

# Standard Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Sept 12, 2023

**Portland Nonprofit Buzzy's Bees Hosts their  
5th Annual Give Grief a Voice Art Reveal & Benefit on Saturday, September 30, 2023**

***Join our Community in Support of Unexpectedly Grieving Families***

PORTLAND, Oregon — Buzzy's Bees, a nonprofit supporting families through the unexpected loss of a young child, is hosting its 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Give Grief a Voice (GGaV) Exhibition & Benefit.

GGaV supports families who have experienced the death of a young child by providing storytelling and artwork as tools to discuss and process grief. The process involves the collaboration of a professional writer and a commissioned artist who creates their child's legacy through artistic expression. Buzzy's Bees fundraises to cover all costs for the writing and art. There is no charge to the participating families.

This will be an evening gathering of love, art, and camaraderie as Buzzy's unveils the art pieces inspired by the 10 families who shared their stories this year. The event will be held on **Saturday, September 30, 2023 from 6-8 pm at The Greatroom, 15900 Southwest Regatta Lane #Suite 105 Beaverton, OR 97006**. The event opens to the public at 6:00 pm and will have been preceded by a private viewing for the participating families. Register to attend here: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/give-grief-a-voice-art-reveal-tickets-646367932887>

Since GGaV's beginning in 2019, 55 families have had their story captured by 9 commissioned artists and 6 professional writers. The families have been from all over the US (OR, WA, ID, CA, IA, ND, MI, TX, AR, NY, and DE) and Canada.

GGaV's primary purpose is to help families who have experienced the death of a young child, but the secondary goal is to help anyone who reads these stories learn how to better support the grieving people in their own lives. Ultimately, the stories will be published alongside the artwork in a book.

A special thank you to the Satterberg Foundation for their Moral Courage grant. The grant is being used to off-set the travel costs for participating families, who might otherwise not have been able to attend this event. Additional event partners include Melissa Lindsay in honor of her daughter, Bella, and Gina Kornfeind, formerly of UCLA Mattel Children's Hospital and currently with Good Grief.

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# ABOUT BUZZY'S BEES



Buzzy's Bees is an Oregon based 501(c)3 nonprofit. Our mission is to change the grief culture surrounding the unexpected loss of a child (stillborn to 12 years old) through outreach, education, and programs offering emotional and financial support.

The name, idea, and passion behind Buzzy's Bees is our founder, Amanda Drews' son, Hudson, who passed away unexpectedly in 2016 at 13 months of age. Affectionately known as "Buzzy" by friends and family, Buzzy's Bees was launched in January 2017 to honor Hudson's life.

## PROGRAMS

We offer three programs to grieving families:

- unrestricted **Financial Support** to assist with a variety of expenses,
- our **Give Grief a Voice Project** (GGaV) providing families an artistic representation of their child's life, and
- an online **Peer Support** program that offers a space for any adult individual impacted by the unexpected death of a child - including aunts/uncles, grandparents, and of course, parents.

## 143 FAMILIES SUPPORTED

44

Financial gifts sent

55

GGaV stories & art given

42

Online Community

## FUNDRAISING AND COMMUNITY EVENTS

To fund our programs, we hold two annual fundraising events for our community of supporters. 2022 was our:

- 6th annual Mini and Par-3 golf tournament (typically held each spring)
- 3rd annual Art Auction (held in the fall, offering approx 25 art pieces donated by artists)

We have an amazing 'hive' of people who make the mission of Buzzy's Bees possible. In 2022, approximately 160 people collectively contributed their time, special skills, and generous gifts, including donations exceeding \$56k.

## COMMITMENT TO ANTI-RACISM

Grief does not discriminate. Buzzy's Bees strives to support a broad and diverse community of grieving families. We are committed to inclusion across identity and experience. These are some actionable steps we are taking to build an anti-racist organization with strong programs that reflect and support all grieving parents:

- Connecting with organizations serving diverse populations to educate about Buzzy's Bees programs.
- Locating resources to help us learn more about other cultures' customs surrounding death and grief.
- Searching for and hiring artists and writers of color for our Give Grief a Voice program.

## WHO WE ARE

5

Board members

19

Committee members

27

Additional volunteers

14

Paid creatives

3

Paid contractors



# ABOUT THE GIVE GRIEF A VOICE PROJECT

The Give Grief a Voice (GGaV) Project launched in 2019 as a special project through Buzzy's Bees, supporting families who have lost a young child. We provide storytelling and artwork as tools for discussing and processing grief.

