

# JUPITER

THE NORTHERN PALM BEACHES



## PROFILE

### TIM GOERING

*Reaching out...one young adult at a time*

By GLENN R. SWIFT

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**O**n a recent Friday afternoon, Tim Goering took some time off from his job as senior vice president for Sun Trust's Asset Management Advisors in Palm Beach to paint a door...but it wasn't just any door.

It was the entrance way to a renovated two-bedroom apartment that would serve as the new home for a young person who was either previously homeless, destitute or a "graduate" of our state's severely over-burdened foster care system. And on this day, Goering was part of a team of local volunteers from the Home Depot Corporation and Place of Hope who were working hard to turn old apartments into quality housing for our community's forgotten youth.

Place of Hope in Palm Beach Gardens is a 10-acre campus of single-family homes (known as "Family Cottages") which serves as a real community for more than 40 foster children. They have parental care 24 hours a day, seven days a week. In the last two years, Place of Hope has cared for a total of 50 children in its long-term residential care.

"I became involved with Place of Hope through its executive director, Charles Bender. Once I toured the campus, I knew this organization was worth the time because it was literally rescuing children from an overwhelmed child welfare system, where the goal of saving our next generation can be easily lost," Goering says.

So what is it that has compelled one of Palm Beach County's most senior private bankers to pick up a hammer and invest his own "sweat equity" into such an ambitious project? The 40-year-old Annapolis graduate and former Marine Corps aviator was eager to share the source of his motivation.

"Nationally, there are a half million children in foster care. On average, each foster child spends four and a half years in the system and is moved 37 times. Even more tragically, three die every day," Goering says.

The problem is not just a national one.

"Right here in Palm Beach County there are 100 new foster children joining the system every month. Organizations like Place of Hope need more community and business support to battle what is certainly an undeniable crisis that affects every segment of our population. How can you not want to help the kids who have been abandoned in your community?"

Inspired by Place of Hope, another type of organization evolved to help a different segment of the foster care system. Explains Goering:

"Villages of Hope is a new affiliate organization that will provide clean, safe apartments for 12 individuals, who at 18 are no longer candidates for state support. Additionally, the program will help its residents continue in school, pursue a trade or skill, prepare for the workplace and enable them to care for themselves. They will

leave when they are ready to be contributors."

Ironically, Goering sees a distinct parallel between his day job and his volunteer work.

"In my profession, I tout the value of preparing clients who need expert advice on managing the continuation of their \$25 million-plus legacies. And although you might think that anyone who has accumulated this kind of wealth would already understand the value of planning, this isn't always the case. In fact, over 80 percent of the large fortunes of the megawealthy are gone in three generations. They simply lose perspective and squander the money. So, I have to help them prepare for the future in a way that isn't all that different from the young people I work with at Villages of Hope. Sharing stories about these forgotten youth encourages my wealthy clients to plan ahead and give back to their community."

Goering has also found a way to bring together both ends of the spectrum.

"We not only teach the young people at the Villages the value of an education and how to get a job and obtain credit, but how to be entrepreneurial as well. And what better way than to have successful people get involved to teach these young folks how to own and run a business. So you see, both sides can learn from each other."

The ability to share and learn from those less fortunate is also something that Tim and Kim, his wife of 16 years, have instilled in their two children, Sienna, 13, and Aislinn, 9.

"We've taught our children that the very privileged life that they enjoy here in Jupiter is not the real world, and I'm proud to say that they have become good friends with a number of foster youth in our community."

Undoubtedly, the core values to which Goering subscribes are in large part a reflection of the family he grew up with as the son of a high-ranking Air Force officer. (Just in case you're wondering, Goering is no relation to that other Goering we frequently see on the History Channel.)

"We never had a lot of money, but it didn't matter. What we did have was family... and that's everything."

Every citizen who is truly concerned with the health and future of our state should ask themselves what they can do to save a child or inspire a young adult whose circumstances dictate a guiding, helping hand. There are a multitude of ways to attack this monstrous challenge, and Tim Goering has shown us that even the smallest of deeds can make a huge difference.

Sometimes, it's as easy as painting a door.

If you are interested in making a donation or lending a helping hand to this most worthwhile of community organizations, please contact Villages of Hope at <http://villagesofhope.net> or call 561.775.7195.