

Philanthropists honored in Naples

By Cindi Withorn

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The Naples community celebrated philanthropy during a recent ceremony.

The Trustees Emeriti of the Community Foundation of Collier County and 300 event attendees recognized the 2019 Celebration of Philanthropy honorees for their dedication to the community and their philanthropic service at the annual Celebration of Philanthropy event held Nov. 1 at Grey Oaks Country Club.

Four awards were presented: The Harvey Kapnick Award was presented to Lighthouse of Collier, Inc.

This award recognizes a nonprofit that has distinguished itself by exemplifying program excellence.

Lighthouse of Collier shines a light to brighten the lives of the visually impaired. They offer programs/services, at no charge, to help the blind and visually impaired become independent in Collier County. As an accredited agency, the main focus is to empower our clients who are blind and visually impaired to be independent through experiences, education, and socialization, leading to an enhanced quality of life for them and their families.

The award was accepted by Scott Flagel, Chief Executive Officer of Lighthouse of Collier.

The Outstanding Corporate Philanthropy Award was presented to èBella Magazine.

The award was accepted by Sharon Hood, Founder/Publisher, Market-Crank, Inc. & èBella magazine The Excellence In Civic Leadership Award was presented to Greater Naples Leadership. This award is sponsored by Naples Daily News and was presented by Shawna Devlin.

This award recognizes a civic organization whose members' volunteer service to a program or project in our community has had demonstrable impact. GNL practices what they preach for the benefit of the entire community. Since 1999, Greater Naples Leadership, consistent with its mission, has had a large impact in our community. GNL's dedicated members have been and continue to be involved in literally hundreds of nonprofit and civic organizations, serving on boards and committees, helping to enrich and improve the quality of life in Greater Naples.

Since 1999, this organization has offered a curriculum that has had more than 875 men and women engaged with their Masters Class program.

Upon completion of the program, graduates are able to combine the knowledge they've acquired with their experience, talent, and leadership skills - individually and collectively - to better the lives of residents and improve effectiveness for institutions in our community. Membership in Greater Naples Leadership is a sought-after experience for many new residents as a way to quickly educate oneself with Collier County.

Their members have a "give back" mentality, and graduates hit the ground running after the completion

objectives. The Flynns have supported many organizations, through their time, talent, and treasure, including St. Ann's Catholic Parish, the Boys & Girls Club of Collier County, the Shelter for Abused Women & Children, the NCH Healthcare Foundation, Professional Givers Anonymous and Greater Naples Leadership.

The Flynns were also honored as the Hodges University 2009 Humanitarians of the Year. Christine was named a Woman of Initiative, class of 2008, by the Women's Foundation of Collier County, served on the Women's Foundation board, and is a member of our Trustees Emeriti.

Also at the Celebration of Philanthropy, Eileen Connolly-Keesler, Community Foundation of Collier County president and CEO, highlighted the Community Foundation's accomplishments of the past year.

The Community Foundation has been partnering with public and private foundations, local government and



Jen Walker, Scott Flagel and Tom McCann. SUBMITTED PHOTO

This award acknowledges an organization that consistently helps support our community by making intelligent use of its own strengths and social capital.

With few large corporations to support charitable causes in Southwest Florida, eBella helps spread the word, generating much-needed support. eBella magazine has made it a priority to shine a light on both unmet needs among area residents and the numerous organizations striving to fill those gaps. With an emphasis on connecting the community in a powerful way, eBella sponsors as many as 40 charitable events each year, donating more than \$2.7 million worth of advertising and editorial space to promote their causes and make a difference where it's needed most.

of the program. Through this commitment, the organization's membership serves the community in numerous ways –such as involving themselves with hundreds of nonprofit and civic organizations, serving on boards and lending their time to committees, all for the betterment of lives in Greater Naples.

The award was accepted by Ned Sachs, Greater Naples Leadership President 2000-2002.

The Robert C. Cosgrove Award was presented to Christine and Terry Flynn.

The Award acknowledges individuals who represent devotion to human values, families and the well-being of our community.

This dynamic couple puts their beliefs in action to benefit others. They believe that philanthropy is a very personal decision based on donor resources and philosophy. We intend to assist those organizations that responsibly utilize their funds to achieve their stated goals and

nonprofits to invest in the health, safety, and enrichment of our community for almost 35 years through grants and scholarships.

We broke our own record this year by distributing almost 19 million dollars, the most substantial amount in our history!

■ We awarded \$1.4 million in scholarships to Collier County students in our 2018-19 fiscal year.

■ We raised \$5.5 million in 24 hours fifth annual online giving day, Give Where You Live Collier, in partnership with the Richard M. Schulze Family Foundation

Florida” with the Conservancy of Southwest Florida, Florida Gulf Coast University, and the Southwest Florida Community Foundation to address the effects of our changing climate and sea level rise.

■ We provided a grant to the Naples, Marco Island, Everglades Convention & Visitors Bureau for Collier County officials to hire consultants to craft a new arts and culture strategic plan to establish Collier as an arts and culture destination.

■ We funded a first-ever adult mental health and substance abuse five year strategic plan which was

Assessment including:

■ Education & Employment,

■ Mental Health & Substance Abuse,

■ Housing & Hunger,

■ Arts & the Environment,

■ Community Crisis & Disaster Response,

■ Seniors

■ Veterans The event was sponsored by the Trustees Emeriti of the

■ We raised over \$107,000 and, we collected 17,400 lbs. of food with the Naples Daily News and United Way of Collier County

■ We continued to make a scholastic impact with Future Ready Collier, which brings together 60 partner organizations to shape tomorrow’s leaders and workforce

■ We formalized a three-year initiative called “Growing Climate Solutions: Path to Positive Southwest

just released to align growing community needs with services.

■ We provided oversight to the Blair Foundation and the City of Naples to raise \$500,000 to replace 2,000 trees destroyed by Hurricane Irma, provide bike paths at the Gordon River Greenway Park and construct the Blair Foundation Bridge.

We will be launching a \$35 million campaign to create real solutions and achieve accelerated impact in tackling seven focus areas from the Needs

Community Foundation of Collier County, Naples Daily News and Naples Illustrated.

Shawna Devlin, of the Naples Daily News, and Ned Sachs.
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