



Women Uniting To Transform Our Community

A curated collection of stories
that reveal the ♥ of our mission

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About The Author

This magazine would not have been possible without the willingness, talent, and dedication of Impact 100 PBC member and professional writer, Sandi Schwartz. Sandi wrote all but one of these articles. Sandi is a multiple award-winning environmental author and freelance journalist with 20+ years of experience effectively and creatively communicating to various audiences in the areas of sustainability, green living, home and garden, nature, and wellness. She has worked for organizations and publications including the United States Environmental Protection Agency, National Academies, District of Columbia's Department of Transportation (DDOT), BobVila.com, Earth911, One Green Planet, Green Child Magazine, Very Well Family, and more.

Sandi created the **Ecohappiness Project®** to focus on where nature and mental health intersect. This one-of-a-kind platform ties together all the science and practical tools to help people live a happy, balanced life through nature. She authored an award-winning book, ***Finding Ecohappiness: Fun Nature Activities to Help Your Kids Feel Happier and Calmer***, and co-authored the children's picture book ***Sky's Search for Ecohappiness***. We are grateful to Sandi for capturing the impact of our grant awards in our local community!



INCREDIBLE STORIES... INCREDIBLE IMPACT!

We are thrilled to share this curated collection of stories that reveal the heart of the mission of Impact 100 PBC. In these stories, we read about the tangible and lasting beneficial impact that has been achieved through the numerous \$100,000 grants funded by Impact 100. Through our strong partnership with local nonprofits, we have brought to fruition these important initiatives that otherwise could not have become a reality. The results are extraordinary!

We give to Impact because we believe in the mission. Often, however, we do not fully grasp the scope of impact that our collective giving has achieved. In these accounts, we get a closeup view of the ways Impact 100 PBC is changing our community. You'll read about the diverse programs we fund that encourage fathers to remain united with their children and teach them how to strengthen their bond; that secure safe transitional housing for children, young adults, and families who would otherwise be homeless; that provide guidance and support for exceptional students from underprivileged areas to enroll in college; that provide specialized therapies to our community members with special needs; that give needed medical care to our beloved pets that would otherwise be unaffordable; and that care for our environment by enhancing and protecting our county's natural resources. The stories are powerful and plentiful!

Together, we have made an investment in our community, and we have received the highest return possible: a return that fills the heart. We believe in a mission bigger than ourselves and in a promise that lives CAN be changed in our community. We work hard for the right goals. We give and give consistently. Thank you for your commitment to Impact and we hope the stories included within bring a smile and deep sense of accomplishment. There is incredible impact ahead as we strengthen our community...together!

Your Friends at
Impact 100 PBC

Impact 100 PBC
protects the lives
& health of our
community's
most precious
members.

Florida leads the country in drowning deaths of children ages 1 to 4. Water access is everywhere, and it attracts children. The YMCA tackled the problem by teaching 10,000 children to swim through a **\$100,000 GRANT** from Impact 100 PBC.



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YMCA's WaterSmart Community Initiative

By Sandi Schwartz

Knowing how to swim can save a life. Palm Beach County ranks third in the nation for drownings, with about 50 occurring each year. Sadly, many of these are young children. Florida loses more children under the age of five to drowning than any other state in the country. Even more shocking is that over half of drowning accidents are within 10 feet of an adult.

The YMCA of South Palm Beach County's WaterSmart Community Initiative helps save these children. In 2016, Impact 100 awarded a grant to the YMCA for their effective program that involves swimming lessons and land-based safety education throughout South Palm Beach County, including part or full financial assistance for underserved communities.

The goal of WaterSmart is to help reverse the high drowning and death rate in our community. Not only does the initiative save lives, but it also provides participants with the healthy, enjoyable lifelong skill of swimming. Many of the children from underserved populations would otherwise not have the opportunity to learn how to swim due to multi-generational fear or lack of resources.