A professional writer listens to and records each family's story, then an artist is commissioned to turn their words into a piece of art representing their child's life which the family keeps. Buzzy's Bees fundraises to pay the creatives and provide this gift all at no cost to the families.



Buzzy's Bees hosts a gathering to unveil the commissioned art pieces inspired by the families who shared their stories with our Give Grief a Voice project each year.

## BY THE NUMBERS

6

WRITERS

9

ARTISTS

7

VOLUNTEER  
COMMITTEE  
MEMBERS

55

FAMILIES  
IN 5 YEARS

\$0

COST TO  
FAMILIES

## TESTIMONIALS

"I cannot even begin to describe how much this project has benefited our grief process. From the write up done by the author, who listened to Logan and I talk about Grayson and our lives without him... to the most beautiful, meaningful piece of art I will ever see in my lifetime. It is truly indescribable."  
- Katherine Seye, Grayson's mom

"Working with Buzzy's Bees has been one of the most powerful and impactful experiences I've had as an artist. It is a gift to me to be able to use my artistic talents to capture these stories, the emotions, and the energy of these little beings in such a unique and healing way. Grief is a process AND art is a process; connecting them this way has the potential to offer new pathways in, out, and through the process of grief for the families that work with Buzzy's Bees."  
- Dianna Fontes, artist

"I did not know then that I would also create new memories for myself; I do not look at sunflowers or narwhals the same and I hear familiar songs differently because of those families' stories. Writing and reading all the stories and now getting to see the art pieces they have inspired is one of the highlights of my writing career so far. It has been difficult to write about this subject, but it has made me a better writer and a better interviewer, and overall a better friend. I have learned so much about how to acknowledge and comfort friends and family who have experienced loss."  
- April Arevalo, writer

# 2023 WRITER & ARTIST BIOS



## JUSTIN CAROLL

Justin has a background in theater, music, and teaching. He has returned to visual arts as part of his recovery from a brain injury suffered in 2015. His work is now primarily abstract painting with acrylics.  
[justinjudecarroll.com](http://justinjudecarroll.com)



## MCKENNA MARVIN

McKenna creates traditional media paintings and illustrations using watercolor, gouache, and pencil in Portland. She studied art in Tokyo, Japan where she received a Bachelor in Fine Arts from the Tyler School of Art. [mckennamarvin.com](http://mckennamarvin.com)



## JOY CHA

When Joy was eleven years old her family emigrated to the United States from South Korea. Joy's interest and talent in the visual arts guided her and she became a graphic designer after graduating from UCLA.  
[joycha.com](http://joycha.com)



## JASMINE PULIDO

Jasmine is a Filipina American writer-activist in Seattle. Her writing reflects deeply on race, racism, and marginalized communities as well as unapologetically discussing shame and exploring all the topics we are too scared to talk about because of it.



## DIANNA FONTES

Dianna's creative nature grew out of a childhood centered in making the most of what is available. Dianna creates in multiple mediums and loves to make commissioned work out of what's left over.  
[astroartistry.com](http://astroartistry.com)



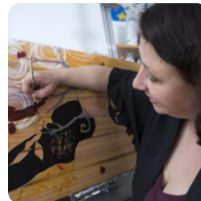
## LISA REIT

Lisa is a writer living in Portland, Oregon. Amanda's story was the first one she helped tell for the Give Grief a Voice project. She's received a fellowship to the Martha's Vineyard Institute of Creative Writing and attended the Tin House Summer Writers Workshop. Her fiction has appeared in the Tahoma Literary Review.



## JESSICA JOHNS

Jessica is a fine line pen and ink and watercolor artist. She's always been passionate about art and using it to bring joy to others. As a former nurse, she considers it an honor to work for the GGaV project.  
[facebook.com/JessicaJohnsDesigns](https://facebook.com/JessicaJohnsDesigns)



## LEA K. TAWD

Lea is a mixed media artist, Reiki Master, creativity coach and author of "Creativity Unstuck: a toolbox for making more art." Her artwork is an illustrative, mixed media exploration of the divine feminine. She uses Reiki energy healing to help connect with the Muse and to infuse her work with healing. [LeaKArts.com](http://LeaKArts.com)



## RYNE JUNGLING

Ryne is a bereaved parent who participated in our 2020 GGaV season, sharing the story of his son, Anders. Ryne is an educator in North Dakota and is writing a book with the working title of Bye Buddy.  
[rynejungling.com](http://rynejungling.com)