
June 15–July 31, 2026
Monday–Friday, 9 AM – 3 PM
Age Group: 18+
Registration Fee: \$150
Entire Summer: \$3,675
Early Bird: \$3,325 until March 1
Limited Scholarships Available

TO REGISTER:
[FRIENDSHIPFL.ORG/SUMMER](https://friendshipfl.org/summer)

(754) 800-1770 1302 E. Las Olas Blvd.
 Office@FriendshipFL.org Fort Lauderdale 33301

We are so excited to welcome you to our **2026 Summer Program!**

Whether you're returning for another season or are brand new to our community, now is the perfect time to secure your spot for a summer of skill-building and fun.

Enroll now for early bird savings:
friendshipfl.org/summer



LIFE SKILLS & JOB TRAINING PROGRAM
for adults with unique abilities

Daily, Monday- Friday, 9:00 AM-3:00 PM

Designed to empower adults with unique abilities, our program offers real-world training in life and job skills. From hands-on experience at The Friendship Grill to interpersonal and communication skills, academics like math and reading, yoga, arts lessons, a mentorship program, and more—we help them build confidence and independence!

A new year of learning and growth is here! We are thrilled to welcome you to a program designed for empowerment and real-world skills.

Spots are limited—register today:
friendshipfl.org/lifeskillsprogram

2026-2027 registration is now open!
 SPOTS ARE LIMITED!

friendshipfl.org/lifeskillsprogram



Who loves to sing?! We do!

Every year, our Karaoke event is one of the most anticipated moments of our Teen Scene program. It's an afternoon filled with courage, laughter, expression, and pure joy. The cheering, the bonding, and the confidence that erupts on stage are what Friendship Circle is all about.

But this year, something unforgettable happened.

For more than a year, Madison has been part of our programs. She walks in with a smile, easily finds a friend, and loves being part of the fun even though she rarely speaks.

But at our Teen Scene Karaoke event, everything changed.

When her turn came, a Bruno Mars song began to play. She stepped forward, took the microphone, and suddenly her voice filled the room with confidence and emotion. Her mother watched from across the room, stunned and overwhelmed with tears.

“I didn’t even know she knew the words,” her mother said. “I was so overcome with emotion, I couldn’t open my phone to video. I was so proud and so surprised.”

Moments like this are the heart of Friendship Circle. Sometimes a person just needs the right setting and the right people cheering them on to find a part of themselves no one has seen before.

And Madison reminded us that everyone has a voice waiting to be heard.





Announcing Pat's Culinary Club

We are honored to share that our Friendship Circle Culinary Club will now be known as Pat's Culinary Club, in loving memory of Patricia Leff.

Pat was known for her warmth, her joyful spirit, and her ability to bring people together. Her home was always open, her table always full, and her heart even more so. She believed deeply in creating a place where everyone belonged.

That spirit continues in Pat's Culinary Club, where our participants learn new skills, build confidence, and create friendships through cooking.

This month, we welcomed Chef Carlos, culinary master and America's Got Talent star. He guided our participants in making a special holiday dish of chicken nuggets, with a side of chimichurri sauce and salad. This tasty dish brought so much excitement and pride to the room. The smiles were endless.





We are deeply grateful to our friends at Fleet Advantage, who partnered with us and made sure every participant went home with a holiday gift of their choice. Their generosity filled the hearts of our Friendship Circle families with joy and gratitude, the perfect way to begin the holiday season.





A Beautiful Day on the Green at the Friendship Circle Annual Charity Classic

The Friendship Circle Annual Charity Classic is always a special day for our community. It is a chance for our supporters to enjoy the South Florida sunshine, share good food, drinks, and spend time with the people who make our Friendship Circle family so meaningful. This year's tournament brought even more excitement as the Fort Lauderdale Police Department and the Fort Lauderdale Fire Department joined us for a friendly tee off to see which team would take home the title.

