

# Big Accomplishments of the Heart



I decided to work with CAFI for the same reasons that most people do—It seemed like a good match for me at the time. But I stayed because of what the organization stood for. This was an organization that worked with children and families impacted by HIV/AIDS both domestically and internationally. It was a small organization with a big heart. I knew immediately that it would be a place where I could do something meaningful to help others in need. I did not know that it would also change my perspective about a lot of things. I have come in contact with some amazing people who do so much with so little. They carry on in spite of what they have to deal with – their illness, the stigma attached to the disease, the reaction of their families and friends, the isolation the disease sometimes brings. I have found that it really doesn't matter how a person got the disease. It matters what they do after they discover that they have it.

***We value the people we serve. They are not just numbers. They are people whose stories we know and whose hands we've held. They are a part of our CAFI family.***

Working with CAFI has shown me the faces of this disease, the men, women and children impacted. They are no longer abstract. They have names, families, hopes and dreams for the

future. I have found not only how devastating HIV/AIDS can be, but also how powerless it can be. It cannot break the strength and resolve of those who choose to continue living and giving of themselves in spite of the disease.

I work with a small group of very dedicated people who have sacrificed a lot to keep CAFI going over the years. More than 90% of what CAFI receives in funding is spent on services for our constituents. What makes CAFI unique among HIV/AIDS service organizations is the dedication and quiet resolve of the staff, the strength of the people we serve and the trust that we share. We value the people we serve. They are not just numbers. They are people whose stories we know and whose hands we've held. They are a part of our CAFI family. This is why I continue to be committed to CAFI and its dedicated Board of Directors.

**Happy 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary CAFI!**

**Cecelia Cooper**

**Treasurer & Finance Director**