

BLUE RIBBON AWARD

Individual or group specifically dedicated to the field of child abuse prevention.

NOMINEES:

- A. **Dr. Van Nguyen Greco** – Child Abuse Pediatrician, University California at Irvine (UCI)
(nominated by Dr. Sandra Murray, UCI)
- B. **Stephanie Palmer** – Children’s Advocate Team Lead, Human Options (nominated by Human Options Residential Team)
- C. **Pooja Bhalla, DNP, RN** – C.O.O. of Illumination Foundation (nominated by Emma Course, American Academy of Pediatrics-OC Chapter)
- D. **Danielle Logan** – Mom, Business Owner at Cyro Haus, Rodan + Fields L5 Rep, Got the Test Sales
(nominated by Geoffrey Poer, CISO, DFND Security)
- E. **Erin Malone**- Health Educator, Clinic in the Park (nominated by Dr. Phyllis Agran, Clinic in the Park and UCI School of Medicine Professor)

SHINING LIGHT ON CHILDREN AWARD

Individual or group that advocates for children.

NOMINEES:

- F. **Patty Hatcher** – Health Curriculum Specialist/AIME Program Coordinator, Anaheim Union HS District (nominated by Joe Baldo, Higher Ground Youth & Families)
- G. **Bikers Against Child Abuse** (B.A.C.A.[®]- OC Chapter) (nominated by B.A.C.A.-OC Chapter President)
- H. **Anat Herzog** – Liaison for Academic Service Learning, Chapman University (nominated by Joe Baldo, Higher Ground Youth & Families)
- I. **Krystle Bevins** – School Volunteer/Advocate for Special Needs Students/Realtor (nominated by Alejandra Rivas, a Behavior Specialist)
- J. **The Priority Center Ragnar Relay Team** – Key Contact Marc Reich (nominated by Lisa Fujimoto, E.D. and CEO of The Priority Center)
- K. **Roe Osborne** – Elementary Principal, Bethel Baptist School (nominated by Cathy Rodriguez- member who is a member of CAPC)

BR AWARD NOMINEES:

A. Dr. Van Nguyen Greco – Child Abuse Pediatrician, University California at Irvine (UCI) (nominated by Dr. Sandra Murray, UCI)

Dr. Greco is an excellent pediatrician. She has a deep commitment to children and their families. Dr. Greco is one of 3 child abuse pediatricians in Orange County. She sees children at CAST, CHOC, and UCI. She is well respected by the other physicians as well as the county and medical social workers, law enforcement, and community members. Dr. Greco spends many hours educating medical students, residents, physicians, nurses, social workers, law enforcement, and community organizations in the area of child abuse recognition, treatment and prevention. A lot of the time spent on these educational activities is outside of work time Dr. Greco is always willing to speak with social workers or law enforcement if they need advice or information—whether if she is working or not. She is an active member of WE CAN, the SCAN teams at UCI and CHOC, and sits on the Child Death Review Team (CDRT). Dr. Greco is involved in obtaining grants for community work—one of the more recent grants will work with the CDRT, pediatricians, and community groups to improve the communication between the groups to better address how to prevent child deaths.

Dr. Greco would be an excellent choice for the Blue Ribbon Award.

B. Stephanie Palmer – Children’s Advocate Team Lead, Human Options (nominated by Human Options Residential Team)

Stephanie Palmer is the Children’s Advocate Team Leader at Human Options. Stephanie is always been so passionate about her work. She models respect and empathy for clients at all times. It is evident in how she talks about and works with all our clients (and especially the kiddos) that she cares deeply about each one of them. Coming to the emergency shelter can be an overwhelming experience for parents and children alike. As the Children’s Advocate Team Leader, Stephanie does a great job fostering a sense of community and togetherness for our families. Recognizing the children who enter our program have been exposed to trauma, Stephanie works hard to meet with new families within a day of their arrival to get to know them and to help the family be settled into this new environment. During the pandemic, Stephanie has come in each day to serve our emergency shelter children. Equipped with PPE, Stephanie has stepped in to providing in-person services since the onset of COVID (when safe to do so). As we shifted from group based services to individual family services, Stephanie swiftly jumped in to parent coaching, a service welcomed by our shelter families. This modality has allowed the parent and child alike to better understand the impact of trauma on children. She communicates effectively with her peers and takes time to teach everyone

how to interact with children who may be displaying trauma symptoms while at the shelter. Additionally, she works tirelessly to advocate for kids to be enrolled in school with the proper special education services as needed and to coordinate remote schooling.

