



NEWS

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Heart of Florida United Way Hosts 3rd Annual Community Volunteer Excellence Awards *Ceremony Honors Those Who Make a Difference in Central Florida*

ORLANDO, Fla. (July 20, 2016) – Heart of Florida United Way presented seven awards at its third annual Community Volunteer Excellence Awards on July 19 at the John & Rita Lowndes Shakespeare Center.

The event, emceed by STAR 94.5's Monica May, recognized contributions that impact nonprofit, government, faith-based and educational organizations across Orange, Seminole and Osceola counties. An independent panel from across the country selected winners from 56 nominations submitted by dozens of local organizations.

Guests enjoyed a special performance from the Central Florida Community Arts Legacy Group dedicated to the spirit of volunteerism.

“Volunteers make our community a better place,” said Traci Blue, director of the Volunteer Resource Center at Heart of Florida United Way. “It’s our hope that highlighting those doing outstanding volunteer work inspires more people to seek out opportunities to make a difference.”

The following volunteers received awards:

Outstanding Corporate Group: Sodexo nominated by Christian Service Center

Outstanding National Service Volunteer: Mary Barry nominated Volunteers for Community Impact

Outstanding Individual Volunteer: Maggie O’Connell nominated by Harbor House of Central Florida

Outstanding Faith/Civic Group: Grace Covenant Church nominated by United Against Poverty

Outstanding Student Group: UCF’s Knights Give Back nominated by IMPOWER

Outstanding Professional Volunteer: Margaret Curran nominated by Hope CommUnity Center

Outstanding Volunteer Manager: Elisa Harris nominated by Volunteers for Community Impact

Outstanding Youth Volunteer: Karla Reyes nominated by Hope CommUnity Center

Robert H. (Bob) Brown was presented with Volunteer Florida's Champion of Service Lifelong Achievement Award by Jovita Woodrich, Volunteer Services Director. The award honors those who have demonstrated significant dedication to making a difference in their communities by volunteering and providing leadership over the course of their life.

For more information about Heart of Florida United Way, or to find local volunteer opportunities, visit www.hfuw.org.

About Heart of Florida United Way

Heart of Florida United Way (HFUW) is Central Florida's most comprehensive health and human services charity and the largest provider of funds to the region's most critical health and human service programs. Last year, it raised and managed \$26.1 million throughout Orange, Osceola and Seminole counties. HFUW is working to advance the common good by focusing on education, income, health and basic needs. It operates United Way 2-1-1, Central Florida's Information and Referral Helpline; Volunteer Resource Center; Gifts In Kind Center; Emergency Homelessness Services; and the Ryan White Part B program, which administers more than \$2 million to provide HIV/AIDS services and referrals. HFUW impacts more than 400,000 individuals annually through its direct service and funded programs. United Way partners with local businesses, government, other charities to increase awareness of local health and human service issues and to inspire hope, provide options and create possibilities for people in need. Visit www.HFUW.org for more information, or call (407) 835-0900.

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