Meet the O’Callaghan’s: One family who has helped transform the lives of many children.

For many of our families, there is a goal to help children in need of families while at the same time growing or starting their own family. The O’Callaghan’s have set the bar high, not only did they grow their family through adoption, but they have also provided respite care for many children living in foster care.

Kristin O’Callaghan remembers saying, when she was a young girl, that she wanted a large family – at least six children. Through their partnership with Sierra, she and her husband Gino have surpassed that goal. This family of four is now a family of nine. It all began through a chance meeting at a doctor’s office.

Before their birth-sons were two years old, (born in 1994 and 1995), they both developed Retinoblastoma, a rare eye cancer. At one of their numerous visits to the eye doctor, a five year old girl with the same eye cancer and her younger brother came in to the waiting room. There was an instant rapport among the children, and since the doctor was two hours behind schedule, there was time for all of the parents to get acquainted. As It turned out, the parent of the two siblings was a foster parent and both of the children were in foster care and available for adoption.

Kristin and Gino worked with Sierra and, in 2003, the adoptions were finalized. As they were already certified and a part of the fost/adopt program, they then began to provide respite care for babies and children just entering the foster care system. During that time, they have adopted five children through Sierra and fostered over twenty children ranging in age from two months to eleven years. The youngest member of the family, adopted in 2007, is Chelle, now five and wheelchair-bound with Cerebral Palsy. “Chelle is our miracle child,” said Kristin. “When she first came to our home, she could only babble. She now has several words in her vocabulary. Her needs and medical care were such that Gino and I knew we needed to devote more time to our family of seven, so we stopped the respite care.”

The kids are now 16, 15, 15, 13, 7, 6, and 5 and each has an Individualized Education Program. “Nevada County educators and administrators have been wonderfully helpful to our family,” reported Kristin. Each child is participating in sports or extracurricular activities to the best of their abilities and all help bring smiles and giggles from Chelle, who basks in their loving attention.

As you can tell from this story, the families who work with Sierra come in many forms and sizes. We make a difference in children’s lives because of the commitment and dedication from our amazing families. Thank you!

We transform the lives of children in foster care by building and nurturing permanent families.
Sierra Forever Families gratefully acknowledges the 22 corporations and foundations who have contributed to our Annual Fund through grant awards from July 1, 2010 to March 1, 2011. The funds raised ($174,147) help provide essential support for programs and services to children.

Grant awards were received supporting permanency services from Arata Brothers Foundation, Bank of America, City of Roseville Community Benefit Fund, Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption, Massie Family Foundation, Sierra Health Foundation, The Sacramento Bee “Book of Dreams”, Union Bank, and the United Way of Nevada County Grant Program. These program services include pre- and post-placement/adoption services, Destination Family, and recruitment efforts.

In support of the Wonder Mentoring Program are Bank of the West, M & M Whitmire Foundation, Macy’s, Ronald McDonald House Charities Northern California, Soroptimist International of Metro Sacramento, Stuart Foundation, Sundt Foundation, The Sacramento Bee “Book of Dreams”, US Bank, and van Löben Sels/RembeRock Foundation.

We also thank Catholic Healthcare West for its award that funds part of our Therapy Support Services in Sacramento County.

To learn more about becoming a supporter through our grants and foundation programs, please contact: Juli Kramer at 916.368.5114 or jkramer@sierraff.org

TOMORROW’S LEGACY CLUB…
Leaving a Lasting Legacy for Sierra Forever Families!

We are pleased to announce a new member to our Tomorrow’s Legacy Club (TLC)!

Our TLC members are very special individuals who have named Sierra Forever Families in their will, trust, or another type of planned gift.

Please welcome Judi Smith as our newest TLC member. Judi is a Guide in our Wonder mentoring program. She and her Explorer have been together nearly two years. “It’s been amazing to see the change in my Explorer’s life by spending part of a day with her, three to four times per month. While we sometimes go ice skating or to the zoo, some of our best outings have been simply sharing a picnic lunch and talking. I think it’s the consistent presence in her life that makes the difference,” remarked Judi. She learned more about Sierra Forever Families through her work with the Wonder mentoring program. “I began to see what a difference a permanent family could mean to a child.” Judi is so happy that her legacy gift will help children find forever families for years to come.

Making a legacy gift can be a great way to do something special, especially during these challenging economic times. Members of our TLC understand that the footprints they leave today will have a transforming impact on our future.

How can you become a TLC member? Simply let us know your plans to include Sierra Forever Families in your estate plans. It’s really that easy!

If you have already named Sierra Forever Families in your will or trust, please share this wonderful news with us. We’d love to welcome you into Sierra’s TLC so we can thank you and recognize your commitment. We enjoy celebrating these gifts and know that TLC members’ stories inspire others to give.

For additional information about the Tomorrow’s Legacy Club (TLC), please contact: Kimberly Cox or Bobby Cobbs at 916-368-5114 or kcox@sierraff.org  bcobbs@sierraff.org
Imagine hearing a child say...  

"YOU ARE THE BEST PERSON I HAVE."