At our Second Step transitional housing facility, Stephanie approached the pandemic by leaning into her creativity and offering “balcony groups” where families were safely distanced on their balconies engaging together in art activities. As one staff member noted, it takes a special person to work with children exposed to trauma day in and day out.” Stephanie does so with a sense of calm and purpose. Another staff member commented, all of the children at shelter always ask for Stephanie whenever she is not around. They always want to go to Children’s Program with her.

Her peers describe Stephanie as a team player and great role model. Stephanie is flexible and always willing to help when crisis arise. Currently, she is working toward safely resuming our previously offered group services for our children at both our emergency shelter and transitional housing programs.

C. Pooja Bhalla, DNP, RN – C.O.O. of Illumination Foundation (nominated by Emma Course, American Academy of Pediatrics- OC Chapter)

Pooja Bhalla, DNP, RN - Chief Operating Officer – Illumination Foundation

A community nursing internship inspired Pooja Bhalla, DNP, RN, to focus her nursing career on helping those experiencing homelessness. She now serves as the Chief Operating Officer of Illumination Foundation, a nonprofit organization that serves individuals and families experiencing homelessness across Orange County, Los Angeles County and the Inland Empire.

Illumination Foundation’s mission is to provide targeted, interdisciplinary services for the most vulnerable homeless clients in order to disrupt the cycle of homelessness. Illumination Foundation believes that every person has an intrinsic right to home, health and dignity. In service of this vision, the organization provides a comprehensive safety net of client-centered services to the most vulnerable population including children and families. Dr. Bhalla, who joined Illumination Foundation in 2017, oversees all clinical and program operations, developing and implementing policies and procedures that result in quality health care for individuals and families experiencing homelessness.

Researchers have identified childhood trauma, or Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), as a major potential causal link to adult homelessness. In response, Illumination Foundation has

developed and implemented a comprehensive program of trauma-informed care practices and behavioral health support. Illumination Foundation's Children and Families Program addresses the effects of childhood trauma by helping children to build resiliency, as well as coaching their parents to reduce the transmission of trauma to their children. This program is run through our family emergency shelters.

Under Dr. Bhalla's leadership, Illumination Foundation is at the forefront in addressing ACEs with our clients by reducing risk factors, promoting protective factors, providing behavioral health and medical referrals to help children and families access services, and providing and coordinating comprehensive services. Dr. Bhalla prioritized the importance of addressing family stabilization with a two-pronged approach: tackling the immediate need of housing and providing necessary wraparound services such as behavioral health counseling. Illumination Foundation provides the children and families we serve with the training, tools, and resources to overcome chronic and intergenerational homelessness, modifying the program continually to adapt to changing environments. For example, since the onset of COVID-19 we have incorporated virtual learning, including virtual literacy classes, into our programming in order to better address the academic, health and emotional needs of our children and families. Since her arrival at Illumination Foundation, Dr. Bhalla has also stressed the importance of addressing the social determinants of health, recognizing that our clients must be served across the entire continuum of care. In order to improve child, adolescent, and family health, clients must have access to preventive and primary care services. These vulnerable clients are often not connected to the wider healthcare system and do not seek services, especially for mental health issues.

