

FIRST THINGS

A publication of First Things First

Flower Fest Is back!

First Things First proudly presents Flower Fest 2010, our annual Valentine's Day fundraiser

Honor your spouse, special friend, co-worker, neighbor or teacher in your life by sending the gift of flowers. Showing your appreciation doesn't have to break the bank-- our beautiful arrangements of tulips start at \$15.00. Individual purchases can be made through our website, firstthings.org. Companies are also encouraged to participate in this unique fundraiser which not only benefits their employees, but helps strengthen families in our community at the same time.

Our goal for this year is to raise \$50,000 within 50 companies throughout the greater Chattanooga area. If your company would like to participate in this fun and exciting event, please call FTF at 423.267.5383.

Exciting news! Unum is returning in 2010 as a Flower Fest partner.



Our largest team, Unum



Lynda Sattler, 2009 Chairman

Thank you to our 2010 partners who have already signed up: Campbell and Associates, Card-Monroe Corp., Chattanooga Bakery, Comcast, Cornerstone, EMJ Corporation, ERMC, Southern Champion Tray, Unum

Not on the list? Call 423.267.5383

Want a MIND-BLOWING Marriage?



Join First Things First for the 2nd annual *Celebrate Marriage* seminar on Saturday, February 20 with relationship coach Dr. Greg Smalley, co-author of *The Wholehearted Marriage* and *Before You Plan Your Wedding, Plan Your Marriage*. This event is designed for singles, engaged couples and married couples who want to empower themselves and learn the keys to creating a mind-blowing marriage experience. The seminar will be held at Ridgedale Baptist Church on Hickory Valley Road from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., with registration beginning at 8:30 a.m.

The cost to attend *Celebrate Marriage* is \$10 per person which includes lunch and materials. For more information, go to our website at firstthings.org.



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**You can donate to
First Things First through
the CFC Campaign!**

Happy New Year!

This past year, the challenges brought on by the economy have indeed been great for all of us. Now more than ever, people need hope and encouragement to stay committed to one another and to our community.

Changes and challenges tend to make most people anxious. Instead of heading into these times with a sense of adventure, we forge ahead kicking and screaming every step of the way. But when all is said and done, the experience actually makes us stronger.

I have heard many stories about how people who have been dealt a major blow have received a major blessing in the process because of their strong relationships with family, friends, church and our community. It softens the blow when you have people who are willing to walk through the tough times by your side.

At the heart of a strong healthy community are strong healthy families. I don't believe there will ever be enough money to make up for the impact of the aftermath that family devastation leaves behind—from broken hearts and emotionally troubled people, young and old, to children who have a hole in their heart the size of their father. There is no substitute for these family relationships.

First Things First's resolve to face the challenges of preventing family breakdown is fierce. We are grateful to so many who share our vision for building healthy marriages and stronger families and are willing to invest their resources to impact our community.

Our Celebrate Marriage event coming up on February 20 and the Big Six Great Dad Experiment are examples of our effort to reinforce marriages. Our new fathering newsletter, Dad to Dad and the All Pro Dad Day breakfast events with Chick-fil-A at Gunbarrel Pointe encourage area fathers to be the role models their children need when so many other diversions are vying for their attention. And our upcoming Connections/Earn While You Learn and Prom classes prepare teens with dating and relationship skills to help them make smart decisions about their future.

Thank you for believing in what we do and for partnering with us to make a difference.

Happy New Year!!!!



Julie Baumgardner
*President and
FTF Executive Director*

IN HONOR/MEMORY OF . . .

A gift has been received by First Things First in Honor of:

Ms. Lynda Childress by the employees of Luken Holdings
Mr. and Mrs. Frank Jackson from Mr. and Mrs. John Jackson
Mr. John Henegar from Mr. and Mrs. Jim Eldridge
Mr. Mike McCleery from Dr. and Mrs. Phil Megison
Mrs. Kathie Fulgham from Mr. and Mrs. Al Hoke
Mr. and Mrs. Chuck Zeiser from Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Zeiser
Mrs. Mary Holliday from Mr. and Mrs. Robert Hunter
Mr. and Mrs. Greg Klapp from Mr. and Mrs. Christopher Klapp
Mrs. JoAnn Schuh from Mr. and Mrs. Todd Osborne

A gift has been received by First Things First in Memory of:

Mr. Bill Taylor from Mr. and Mrs. Ben Fischer
Mr. Raymond Hale from Mr. and Mrs. Jim Abel

HAVE YOU HEARD THE LATEST?

In October, First Things First received the Alfred P. Sloan Award for Business Excellence in Workplace Flexibility. The Sloan Awards honor organizations of all sizes and types across the country that are using workplace flexibility as a strategy to increase workplace effectiveness and yield positive business results.

"We are thrilled to receive this recognition for our workplace practices," said First Things First President and Executive Director Julie Baumgardner. "We value the contribution each employee makes to this organization and to the people we serve. It's important to offer our staff a flexible work environment that allows them to effectively do their jobs and be there for their families as well".

The Alfred P. Sloan Awards for Business Excellence in Workplace Flexibility are part of the *When Work Works* project, an ongoing initiative of Families and Work Institute, the Institute for a Competitive Workforce (an affiliate of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce), and the Twiga Foundation.