A Guide in our Wonder mentoring program heard just that from his Explorer. Our Wonder program is unique in that it matches children and youth (ages 6-12), who are currently in the foster care system, with a caring and consistent adult mentor. During their time together, the Guides and Explorers engage in activities that are designed to enrich the children’s lives. These fun age-appropriate experiences in music, the arts, sports, volunteer service, dining out, and nature become cherished memories to children in foster care, helping them feel as though they are not going through the system alone.

Wonder is pleased to once again participate in Walk ‘N Rock for Kids on Sunday, May 29, 2011. It is a privilege to be one of the selected 22 nonprofits benefiting from this wonderful event, sponsored by Hope Production Foundations.

Wonder will receive 100% of the funds raised from our teams! We invite you to support the Wonder program by donating or joining a walk team on behalf of Sierra Forever Families. Then share the news with friends and family. This is a fun and exciting way to help bring a world of wonder to children in foster care.

The event is a rockin’ good time and begins with a morning 5K walk then a benefit concert later that evening, featuring legendary rockers KISS. The walk route starts at Raley Field at 8 am, goes to the Capitol then back to Raley Field where family fun festivities await. This entertaining community event will be a day to remember and your support is appreciated. (There is a registration fee to walk, but not to donate.)

To JOIN A TEAM, or DONATE on behalf of Wonder, please visit [www.walknrock.org/sierraffwonder](http://www.walknrock.org/sierraffwonder).
For more information, contact April Johnson 916.368.5114 or [ajohnson@sierraff.org](mailto:ajohnson@sierraff.org)

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S.H.A.R.E.S. Card - Simply Shop, Swipe and Benefit Sierra Forever Families

S.H.A.R.E.S. - Supporting Humanities, Arts, Recreation, Education & Sports in our community.

Cards are pre-registered to support Sierra Forever Families - no need to go online to share personal information.

You can use this pre-registered card at any of the participating stores: Save Mart Supermarkets, SMART foods, FOODMAXX, or Lucky.

Up to 3% of qualified purchases will benefit Sierra. Alcohol sales, postage stamps, and lottery sales excluded.

PLEASE NOTE: Be sure to hand your card to cashier at the beginning of transaction.

To request a card (or multiple), contact: Kimberly Cox at 916.368.5114 or [kcox@sierraff.org](mailto:kcox@sierraff.org)
Family is at the very heart of Sierra Forever Families. It’s in our name. It is embraced by our mission to transform the lives of children in foster care by building and nurturing permanent families. We help children overcome loss, regain security and restore their sense of identity that comes from belonging to a family.

Sierra has helped place over 2,600 children during our 28 year history. Each child’s life was transformed because of a very special extended family they probably never knew— their Sierra Family. Their Sierra Family supported and helped guide them during their time in foster care, and eventually helped introduce them to a loving and nurturing family they could call their own—forever.

Who is the Sierra Family? You are. In fact, everyone involved with our mission including children and families served, board leaders, staff, volunteers and donors are a part of Sierra’s Family. As family members, our roles may vary. But all are essential in helping provide a loving forever family for a child or youth.

Donors are very special family members who help offer essential support to sustain needed services before, during, and after a placement is made. We are grateful for the individuals, foundations, and businesses who generously give to help the children. They give in many ways, such as:

- **Our family members** like employees of Williams+Paddon Architects + Planners in Roseville who became a Champions for Children Team. During the year, collectively, they conduct small fundraisers with a goal to raise $5,000 in a year. That money helps provide a forever family for a child.

- **Our family members** like Waste Connections who partner with Sierra to host its annual “Golf Classic for Kids” fundraiser. This year the “7th Annual Golf Classic for Kids” will be September 12 at Serrano Country Club in El Dorado Hills.

- **Our family members** like Ms. Jan Lucas, who chooses to give monthly through an automatic Electronic Fund Transfer (EFT).

- **Our family members** like Mr. Howard Boscus who gave the vast majority of his estate away to eleven charities that serve needy children and the underserved. Many considered him an ordinary man. But that ordinary man did something quite extraordinary! His bequest gift to Sierra, designated for endowment, will continue to provide support from those invested earnings for many years to come.

There are many family members like Williams+Paddon, Waste Connections, Jan Lucas, and Howard Boscus. It takes all of us to help the children.

Thanks to your support last year, Sierra provided services for 448 children and youth in foster care through placement services, mentoring, and therapeutic support.

Our ability to serve children depends upon the generosity of many individuals, foundations, and businesses. We are grateful for all you continue to do to support our mission. Please help sustain and grow Sierra’s Family with your continued generosity.

Bobby Cobbs, MSW, CFRE
Development and Public Relations Officer

P.S. As you are a very special friend and member of the Sierra Family, we are honoring your friendship by changing the name of our donor newsletter from Heart Beat to Friends of the Family, beginning with our next issue.

For more information on how you can help a child living in foster care:
- visit our website at www.SIERRAFF.org
- call me at 916.368.5114 ext. 346
- or email me at bcobbs@sierraff.org