The YMCA oversees the initiative and partners with various organizations throughout the county—such as the city of Boynton Beach, Drowning Prevention Coalition, and Fuller Center—to offer swim lessons and water education at over 15 pools. During the two-year grant period between May 2016 and April 2018, over 10,000 children enjoyed eight half-hour drowning prevention swimming lessons. Additionally, over 15,000 people received water safety information in a classroom setting or at a health fair or community event.

Libby Moon, YMCA's Drowning Prevention Coordinator and co-chair of WaterSmart, is grateful for Impact 100's support. "We received the grant in 2016 and truly that was the foundation for what we do now. We are extremely thankful for the opportunity. We have been able to provide year-round swim lessons for two-year-olds all the way up to people in their eighties." Also, through connections made because of this grant, WaterSmart has built relationships with area non-profits and been recognized as a leader in drowning prevention initiatives in the state. They were one of three YMCA's in the state awarded \$100,000 through Florida Blue Foundation to continue their efforts. Funding has also been secured from Boca Regional Hospital Foundation, Sun Capital Partners, Step into Swim, USA Swimming, among others.

WaterSmart also has an adaptive aquatics program for children and adults with special needs like autism, down syndrome, and cerebral palsy. Libby is proud of this program, as the ultimate goal is inclusion. "Our adaptive aquatics lessons have grown significantly. We now offer group adaptive swim lessons that focus on safety first, swim second." The group lessons allow for more people to have swim lessons and are very popular. "We have a waitlist of over 50 students. These classes are helpful because they allow the students and their parents to have a supportive social outlet and a community to talk about different resources."

Another important aspect of this initiative is the widespread outreach and media campaigns. The "Be WaterSmart" booklet is available in multiple languages and given out at hospitals, schools, doctor offices, and community centers to educate the public about water safety. It is estimated that they have reached nearly half a million residents in the county through messaging via print, social media, and television news.

Libby highlights what makes WaterSmart so special. "It is unique because it is all completely free to the students. The entire program is grant-based. Our goal is to keep the funding coming in to be able to provide as many swim lessons as possible—hopefully at least 1,000 lessons each summer, and we are trying to grow that number."



The kids LOVED the swim lessons and looked forward to all our field trips there. When we started in June, it was the first time some of these kids had ever seen a pool. Now these same kids are passing swim tests at the waterpark and jumping off diving boards with 15-foot-deep water! It's incredible to see their growth over the summer. Thank you!

Francheska Delgado-Rivera
South Grade Elementary
AfterSchool Director



Impact 100 PBC
connects fathers
and children in
our community.

"I am grateful for the opportunity I received to rebuild relationships with my children. I don't want my children to think of me as an absentee dad. I want to be there for them through thick & thin."

Impact 100 PBC funded Project FACT (Fathers and Children Together), a program operated by the Boys and Girls Club with a **\$100,000 GRANT** to rebuild and strengthen local families.



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Boys & Girls Clubs of Palm Beach County Project FACT (Fathers & Children Together) *By Sandi Schwartz*

Boys & Girls Clubs of America is a household name. There are clubs in both Boca Raton and Delray Beach to help young people reach their full potential as productive, caring, responsible citizens. These centers provide a world-class experience that assures success is within reach of every young person who walks through a club's doors, with members working hard to graduate from high school, demonstrating good character and citizenship, and living a healthy lifestyle. The organization transports kids from schools to clubs so parents can pick them up at the end of the workday. Open until 8pm in most locations, the clubs provide a snack, hot meal, tutoring, college prep support, and fun activities.

Impact 100 awarded the Boys & Girls Club a grant in 2021 to support and expand Project FACT (Fathers And Children Together). This grassroots, community-based initiative seeks to empower and mobilize fathers and father figures to become more engaged in their children's lives, improve fathers' parenting skills, and enhance academic engagement. Services include programs for boys and young men; fatherhood curriculum about mental health and family law services; the annual Fathers & Daughters Dinner & Dance; and FatherFest, an affirmation and celebration of fathers and their children.

A key component of FACT is the Passport to Manhood program, which teaches boys what it means to be a responsible man. "We often recruit dads from the group of boys who went through Passport to Manhood. We also partner with schools, nonprofits, and churches to get more dads involved," mentioned Kimberly.