BOOT CAMP FOR NEW DADS

Expectant fathers have just as many questions about taking care of a baby as expectant mothers. Boot Camp for New Dads offers fathers-to-be basic training from veteran dads who know the ups and downs of fatherhood.



"(Todd Agne) presents the material in a way new dads are going to appreciate. I find his use of YouTube and other multi-media very interesting and engaging for class participants. I often hear parents talking about (the class) even after they deliver!"

Upcoming classes:

- Saturday, January 16 at Erlanger Women's East, 9a.m.–Noon
- Saturday, February 20 at Erlanger Women's East, 9a.m.–Noon
- Saturday, February 27 at Parkridge East Hospital, 9a.m.–Noon
- Saturday, March 20 at Erlanger Women's East, 9a.m.–Noon
- Saturday, April 17 at Erlanger Women's East, 9a.m.–Noon
- Saturday, April 24 at Parkridge East Hospital, 9a.m.–Noon

Check firstthings.org for more class dates



The First Things First "Partnership Plus" Campaign is in high gear, offering you sensational benefits at a fraction of the cost. For an annual commitment of \$19.99 a month or a lump sum gift of \$200.00, you will receive:

- 12 months of monthly date night tips/ideas
- Restaurant discounts
- A Deluxe Flower Fest arrangement
- Special VIP event seating at Movies in the Park
- 2 tickets to a FTF special event
- 4 free classes for two people
- 4 free books (one per quarter)
- Families on the Run Registration

Your partnership with First Things First reinforces our effort to build up and support the families in our area while promoting the health of your family as well. Sign up for Partnership Plus today at firstthings.org.

First Things First and Chick-fil-A Team Up for "All Pro Dad" Days

Hey Dads! Looking for a fun way to connect with your kids?

Join First Things First for *All Pro Dad Days* at Chick-fil-A. This is a sports-themed breakfast event held at **Chick-fil-A at Gunbarrel Pointe** on the fourth Saturday of each month from **9 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.** It is specifically designed for fathers and their children in grades 3 to 5. Dads and their kids can participate in interactive discussions on topics like peer pressure, goal-setting, caring for the less fortunate and more. For every meal purchased you will receive a free 3-pack of Chick-n-Minis. Join the team of All Pro Dads in our community. **Save these dates: January 23, February 27 and March 26.** We'll see you there!



Family University offers a variety of classes to help 21st Century parents in their efforts to be the parents their children need them to be.

Check out firstthings.org for the latest FAM U class schedule



Families from across the region came to exercise and kick-off the holiday season on the right foot at our 5th annual Families on the Run. The event was held on Saturday, December 5 with more than 600 people in attendance, and proved to be another huge success! A highlight of the run was the early winter snow that made the season bright! And let's not forget the Santa Stroll with the Chick-fil-A

Santa Cow, the Notre Dame High School Choir and our Christmas cookie specialists, Girl Scouts Troop #31!

Special thanks to this year's sponsors: SportsBarn/Personal Fitness Specialists, Comcast, Coca-Cola, Sunny 92.3 FM, Aquarium Foods, University of Phoenix, Groome Transportation, the Hunter Museum of American Art and Chick-fil-A at Gunbarrel Pointe.



LOVE & RESPECT

First Things First hosted the highly-acclaimed *Love and Respect Marriage Conference* at the Chattanooga Convention Center in

October. Couples and individuals alike traveled from across the country to be taught by author and founder of the conference, Dr. Emerson Eggerichs and his wife Sarah. More than 800 people attended the two-day event which offered couples an opportunity to connect with their spouse like never before. There was laughter as well as a few tears as many husband and wives found a deeper level of intimacy through the message of *Love and Respect*. Special thanks to The Eggerichs for helping FTFF strengthen marriages in the greater Chattanooga area.

ERQ TRAINING



In November, First Things First presented the Emotional and Relational Intelligence (ERQ) seminar to business professionals in and around Chattanooga. Dr. Gary Oliver taught the importance of understanding and identifying better ways to communicate and resolve conflict in the workplace and in everyday life. Thank you to the Society of Human Resource Managers for sponsoring this event. Here are a few comments from the seminar:

"Gary is a dynamic, interactive presenter—great information, effective use of multi-media. Thank you!"

"This was incredibly impactful to me both personally and professionally..."



DAD to DAD

Introducing Dad to Dad, The Fathering e-newsletter

Fatherhood is one of the most rewarding experiences of a man's life. It can also be one of the most challenging! First Things First is proud to introduce Dad to Dad, our new monthly e-newsletter. Dad to Dad is designed to equip, educate and encourage men in their role as father. Whether you're a father-to-be or a grandfather, you'll find great information on new ways to engage your kids, coach your family and much more.

Starting in January, look for the first issue of Dad to Dad, giving you the 4-1-1 on fatherhood. Sign up for the newsletter online at firstthings.org.

