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Starlight Children’s Foundation Picks Up Journal for Kids Facing Health Challenges

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By Aaron Brophy | www.samaritanmag.com

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Sheri Sobrato Brisson helping a child — photo credit: Sheri Sobrato Brisson

A number of children facing health challenges are getting another tool to address the difficulties they face — a book.

Specifically, the book *Digging Deep: A Journal for Young People Facing Health Challenges*, written by Rose Offner and Sheri Sobrato Brisson, which is a 140-page journal that combines artwork with writing prompts designed to help get kids and teens writing and talking about the issues they face on their health journeys.

Digging Deep will be distributed free to more than 600 community partners in North America including hospitals, specialty clinics and camps, respite houses and hospices through the **Starlight Children’s Foundation**, a worldwide organization whose express goal is to improve quality of life for children, families and communities around the world. Some of the many things the Starlight Children’s Foundation has initiated include the "Get Fit, Get Right" program to combat childhood obesity, PC Pals, which provides laptops for pediatric

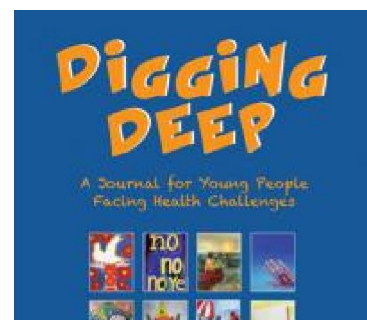
patients, and Starbright World, a fully navigable shared virtual reality environment linking children from their hospital beds across the country.

"Starlight focuses on supporting the physical as well as the emotional health of young people, so we are thrilled to be able to offer ‘Digging Deep’ to our network of community partners," says Jacquie Hart, Global CEO, and Starlight Children’s Foundation, in a press release.

Offner, a motivational speaker, writer, and visual artist, tells this story on the Digging Deep web site: "Recently I was working with a five-year-old girl using Digging Deep. The girl couldn’t write yet, so I was her scribe. She told me a story about a little girl who was in the hospital with asthma. She was afraid that she would not have enough air and die. The girl was afraid of the doctors, the hospitals, and the tests, and afraid of being alone in the dark.

"But then she realized that the medicine, the pumps, and the treatments made her feel better, and she was going to be all right. The girl felt safe. By the end of the story she told me, I could see a noticeable difference – a sense of pride she had gained from finding her own way and having someone else witness her transformation. Even though she was shy, she was able to honestly tell me her story and smile at the outcome."

For Sobrato Brisson, who's a brain tumor survivor with a MA in counseling psychology, helping children and teens build emotional strength and resilience through writing is an important cause of hers.



“Partnering with Starlight Children’s Foundation will allow us to reach far more children. We are grateful to have the support of their network,” said Brisson.



Sobrato Brisson is familiar with philanthropic causes. The eldest daughter of the Silicon Valley-based **Sobrato** development family, the members of the Sobrato family have made a point to take up causes both as individuals and through the **Sobrato Family Foundation**. The family estimates they've contributed \$349 million US (\$467.2 million Canadian) to community investments over the years. Some of the areas the family contributes to includes English language literacy development, office space grants for non-profit groups and affordable housing funding.

Digging Deep: A Journal for Young People Facing Health Challenges has won a number of literary awards in recent years, including the 2014 Moonbeam Gold Medal Spirit Award, the IPPY Gold Medal Award from the Independent Publishers Book Award, the Mom’s Choice Award Gold Medal for Young Adult Books, a Pinnacle Book Achievement Award in the health category and was a finalist for the 2014 Eric Hoffer book award. 📖

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Rich Srsen · GFO at Retired

Just so you all know.....The main author and creator of this journal is Rose Offner. Give credit were credit is due.

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This book was written by Rose Offner, not Sheri and it is wrong to not say that. Sheri is a co author and Rose is the primary author. If you've seen any of Rose's other books, Journal to the Soul, Journal to Intimacy and Journal to the Soul for Teenagers, you'd know that this is Rose's style, Rose's artwork and Rose's creation. It is completely illegal and unethical and I think politically motivated to leave Rose's name off of all the publicity.

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CHARITY SONG OF THE MONTH:



VARIOUS ARTISTS, "Hands," 2016

Two dozen major artists — including Mary J. Blige, Jason Derulo, Selena Gomez, Imagine Dragons, Juanes, Adam Lambert, Jennifer Lopez, P!nk, fun.'s Nate Ruess, Britney Spears, Gwen Stefani, and Meghan Trainor — have come together to sing on this ballad "Hands" benefitting the **victims of the Orlando massacre**. The song about the good and bad that hands can do (ie. "can hold a gun and hold your heart) was co-written by Justin Tranter & Julia Michaels and BloodPop with Ely Rise; and produced by BloodPop, Mark Ronson and Tranter. Proceeds from each song sale via **iTunes** will be divided equally (43 cents to each) to **Equality Florida, GLBT Community Center of Central Florida, and GLAAD**. Buy it **here**. — *Karen Bliss*

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CAUSE SONG OF THE MONTH:



ALEJANDRA RIBERA, "Orlando," 2016

"*I am Orlando/You are the world*," Canadian folk singer Alejandra Ribera's **somber song** begins. Originally inspired by the title character Virginia Woolf novel Orlando, it has now taken on new meaning. She wrote it in Paris the week of the Charlie Hedbo massacre in 2015 after she was "paralyzed by my sadness" and used songwriting "to soothe myself," she notes in the press release. "At that time I needed to remind myself of the potential for transformation that can only come in our most vulnerable moments." She released it now as a tribute to the victims of the

Orlando shooting and the other recent tragedies. Listen to the song **here**. — *Karen Bliss*

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