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Trey's memory lives on through several local charities

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FILE PHOTO

A group home at A Kid's Place has been named for Trey Curry, pictured here with his father Clif Curry Jr. Trey died unexpectedly in 2008 at age 20, and his family set up a foundation to honor him. The foundation has pledged \$400,000 to name the house for him.

By YVETTE C. HAMMETT | The Tampa Tribune
Published: March 14, 2012

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BRANDON -- After 20-year-old Clifton Conrad "Trey" Curry died unexpectedly four years ago this month,, his family decided his memory would live on through their good works for children.

In the past few years, his family has targeted specific local charities that either weren't getting much



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community support or those that just seriously needed help.

The Trey Curry Foundation has reached the point, with a \$400,000 four-year pledge to A Kid's Place, that it's time to seriously ramp up its fundraising. It kicks that off with the annual Vine to Wine event May 18 at The Regent in Riverview.

The foundation purchased the naming rights last month to the fifth house at A Kid's Place, a 60-bed residential care center for children removed from their families because of abuse, neglect or both.

A Kid's Place, on Lithia-Pinecrest Road, allows brothers and sisters to stay together in such situations.

The Trey Curry House is the last house to be named, said A Kid's Place Director Virginia Johnson.

"The home has been open for a year, and it is full of children," Johnson said.

The \$400,000 from the Trey Curry Foundation represents the cost of building the 3,200 square-foot house, which like the others, features an oversized kitchen and family area where the children and their house parents share meals and activities.

Raising that money will be the foundation's most challenging pledge to date, said Executive Director Mary Beth Curry, Trey's sister. But supporting A Kid's Place is important.

"It's such a wonderful place," she said. "It was kind of a no-brainer for us, and it's right in our backyard."

The foundation works closely with O'Brien's Irish Pub & Grill owner Sean Rice to plan its fishing tournament and other events, and they are discussing the addition of a golf tournament.

"We are realizing that we will need a couple more fundraisers to do this," Curry said.

Wayne Witzcak, director of Kids Charity of Tampa Bay, which owns the property and houses at A Kid's Place, said the charity approached the Trey Curry Foundation about taking on the house naming.

"We knew that the family and friends had started the foundation to honor Trey's memory ... and we knew they were working hard doing children's charities in the Tampa Bay area.

"We felt very strongly that their mission kind of coincided with our mission of helping abused, abandoned and neglected children," Witzcak said. "So we approached them with the opportunity to really honor Trey's memory by putting his name on the last of our five houses. Really, without hesitation, the entire family, Cliff, Terry, Colton and Mary Beth, almost immediately agreed it was the right thing to do."

Witzcak called the plan "a match made in heaven."

The Trey Curry Foundation has pledged to raise \$100,000 each year to meet its commitment.

Last year, the Wine to Vine event raised \$40,000. This year, all of the proceeds will go to the pledge, Curry said.

To purchase tickets or learn more, visit www.kidscharitytb.org or www.treycurryfoundation.org. Tickets will initially sell for \$50, with the price going up as the event draws closer.

The foundation's pledge is one of many ways the Brandon community has opened its heart to A Kid's Place, Johnson said. Community members volunteer there, donate clothes, food and other needs and give generously to help it run smoothly.

"Being in Brandon has just been great for us and for the kids," she said.



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The Brandon Roundtable recently named A Kid's Place the local Nonprofit of the Year.

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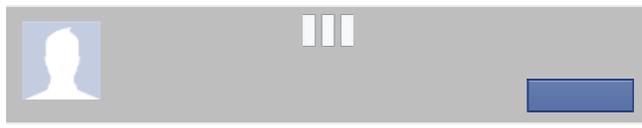
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