Of course, the real champions are the people who showed up to support our Life Skills and Job Training Program. Every participant who joined us on the green showed what we already know to be true. The best way to change lives is to be a part of making that change happen.



We are deeply grateful to Dean Myreow of Southern Waters Capital, whose vision and leadership has now led our Friendship Circle Charity Classic since inception into its fourth year. His dedication is opening doors, our students once only dreamed of, enriching their lives and our program in truly meaningful ways.



This year came with an exciting and very special new addition. All sponsors were invited to an exclusive dinner catered by Alma Steakhouse at the Friendship Art Gallery on the Monday before the tournament. This gathering gave our supporters the chance to see firsthand how their generosity impacts our students every day. At our Friendship Art Gallery, they experienced the pride and joy our students feel when their talents are celebrated.

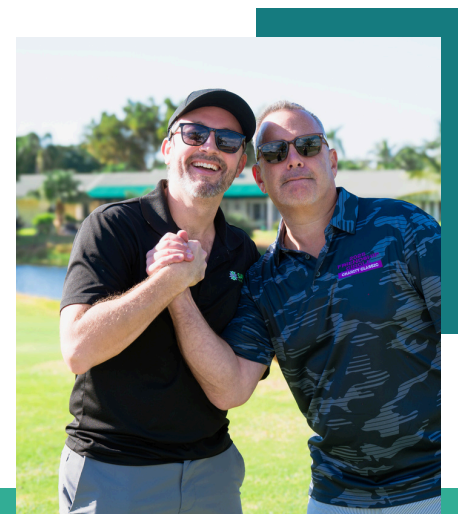




Here is something many people do not know. This year alone, Friendship Circle provided more than \$227,000 in scholarships across our Life Skills and Job Training Program and our Social Programs. Our mission is to make sure that every child, teen, and adult receives friendship support and the chance to grow. Financial challenges should never prevent a family from getting the help they need and thanks to our generous supporters, we can continue to say yes to every family who walks through our doors.

If you believe in building a community where every person belongs and has a chance to learn and grow, we would love to have you partner with us. Your support makes it possible for our programs to continue growing and for our families to feel supported. To donate, sponsor, or get involved, please reach out to Nechama at OutreachDirector@Friendshipfl.org or scan the QR code below. Together, we perform miracles and change lives.

Scan the QR code or visit:
[friendshipfl.org/
donate](http://friendshipfl.org/donate)





2025 FRIENDSHIP CIRCLE CHARITY CLASSIC

BENEFITTING THE FRIENDSHIP CIRCLE



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Looking for a
Transition
Program?

THE FRIENDSHIP GRILL
LIFE SKILLS & JOB TRAINING PROGRAM

OPEN HOUSE

TUESDAY • FEBRUARY 10 • 7:00 PM
RSVP: FRIENDSHIPFL.ORG/OPENHOUSE

HOSTED BY: JAFCO CHILDREN'S ABILITY CENTER
located at 5100 N Nob Hill Road, Sunrise, FL 33351

The Life Skills & Job Training program, created with the goal of providing adults with special needs an immersive, real-world environment, provides our students a chance to practice critical life and job skills and navigate their best life!

Our program is geared for adults 20+ with developmental disabilities, independent with self-care needs and respectful to those around them. It includes hands-on training in our Friendship Grill Restaurant, located in the heart of Las Olas as well as other local businesses. Our program focuses on a trio of Social emotional skills, Independent living skills & of course Job Training Skills!