Another meaningful part of FACT is the Tying of the Tie activity. "This event helps get fathers involved. Many boys don't have fathers in their lives, which is what makes our program so valuable," said Chilondra Sheppard, who oversees Project FACT. During this beautiful ceremony, each boy receives a blue tie and learns how to tie it with the help of either their dad or a father figure. "The most important piece was to see all the men gathered in the room—all sorts of dads of different ages and backgrounds. What we are doing is so special," declared Chilondra.

The Fathers & Daughters Dinner & Dance is a wonderful opportunity for dads and their daughters to bond. Chilondra explained, "The father daughter dance is so important to give dads time with their daughters. Many dads are not in the home with their daughters and don't know how to engage with them. We help lead table conversations so girls can understand and see their dads in a new light."

FACT is also hosting Father Fest, which will include workshops pertinent to fathers and representatives from local community service agencies. Another component of FACT includes Strong Schools, which involves Donuts for Dads in school, math night, science night, and more.

Impact 100 has played a major role in FACT's success. Boca Raton and Delray Beach have seen a significant increase of fathers/father figures attending meetings, as well as improvements in their co-parenting relationships. "We get positive feedback from moms and dads. This work has been very sensitive and moving for moms as well," Kimberly said. She believes that the program has huge potential, and they intend to take it to scale to reach as many families as possible. "Moms, dads, and kids desperately need it."

In looking forward, the staff hopes the program will continue to grow. Chilondra highlights the importance of FACT during a time in which gentle parenting and emotional intelligence are priorities. "We are integrating fatherhood into social emotional learning. As fathers are going through the workshops, there are so many childhood traumas that bubble up that we often make referrals for additional help—anger, commitment issues, and more. They are really learning how to manage their behavior and emotions. The same thing happens with the boys." Participants look forward to the programs and the larger conversations that result. "FACT provides a unique opportunity for boys to share their feelings and talk about how they can be connected to their fathers and other male role models."



The Impact 100 grant allowed us to expand the program into Delray & Boca. We were also able to add an educator for south county.

Kimberly Sovinski

Chief Development
& Programs Officer

Impact 100 PBC

brings shelter and security to the lives of our community's most precious members.

- When a child in the foster care system needs the security of a stable home, the Place of Hope can meet that need.
- A **\$100,000 GRANT** from Impact 100 PBC contributed to the building and outfitting of a new transitional living neighborhood for children and families at their Boca Raton campus.



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Place of Hope: Providing Support and Second Chances to Community Members Who Need It Most *By Sandi Schwartz*

While Palm Beach County is one of the wealthiest counties in Florida, you may be surprised to discover how many people are struggling to make ends meet in this region. According to Data USA, 11.6 percent of the population in the county live below the poverty line, a number that is lower than the national average of 12.8 percent. Hundreds of young adults are homeless and without a support system, and many experience abuse and neglect. On top of that, there is currently a severe shortage of affordable housing in this area, particularly for low-income families.

Fortunately, there is an incredible place for those who need support, services, and a safe home to go to now. Place of Hope is a faith-based, state licensed children and families organization offering housing and assistance designed to end the cycles of abuse, neglect, homelessness, poverty, and human trafficking. As one of the largest and most diverse residential children and families organizations in Palm Beach County and the Treasure Coast, Place of Hope helps heal and restore children, youth, and families.

Many of the children and families who come to Place of Hope have experienced serious trauma as a result of abuse and neglect. Through a variety of programs, the organization strives to foster hope and confidence rather than despair so they can go on to live healthy, productive lives free from fear, endangerment, and abuse. There are several programs spread throughout multiple campuses, including family-style foster care; emergency placement; maternity care; human trafficking prevention, education, and recovery; educational centers; fitness activities; community outreach; and more.

Over the years, Place of Hope has served over 20,000 children, youth, and families; placed over 360 foster children in forever homes through adoption; and helped over 300 aged-out or homeless youth and families find a place to live.

