

ST. LUCIE COUNTY

Eugene Atkinson and Jodi Harvey, of the Atkinson Family Foundation, are the Presenting Sponsors for the 5K Race for Recovery..

CONTRIBUTED BY
LISA RYMER/NEW
HORIZONS
BEHAVIORIAL
HEALTH



Dynamic duo goes distance for mental health services

LISA RYMER
YOURNEWS CONTRIBUTOR

If there's an unmet need in the community – especially dealing with children – Jodi Harvey and Eugene Atkinson almost always come to the rescue.

Among the many local nonprofit organizations the Vero Beach couple supports are Live Like Cole, Special Olympics Indian River County, The Learning Alliance, Indian River Hospital Foundation, Environmental Learning Center, Vero Beach High School Football, and Riverside Theatre.

This year, they are the presenting sponsors for New Horizons Race for Recovery 5K Run/Walk.

"It is an honor to be able to help spread the word about mental health services at New Horizons. Gene and I are dedicated to this community, we care about the people of Indian River County and we want to help build a better tomorrow for everyone," said Harvey.

A longtime local business owner, Harvey is the ultra-devoted mother of Sean Harvey, a Vero Beach High School graduate and former Fighting Indian football player, who's now a sophomore at the University of Alabama. Her "other son," Will Dawkins, also graduated from VBHS, played football for the Fighting

Indians, and now plays for the University of Alabama Blazers.

"We'd do anything to help these kids succeed," she said. "That's what they need, people who believe in them and are willing to walk their talk."

Atkinson grew up in Birmingham, Alabama, the son of a gas company superintendent. He earned a scholarship to West Point, where he was captain of the baseball team, then served in the Vietnam War as a Brigade Executive officer. Later, he graduated in the top 10% of his class from Harvard Business School.

As a young man, Atkinson was recruited by Goldman Sachs in NYC, and eventually became chairman of the international division, heading up offices in Tokyo, Hong Kong and Sydney.

In 1998, Newsweek magazine named Atkinson one of "America's 25 Top Asia Hands" for helping the firm become one of the first U.S. companies on the Tokyo Stock Exchange.

Due to Atkinson's generous contributions to West Point over the years, his name is emblazoned across the United States Military Academy's baseball field press box.

"I feel like I've been so lucky in life, it's time to give back," says Atkinson.

And the community is lucky to have them both!