

C.A.S.E. Gala 2020

Guest Speaker Jimmy Wayne

The Center for Adoption Support and Education (C.A.S.E.) is thrilled to welcome country music star and life-long advocate for youth in foster care **Jimmy Wayne** as our special guest and Star of Adoption Awardee at our Branching Out Gala on March 21, 2020 in Chevy Chase, Maryland.

Jimmy Wayne is a New York Times bestselling author, presenter and former foster youth dedicated to creating a positive change in the lives of children in foster care who need permanent families. Many of his award-winning songs including *Stay Gone*, *Paper Angels*, *I Love You This Much* and *Do You Believe Me Now*, which earned BMI's prestigious Million-Air Award, spotlight his mission of raising awareness for youth in foster care.

Jimmy has spent his career advocating for children in foster care, sharing his own experience as a homeless youth who was welcomed with open arms into the home of Bea and Russell Costner, 75 and 79 years old respectively, when he was 16 years old. Living with the Costners allowed him to attend school and eventually write and perform music.

Jimmy's three-time New York Times bestselling memoir **Walk to Beautiful: The Power of Love and a Homeless Kid Who Found the Way** has become a valuable resource for foster and respite foster parents. His children's book **Ruby the Foster Dog**, inspired by a puppy he rescued while on his walk halfway across America, explores the challenges of foster care in a way that is both heartwarming and relatable for all ages.

In 2010, Jimmy founded **Project Meet Me Halfway**, an initiative that inspires Americans to take action in their home communities as volunteers and advocates for children in foster care. That initiative coincided with Jimmy's 1,700 mile walk across the country from his home town of Nashville, Tennessee to Phoenix, Arizona to raise awareness of foster youth aging out of care into homelessness. Project Meet Me Halfway advocates for services for these at-risk youth and encourages states to increase the age of emancipation to 21 so that young people have continued access to critical services as they transition into adulthood. Jimmy helped advocate for the successful passage of legislation raising the emancipation age in California, Tennessee, and his home state of North Carolina.



While walking, he wrote the Christmas novel ***Paper Angels*** (2011, Simon & Schuster). In 2012, Jimmy lobbied to pass legislative bills extending the age of foster care from 18 to 21 in California and Tennessee.

In 2013, Jimmy's first film, ***Paper Angels*** (UPtv) became an instant holiday classic and in 2014 he released ***Walk to Beautiful: The Power of Love and a Homeless Kid Who Found the Way*** (2014, Thomas Nelson/Harper Collins) which became a three-time *New York Times* bestseller, crossing the 170,000 sales milestone in early 2019, and became a #1 Bestseller at Amazon.



In 2016 President George W. Bush (41) awarded Jimmy the prestigious ***Points of Light*** award. One year later, he was honored with the inaugural Community Maker award by Verizon and received an honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters from William Woods University.



In 2018 Jimmy received an honorary Doctorate of Fine Arts from Cal State University San Marcos and most recently, in May of 2019, he was honored by the National Council for Adoption with the ***Warren and Mary Alice Babineaux Award*** in recognition of his continued commitment to creating positive change in the lives of children in foster care who need permanent families.

Jimmy has shared his story, ***The Power of One***, globally as a keynote speaker and has performed on the Grand Ole Opry 223 times. He lives in Nashville and continues to work tirelessly on behalf of at-risk foster youth.



You're Invited!

C.A.S.E.'s Branching Out Gala
Saturday, March 21, 2020
6:00 pm – 10:00 pm
Columbia Country Club
7900 Connecticut Avenue
Chevy Chase, Maryland

For event details including additional guest speakers, live and silent auction information, sponsorship opportunities and ticket purchases, please visit

www.store.adoptionsupport.org/gala

or contact Tamara Arsenault at arsenault@adoptionsupport.org, 301.476.8525.



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