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WESTCHESTER

Fundraising bowling tourney is a strike against child abuse



Miami lawyers, their families and friends gathered to bowl for charity at Bird Bowl for 13th Annual Lawyers Strike against Child Abuse Bowling Tournament to benefit the Family Resource Center of South Florida. ALLISON DIAZ/FOR THE MIAMI HERAL / ALLISON DIAZ/FOR THE MIAMI HERAL

BY PARADISE AFSHAR

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Lawyers and other professionals from Broward and Miami-Dade counties set aside their legal skills and polished up on their bowling prowess on June 13 for the 13th annual Lawyers Strike Against Child Abuse Bowling Tournament.

The tournament is put on by the Family Resource Center of South Florida as a fundraiser to help them in their mission to strengthen families and preventing child abuse and neglect.

The event began as the vision of Paula Carter, wife of bowling professional bowler and bowling lane owner Don Carter.

"I think this is a good cause," said Oren Wunderman, the FRC's executive director. "And a vast majority are repeats who come back year after year."

The law firm of Adorno and Yoss is among those that have been longtime supporters of the tournament.

"We've been doing this for nine years, and we're coming back again next year," said Donna Blake, 60, of Homestead.

This year, the firm bought 11 lanes and some teams purchased matching shirts to show solidarity.

The FRC said 240 bowlers participated in teams of four.

Each team played three rounds at Bird Bowl, 9275 SW 40th St., where the event took place, and the teams that had the highest combined points placed in the top three.

Winning teams received one of three bowling trophies, designed by Ed King, an FRC board member.

The red and orange first-prize pin, and the second-place purple pin went to Adorno and Yoss, while third-prize winner, City National Bank, received a bronze pin.

"It's more important to take part in the event than to win," said Mark Fisher, 53, of Pinecrest.

Fisher, whose team took first place, said he was happy to help out the cause and that "we wouldn't miss it next year."

Real estate company Keller Williams is one of the non-legal firms that bowled in the tournament, and lent their support to FRC.

"I know how important it is to support [the FRC]. They provide so many great services for kids," said Kevin Veilleux, 46, of Miami.

Some of the services provided by the FRC include rehabilitation programs for parents with substance abuse and alcohol addition, parenting support and foster care, among other programs.

It was not only professionals who were bowling in this event, two lanes were donated to the foster children that the FRC supports throughout the year.

"It's fantastic. This is my first time bowling and it's great," said a 14-year-old foster child from Hialeah. (Florida law prohibits publishing the names of children who are in foster care.)

From the bowling, raffle tickets and silent auction, the FRC raised more than \$22,000 and is still accepting donations.

"We could use diapers and kids clothing," Wunderman said.

Donations can be dropped off at 155 S. Miami Ave., Suite 400, in Miami.

For more information about the Family Resource Center of South Florida, call 305-374-6006 or go to www.frctflorida.org.