



Children's Advocacy Center / Hope House  
P.O. Box 1852  
Covington, LA 70434

Tax I.D. 72-1271514

985.892.3885  
[www.cachopehouse.org](http://www.cachopehouse.org)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Nov. 7, 2018

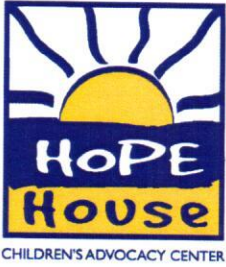
## **Historic Donation Will Make 'Men Who Cook' Fundraiser The Biggest Yet**

COVINGTON—The Children's Advocacy Center–Hope House expects to hit an historic high level of fundraising this weekend for its sixth annual “Men Who Cook” event, thanks to a family of generous donors who pledged to match all donations, dollar for dollar, up to \$100,000.

The non-profit organization, which helps children who have been sexually abused heal and seek justice, could raise for the first time in its 24-year history as much as \$200,000 at one time. That far surpasses the initial \$70,000 fundraising goal for “Men Who Cook,” to be held Sunday (Nov. 11) on the roof of the St. Tammany Parish Justice Center parking garage, 701 N. Columbia St., Covington.

“Since the inception of Hope House in 1994, we have never received a donation of this magnitude,” Executive Director Thomas Mitchell said. “This will undoubtedly result in many more kids being able to experience safety, justice, and healing. We are so honored and privileged to experience such an amazing act of kindness in Christ's name.”

The donors, who wish to remain anonymous, explained their motivation by quoting biblical scriptures, including Colossians 3:17: “And whatever you do whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.”



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To claim the full donation, though, the community will have to participate in the “Men Who Cook” fundraiser as never before. The initial goal of \$70,000 would have been a record high, and the donation sets the bar even higher.

District Attorney Warren Montgomery, one of 21 “celebrity” personalities who teamed with local restaurants to compete in the event, urged everyone who cares about the safety and well-being of children to participate. “The role that the CAC-Hope House plays in the prosecution of child sexual abuse cases is invaluable,” Montgomery said. “With the professional, thorough job they do interviewing child victims, we are able to win these cases and put dangerous child predators behind bars.”

Mitchell credits Attorney Tony LeMon, one of the fundraiser’s “celebrity cooks,” with securing the historic donation.

The increased funds will empower Hope House to upgrade old equipment, such as the forensic interviewing audio/visual recording devices, donated in used condition in 2008. But more importantly, the agency will be able to expand its services, including the specialized therapy, known as Trauma Focused-Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, which decreases the impact of childhood trauma. With its current resources, Hope House can offer the therapy only to the most devastated child victims.

CAC-Hope House is the only board-certified organization that responds to child sexual abuse in St. Tammany and Washington parishes. In addition to the counseling provided to



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victims, the agency also advocates on the local and state level to combat child abuse. In addition, the agency conducts forensic interviews, in which a trained professional talks to a child victim in a comfortable setting to discover the details of what happened. The interviews are recorded and presented to law enforcement agencies and the District Attorney's Office to be used in the prosecution.

The organization in 2017 served nearly 300 children in the 22nd Judicial District (Washington and St. Tammany), including 226 children in St. Tammany alone. Its staff currently includes one director/therapist, two professional forensic interviewers, one family advocate, an office manager, and two specially-trained clinical therapists.

"Men Who Cook" will be held Sunday (Nov. 11) from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. Participants can buy tickets in advance for \$70 per person or \$125 per couple; at the door, the cost increases to \$80 for individuals and \$150 for couples. The fee provides admittance to the event for tastings at any station, as well as drinks, dessert, and entertainment. Guests also can purchase "tip" tickets and award them to their favorite "celebrity"-restaurant team. The following awards will be given: Most Money Raised For Hope House (most advance "tip" ticket sales); People's Choice (most "tip" tickets given to a team at the event); and Judge's Choice (best food items, based on taste tests by a team of judges).

To purchase tickets and view a list of all personalities and restaurants competing in the event, go to [www.cachopehouse.org](http://www.cachopehouse.org) or text MWC to 71777.



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AVAILABLE FOR INTERVIEW: Thomas Mitchell, Executive Director, Children's  
Advocacy Center-Hope House

POSSIBLE PHOTOS/VIDEO: Scenes at Hope House, including a cubby full of new,  
stuffed teddy bears (each child interviewed there gets one)