In March 2020, due in large part to Dr. Bhalla's leadership, Illumination Foundation was named the sole service provider for Orange County Health Care Agency to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 within the fragile population of those experiencing homelessness in Orange County. With hands-on support and management from Dr. Bhalla, Illumination Foundation opened six Project Roomkey locations within four weeks. To date, we have served more than 2,500 clients, providing a safe environment for individuals experiencing homeless who needed isolation and medical care while also protecting those at risk. We were able to accomplish this while continuing to manage our regular operations, including serving more than 1,000 clients a day in our three family emergency shelters, two emergency shelters/navigation centers, six recuperative care facilities, and housing program.

Dr. Bhalla is a graduate of Simmons College of Nursing, where she received her BSN in 1997. She received her master's degree in leadership, health policy, and nursing administration from Northeastern University and also received her doctorate in nursing practice from Northeastern University, where her research focused on "Emerging Leaders and Homeless Health Care."

Dr. Bhalla was formerly the COO of Boston Health Care for the Homeless Program, the largest nonprofit health care organization for homeless individuals in the country. Beginning in 1997, she led an effort to establish shelter clinics throughout the city of Boston to bring health care to homeless individuals. Today the program operates more than 50 clinics throughout Boston.

Since 2002, Dr. Bhalla has been a member of the National Health Care for the Homeless Council, chair for the steering committee of the Clinicians Network, and a board member of the Council. A graduate of UCLA's Johnson & Johnson Health Care Executive Program, Dr. Bhalla has served on the faculty of Simmons College and Northeastern University and has published and lectured on the impact of homelessness on health and access to care for vulnerable populations.

Dr. Bhalla is a frequent speaker at conferences, giving insight into the lifelong effects of early childhood trauma on children experiencing homelessness. Negative experiences such as not knowing where one will sleep each night, losing friends as a family moves from place to place, and food insecurity all contribute to higher ACEs scores. Dr. Bhalla works diligently to help shape policies that address this critically important social determinant of health.

Dr. Bhalla is the rare leader with passion, compassion, and innovative spirit that inspires others to provide client-centered care and implement transformative changes that impact people's lives. She has heartfelt commitment to those that society puts last and counts least. Dr. Bhalla leads by example and exemplifies Illumination Foundation's guiding principles of integrity, humility, sustainable compassion, quest for knowledge and critical thinking, client-centered care, innovation, advocacy, and stewardship and compliance.

D. Danielle Logan – Mom, Business Owner at Cyro Haus, Rodan + Fields L5 Rep, Got the Test Sales, Mother of 4 (nominated by Geoffrey Poer, CISO, DFND Security)

Danielle is an inspiration! She has 3 jobs and is a mother of 4 young children (ages 3, 5, 7, and 11 years). She has dedicated herself to helping end human trafficking and child slavery. She volunteers for Operation Underground Railroad. Recently to help support the organization she organized and hosted (at her home) an Operation Underground Railroad fundraiser that generated over \$200,000 to fund an operation that will save child victims currently being trafficked. In addition, she has helped to organize and attended numerous community awareness events centered around raising awareness to the issue of human trafficking and child slavery here in Orange County.

She also worked with Dr. Sandra Morgan and the Global Center for Women and Justice, an organization dedicated to the after care of victims of child trafficking, to help raise money to provide laptops and supplies to students for the holidays.

In addition to the numerous speaking events and community events she also found the time to organize friends and volunteers together to make homemade candles that "ignite hope" and raise money for victims of child trafficking. These candles were extremely popular gifts over the holidays, and she continues to market and sell these items to increase awareness and funds to help support these child victims.

These are children without families that experience the holidays afraid and alone. Danielle took it upon herself to make sure these kids had something, so they knew they were not alone in the world.

Her dedication of time, talents and treasure has helped to support and raise awareness of human trafficking and the plight of these innocent children here in our backyard.....in Orange County, CA. Danielle Logan is a role model for so many and shows us that being a volunteer and supporting a worthwhile cause can make a difference in the life of a child!

