



As the year winds down, we want to take a moment to express our utmost gratitude for your support of Elizabeth Toon Charities over the past nine years. It is so hard to believe we are approaching **our tenth year**. It is amazing to think about the thousands of children and families blessed by Elizabeth Toon Charities through the years and we are so honored to continue our mission.

After we delivered the checks from this year's Shootout, we were reminded of the impact we have made particularly to our partner charities. Since 2007, we have gifted **over a million dollars** to Scottish Rite Hospital, Camp John Marc, The Rise School of Dallas and Dallas Children's Advocacy Center.

In addition to our partner charities, we have also supported 52 well-deserving charities in the North Texas area through our annual grant program. Over the years, ETC has funded education programs, camps for children with disabilities, programs for children that have faced physical and sexual abuse, assistance programs for children facing illnesses, as well as many, many more.

This brings us to what we are truly thankful for this year - **our hundreds of supporters, volunteers and corporations!** Because of your generous gifts of both time and resources, we are able to achieve these phenomenal figures.

**We are so proud of what the organization has become in honor of Elizabeth and the children and families we support.** It was just nine years ago we lost sweet Elizabeth and today we reflect on the children her life has continued to touch. Through each of your generous donations, you are a part of making a difference in the lives of children suffering from abuse, educational disadvantages, homelessness, foster care, terminal illness and physical challenges.

With your continued support, we look forward to growing our mission in 2016 and celebrating our 10th year. Please consider making an end-of-the-year tax deductible donation of any size to Elizabeth Toon Charities by using the donation link below. On behalf of our Board of Directors and our extraordinary Shootout Committee, thank you for your support of Elizabeth Toon Charities. On behalf of my family, thank you for your love and friendship.

[Make a Donation >>](#)

Have a wonderful Holiday season!



## SAVE THE DATE Spread the Word!

### 10th Annual Concert and Shootout Thursday, April 28th & Friday, April 29th

We are so excited to celebrate our 10th year of making a difference in the lives of children in North Texas! This year's concert & live auction promises to be **the best year yet!** We are returning to **Gilley's** for the concert and the entertainment will be announced early in 2016. The fun will continue on Friday with the sporting clay tournament at the **Dallas Gun Club**. Be on the lookout for additional details in the New Year and be the first to sign up your team!



## How to get involved with Elizabeth Toon Charities

**Join the ETC Shootout Committee** - This fun group helps plan the annual concert & shootout by working on entertainment, live auction items, raffle items, sponsorship and ticket sales, and much more! Please contact [Carolyn](#) if you are interested in joining.

**AmazonSmile** - Shop at AmazonSmile and Amazon will donate .05% of all eligible purchases to ETC! Register your Amazon account [here](#).

**Matching Gifts** - Many companies offer a matching gift program that could double or even triple your gift to ETC! Contact your human resources department to see if your company has a program.

**Volunteer Days through ETC** - We are happy to help arrange volunteer events for your company, friends or family with many of partner charities. Contact [Carolyn](#) for more information.

## 2016 Beneficiaries

Selected by the Elizabeth Toon Charities Board of Directors and the Grant Selection Committee

We are very excited to announce the 2016 beneficiaries selected through our grant program! Our team is dedicated to helping children suffering from a variety of issues, such as abuse, educational disadvantages, homelessness, terminal illness and physical challenges.

Each one of these charities carries out the mission and values we strive for at ETC and they work hard to improve the lives of children in North Texas.

[Big Thought](#)  
[The Birthday Party Project](#)  
[Camp John Marc](#)  
[Camp Summit](#)  
[Hope Supply Co. \(Formerly Captain Hope's Kids\)](#)  
[Catholic Charities of Dallas](#)  
[Dallas Children's Advocacy Center](#)  
[Heart House](#)  
[Leukemia Texas](#)  
[Open Door Multilingual Preschool](#)  
[Presbyterian Communities and Services](#)  
[Rise School of Dallas](#)  
[Scottish Rite Hospital](#)  
[The First Tee of Greater Dallas](#)  
[Trinity River Mission](#)  
[West Dallas Community School](#)

Please click on the names of each organization to learn more about the charity recipients or visit our website at [www.elizabethtooncharities.org](http://www.elizabethtooncharities.org) to learn about what programs each of our grants will be funding at the organizations.

## Featured 2016 Charities of the Month

### The Birthday Party Project

Romero's actual birthday was a normal day for him. He woke himself up, got ready for school, tiptoed through the house quietly and helped his siblings get ready for school. His dad just got home from the graveyard shift and was sleeping. Romero knows not to wake the sleeping giant. His mother wasn't there to wish him happy birthday and see him off to school, because she left for work early that day.

At school, Romero's teacher wished him a happy birthday. When he got home from school, he avoided his dad by running into his room to do his homework. There was yelling in the house, and Romero was worried about his mom.



