

PEOPLE

A GLANCE AROUND TOWN AND COUNTY

A Charity Empowered to Save Souls (ACETSS)



Photos contributed
Left: Master G at Amputee Conference.
Right: Master G with Mephibo's House and ACETSS.

By Jenna Greaves
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One woman's relentless tenacity and her mission to break barriers is changing lives in the Central Florida disabled community.

A Charity Empowered to Save Souls (ACETSS) is a nonprofit led by VII Degree black belt Michelle Golino-Crisco, or "Master G," with the main goal of teaching self defense and Taekwondo to the community.

"Everyone deserves an opportunity to benefit from martial arts training," Master G said. "Rather than tell them what they cannot do, I show them what they can do, then we execute!"

ACETSS all started when Master G leaned into her passion to empower all ages and abilities. Now, the nonprofit's impact has spread to 5,000 individuals of all walks of life.

Motivated by the aspiration to recognize every individual's value and her commitment to creating a more inclusive community, Master G introduced a new program tailored to the disabled community. In November 2021, Master G started Inclusive TKD which offers Taekwondo workshops for individuals with disabilities.

"Being able to provide this experience for this community is deeply meaningful and fulfilling," Master G said. "It represents the opportunity to make a tangible difference in the lives of individuals who often face unique challenges and may feel overlooked or marginalized."

Master G creates a safe space for participants to feel empowered regardless of their ability. The Inclusive workshops include a blend of Taekwondo fundamentals, self de-

fense and personal development.

Through Inclusive TKD, Master G has left her mark throughout the Central Florida community. From clients, Master G has heard that the ACETSS workshops have helped to boost confidence and inspire individuals. One client that specifically stood out to her was an 81-year-old who Master G said proclaimed "you changed my life" after a workshop.

"Participants leave the workshops feeling stronger, more confident, and better prepared to face the challenges of the world," Master G said.

Master G said Inclusive TKD is more than just kicking and punching.

"It is a way of life, a powerful vehicle for empowerment, personal growth, and community building," Master G said.

Each workshop is designed to meet participants where they are and help them surpass their full potential.

"It's about creating a space where all participants feel valued and supported, proving that martial arts is accessible to everyone and that every individual has the potential to achieve greatness through perseverance and community support," Master G said.

Soon, ACETSS's reach will expand nationwide through Sporfie, an online live streaming program that will provide access free online classes from ACETSS. The classes can be accessed through <https://www.acetss.org/sporfie> for anyone looking to get involved.

To test out your Taekwondo skills with ACETSS, visit www.ACETSS.org, call 321-338-3561 or email MasterG@ACETSS.org with your name, contact information and preferred class time.

Habitat for Humanity Open House Celebration attracts Hundreds



Photos contributed

First Ever Florida Statewide Conference for Unmarried Members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Special to the Herald

For the first time ever, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints hosted a statewide conference for single members living in Florida. Recently held at Seaworld, Orlando, over 1,000 attendees spent time learning more about their faith, mingling with each other and participating in a unique service project. Organizers assembled and plan to deliver 1,000 much needed blankets to local animal shelters.

Through service and spiritual enrichment, the conference helped to unify these faithful members of The Church of Jesus Christ. They strengthened testimonies, contributed their talents, found unity and personal growth. It helped strengthen young single adults by giving them a sense of belonging and to feel better connected to the Savior.

Elder Daniel Amato, a regional Church leader serving Central and Southern Florida, expressed, "We were thrilled to welcome 1000 young single adults and 200 dedicated volunteers to the first-ever YSA conference for the entire state of Florida for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Over the three days of the conference, we witnessed miracles unfold as we came together in unity and faith.

This conference was a wonderful opportunity for our youth to strengthen their bonds with one another and draw closer to Jesus Christ. Additionally, participants enjoyed many fun activities and engaged in meaningful community service, making a positive impact on our community."

Elder Amato continued, "Our theme for the conference is found in Isaiah 48:18: 'Then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea.' Together, we inspired and uplifted each other, making this an unforgettable experience."

Reagan Sorrough, a resident of Saint Cloud, FL and first time attendee of this type of event, was impressed by the magnitude of it. She explained, "I was pleasantly surprised on the very first night." Reagan added, "It's cool to be a part of this and to know we don't have to go out West where there are higher concentrations of members of The Church to experience it."

For more information about this conference please visit floridaysa.com

For more information about The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, please visit churchofjesuschrist.org

Special to the Herald

Habitat for Humanity Seminole-Apopka held three, back-to-back open house celebrations on Wednesday, August 14, 2024 at Leadership Point in Sanford, Florida. Leadership Point is Habitat's newest enclave that broadens the nonprofit's role as a home community developer. The events drew hundreds of community members and supporters from across Central Florida, including elected official and staffers from Seminole County and the City of Sanford.

The celebration marked a significant milestone to commemorate upward mobility for six families, all of whom were uncertain about their move-in date until mid-afternoon Wednesday when Habitat was able to deliver the good news that certificates of occupancy had been issued by the City of Sanford. Now each family, some facing homelessness if the process had not been resolved in the coming days, can focus on a permanent move that will bring stability at the start of a new school year in their forever home.

"We are all here today to celebrate the American dream of homeownership here in Central Florida," said Penny Seater, CEO of Habitat for Humanity Seminole-Apopka. "That's because homeownership is more than just about owning a home, it's about building a stable workforce, fostering civic responsibility, and taking pride in the hard work necessary for home ownership as our six families have each demonstrated."

Habitat homeowners are actively engaged in building their own home and/or another homeowners' home by investing up to 400 "sweat equity" hours, which also includes their participation in classes that encourage their financial stability. Those families then become eligible to purchase their home at a much-reduced cost.

Each of the six, Leadership Point homes is move-in ready and has been constructed using cutting-edge building techniques and energy-efficient materials to provide a long-term benefit and savings for the families so they can save more for future needs. Amenities such as energy-efficient appliances from Habitat partners like Whirlpool save water and electricity and double-pane windows, enhance insulation, reduce energy loss and cut heating and cooling costs.

About Habitat for Humanity Seminole-Apopka

Habitat for Humanity Seminole-Apopka has been building brighter futures and better communities in Central Florida for over 33 years. Through financial support, business partnerships, and volunteer resources, Habitat builds and develops affordable homes that are sold to low-to-moderate income families at no profit and are financed with a modest mortgage. Homebuyers qualify through financial education, volunteerism and by helping to build their home as well as those of other, future homebuyers. Visit <https://www.habitat-seminoleapopka.org/> to learn more.

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