E. Erin Malone- Health Educator, Clinic in the Park (nominated by Dr. Phyllis Agran, Clinic in the Park and UCI School of Medicine Professor)

I take this opportunity to nominate Erin Malone for the 2021 OC Child Abuse Prevention Council Blue Ribbon Award. Ms. Malone has devoted her professional career to preventing death and disability to children from preventable injuries. It has been a privilege to share our passion and our work for improving the lives of children by promoting their safety. As a senior health educator, she has provided professional trainings for colleagues, injury prevention educators and parents for more than 20 years. She is a recognized leader in the Orange County community and beyond. She participates with the State Department of Public Health and the CA Coalition for Children's Safety & Health Injury Prevention Strategic Plan for California. As one of the nation's leading experts as a Child Passenger Safety (CPS) Technician Instructor with special credentials in child passenger safety for children in with special medical and/or neurodevelopmental needs, she is a well-known consultant, professional trainer and family health educator. She recently provided a CPS Training at the Statewide Safer California Virtual Conference (2020). She participates in the national Lifesavers Conference. We submitted an abstract on our Clinic in the Park Booster Seat Project which was accepted for presentation at the Injury Free Coalition for Children. (Due to COVID-19 this is deferred to the 2021 Conference). Locally, she is a speaker at our Orange County Water Safety Summit. Ms. Malone is our Clinic in the Park senior health educator and CPS Technician Instructor. Last year she fitted and educated over 300 Clinic in the Park Health Expo participants for booster 2 **(cont. next page)**

seats. Her work for the Riverside Public Health Department includes car seat installation and education, bicycle helmet fitting and distribution and overall organization of their pediatric childhood injury prevention services, serving thousands of vulnerable children each year. Ms. Malone is an innovator. Due to COVID-19 and the cancellation of in-person events, she developed online booster and car seat education with curbside distribution for thousands of children. We are privileged that Erin has conducted Train-the-Trainer and parent education modules for our Orange County children and families. In fact, more than 30 Clinic in the Park collaborators participate in this project. Her work was featured at the CA Safer California Conference (2020). Another area of expertise is the prevention of drowning, now the leading cause of toddler death. She developed a surveillance tool that provides real-time data for Riverside County Health Department. She participated in our American Academy of Pediatrics – Orange County Foundations for Drowning Surveillance Study, funded by the CA Department of Public Health. She has trained thousands of health professionals and parents providing the tools and skills to prevent the tragic loss of a child from drowning. She devotes hours of volunteer work to assist children in OC, including with special health care needs in selecting and installing car seats for children with special health care needs. She is the only Child Passenger Safety Technician Instructor who is also certified in Child Restraints for Children with Special Health Care Needs. She has worked tirelessly to ensure their safety in personal motor vehicles as well as school bus transportation. Ms. Malone is a volunteer advocate for children at the local and state levels, promoting policies and legislation to contribute to childhood injury prevention. Furthermore, she participates in research studies on reaching the hard to reach for booster seat education and fitting. Our abstract, *No Child Unrestrained: Reaching the Hard to Reach with Booster Seats* was accepted for a podium presentation and a poster session at the 2020 National Injury Free Coalition for Kids. (This meeting was postponed for 2020 due to COVID-19 and we are scheduled for the 2021 conference, COVID-19 permitting!) Moreover, she mentors public health students in OC in the public health approach to child injury prevention. These volunteer activities are beyond her scope of work with the American Academy of Pediatrics-Orange County. On a personal note, Ms. Malone assisted my family — installing and fitting our grandchildren in car seats in all our cars! To see her in action working with children is truly inspiring. Ms. Malone approaches her professional and her volunteer work with passion and compassion. Her legacy is that she had saved the lives of thousands of children, who do not even know her 3 name. She is a voice for children in our community. She is truly deserving of the honor of the OC Child Abuse Prevention Council's Blue Ribbon 2021 Award.

SHINING LIGHT ON CHILDREN AWARD

Individual or group that advocates for children.

NOMINEES:

A. Patty Hatcher – Health Curriculum Specialist/AIME Program Coordinator, Anaheim Union HS District (nominated by Joe Baldo, Higher Ground Youth & Families)

There are stand out teachers everywhere, but Patty Hatcher is exceptional.