That night, he packed one suitcase, got into a taxi with his mother and siblings, and found safety at Genesis Women's Shelter. Romero's birthday became significant-but for all the wrong reasons.

But they know that JOY transforms. The very next day, the team of birthday enthusiasts (volunteers) were hosting a party to celebrate February birthdays at Genesis. After learning that an eleven year old boy needed to be added to our birthday list, the team coordinated the delivery of an extra cake and a gift for him. The Birthday Party Project believes that every child should feel celebrated on their special day.

The birthday party was rocking! It was a super hero themed party complete with capes, masks, and super hero activities! At one table, Romero sat quietly as he colored with his mother. But when the volunteer put a cape around his neck, his eyes lit up. He sat taller in his chair. He smiled! In that moment, the birthday enthusiast validated Romero's existence.

After the birthday enthusiasts sang happy birthday to the four birthday kids, Romero's mother approached them. She was weeping. In broken English, with trembling hands holding her son, she explained that she was so focused on keeping her family safe and preparing to flee their home that she forgot to celebrate Romero's birthday. The gratitude in her eyes was so powerful. She hugged everyone from the team, she hugged her son and assured him, "See, it's going to be alright. We are safe. You are here. You are loved."

The Birthday Party Project believes that JOY changes lives through the MAGIC of Birthdays. Every month, the testimonies pour in from our parties like the one of Romero.

The kids celebrated have experienced trauma and crisis so unimaginable. The shelters they live in are providing their basic needs while their parents are struggling to survive. The Birthday Party Project has the opportunity to add an invaluable positive experience to their circumstance. When the birthday enthusiasts celebrate with the birthday kids, children at the shelter, and their parents, the socioeconomic borders disappear. Children have an opportunity to experience something most children consider to be normal.

Kids are allowed to dream big! Celebrations are more than a party. They are a loud exclamation point that children matter; that JOY can come out of any circumstance, and a JOYful community can transform our society.

## Big Thought - Creative Solutions

In the three years since Frankie Zuniga joined Big Thought's Creative Solutions program, the 20-year-old Dallas native graduated from high school, started attending college, connected with local arts and business leaders, and found his passion for acting and dancing while developing an interest in nursing and criminal justice.

His days as a 12-year-old troublemaker hanging with the wrong crowd are gone.

"Creative Solutions gave me a future," Frankie says. "It taught me to look at the positive, and turn a negative into a positive. They never gave up on us. They never labeled us as criminals even though we were on probation. Nobody is a bad person; you just make bad choices."

Big Thought's Creative Solutions program utilizes professional teaching artist mentors and a research-based curriculum to enhance empathy, critical thinking, teamwork skills and grit in teen probates. The 20-year partnership with the Dallas County Juvenile Department benefits from the generous support of the DCJD Juror's Fund/Youth Services Advisory Board; Grant

Thornton, LLP; the M.R. & Evelyn Hudson Foundation; Neiman Marcus; Texas Commission on the Arts - Arts Respond; the W.P. & Bulah Luse Foundation, Bank of America, N.A.; and the Texas Bar Foundation.



Frankie lives in Dallas with his father; his parents, both from Mexico, are separated. He is the youngest of seven children. Frankie was on the cusp of his senior year at Lancaster High School when he accepted the Creative Solutions invitation. He graduated in 2013.

Thanks to Creative Solutions his final high school year was filled with drama class activities, plays, technical theater, Project Discovery, Dallas Theater Center's signature education program, and University Interscholastic League. Alejandro Pérez, Jr., Creative Solutions teaching artist, introduced Frankie to dancing.

"I wasn't really into dancing, but it's awesome. I love it. I can't put choreography together, but give me one and I'm a great dancer. I found a way to express myself."

Frankie's major at El Centro Community College is performing arts with a concentration in acting and dancing. His minor is nursing and criminal justice.

At the Creative Solutions 20th anniversary luncheon in May, Frankie spoke about acting and dancing as saviors. He met local businessman Jorge Baldor, a benefactor of Big Thought's Thriving Minds After School program La Rondalla. Baldor is sponsoring Frankie's college education.

Frankie has forged a relationship with Telemundo 39 in Dallas. He shadowed station directors and designers in March and November. Through Telemundo he was invited to the Hispanic Business Salute 2015 at AT&T Stadium. Frankie is also an AmeriCorps volunteer teaching kids dance steps.

"Whenever Creative Solutions invites me somewhere, and they take me there, something good happens," he says. "Creative Solutions is like my second family. Creative Solutions helped me get myself out there. They opened all these doors for me. They are here to listen to you. It's home."

[Make a Donation >>](#)

For more information, call (214) 438-6445 or e-mail [carolyn@elizabethtoon.org](mailto:carolyn@elizabethtoon.org).  
[www.ElizabethToonCharities.org](http://www.ElizabethToonCharities.org)