

# Laughter Unlimited

**Humor with a Serious Purpose**

## Celebrating a Decade of Service

Ten years ago, Laughter Unlimited started an innovative program at the Pines of Sarasota through a William G. and Marie Selby Foundation Innovative Partnership grant. The partnership continues today. Since its inception this year-round program has grown steadily, we have served 71 facilities in Sarasota, Manatee, and Charlotte counties. Currently, we visit these 15 facilities weekly:

- Pines of Sarasota
- J.H. Floyd
- The Glenridge on Palmer Ranch
- Pinebrook Nursing and Rehabilitation
- Springwood Care and Rehabilitation Center
- Sarasota Health and Rehabilitation
- Senior Friendship Centers in Sarasota & Venice
- United Cerebral Palsy
- Anchin Pavilion
- Sarasota Memorial Hospital
- Sarasota Memorial Nursing and Rehabilitation Center
- Healthpark Care Center

Laughter Unlimited is an ongoing hallmark program using the age-old art of clowning. The program is a masterful blend of therapeutic interaction medicine we call "Humor Therapy". It provides professional clowns, entertainers, musicians and

trained volunteers to add a new dimension to the lives of those in hospitals, nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and adult day care centers. Originally introduced in nursing and assisted living facilities, Circus Sarasota is proud to announce that it has successfully implemented Laughter Unlimited at Sarasota Memorial Hospital. Studies consistently show that laughter reduces stress, eases anxiety and depressive symptoms, decreases pain perception and has a positive, lasting effect on the body's immune system, heart and brain. The program is not designed as a one-time activity, or to be just entertainment. It is a vehicle by which loving persons establish relationships and who work to improve the quality of life for others. "Humor with a Serious Purpose" runs the gamut from one-on-one bedside visitation and conversations to engaging patients and residents in physical activities, and individual and group memory stimulation. In addition, the program also enhances the lives of family and staff.

Our goal is to be a permanent, interactive part of the health-care and retirement communities and to elevate the quality and meaning of daily life for clients, caregivers and staff, through our on-going, relationship-building programs. Using Individual Care Plans and the specific needs of each facility, Laughter Unlimited develops interventions that include:

### Room-to-Room Visits

Room-to-Room rounds are a most important component of the Laughter Unlimited program. These one-on-one improvisational visitations are for children in hospitals and senior residents of nursing and assisted living facilities who are not able to join in activities because of physical limitations or the lack of desire to join in.



### Interactive Programs

Entertainment based programs presenting a wide range of disciplines; music, magic, clowning and more. Memory stimulation through the use of familiar themes which draws on life memories of residents in interactive relationship building.



### Men's Club

Designed to create a working unit of men that will support and represent the facility internally while building a social relationship using common interests, activities and progressive interactive ideas developed by the residents involved.



### Comedy in Motion

Designed to increase the range of motion of the resident through the use of comedy and clown skills.



### Memories...Lost & Found\*

Designed to address the memory challenged resident at all levels of impairment. This progressive program takes the resident through a series of interactions proven to increase sociability and awareness.



### Inter-generational Events

Generating bonds between age groups, the inter-generational events are occasions during which we combine the gift of youth with the wisdom of experience.

### Laughter Unlimited Team

#### LU Professionals

Karen Bell  
Robin Eurich  
Jackie LeClaire  
Tom Lemoine  
Nathan Coe Marsh  
Bob Marsh  
Chuck Sidlow  
Noriko Sidlow  
Billy Bob Steinberg  
B.B. Widdop

#### Clown Volunteers

Chris Blackman  
Tiffany David  
Scott Gregory  
Dawn Kraegel  
Skip Land  
Marjorie Nolan  
Julie Scarupa  
Agnes Walters  
Harry Witt

**JACKIE LECLAIRE**  
Ambassador of Mirth



# BIG TOP EDUCATION

Circus Sarasota's Big Top Education curriculum, developed in accordance with Sunshine State Standards and FCAT requirements, captures students' interests and illustrates that learning can be fun.