Her passion for helping students began early and means she goes above and beyond every day – her classroom was the one where students went before and after school because they knew support was there, or at lunch time when they didn't have a safe place to be or didn't have food.

Patty was an advisor for clubs, committees and organizations on campus that are too numerous to count. She worked hard to fill in the gaps so kids didn't fall through the cracks or get lost. She focused on helping students thrive academically and emotionally and focused on their mental health before it was a well known issue.

I know Patty has had a huge impact because of the many students who return to campus to seek her out to say thank you or invite her to their weddings years later. One such student told her recently that if it were not for her he would have committed suicide his senior year. She has saved many lives.

She sees a need and creates incredible solutions. When Patty spoke to a student once, to say she was not allowed to wear slippers to school for safety reasons, the student told her she did not have shoes. Patty didn't just buy her shoes, she called Sketchers to get shoes donated. Then she created a 'Clothes Closet' at Kennedy HS for students and families who needed clothing, shoes, etc. She sought out dress donations at prom time to find a way for students to attend, who couldn't afford a dress.

At Christmas time, her personal Christmas party became a fundraiser for students. She identified those most in need and asked them to make a list of things their family needed. Instead of friends bringing gifts, food, and drinks to her party, she asked them bring gifts, money, or gift cards for Kennedy students. She would purchase cleats and sports equipment so these youth could play sports or tickets so they could attend a dance or game.

In her current role as Health Curriculum Specialist, she is constantly identifying staff opportunities for social-emotional learning workshops, encouraging them to get to know their students by name, need, and story and always sending them updated lists of community organizations that can assist families and students with these needs. As the AIME (Anaheim's Innovative Mentoring Experience) Program Coordinator, she works 24/7, seeking opportunities for students to mentor, intern, or experience anything that will help them prepare for college, career, and life.

In 2019, Patty worked with Higher Ground to create a pilot program for our human trafficking prevention program. She spent months writing curriculum, helping us get approval from the AUHSD to allow us to present in her schools, identifying teachers who would embrace and allow the program into their classrooms.

Human Trafficking, the second largest problem in Orange County, affects so many high school students here and prevention is a new tool that we believe will help combat the issue. Often on her own time, Patty helped us launch this important program and continues to help us audit, refine and grow the curriculum. This program would not exist right now without Patty Hatcher.

She doesn't think what she does is special, these are simply things that Patty does every day, its embedded in her DNA to help others. She is passionate about making children feel safe in their schools and creating a supportive, encouraging environment. We believe Patty Hatcher to be very deserving of the Shining Light On Children Award.

B. Bikers Against Child Abuse (B.A.C.A.[®]- OC Chapter) (nominated by B.A.C.A.-OC Chapter President)

Bikers Against Child Abuse (B.A.C.A.[®]) exists with the intent to create a safer environment for abused children. We exist as a body of bikers to empower children to not feel afraid of the world in which they live. We stand ready to lend support to our wounded by involving them with an established, united organization. We work in Conjunction with state and local official's who are already in place to protect children. We desire to send a clear message to all involved with the abused child that this child is part of our organization and that we are prepared to lend our physical and emotional support to them by affiliation and our physical presence. We stand ready to shield these children from further abuse. We do not condone the use of violence or physical force in any manner, however, if circumstances arise such that we are the only obstacle preventing a child from further abuse, we stand ready to be that obstacle.

There are no paid positions within B.A.C.A. [®]. Members volunteer their time and resource's 24 hrs a day 7 days week as the children need us. Services are all free of charge. We will be there for things such as court, school, nightmares, whenever the child feels afraid or is at risk. As we remove the fear within these children they are 4X more likely to testify in court and we get more conviction's thus taking these abusers off the street and preventing additional abuse. Additionally, children who suffer the effects of abuse that go addressed often go on to repeat the abuse in their adult lives. B.A.C.A children regain their lives, self-confidence and go on to become productive members of society and we break those cycles of abuse.

