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Alexa's Bright Smile Foundation Established at Community Foundation *Fund Honors Alexa Latteo's Memory*

Alexa Latteo was just shy of her 20th birthday, a caring, bright young woman with a dazzling smile, when she died tragically in July 2008 as the result of an automobile accident.

The Mansfield resident, daughter of Tina and Peter Holmes, was entering her junior year as an elementary education major at Bridgewater State College. While the loss has been devastating to the Latteo-Holmes family, her parents are determined to celebrate her life and honor her memory in a positive way.

"Alexa lived, loved and laughed," Mrs. Holmes recalled. "She had a magnetic personality. She adored everyone, especially children. She always reached out to the underdog, and wanted to make a difference."

Alexa's family has established the **Alexa Latteo-Holmes Bright Smile Foundation** at the Community Foundation of Southeastern Massachusetts (CFSEMA) as a means "to celebrate her life in a way that is truly fitting to who she is," Mrs. Holmes said. The fund was launched with \$25,000 in donations from Peter Holmes' former colleagues at the Lincoln Financial Group, which were matched by the company.

The first fundraiser to benefit Alexa's Bright Smile Foundation will be a **Boston Harbor Sunset Cruise on Saturday, August 15**. The cruise will include music, dancing, and passed hors d'oeuvres, and will leave from Rowes Wharf in Boston at 6:30 p.m. This is a 21-plus event; tickets are \$100 and must be purchased by August 5. For more information on tickets or to make a donation, contact Tina Latteo-Holmes at 774-719-2490, or the Community Foundation at 508-996-8253.

With the fund, the Holmes family hopes to ultimately award scholarships in Alexa's memory to students in Mansfield, where Alexa assisted teaching at the elementary schools, as well as in Norton, where Alexa graduated from high school in 2006. They also hope to fund community projects for children, as Alexa's goal was to teach elementary education.

The first such community project is taking place this summer, when a teen group from the Hockomock YMCA in Foxboro will travel to Martha's Vineyard for a day to do a community service project for a new YMCA being built on the island. Mrs. Holmes looks forward to working with the YMCA on this trip.

"Martha's Vineyard was a special place that Alexa loved," her mother recalled. "She was summering on Martha's Vineyard, working at the Harbor View Hotel, and I would speak to her everyday, texting or calling or emailing. We would share a laugh, and stories together as her brothers would wait for their turn to talk to Lexa, too."

Her accident occurred the day after she returned home to Mansfield to await the birth of her sister Halia, who was born on August 1, 2008.

About the Community Foundation

Since 1995, area residents have been turning to the Community Foundation of Southeastern Massachusetts to make their philanthropic giving as effective as possible. CFSEMA is a public charity serving thousands of people who share a common concern – improving the quality of life in Southeastern Massachusetts.

While the Foundation’s primary grantmaking focus is on the SouthCoast communities of Greater New Bedford, Greater Fall River, and Greater Plymouth County, CFSEMA is a regional foundation serving 41 cities and towns. To date, the Community Foundation has distributed over \$7 million from 110 funds to humanitarian, educational and cultural organizations in the region. . More information about the Foundation can be found at www.cfsema.org.

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