



Make a Friend Be a Friend

For Students by Students

March 7, 2020

Dear Community Members,

First and foremost I apologize for the cancelling of the Second Annual Make a Friend Be a Friend Empowerment Inclusion Walk. I am writing this letter today to explain what led to our cancellation of the event and in effort to keep full transparency between the foundation and our community members.

Over the last few months our board has been planning and preparing a five-kilometer walk in Pompano Beach, Florida with thirteen interactive inclusion stations. This five-kilometer route started near Pompano Beach High School and went towards the Goodyear Blimp Base. The route did require several road closures on main intersections such as US-1, Copans, and more. The foundation was able to secure the necessary facilities to close such intersections and obtain approval from the City of Pompano Beach for such closures. In addition to assuring that no other events will be in conflict. To assist in these closures we also hired Broward Sheriff Officers (BSO) per BSO's recommendation. Although the cost was significant the foundation decided to hire per BSO's recommendation as the safety of our participants and volunteers was our first priority for the event. As of last week Friday, BSO Pia Chandler contacted me ensuring that officers were hired and will be at the event from 8am to 1pm to assist in road closures and crowd control.

As the event start time approached I came to the realization that BSO has not yet arrived at the event, even though I received a call around 7:50am from a BSO Representative asking where exactly we wanted to coordinate with BSO. Due to this I reached out to a BSO Pompano Beach Officer who was in the area around 8:10am. I asked them if they can get an ETA of when the hired BSO detail will arrive. The officer informed me that BSO will no longer be attending the event and that we should 'pray' nothing happens. Additionally, there were other BSO patrol units monitoring around the event, but could not assist us. Although this was a major setback we tried to readjust our game plan for the walk. We placed volunteers near road closures to assist in detouring traffic and placed vehicles near the barricades. This did not stop the Citizens of Pompano from running over barricades, threatening our volunteers, and speeding down the closed road where students were setting up.



Make a Friend Be a Friend

For Students by Students

I then went to assess the traffic on the closed roads. After assessing the situation I made the determination with a heavy heart that the event had to be cancelled due to health and safety concerns for the welfare of our volunteers and participants. For these reasons I back my decision to cancel the Second Annual Make a Friend Be a Friend Walk and would like to apologize to disappointing all of our volunteers, vendors, community supporters, sponsors, and event organizers.

As we reflect we remember that this event and foundation is geared toward Inclusion and Empowerment of all individuals. This foundation was created around the idea of finding a place for all students regardless of social abilities, age, race, or ethnicity to make a friend, because sometimes all you need in life is a friend by your side. Even though this is the foundation's first event we look forward to fulfilling the mission statement and proving ourselves to each and everyone of you.

With this I extend my deepest apologies to participants at the event. Although this event was canceled I will make it my personal mission and promise to look for every opportunity possible to host inclusion friendship events through the upcoming months and years.

Your Friend,

Jonathon Mungal

Chief Executive Officer