

FRIENDSHIP THAT GIVES

2024–2026 IMPACT REPORT

A keepsake of advocacy, connection and community

INSPIRATION · CONNECTION · IMPACT

LEADERSHIP

A Letter of Purpose



JONATHAN L. DOTSON
Executive Director

Friendship That Gives was born from love, caregiving, loss, faith, and a responsibility to act. Watching my mother live with Parkinson’s disease and my father battle amyloidosis showed me that a diagnosis never affects only one person. It reshapes families, relationships, finances, emotional wellness, and the everyday realities of caregiving. Our work is grounded in a simple conviction: families deserve trusted information, clinicians who listen, and communities that stand beside them. Together, we are building meaningful connections between lived experience, education, advocacy, and access.

Our purpose is to make knowledge more accessible, strengthen the voices of patients and caregivers, and build a community where no one has to navigate illness alone.

OUR BEGINNING

The Story Behind the Mission

Friendship That Gives began with a deeply personal understanding of what families experience when illness changes everyday life. That experience became a commitment to make health information easier to understand, to strengthen the voices of patients and caregivers, and to bring trusted clinicians into meaningful conversations with communities. Our mission reaches beyond a single diagnosis. We focus on amyloidosis, Parkinson’s disease, caregiving, mental wellness, and the barriers that keep families from obtaining timely information and compassionate care. Illustrative image; not an FTG event photograph.



Illustrative Image

OUR PILLARS

A Community Built on Connection

Inspiration. Sharing lived experience, hope, resilience, and encouragement so individuals and families know they are not alone. Connection. Bringing patients, caregivers, clinicians, researchers, advocates, faith leaders, and community partners into trusted relationships. Impact. Translating education and partnerships into practical resources, informed advocacy, and sustained community engagement. These pillars guide how Friendship That Gives convenes people, approaches health equity, and measures the value of its work. Behind every diagnosis is a person. Behind every caregiver is a story.



Illustrative Image

HEALTH EQUITY

The Need We Address

Chronic and rare illnesses can be difficult to navigate, particularly when symptoms are overlooked or specialty care is hard to access. Black and historically underserved communities may encounter barriers related to healthcare access, transportation, representation, and culturally relevant information. Friendship That Gives helps bridge these gaps through education in trusted community spaces, patient-centered dialogue, and collaboration with healthcare professionals. Illustrative image; not an FTG event photograph. We strive to make information understandable, conversations welcoming, and next steps practical.



Illustrative Image

AMYLOIDOSIS EDUCATION

Knowledge Creates Possibility

Amyloidosis is a group of conditions in which abnormal proteins accumulate in tissues and organs. Depending on the type, the heart, kidneys, nerves, and other organs may be affected. Awareness can support earlier conversations about symptoms, family history, referrals, and appropriate evaluation. Our educational work invites patients and caregivers to ask questions while clinicians explain complex topics—including cardiac amyloidosis and ATTR—in accessible language. Illustrative image; not an FTG event photograph. Education is most powerful when people leave knowing what to ask their healthcare team.



Illustrative Image

PARKINSON’S EDUCATION

Beyond the Diagnosis

Parkinson’s disease affects movement, but the experience can also include changes in sleep, mood, cognition, and other non-motor symptoms. Progression and support needs differ from person to person. Through clinician-led conversations, families can learn about common symptom patterns, available therapies, supportive care, and the role of caregivers. Educational discussions of disease stages should be framed as guides—not predictions for any one individual. Illustrative image; not an FTG event photograph. A classroom conversation can turn unfamiliar medical terms into informed questions.



Illustrative Image

CAREGIVER SUPPORT

Caregiving Is a Shared Journey

Caregiving often includes scheduling appointments, navigating medications, supporting mobility, managing household responsibilities, and responding to emotional changes. Caregivers also need rest, community, and permission to seek support. Friendship That Gives creates space for honest dialogue about role reversal, burnout, grief, respite, and communication with clinical teams. Supporting caregivers is essential to supporting patients. Illustrative image; not an FTG event photograph. Caregivers deserve to be heard, supported, and cared for, too.



Illustrative Image

WHOLE-PERSON WELLNESS

Mental Wellness Matters

Living with chronic or rare illness can affect confidence, relationships, emotional health, and a sense of control. Mindfulness, supportive conversation, meaningful connection, and professional mental health care can help people respond to stress and uncertainty. Our approach treats mental wellness as part of whole-person support for patients, caregivers, and families—not as an afterthought. Illustrative image; not an FTG event photograph. Healing spaces should feel welcoming, restorative, and free of judgment.

