



## NEWS & PROFILES

Winter ★ 2020



**Vincent M. Dawson**  
*President*



**Dr. Cary Stratton**

## Thoughts from the President

First, on behalf of the Trustees, I would like to thank you for your generous donations over the last 30 years. I think we can all revel in the success stories we have generated for thousands of children in South Texas.

As Trustees, we take our roles very seriously, and in the true Cavalier spirit, we also have a lot of fun. The Foundation has never been stronger, due to the generosity of our membership as well as the many years of prudent fiscal management from the Trustees and the Cavaliers.

Thank you so much for your trust and guidance. We truly believe that the Texas Cavaliers Charitable Foundation will continue to be a force for positive change in our community for many years into the future.

See you at the Texas Cavaliers River Parade on April 20! Best party of the year!

***Viva The Texas Cavaliers!***

**Vincent M. Dawson**  
*President*

## Cary Stratton: One of the Good Guys in Blue Suits

After serving his ear-nose-throat patients faithfully and well for 47 years, Dr. Cary Stratton retired, but he didn't stop serving others. He now volunteers in the San Antonio Youth Literacy program, taking second graders under his gentle wing at a low-performing, high-poverty school in the San Antonio Independent School District. "Kids identified as weak in reading skills at the end of first grade often fall behind and are at risk of dropping out," he says. "I work with two students for the entire school year to help them improve their reading proficiency. And I get to be a granddad figure to kids who often come from dysfunctional families and are hungry for positive adult influence. It is very gratifying." When he first began mentoring at a remote school in an impoverished neighborhood, he convinced King Antonio XCVI Richard Sparr to visit his school. "It was the most wonderful thing for those children," he says.

Dr. Stratton also serves on the board of the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation (JDRF). When he was diagnosed with Type I Diabetes 58 years ago, there was little anyone could do to treat the disease. "We can directly thank the JDRF for the amazing strides we've made in managing diabetes – including the invention of devices for self-testing blood sugar and insulin pumps." With a personal and medical passion for the JDRF's mission, Dr. Stratton initiated the annual JDRF Golf Tournament seven years ago, which has raised a total half-million dollars.

Shannon Nisbet says, "On his 75th birthday, he raised \$75,000 for JDRF ... he is absolutely amazing!"

Typical of Dr. Stratton's humble nature, his response when we asked if we could honor him with this story, he replied, "No one deserves this 'good guy in a blue suit' attention less than I." We disagree, and we thank him for the work he has been doing as a Texas Cavalier since 1985, and for his exemplary community service.



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### TCCF Grants: Reducing Suffering, Giving Hope, Saving Lives

In 2019, \$1.5M in TCCF funding provided critical support to 69 non-profits that serve children. Education, arts, culture, medicine, science, social services and youth enrichment projects are among the services we fund. This issue, we introduce three agencies that are doing tough work with children and youth to abate their suffering and guide them toward lives of hope, health and safety. These selfless organizations are making a difference. Their work is arduous, innovative and critical to the children who are the beneficiaries.

**Hope House Ministries** brings positive youth services to a four-square mile area on the eastside where poverty, violence, un- and under-employment, school drop-out rates and other social problems are extremely high. Hope House engages youth in innovative after-school, weekend and summer activities that promote nutritional education, leadership, teamwork, socialization and potential career paths. The TCCF grant will help Hope House continue its transformative work.

**The South Texas Alliance for Orphans "More than Enough Initiative"** serves and equips churches, their members and the community with the goal of giving children in foster care the benefits of strong, healthy, supported biological, foster, adoptive and kinship families. Its mission is to care for the thousands of children and families affected by the overwhelming need for quality foster care. In 2018, there were almost 4,000 infants and children up to 21 years old in foster care in Bexar, Kendall and Comal counties. Many of these children have suffered abuse, neglect and other Adverse Childhood Experiences. Your TCCF grant can change the world for the children served by this project.

**Ransomed Life, Inc.** provides lifesaving counseling and mentoring to girls, ages 12-18, who are survivors of Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking. These young women are traumatized, angry, hurting and often suicidal. Healing can take years.

This program helps the victims recover their self-esteem, self-worth, sense of hope and ability to trust. The victims represent every socio-economic and geographic group in Bexar County, and are referred to the agency through the Bexar County Juvenile Probation system, school counselors, family, and others. TCCF was honored to provide support to this first-time applicant.