Taking place in local public schools K-8, the program helps academics come alive! For example, imagine the engaged enthusiasm when students learn and experience physics utilizing the circus arts of juggling (Newton's Law) and wire walking (center of balance and gravity). Following a field trip to Circus Sarasota, 7th grade students shared their reactions:

"I never knew science had so much to do with the circus arts"

"I really enjoyed learning the physics behind the acts"

"I learned that they use gravity, inertia, acceleration and force when juggling"



Students experience a curriculum rich in Florida's circus history and they are introduced to other art forms such as theater, music and dance all of which are closely interwoven with the circus.

Beyond the academic base, the importance of discipline, teambuilding, trust and self-confidence is stressed throughout the lesson plans.

"The Big Top Education program is wonderful for teaching children the real-world concept of teamwork as well as patience"

-Paula F. Karalis, First Grade Teacher,  
Rowlett Magnet Elementary School



An essential part of Circus Sarasota's mission, the Big Top Education program has reached more than 5,000 students and has helped many economically and developmentally challenged students improve their learning capabilities. In addition, approximately 3,000 tickets are donated each year to low income families so they can share in the thrilling experience of Circus Sarasota's performances under the Big Top.

Though shrinking revenues continue to threaten arts education in local schools, Circus Sarasota feels that programs like Big Top Education are vital to the development of the whole child.

Please visit our website to make a donation: [www.CircusSarasota.org](http://www.CircusSarasota.org)  
Your gift will touch the lives of the youth and seniors in our community.  
Please help us to enhance the lives of CHILDREN OF ALL AGES today!

## Many Thanks to Our...

### 2010 Laughter Unlimited Luncheon Sponsors

Big Top  
Mary Ann Robinson

Wirewalker  
Northern Trust Bank  
Al and Bette Van Tieghem

Ringmaster  
Phyllis Siskel

**Save the Date**  
Laughter Unlimited Luncheon  
April 26, 2011 – Hyatt Sarasota Ballroom

### Laughter Unlimited Sustainer Society

Circus Sarasota is sincerely grateful to the generous donors listed below who are members of the Laughter Unlimited Sustainer Society. Sustainer Society Members have committed to helping Circus Sarasota's Laughter Unlimited outreach program grow and flourish by pledging their support of \$1,000 or more per year for a period of five years.

#### Thank you Sustainers!

Steven and Melanie Cohn  
Scott Hinckley and Elizabeth Bornstein  
Robert and Me Me Kramer  
Dennis and Graci McGillicuddy  
Marian Moss  
Charles and Charlotte Perret

#### Circus Sarasota Gala Sponsors

Polo Grill & Bar  
Gulf Coast Community Foundation  
Sarasota Magazine

#### Ticket Sponsor

Primo's Ristorante

A special thanks to Bob Collins for his eloquent prose & expertise in producing the souvenir program

## GRANTS AND FOUNDATION SUPPORT

- William G. and Marie Selby Foundation for replacing the ring carpet and runner, movable spotlights and a new electric distribution box.
- Roberta Sudakoff Foundation in support of the Laughter Unlimited program at Sarasota Memorial Hospital.
- J. Milton and Nellie Hoffa Memorial Foundation support for the Laughter Unlimited program at Sarasota Memorial Hospital.
- Community Foundation of Sarasota County through the Pitching for Projects and Program Fund in support of "I Can Too" at United Cerebral Palsy.
- Norman and Phyllis Siskel Donor Advised Fund of the Community Foundation of Sarasota County – Tickets for underprivileged families to attend the Summer Performance
- Publix Supermarket Charities – tickets to the winter production for underprivileged families
- The Community Foundation of Sarasota County from the BOOST Initiative Fund for a new copier
- The State of Florida, Division of Cultural Affairs, the Florida Arts Council and the National Endowment for the Arts – General Program Support
- The School Board of Manatee County – support for education programs
- Winter Production – Paid for in part by Sarasota County Tourist Development Tax Revenues
- The Rubin Charitable Foundation
- Tillie, Jennie & Harold Schwartz Foundation
- The V. Harriette & Raymond Brush Foundation
- Jelks Family Foundation
- The Salem Foundation
- Paul & Sharon Steinwachs Foundation