

# Local Hero

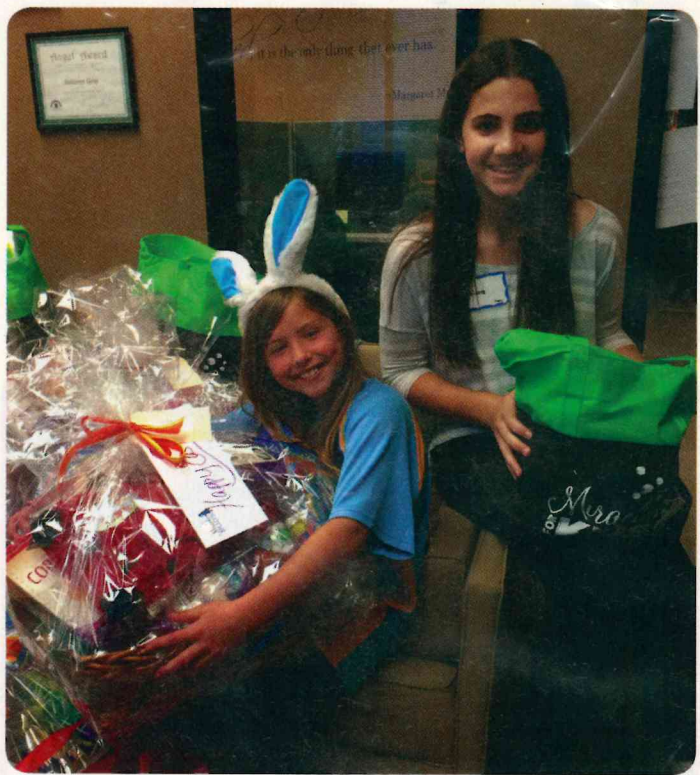
By Danilae Smith

## Autumn Strier Miracles for Kids

President and Co-founder, Miracles for Kids  
City of residence: Coto de Caza

Meet Autumn Strier, OC mom of three, and president and co-founder of Miracles for Kids: an organization of support—financially and emotionally—for families with children battling critical, life-threatening illnesses. With a lifetime dedicated to public work and servicing the community in New York, Washington D.C., and Southern California, Strier brings a wealth of knowledge to OC's families while maintaining the kind of gentle disposition that only a mom has—and that these families need the most.

With awards including OC Metro's "Top 40 Under 40" in 2009, and OC Business Journal's "Women in Business" honoree, Strier is a pillar of the community and is part of a movement that is showing the world that moms can do it all.



### Parenting OC: Why did you start Miracles for Kids?

**Autumn Strier:** I started Miracles for Kids to meet the needs of a greatly underserved population within our community—families struggling to remain stable while caring for their child battling a serious illness.

### POC: What is Miracles for Kids?

**AS:** Miracles for Kids is an Orange County-based, nonprofit organization that provides financial aid and other dire support to families with children battling critical—and often terminal—illnesses.

### POC: What are some characteristics that make Miracles for Kids unique?

**AS:** Miracles for Kids takes a holistic approach to supporting the families we serve. Through the operation of core programs that target financial stability and provide food and clothing, there are also wellness programs that focus on keeping our families healthy. Furthermore, we include summer beach camps for our patients and their siblings as we try to focus on every member of the family in order to provide stability to all those affected by the child's health.

### POC: How do your kids inspire your role at Miracles for Kids?

**AS:** I am blessed to wake each day with three healthy, strong children filled with passion and energy for life. They remind me to stay strong and never give in or give up, because there are hundreds of Miracles for Kids children and families who need us every day.

### POC: What has been the most challenging part of being a mom while starting a nonprofit, and how did you overcome it?

**AS:** Spending time away from my kids is by far the hardest part of building a business. However, I have learned that by sharing why I built Miracles for Kids with them and communicating about my days—the good and the hard ones—they truly understand my passion for making change and want to do the same with their lives.

### POC: What are your goals for Miracles for Kids?

**AS:** Short-term: to raise enough funds to meet the needs of the families we serve. We currently have a waiting list of over 40 families in need of our services. Long-term: to provide programs to children's hospitals throughout SoCal, and to build a housing facility that will allow us to provide shelter to those who lose their homes.

### POC: If you had to pick a story that came from Miracles for Kids that stands out to you, what would you pick?

**AS:** Recently, we lost an 18-year-old boy to leukemia. He had applied to Miracles for Kids for a grant to support his mother after he passed away because he was worried about how she would support herself and siblings. His selflessness was incredibly touching, and is just one example of the extraordinary kids I am honored to know.

### POC: How do you think your working with these families has affected the way you parent?

**AS:** Working with the patients and families at Miracles for Kids is an inspiration—they have a level of stamina and fortitude I don't see elsewhere. I am a more patient parent as a result of knowing them, and able to put into perspective the things that truly matter.

### POC: What advice do you have for parents with children these types of circumstances?

**AS:** Reach out to your social worker and ask for help. Our community is filled with incredible organizations waiting to provide assistance to those in need.



Autumn Strier is President and Co-founder of the organization Miracles for Kids, a mother of three and resident of Coto de Caza. [www.miraclesforkids.org](http://www.miraclesforkids.org)