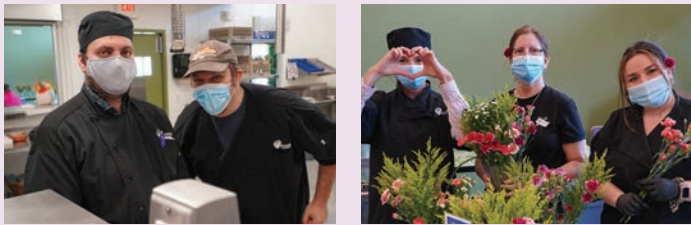



**COVID-19 UPDATE:** The Academy is open regular hours of Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. using screening and safety protocols. For more information about our Phase I Safety Guidelines on the Academy's website: [AcademySRQ.org](http://AcademySRQ.org).





Dec. 10-19, 2021

Watch our videos starting Dec. 10.

[AcademySRQ.org](http://AcademySRQ.org)

## SHINE A LIGHT

by Diane Kreisman

It was a starry starry night at the Ritz Carlton, where I had the pleasure of attending the Stamping Out the Stigma of Mental Illness Event. The room was beautiful! I got to meet the hosts of the event, the namesakes of the Lee & Bob Peterson Foundation, and they were warm and welcoming.



Diane Kreisman

MLB legend Darryl Strawberry was there. He spoke about the stigma of mental illness and substance abuse, and he made the point that mental health challenges can happen to anyone. What really struck me was when he said that the highest point in his career was actually the lowest point in his life because of the struggles that he had to hide from the world. I'm sure that many people who have a mental health diagnosis, or struggle with addiction, could relate to this.

Steve Ford, the son of Betty and President Gerald Ford was also a speaker at the event. He too struggles with mental health and substance abuse challenges. He spoke of how he participated in an intervention for his mother all while hiding his own struggles. This was a reminder that no amount of money or influence can make one immune from such challenges.

There was a silent auction which was matched by the Lee & Bob Peterson Foundation and garnered \$150,000 to increase mental health awareness in the public schools. Despite the weighty topic, it was a wonderful evening, and an important one in how it raised money and visibility, and humanized mental health challenges by hearing from those whom we admire. May there be sunshine from darkness for everyone facing these challenges.

## THANKSGIVING DAY FEAST

by Rima Ghalieh

I attended the Thanksgiving feast at the Academy with my brother. He and I enjoyed spending quality time together. I also spent time with my Academy friends, and with some of their family who attended as well. We had a great turnout, and the dining room was full.



Rima Ghalieh

The food, of course, was delicious, and the service was superb. I am grateful that Ben and Patty organized and prepared the meal for all of us. Academy member Candy El-Azzaoui also helped out on the day, and she did a great job.

I'm appreciative that the Academy opened up on Thanksgiving Day since last year we weren't able to because of Covid-19. If it wasn't for the Academy, it would have just been my brother and I, with nowhere to go to celebrate. We were both very grateful for great food and community.

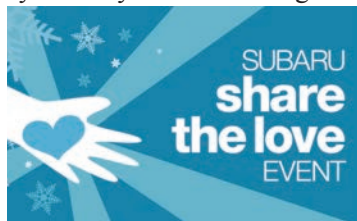


(left to right) Paul Hennekes, Irene Lunt, Bob Ismeurt, Mary Kennedy, Omar Ghalieh, Rick Pardo, Rima Ghalieh, Patty Haltinner and Ben Burnside

# SHARE THE LOVE

Love is a many-splendored thing, especially when it means that one of our favorite community partners will share the love with us. Subaru of America, Inc. has launched their 14th annual Share the Love Event. Over the years, they have donated over 200 million dollars to national and local charities, and we have been a grateful recipient of their generosity for the past three years. We're told that they are expecting that this year will push them past 225 million dollars! Now that's exciting!

The event, which began on November 18th, 2021, will run until January 3rd, 2022. Purchase or lease a new Subaru and Subaru of America, Inc. will donate \$250 to one of four non-profit organizations: buyers choice. Additionally, for every vehicle purchased or leased at Sarasota Subaru, they will donate \$50 to the Academy. For anyone considering new wheels, this should make the choice easy: drive home in a sporty new car AND support one of your favorite local non-profits, the Academy. That's what sharing the love is all about.



## SLEIGHING IT AT WORK

by Cayman Seiffert

The holidays and retail go hand and hand. And if you know anything about the holidays and retail, you know that things can get a little hectic. I'm not unfamiliar with the chaos of retail during the holidays. I've been in the trenches before, but not in years.



Cayman Seiffert

I'm an Electronic Pricer at Goodwill, and I was just starting to settle into a rhythm when the holidays struck, and bam! I became inundated with donated goods. From chainsaws and flashlights to lamps and TV's; bins upon bins of merchandise came in for me to price.

I'm up for the challenge. The Academy has prepared me for this and helped me build my stamina so I could get, and maintain, this job. The Academy prepared me to exceed expectations. I've stayed extra hours to help combat all of the additional work, and I've taken it in stride. With the communication and socialization skills that I've worked on at the Academy, I've been able to effectively communicate with my boss and co-workers to get the job done to the best of my ability, and as part of a team. The holidays maybe hectic in the retail industry but I'm ready for whatever is thrown my way.

All events take place on-site at the Academy and through the Zoom app.

Watch Slack for Meeting ID and Password.

**NOTE: Morning meetings begin at 8:45 a.m. on Mondays - Thursdays.**

### Monday, December 6

Typing with Rima - 8 a.m.

Morning Meeting - 8:45 a.m.

Individual Team Meetings - 9:15 a.m.

Graphic Des/Multimedia Team Meeting - 1:15 p.m.

Bus & Tech/Culinary Team Meetings - 1:30 p.m.

Graphic Design/Multimedia Workshop - 3 p.m.

### Tuesday, December 7

Morning Meeting - 8:45 a.m.

Individual Team Meetings - 9:15 a.m.

Academy Meeting - 1:30 p.m.

Individual Team Meetings - 2 p.m.

### Wednesday, December 8

Morning Meeting - 8:45 a.m.

Individual Team Meetings - 9:15 a.m.

Newsroom Meeting - 11 a.m.

Menu Planning Meeting - 11:45 a.m.

Graphic Des/Multimedia Team Meeting - 1:15 p.m.

Bus & Tech/Culinary Team Meetings - 1:30 p.m.

Wellness Wednesday Workshop - 3 p.m.

### Thursday, December 9

Morning Meeting - 8:45 a.m.

Individual Team Meetings - 9:15 a.m.

Graphic Des/Multimedia Team Meeting - 1:15 p.m.

Bus & Tech/Culinary Team Meetings - 1:30 p.m.

### Friday, December 10

Morning Meeting - 9 a.m.

Individual Team Meetings - 9:45 a.m.

Graphic Des/Multimedia Team Meeting - 1:15 p.m.

Bus & Tech/Culinary Team Meetings - 1:30 p.m.

Writer's Workshop - 11 a.m.

Spanish Workshop - 3 p.m.

HYBRID WORK-ORDERED DAY

## TO MAKE A DONATION

visit our website

[AcademySRQ.org](https://AcademySRQ.org)

and click on the  **Donate Now** button

*Thank you for transforming lives!*

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