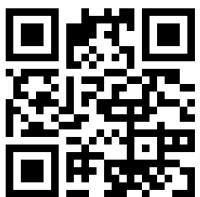
☎ (754) 800 1770



✉ outreachdirector@friendshipfl.org



📍 11302 E. Las Olas Blvd., Fort Lauderdale 33301



RSVP now at [FriendshipFL.org/OpenHouse](https://friendshipfl.org/OpenHouse)

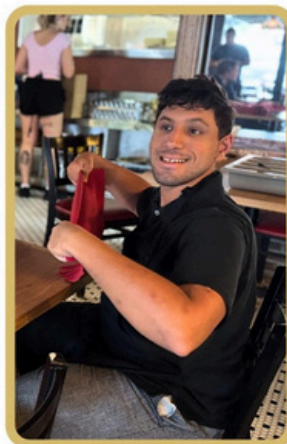


The Friendship Circle
of Greater Fort Lauderdale

invites you to our

Business Ambassador Luncheon

Join us in thanking the wonderful businesses and mentors who have opened their hearts and doors to help our students grow. This special luncheon is a celebration of their generosity and the power of inclusivity. It's about breaking down barriers and creating a community where our adults with unique abilities are supported, encouraged, and empowered to thrive.



April 28, 2026 | Tuesday | 12:00 PM

1302 E Las Olas Blvd, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301

RSVP today: FriendshipFL.org/Ambassadors



Our annual Business Ambassador Luncheon celebrates the mentors and businesses empowering our Life Skills & Job Training students. Join us to honor their generosity and support a cause that builds a stronger community.

[RSVP now at FriendshipFL.org/Ambassadors](https://FriendshipFL.org/Ambassadors)



The Friendship Circle of Greater Fort Lauderdale 2025-2026

EVENT SCHEDULE

- **Teen Scene:** 3:00pm-4:30pm
- **Culinary Club:** 3:00pm-4:30pm
- **Cheerleading:** 4:00-5:00pm
- **Young Adult Circle:** 6:00pm-7:30pm
- **Mom's Night Out:** 7:00pm

• SEPTEMBER •

- 7: **Volunteers Kickoff Party**
- 14: Teen Scene
- 18: Young Adult Circle
- 21: Culinary Club

• OCTOBER •

- 5: Teen Scene
- 19: Culinary Club
- 23: Young Adult Circle
- 26: Teen Scene

• NOVEMBER •

- 2: Teen Scene
- 3: Cheerleading
- 4: Mom's Night Out
- 6: Young Adult Circle
- 9: Culinary Club
- 14: **Golf Tournament**
- 16: Teen Scene
- 20: Young Adult Circle

• DECEMBER •

- 1: Cheerleading
- 7: Culinary Club
- 11: Young Adult Circle

• JANUARY •

- 4: Teen Scene
- 5: Cheerleading
- 8: Young Adult Circle
- 11: Culinary Club
- 29: Young Adult Circle

• FEBRUARY •

- 1: Teen Scene
- 2: Cheerleading
- 12: **Community Inclusion Awards Ceremony**
- 12: Young Adult Circle
- 15: Culinary Club
- 22: Teen Scene
- 26: Young Adult Circle

• MARCH •

- 1: Teen Scene
- 8: Culinary Club
- 11: Mom's Night Out
- 12: Young Adult Circle
- 22: Teen Scene
- 26: Young Adult Circle

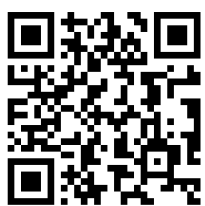
• APRIL •

- 12: Teen Scene
- 16: Young Adult Circle
- 19: Culinary Club
- 26: Teen Scene
- 28: **Business Ambassador Luncheon**
- 30: Young Adult Circle

• MAY •

- 3: Culinary Club
- 4: Cheerleading
- 14: Young Adult Circle
- 17: Teen Scene
- 28: Young Adult Circle
- 31: **End-of Year Event**

(754) 800-1770 office@friendshipfl.org www.FriendshipFL.org 1302 E Las Olas Blvd



REGISTER NOW at
[FriendshipFL.org/Participant-Registration](https://www.FriendshipFL.org/Participant-Registration)



A huge thank you to our sponsors!

Will you join our circle?
Be our partner here:
friendshipfl.org/donate



Thank you for your generosity!



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of Broward County



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