

Little Silver

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Neighbors



**MEET
ADRIENNE
AND
CHRISTINE**

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BloomAgain Sisters

MEET ADRIENNE AND CHRISTINE



BY ALLISON MERCHANT

Growing up, Adrienne Supino viewed her sister as a role model. As both women grew into adulthood, Adrienne admired her sister's infinite capacity to help others. She watched as her sister worked in education as a classroom teacher, counselor, and then raised her own two children.

Christine Rieger encouraged and supported Adrienne's pursuit of life in Manhattan working in broadcast journalism. "I was in New Jersey raising my children, so we were on different paths. Still close but living in different states and maybe just seeing each other every once in a while," said Christine.

Now they live in neighboring towns and see each other every day. The sisters work together to support families through their non-profit foundation BloomAgain. The purpose of the BloomAgain Foundation is to provide financial assistance to economically vulnerable working women when they need it most, during personal or family medical emergencies.

"So many people, especially single mothers, are living paycheck to paycheck with little or no financial cushion. Sickness or injury can threaten a family's stability," Adrienne said.

BloomAgain was founded by Dr. Lois Frankel. An acclaimed author and corporate coach

in California, Dr. Frankel underwent treatment for breast cancer and recognized how fortunate she was to have the resources for a steady-paced healing process. It prompted her to think of the thousands of women who did not have those resources and inspired the beginning of her volunteer organization. Dr. Frankel is Adrienne and Christine's cousin and her work encouraged them to bring BloomAgain to the east coast.

In 2015 Adrienne and her sister Christine founded BloomAgain Foundation NJ. Christine serves as Executive Director while Adrienne is Vice Chairman. "We've never done anything like this together or worked together," Adrienne admitted. "And we realized that we do work together really well. I really depend on her; she always pulls through for me."

When Adrienne was in Manhattan, she was working as a television reporter with NJN public Television and Radio and FOX5. Christine was a teacher and a mother of two girls, living in Red Bank with her husband Mike Rieger.

"Now we are in constant contact with each other every single day and talking about things that really matter. It's a whole different dynamic, discussing serious topics, and being involved in the community together," Christine said. "So, it's

totally different than anywhere our relationship was ten years ago."

The sisters work together daily on projects and growing the foundation. They both play off each other's strengths: Adrienne's journalistic and marketing skills, and Christine's leadership and organizational talents. Both sisters joke about their ability to read the other's mind and truly appreciate their collaborated finished products.

BloomAgain is an all-volunteer registered 501(3)c organization. All money raised is given to women and families in need. The NJ chapter of the foundation has helped more than 60 families in the four years of its existence.

"BloomAgain steps-in with grant money that can keep a family afloat. BloomAgain writes checks directly to landlords and utility companies and provides food cards when needed," Adrienne said. "BloomAgain locates potential clients through our community partners such as Riverview Medical Center, LoveThyNeighbor, Lunch Break, and Bayshore Family Success Center."

"I don't think that enough people realized how many people in the community are working hard but are financially constrained," Christine added. "These families are only two

or three paychecks away from depleting their financial cushion. It's just really nice to be able to give back to their neighbors when they have a medical crisis because that medical crisis can really set people back."

One of the most recent families BloomAgain supported was Kelly Neilson from Hazlet. Kelly had been undergoing chemotherapy treatment and surgery during her battle with Stage 2 Breast Cancer. In addition to her two grown daughters, Kelly cares for her son Nicholas, who has Type 1 Diabetes and Down Syndrome. Her illness forced her to take time off from her established job at a local school. BloomAgain's assistance helped Kelly physically and mentally, inspiring her to now help other families in similar need.

"When I started this, my children were young and I wasn't sure how much I would be able to give," Adrienne said. She currently resides in Little Silver with her husband Jonathan Mackay and their two children Benjamin and Charlotte. "But by following [Christine's] lead, it has opened up other doors for me and it is so rewarding, and I give more than I ever thought."

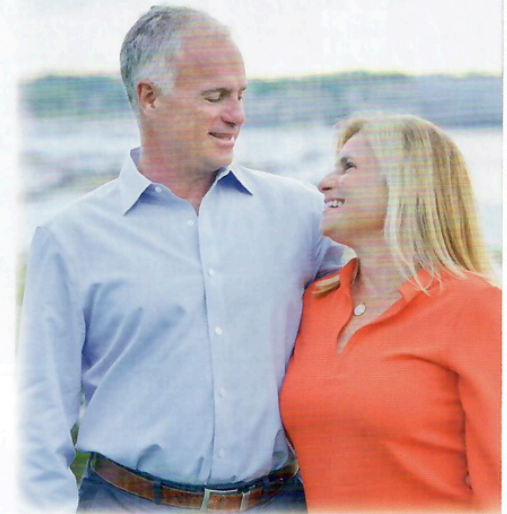
Both women realize the importance of showing their children the work that they do each day. As sisters, they understand the impact

a strong role model can have growing up. Christine recognized the advantage of coming from a familial background and holding similar views on helping people is what makes the sister-run dynamic of BloomAgain so strong.

"My sister and I love working together," Adrienne said. "We are a great tag team! It's really satisfying knowing you have reached another person in need during a difficult time."

"It's nice that my daughters can get involved in this and I can teach them to be philanthropic," Christine said. "I think it's really important to be part of a family that is philanthropic, this is a great example for them. And they're very excited to always help me out with computer work and volunteering at our fundraising events. It's nice to make it a family affair."

"We all need a hand sometimes and a chance to bloom again," Adrienne added. "We hope we have created something our children can be proud of." ♣



DO YOU KNOW A NEIGHBOR WHO HAS A STORY TO SHARE?

Nominate your neighbor to be featured in one of our upcoming issues! Contact us at amerchant@bestversionmedia.com.

We would like to thank Stacie Bender Heritage House Sotheby's International Realty for sponsoring this month's feature story.



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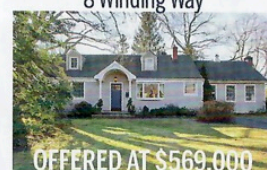
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