In 2018, Place of Hope won an Impact 100 grant to support their Leighan and David Rinker Campus in Boca Raton. This transitional independent living neighborhood opened in February 2013 to provide housing for foster youth, homeless youth, and homeless families with children. Around the time the organization applied for an Impact 100 grant, the Boca campus was undergoing an extensive expansion and renovations. "We were down to raising the last \$100,000 for the Boca project. When the grant came through and we got selected, it ended up that we just needed that amount left. It was truly amazing timing," recalls Charles.

The Impact 100 grant was used to outfit and furnish one of the buildings, which includes eight two-bedroom units. At this location, Place of Hope provides a supportive and proactive living and learning environment with emotional and material support, goal setting, career planning, and education and employment opportunities for its transitional residents.

In 2021, the new building opened. Impact 100 helped provide bedding, furniture, televisions, kitchen supplies, and more for these eight family units. "Timing was amazing because once we got approved, we were seamlessly able to provide these critical homes and materials to additional residents. That building has been running ever since," said Charles. "This was a true collaborative initiative that resulted in all kinds of other things, such as volunteers and additional donors."

Charles is very happy with the outcomes. "Of the 60 adults living in those units, 95 percent received physical medical exams; 89 percent visited a dentist; 94 percent were employed; 97 percent received either a GED, high school diploma, or were working toward it; 77 percent were enrolled in post-secondary education, and 100 percent maintained stable housing within the first year of being part of Place of Hope."

Charles and his team are so grateful for Impact 100's support. "To be able to build a beautiful building and do it debt-free is incredible. It truly was a big, measurable impact."



We are faith-based yet serve people of all backgrounds. This helps drive us to do everything in excellence. In everything we do, we try to emulate what a healthy family can be like. We work hard to try to break the cycles of abuse and neglect—things that can lead people in the direction of poverty, human trafficking, and homelessness. Healthy, personal responsibility is our focus.

Charles L. Bender III

Founding CEO & Board Member

Impact 100 PBC
protects the lives
and health of our
community's
best companions.

"Thanks to Tri-County
Animal Rescue's
Together Fur-Ever
program that Impact
100 PBC funded with a
\$100,000 GRANT, my
dad got me the medical
care I needed that he
couldn't afford."

I 🐾 Impact 100!
-Benji



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Tri-County Animal Rescue: Together Fur-Ever

By Sandi Schwartz

Pets can have a profound impact on our health and well-being. They offer comfort and companionship, provide a healthy distraction, encourage exercise, and increase social interaction. Walking, grooming, feeding, and playing with a pet are enjoyable activities for all ages. They help people slow down from their hectic lives, providing a relaxing outlet. Some pets are also used as emotional support animals for those struggling with issues like anxiety and depression.

Many who have pets often take it for granted that they can afford everything involved with caring for their furry friend. However, there are numerous pet owners in Palm Beach County who struggle to pay these expenses, especially if the animal needs medical attention. Fortunately, Tri-County Animal Rescue in Boca Raton is available to help.

Tri-County Animal Rescue is a 100% No Kill 501(C) 3 non-profit animal shelter with a 4-Star Rating from Charity Navigator. Since it was founded in 1996 by Suzi Goldsmith, the organization has saved over 88,000 animals from being euthanized, placing them in homes through the adoption center. They have also reunited over 9,000 lost animals with their families. Additionally, Tri-County works with several organizations, businesses, and local schools to educate the community about animal awareness. Tri-County Animal Rescue believes that every cat and dog—regardless of breed, gender, or age—deserves to live a happy and healthy life. Their mission is to shelter and provide a comfortable home for all animals placed in the facility.

Tri-County recently expanded to add a very important pet clinic to its 14-acre campus. In June 2019, the Lois Pope Pet Clinic, a 10,000 square foot animal hospital, opened to serve the entire community, not just animals adopted at Tri-County. The goal of this full-service animal clinic is to provide premium medical care to animals whose families are in financial need. The Lois Pope Pet Clinic offers veterinary services including, but not limited to, spay and neuter, microchip implant, annual vaccinations, dental cleanings/extractions, and other surgeries.