C. Anat Herzog – Liaison for Academic Service Learning, Chapman University (nominated by Joe Baldo, Higher Ground Youth & Families)

Anat is a true connector who brings people and groups together, for the greater good. She has genuine love and concern for others, especially the most vulnerable populations and through support and advocacy, and long term thinking, she creates pathways toward partnership and collaboration that are of immense benefit to all involved. She is thoughtful and brilliant when pairing deserving youth with organizations/groups/communities/ that can help them achieve their goals, sometimes in ways they could have never imagined themselves. This is her gift.

She is a teacher educator. At Chapman, she began supervising student teachers in the Masters in Education Teacher Ed program, working with them to build the professional skillset and dispositions needed to be social justice educators. Grounded in radical love, her pedagogy centers students, their lived experiences and identities, and builds upon their hopes and aspirations. Anat knows how important education is and how that contributes to healthy communities for the wellbeing of youth.

Anat's current role at Chapman University, as Liaison for Academic Service Learning, focuses on building relationships between local community partners and Chapman University's community of scholars and students. This work includes connections to local non-profits that work with youth as well as a focus on building meaningful educational pathways for local youth to attend Higher Education institutions. Each relationship has a different flavor, but they all focus on serving youth.

As the founding organizer of Advocate for the Ethnic Studies Summit at Chapman University, Anat worked with local teachers to understand and implement ethnic studies in classrooms and to uplift the work of local youth and their Youth Participatory Action Research work. Ethnic Studies curriculum has been shown to improve student retention, academic achievement and graduation rates of our most marginalized student populations. It also increases student self confidence and efficacy. This year will be the 5th year where this summit will highlight local youth projects, art, and perspectives.

Each week through Los Amigos, she is working to leverage resources for individuals, families, communities, and municipalities. Right now, Anat and a few others are working to push the City of Orange to adopt a No Child Marriage Resolution, and support the movement to end child marriage in CA, and nationally.

Anat began her career in education and worked as a HS science and ASB teacher in south LA, working with youth from some of the most underserved and impoverished communities. It was important to her that science work and student government work was relevant to the lived experiences of her students and their families, and she helped students not only become knowledgeable, but also engaged in their community through science.

For example, after hurricane Katrina, she and her students worked as a community to understand and prepare for potential disaster which they determined would most likely be earthquake and fire in LA.

This work revealed that part of their city did not have an emergency plan for fire/police/medical aid services. After students shared their concerns with local government officials, they were granted funds to support the development of an emergency plan. Anat supported, encouraged then watched her students grow in their efficacy and capacity to advocate for social justice, and change public policy.

We believe Anat to be a great nominee for the Shining Light On Children Award.

D. Krystle Bevins – School Volunteer/Advocate for Special Needs Students/Realtor (nominated by Alejandra Rivas, a Behavior Specialist)

Krystle Bevins has shown throughout the years dedication, time, and energy to assure how important a child's education is. She is a mom of two, a wife, and works in real estate and Disneyland. Through Real Estate she continues to engage with offering and organizing community events. Donating her time to food drives for the homeless, seminars for Homeowners on new information about new laws and ordinances that affect them. Bringing the holiday spirit to our community this year in this awful pandemic we are going through, she helped spread the holiday cheer by having a Drive-thru Lighting Contest practicing all social distancing regulations and guidelines.

Being a mom of an autistic child she has been determined to support the special education department and support children with disabilities. Balancing two jobs and the job of being a mother she has set aside her time to take opportunities to be involved by volunteering and participating in fundraisers. Throughout her commitment, she would take matters into her own hands and contribute through school board meetings and express the change that needs to be done within the school system and community to ensure children with autism get the same opportunities as other children and set them up for success. Krystle's approach towards children with autism has shown the community how much one person can make a difference. By showing passion and dedication she is a prime example of how much she has contributed throughout her community, her family, and the lives of many children.

E. The Priority Center Ragnar Relay Team – Key Contact Marc Reich (nominated by Lisa Fujimoto, E.D. and CEO of The Priority Center)

Under the leadership of Sue Crockett and Marc Reich, The Priority Center Ragnar Relay team has worked tirelessly for the last nine years to ensure our organization receives generous funding to support our programs and services for at-risk children and adults in the areas of child abuse prevention and intervention, mental health and crisis, basic needs, and early childhood development.