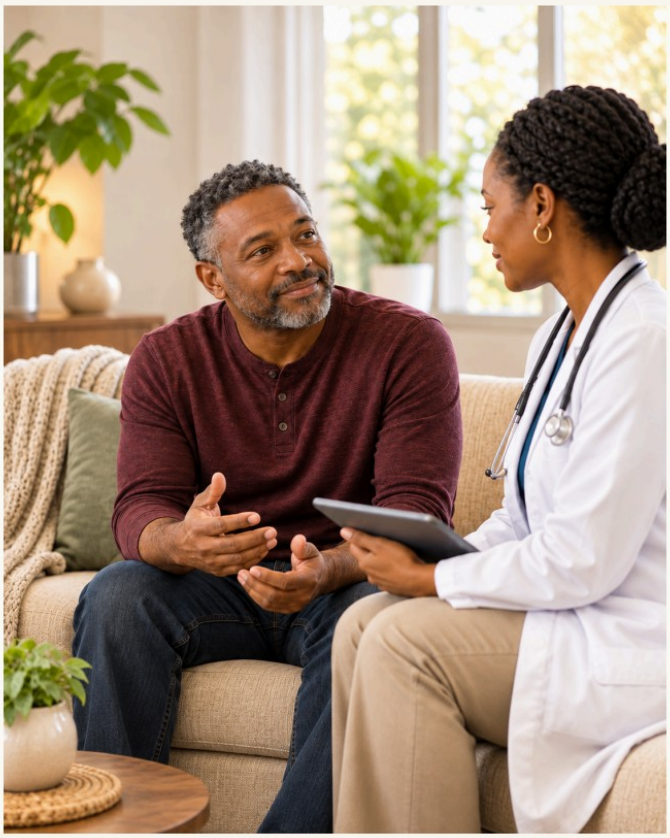


Illustrative Image

PATIENT ADVOCACY

The Power of Being Heard

Patient advocacy begins with the understanding that lived experience matters. People need opportunities to describe symptoms, ask questions, express concerns, and participate meaningfully in decisions about their care. Friendship That Gives encourages patients and caregivers to prepare for appointments, keep records of symptoms and questions, seek clarification about treatment options, and understand when a second opinion or specialist referral may be appropriate. Advocacy also means listening to the barriers people encounter and elevating those experiences in conversations with healthcare and community leaders. Illustrative image; not an FTG event photograph.



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EMPOWERMENT SERIES

Conversations That Give

Formerly the Fashionably Healthy Community Conversations Empowerment Series, Conversations That Give brings patients, caregivers, clinicians, pharmacists, researchers, mental wellness professionals, and community advocates into shared learning spaces. Each conversation is designed to be approachable and participatory: real questions, clear explanations, practical resources, and opportunities to connect beyond the event. Illustrative image; not an FTG event photograph. Our goal is not simply to present information—it is to make room for dialogue.



Illustrative Image

COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

Learning Together, Moving Forward

Community conversations can help transform complicated health topics into meaningful, actionable understanding. Participants learn from clinicians and from one another, sharing experiences that may otherwise remain unheard. An April 4, 2026 community conversation at The Favor Church in Decatur, Georgia, reflects this approach to education and support. Attendance and resource distribution should be documented from event records before publication. Illustrative image; not an FTG event photograph. The most meaningful engagement continues after the presentation ends.



Illustrative Image

COMMUNITY & YOUTH

Beyond Healthcare

Health equity is connected to opportunity, education, and community relationships. Friendship That Gives' broader service includes youth mentoring, college and career exposure, seasonal giving, and initiatives that support families across generations. These efforts reflect a whole-community perspective: the conditions that help people thrive extend beyond clinical care. Illustrative image; not an FTG event photograph. Service creates relationships that strengthen communities.



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PUBLIC EDUCATION

Advocacy That Travels

Through media coverage, interviews, opinion writing, digital education, and public conversation, Friendship That Gives works to bring overlooked health concerns into wider view. Publication and media activity has included outlets such as Rare Revolution, The Miami Times, The Charlotte Post, the Chicago Tribune, the Philadelphia Tribune, BlackDoctor.org, Black Health Matters, VoyageMIA, and BOLD Journey. Every story shared can help another family recognize a question worth asking.



Illustrative Image

COLLABORATION

Partnerships With Purpose

Our work grows through relationships that advance rare-disease education, public awareness and caregiver support. The following organizations represent the focused partnership and recognition landscape highlighted by FTG.



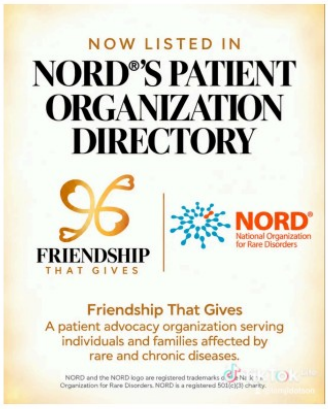
Amyloidosis Africa



Amyloidosis Army



Annett W. Snell Foundation



NORD: Directory Recognition



Parkinson·s Foundation



Patient Advocacy Education

NORD directory inclusion and patient advocacy education are recognitions, not formal partnerships.

OUR IMPACT

Measuring What Matters

11,583 — reported lives impacted in 2024. More than 90 million — estimated potential public and media audience exposure reported for 2026; not a count of unique people served. Direct participation, distribution of resources, community engagement, and publication audience exposure are different measures. They should be presented separately rather than added together. Consistent measurement helps Friendship That Gives communicate its work responsibly and identify where deeper engagement is needed.



Illustrative Image

FUTURE PRIORITIES

Looking Toward 2027

Expand accessible health education. Grow Conversations That Give and deepen dialogue on amyloidosis, Parkinson’s disease, caregiving, and mental wellness. Strengthen resources for patients and caregivers. Connect communities with credible information, supportive services, and opportunities to ask questions. Deepen clinical and community relationships. Engage specialists, researchers, advocacy organizations, and trusted local partners. Improve impact measurement. Track participation, resources, learning, and follow-up with care and respect for privacy.



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ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Leadership With Purpose

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board of Directors brings experience, stewardship, and a shared commitment to education, patient advocacy, caregiver support, and health equity.

Dr. Valerie Diaz

Leah Stewart McGregory, Esq.

Michael Strong-Mason

Regina M. Grace

Brian Suiter

Amir Windom

FRIENDSHIP THAT GIVES

The Work Continues.

Every conversation opens a door. Every connection strengthens a family. Every act of advocacy helps move our communities forward.



JOIN US IN THE WORK AHEAD

Help expand trusted education, elevate patient and caregiver voices, and build a future where more families feel seen, heard, and supported.

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