Impact 100 has played a crucial role in helping to support and expand the clinic. In 2021, Tri-County was awarded an Impact 100 grant for their Fur-Ever Program. This initiative offers a free food bank and low-cost veterinary services, enabling low-income families and their pets to stay together and reducing the number of pets euthanized. Services provided included spay and neutering, vaccinations, dental care, microchipping, flea and tick prevention, heartworm medications, and emergency surgeries for pets of low-income families in South Palm Beach County.

The grant funds have been used for medical and lab supplies, disease prevention medicine, and pharmacy expenses for pets of low-income families. The money also supports the two veterinarians and five veterinarian technicians that staff the facility, which is open six days a week. This project is transformational because it has helped thousands of low-income families keep their beloved four-legged family members.

"I want to thank Impact 100 PBC and every woman involved with the organization because they helped us save so many pet lives," expressed Suzi Goldsmith, Founder and Executive Director of Tri-County Animal Rescue. She is extremely grateful to Impact 100 for the support.

She indicated that the grant helped the clinic take care of hundreds more animals than they would have been able to if they did not have the financial gift. "This really helped us tremendously to support the community. We have been able to help so many animals stay in their homes. This grant made a lot of families and children happy because they were able to keep the pets they love."

Impact 100 PBC members were thrilled to support Tri-County Animal Rescue by providing the \$100,000 grant to support this program.

“

The Impact 100 PBC grant allowed us to do many surgeries. This avoided pet owners from having to either surrender their pets or put them down because it is very expensive to go to a vet, especially in an emergency situation.

Suzi Goldsmith

Founder & Executive Director

Impact 100 PBC addresses the needs of those with food insecurity in our community.

"When my favorite meal is delivered by The Soup Kitchen, it gives me feelings of comfort and security I otherwise wouldn't have."

In 2015 and again in 2022, The Soup Kitchen received **\$100,000 GRANTS** from Impact 100 PBC to fund high-impact food initiatives for the less fortunate in our community.



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The Soup Kitchen: Delivering Meals and Happiness

For nearly 40 years, The Soup Kitchen has been a driving force for good propelled by community engagement. Thanks to our generous donors and volunteers, we serve approximately 1000 hot meals a day, at a cost of \$0.60 per meal. With more than 300 active volunteers helping to conduct all phases of the operation, we can safely say that we are powered by a compassionate community.

Our main focus is the relief of food insecurity for our area's most vulnerable. However, seeing first-hand so many needs, we have evolved to offer a variety of other services. Our Taking Care of Babies program provides diapers, formula, and other infant care products to new parents struggling to make ends meet. In cooperation with Palm Beach County's resettlement officials, The Soup Kitchen supplies newly arrived refugees and immigrants with furnishings and friendship to help them culturally acclimate. We play an active role in assisting migrant farm workers and their families to meet their material needs. Prior to the pandemic and in collaboration with area professionals, we offered (and hope to offer again soon) classes in parenting, financial literacy, English, and other pertinent topics.

One of our most vital programs, however, was established in 2015 thanks to a generous grant from Impact 100 Palm Beach County. In 2014, we became aware that Boynton Beach's homebound population had no access to a "Meals on Wheels" program. Armed with the facts and ready to do the work, The Soup Kitchen presented a proposal to Impact 100 Palm Beach County and, to our delight, secured a grant. By June of 2015, The Soup Kitchen Meals on Wheels program was born and served its very first clients.

Currently, our Meals on Wheels program serves between 80 and 100 people each day who are homebound due to chronic/terminal illness or advanced age. There is never a fee for service regardless of income or ability to pay. Having prepared foods delivered to the front door helps make it possible for our clients to stay in their home, postponing traumatic and often unaffordable moves into assisted living facilities. Daily contact with our volunteers reduces isolation and loneliness, as volunteers are assigned the same clients each week. The volunteers get to know the clients and are able to detect changes in their physical/mental status. If no family or emergency contact is evident, the Program Director networks with social service agencies to ensure that each client's well-being is preserved.

