

Campbell students help Florida family through crisis

When Russ Lockamy and George Sharrar, both students at Campbell University in Buies Creek, North Carolina, came to Fort Lauderdale to fulfill an internship at the Bank of America (BOA), neither of them knew that they would be changing a family's life during their most difficult crisis.

Campbell University offers a specialized major called Trust and Wealth Management which is the only type of its kind in the country. Banks like Wells Fargo and BOA come to Buies Creek to interview interns and hires. Lockamy and Sharrar were fortunate to be recruited as interns at BOA's Fort Lauderdale office.

As part of the BOA internship, Lockamy and Sharrar were tasked in taking part in a community service project to give back something to the community they were working in. They thought it would be nice to find a local charity that everyone in the Fort Lauderdale office could get excited about helping. Lockamy searched in Google for local charities, and the Jessica June Children's Cancer Foundation (JJCCF), an organization that provides financial assistance for children fighting cancer, was one of the first to pop up. Families who qualify for JJCCF's Financial Assistance Program receive emergency financial relief for everyday necessities such as medical, utility, rent, mortgage, car, gas and food. This direct and tangible temporary financial assistance JJCCF provides



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Campbell University students George Sherrar and Russ Lockamy, and Sandra Muvdi, founder of Jessica June Children's Cancer Foundation (JJCCF).

is vital to the survival of these children while they receive cancer treatment.

"We wanted to accomplish something more than just collecting canned food or coupons. Russ was doing some digging around on the internet about local charities in the area, and decided that JJCCF would be the one," said Sharrar. "It was something that I could relate to because I have a family member that had cancer.

Lockamy and Sharrar contacted JJCCF's founder, Sandra Muvdi, who established the Foundation after losing her only child. Jessica June Eiler Muvdi was only seven years old when she died after a short battle to Leukemia in 2003.

"I called Sandra and after an extensive conversation, I really felt good about this charity," said Lockamy. "We both did."

After the JJCCF community project was approved by their manager Paul Weigel, Lockamy and Sharrar agreed to help sponsor a family in crisis

enduring pediatric cancer. "Once the money was raised, we knew it was in good hands with Sandra, so we left it up to her to choose our 'adoptive family,'" added Lockamy.

Enter the George family – Dawn (a homemaker) and Chris George (a Police Sergeant for the Miami Dade Police Department) whose 11 year-old son Christopher George Junior (CJ) was stricken with Stage 3 Acute Lymphoblastic Lymphoma in September 2008. The George's had four children (including custody of two other chil-

dren, a 3 year-old niece and 7 year-old nephew). Not wanting these children to go in to the foster care system, the George's took them in.

Now it was time to get to work to raise the money to help out this family during this time of duress. Through a company wide e-mail blast to co-workers at BOA, Russ and George started receiving donations with BOA matching whatever they raised 100 percent. Soon, Lockamy and Sharrar raised close to \$3,000.

"The goal to sponsor a

family was to raise two thousand dollars for a local family in crisis. Not only did Russ and George accomplish this goal...they exceeded it," said Muvdi. "I can't tell you how impressed JJCCF was with the tenacity and time that Russ and George devoted to this cause."

"The past two years have been focused on healing CJ while managing the demands of multiple hospital visits, clinic appointment and dealing with the side effects from the chemo," said Dawn George. "The financial strain accompanying a diagnosis of this magnitude has created added pressure to our already large family. From the bottom of our hearts, we are so thankful that Russ and George agreed to

sponsor our family who was selected through the JJCCF."

The George's were able to use the money to pay their mortgage and receive grocery gift cards. James DeAnda, who is a childhood leukemia survivor and one of JJCCF's outstanding volunteers, delivered the check and gift cards to CJ while he was undergoing treatment at Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital in Hollywood, Florida.

Added Chris George, "JJCCF has reminded us that there are people who care deeply about our struggles and are willing to use their time and resources to bless and encourage others. We are so grateful for the assistance JJCCF, Russ, George and BOA have provided to our family."