Nine years ago, a group consisting of board members and the executive director formed The Priority Center's first Relay Team, entering the 2.5-day Ragnar Road So Cal event (an annual 200-mile team relay race) to raise critical funds for The Priority Center. The Relay Team's annual commitment to The

Priority Center is still going strong, and they have collectively introduced over 200 runners to our organization and raised over \$250,000 to fund needed services for at-risk families and child abuse victims.

The Relay Team recruits avid runners to join the race and solicits family and friends for financial support, year after year. Team leaders Marc and Sue also plan and organize the logistics for the team, including booking the hotels and transportation and managing the team's micro-fundraising page. Over the years, the success of the annual fundraiser has been a vital source of funding for The Priority Center. Even with the cancellation of this year's event due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the team has continued their fundraising efforts and donated a significant sum to The Priority Center, which has enabled us to continue providing support and resources to vulnerable children during this difficult time when such services are needed more than ever.

F. Roe Osborne – Elementary Principal, Bethel Baptist School *(nominated by Cathy Rodriguez-member who is a member of CAPC)*

Roe began her devotion to children early in 1976 when she enrolled her son at Bethel Baptist School. Roe jumped right in and began volunteering. By 1981 Roe had two daughters and a son and was now asked to help in the kitchen providing lunches for the students. This temporary assignment lasted for two years. Roe cooked over 100 lunches on pizza day because she made them all from scratch. She cooked, served, and washed and cleaned the pots and pans herself.

Roe said she has always loved children. In 1982 there was a need for teachers in the 5-year-old kindergarten class and this was Roe's opportunity to get into the classroom. Soon the administration began to realize Roe's commitment, educational awareness, and loving care of young children. From the very beginning of her service at Bethel, she exemplified everything that you would want in a teacher. Encouraged to go to school and get her degree for teaching, Roe did just that as an adult, while raising her family and working at Bethel. Roe completed her bachelor's degree.

During the next 23 years, Roe faithfully served as kindergarten teacher, literally being responsible for the learning of hundreds of school children that had the privilege of being in her class. As an active mother of three, she constantly honed her teaching skills and went on to complete her Master's degree and continued to update her qualifications. In addition to her teaching responsibilities for many years Roe ran a special reading program in the afternoons to help students overcome reading difficulties.

In 2005, Roe assumed the informal position of supervisor of the entire elementary school, and in 2008 she assumed the duties of Elementary Principal of Bethel Baptist School. This position was further expanded in 2018 to include the 7-8th grade middle school.

During her long and continued service to Bethel, she has continued to begin each of her days with teaching core academic subjects to a kindergarten class along with her additional administrative duties. She also takes time to serve students with individual challenges and students who need reading help. Roe shared that students that she taught many years ago come back to visit her. She also said she never cared about what her title would be. In fact, she prefers to stay in the background and not be the center of attention. She is very thankful that she gets to love children year after year.

Recently, due to the closing of schools in Orange County, she spearheaded the elementary staff to prepare and apply for a waiver issued by the Orange County Health Department, allowing some schools the ability to hold in-person, modified classes. Roe initiated the entire process of acquiring this legal waiver that would enable Bethel Baptist School to reopen safely with face-to-face learning. Through her leadership and staff example, she led a group of elementary teachers to successfully transition from face-to-face instruction to online instruction while applying and meeting the stringent compliance of the Health Department so the school could transition back to face-to-face learning when allowable.

In closing, I want to share a special story. There is a beautiful 5-year-old little girl who refused to speak to anyone while outside her home, even her friends. Mom and dad were very worried. They sought professional advice and tried to find out what was going on. This little girl came to her kindergarten class and met Roe Osborne. After just a few weeks of encouragement, this little girl is now speaking up and slowly getting better and better. This is the magic and love Roe Osborne gives to children. Roe makes children feel safe and happy.