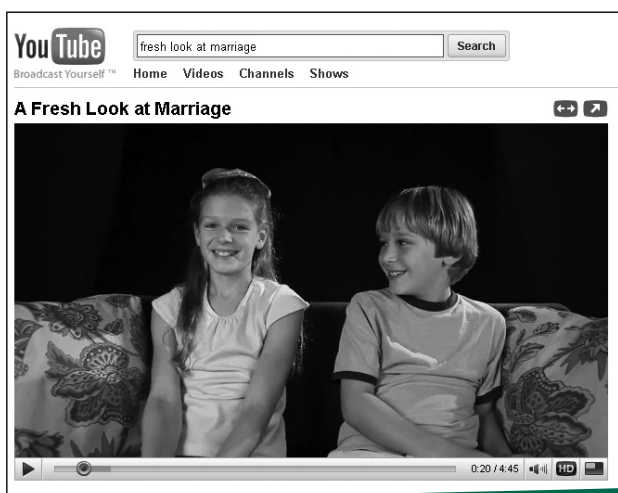
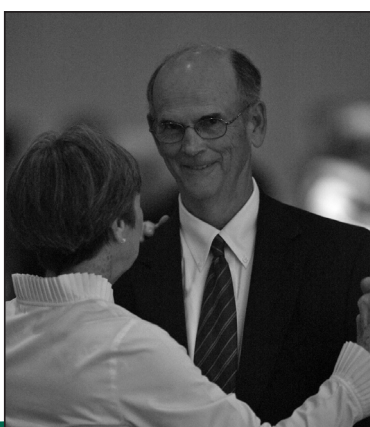
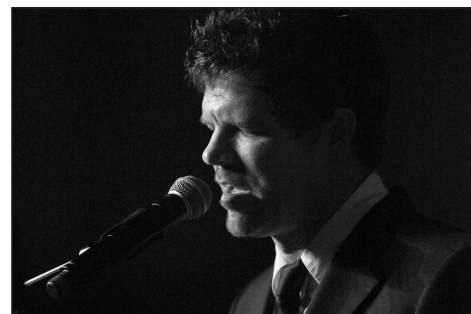
Michael O'Brien Celebrates the Art of Romance at Fall Banquet

Our 12th annual Fall Banquet was truly a night to remember with singer/songwriter Michael O'Brien and the "Tour de Romance". Couples and individuals alike were inspired by his music and the personal account of his mission to strengthen his own marriage. The evening also recognized companies and individuals for their support of First Things First. Chattem, Inc. received the Spirit of the Family Impact Award and Personal Fitness Specialists/SportsBarn was given the Spirit of the Family Partnership Award. "First Things First is truly grateful to have such significant support in our community," said Julie Baumgardner, President and Executive Director. "While we have seen much progress since we began this journey 12 years ago, there is still more work to be done to continue providing the best resources available to our community for stronger marriages and families."

There were several highlights of the banquet. Scottie Goodman served as our emcee for the evening. WJTT-Power 94 personality Donna L. spoke candidly about the impact of growing up without a father in her life. Her story was truly moving. And let's not forget the amazing video depicting views on marriage as told by children. The project was produced by FTF board member Andre Dantzler and really brought home the message of being intentional about strengthening our marriages and families. The video, "A Fresh Look at Marriage", is posted on the FTF YouTube Channel and received nearly a 1,000 hits within the first few hours of posting.

Special thanks go to our Chaircouple Richard and Mildred Bethea for a job well-done, and to Lynda Childress who served as our Corporate Sponsorship Chair. And a special thanks to our many sponsors who made the evening possible.

SAVE THE DATE: the First Things First 2010 Banquet, Thursday, September 2nd!



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First Things First
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Sign up for our e-news today!
to register, visit:
firstthings.org

First Things First partners with Siskin Children's Institute

Siskin Children's Institute will offer a one-day workshop on children's behavior and family interaction for caregivers of children of all abilities on March 18, 2010. Registration is required.

For more information go to www.siskin.org or contact Beth Oldham at 423.648.1757 or beth.oldham@siskin.org



Prom Class for Teens

The perfect dress, the right tux, pinning on that corsage . . . Yes, prom season will be here before you know it. But for many teens,

prom can be more frustrating than fun due to peer pressure and a lot of misinformation. First Things First can help make your teen's prom experience a fun (and safe) night that they'll always remember. Our new "Prom Class for Teens" offers healthy dating tips and facts to equip them to make responsible decisions and still enjoy being a teenager. Join us on Saturday, March 6 at the Brainerd Crossroads (BX) from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. for a day of fun activities—and a few surprises! The cost is \$5 per person which includes lunch. For more information or to register online, visit firstthings.org.

the big 6 great Dateexperiment



Has your flame lost its flicker when it comes to romance? Then you need to check out The Big Six Great DatExperiment. This program offers you and your spouse the chance to relax, relate and reconnect with six specially-designed dates that can help put the fun of dating back into your marriage.



The truth is, most of us want to spend time with our spouse, but most of us don't. When we do get time together, a lot of us experience the classic, "What do you want to do? I don't know. What do you want to do?"

The Great DatExperiment is the answer!
For the next 6 months, once a month, we'll offer you a different Great Date to help you recreate some magic. Go to firstthings.org to get started with Great Date #1!