

# CitySocial

MAGAZINE

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Mrs. Danielle Kelley, FNP,  
Co-founder of Jump Start Your  
Heart and her daughter Raven



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# Jump Start Your Heart

*Promoting Healthy Hearts in Student Athletes*



*Photo by Darryl Bell*

Founded by Dr. Steven Kelley and Mrs. Danielle Kelley, FNP in 2008, Jump Start Your Heart, Inc. (JSYH) is a local nonprofit committed to decreasing the incidence of sudden cardiac deaths and other cardiovascular diseases within high school athlete populations in Baton Rouge and surrounding areas. "Let's save lives together as we continue to raise awareness regarding sudden cardiac death, healthy eating and exercise in young athletes," states Mrs. Kelley, who also serves as Executive Director of JSYH.

Through preventive and urgent care, their mission is to detect and identify the obstructive forms of hypertrophic cardiomyopathy—a disease that enlarges the heart muscle. Hypertrophic cardiomyopathy is regarded as the leading cause of sudden cardiac deaths amongst student athletes, including the death of Glen Oaks High School athlete Shannon Veal in 2008.

Already involved in the fight against heart disease due to having family who'd survived the affliction, the Kelley's were shocked at the collapse and subsequent death of the high school athlete. Mrs. Kelley recalls having known Veal as one of two girls who routinely played at a local recreation center and extremely well, at that. A year later, the couple was equally disheartened to learn of the death of twenty-three-year-old Jim Griffin, a teammate of their son's, at Samford University. Like Veal, he passed away from an enlarged heart without ever having been screened.

It is for their memory, athletes like them, and the families of students afflicted with cardiovascular abnormalities that the Kelley's first began the nonprofit; they founded the organization in order to prevent future deaths from hypertrophic cardiomyopathy, as well as to stress the importance of addressing the health needs and concerns of student athletes overall. Their chief goal is to enhance community, if not national, awareness of this condition and increase participation so that screenings become routine in student athlete populations.



*Photo by Darryl Bell*



Since 2009, an estimated 3,500 student athletes in local area schools and universities have been screened for cardiovascular diseases, including an enlarged heart (hypertrophic cardiomyopathy) by JSYH. These schools include Veal's alma mater Glen Oaks High School, Madison Preparatory Academy, McKinley Magnet High School, Christian Life Academy, Zachary High School, Port Allen High School, Brusly High School, Scotlandville Magnet High School, Baton Rouge Community College, Southern University, Central High School, Parkview Baptist High School and Samford University. JSYH and staffers illustrate their dedication to the student athletes and community at large as they provide the former with two free, non-invasive diagnostic screenings at no cost to them or their families. The screenings consist of an electrocardiogram (EKG) and an echocardiogram, or ultrasound of the heart muscle, neither of which is included in a routine physical exam. In effect, they advocate that Louisiana become a leader by recognizing the two exams as mandatory for competitive high school athletes.



To recognize this goal and to enhance the quality of life for young athletes, overall, JSYH has partnered with an array of schools, medical institutions, and other nonprofits—among them Baton Rouge Surgical Hospital, Healthy Baton Rouge, the American Heart Association, LSU Baton Rouge Children's Health Project, Philips Medical Supply Company, and the "Save An Athlete Program". Of particular importance is the partnership between JSYH and East Baton Rouge Parish Medical Services; the latter has played a vital role alongside JSYH by performing all of the nonprofit's EKGs since 2011. In March of 2012, Dr. Kelley also partnered with Boston Scientific and delivered a lecture, "Cardiovascular Diseases in Athletes and the Call of Action", at the Black Coaches Association during the NCAA Final Four Tournament in New Orleans.

His efforts and those of his fellow philanthropists at JSYH have deservedly been recognized for the attention and care it affords to the health of high school students involved in sports, including being nominated in the past by the American Heart Association for The Blue Cross Blue Shield Angel Award. Owing to the support they've been given, JSYH was able to donate automated external defibrillators (AEDs) to local institutions, including Port Allen High School, McKinley Magnet High School, Parkview Baptist School, and the Greater King David Baptist Church. JSYH staff also realized one of their long-term goals in April of last year; they were able to purchase a state-of-the-art mobile unit that will allow them even greater access student athletes in Louisiana in need of screenings. And there is a need for such access. citySocial



*Yolanda Freeman, the first Jump Start Your Heart Volunteer with Dr. and Mrs. Kelley.*



*Dr. Kelley, Danielle Kelley, Hacquekine Holmes, Raven Kelley, Grant Broadway and John Kelley.*



*Photos by Darryl Bell*

*Gala Committee: Shelly Dubriel, Lenell Young, Gloria Whiten, Mayor President Sharon Weston Broome, Agnes Andress, Danielle Kelley and Donna Lee.*



*Dr. Steven and Mrs. Danielle Kelley with their daughter Raven, and Mrs. Kelley's brother Grant Broadway.*

## Ninth Annual Valentine's Gala

On February 4, 2017, Jump Start Your Heart Inc. hosted their Ninth Annual Valentine Gala at the Renaissance Hotel on Bluebonnet Boulevard. In attendance were President/co-founder Dr. Steven Kelley and Executive Director/co-founder Mrs. Danielle Kelley, Emcee LaTangela Sherman of Cumulus Media, and guest speaker and student athlete Malik Antoine. Also present were Andre Harmon, Dr. Daryl W. Peterson, "the Michael Foster Project", the gala committee, including co-chair Donna Lee, Agnes Andrews, Caryn Whiten, Gloria Whiten, Pamela Daniel, DDS, Shelly Dubriel, Lenell Young, board members Eugene Daniel and John Kelley, and over twenty table sponsors and vendors, including both corporate and business entrepreneurs.

The night opened with a welcome address by Emcee Sherman, followed by an invocation by Andre Harmon, and the subsequent reveal of the new JSYH state-of-the-art mobile unit. Speaking immediately after was Malik Antoine, a college football athlete currently enrolled at Stanford University. A native of Baton Rouge, Malik was later interviewed by City Social regarding his endorsement of and donation to JSYH. Like many, the college athlete found that his home was all-but destroyed following the August 2016 flood that rampaged through Baton Rouge and surrounding towns. As a show of support, the Stanford community rallied together and raised over 100,000 to help Antoine rebuild his home—more funds than were necessary, as it turned out.



*Malik Antoine*

During the interview, he expressed a great love and gratitude for their efforts, as well as an unwavering sense of charity and of wanting to give back. He asked that the remaining funds be donated to a worthy charity—the Jump Start Your Heart Foundation. Speaking of his reasons for choosing JSYH, he said simply that it allows student athletes "a sense of ease". He adds, "A major part of being an athlete is your health...this is one of those organizations that can help you out." In addition to his donation to the JSYH foundation, he is engaged alongside Dr. And Mrs. Kelley in another nonprofit, Jack and Jill of America, Inc., an organization of mothers dealing with African American children's leadership development, volunteerism, and civic duty. "This world's so big and you have to help people just like [Stanford community] helped me. I want to continue lending a helping hand to people," said Antoine. citySocial