Much like The Soup Kitchen, Impact 100 Palm Beach County is very much a grassroots organization. As a group, Impact 100 is proficient at recognizing needs specific to our area and identifying organizations worthy of their gifts. Members understand the cost of starting a program or launching a new phase of an existing one. The amount of funding provided to nonprofits selected for grants is realistic and allows the start up team to focus on the program rather than diverting attention to finding additional resources.

We are thankful for the support of Impact 100 PBC and our community and look forward to continuing to assist our area's most vulnerable due to food insecurity.



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Impact 100 PBC
brings joy to
the lives of our
community's most
special members.

- A boundary-free playground designed and equipped for handicapped children unlocks the joy of play, enriches peer interaction, and reduces prejudice toward our children with special needs.
- Impact 100 PBC funded this playground with a **\$100,000 GRANT** to The Miracle League Palm Beach County who worked in partnership with the City of Delray Beach to make this oasis of play a reality.



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The Miracle League: Boundless Dreams Playground

By Sandi Schwartz

For over 150 years, Americans have enjoyed playing and watching the engaging game of baseball. As one of the most popular youth sports with millions of children playing each year on traditional Little League teams, sadly some will be left out due to special needs. Fortunately, the Miracle League was created to address this concern. Founded in 2000, this national organization removes the barriers that keep children and adults with mental and physical disabilities off the field and lets them experience the joy of baseball. There are now over 350 Miracle League groups across the country serving more than 450,000 children and adults, including the free Miracle League Palm Beach County right here in our own community.

In 2017, the Miracle League of Palm Beach County won an Impact 100 award to help fund a new playground for the players and the community as a whole. This effort was initiated by Julia and Jeff Kadel who established the group in 2005. Located off Linton Boulevard just west of Dixie Highway in Delray Beach, a special baseball field at Miller Park hosts the Miracle League games for over 150 special needs athletes and the volunteer buddies that they are paired up with. After some time, Julia and Jeff realized that the playground onsite was not conducive for their special needs athletes and they wanted to do something about it. That's when they decided to seek funding to build the Boundless Dreams Playground.

"We noticed that our special needs athletes couldn't play on the playground next to their own ballfield," Julia recalled. "We then reached out to the city and asked for a new playground to be built. Although they didn't have the funding at the time, they said if we could raise the money then we could revamp the playground to accommodate special needs children."

Miracle League volunteers collaborated to craft the grant proposal for Impact 100, and they were ecstatic when they won.

Although the Impact 100 grant did not cover the entire cost of the \$225,000 playground, it gave the group the momentum to raise additional funding from other grants, sponsorships, and fundraising activities including a \$50,000 grant from the Men's Impact 100 organization.

After a lot of hard work and consulting with special needs playground experts, the new Boundless Dreams Playground opened to the public on June 27th, 2018, with a meaningful ribbon cutting ceremony. It is the first barrier-free, inclusive playground in the area and allows children of all abilities to play side by side. Julia explained, "We are thrilled to see all the kids on the playground every day. It's a completely inclusive community. It's great that it's wedged in between the special needs ballfield and the Little League ballfield so all children can play there together."

Unique features of the playground include an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) ramp, specialized rubber surface, sensory play panels, custom baseball-themed play elements, sunshade protection, sensory butterfly garden, and play boat that a walker or wheelchair can easily ride into.

With over 100,000 special needs residents in Palm Beach County, the Miracle League and these facilities are powerful resources in our region for both children and adults with special needs. And they are growing. The second Miracle League field just opened in Palm Beach Gardens in 2020, and they are working with the county on a third location. "We are really excited because Miracle League Palm Beach County was just chosen to host the 2023 All Stars," announced Julia. "In November, we will have 800-1,000 special needs families from all over the world here to play baseball."

“

Winning the grant was truly exciting because we all put our heart into the project. The highlight that evening was that we brought one of our wheelchair-bound athletes to hear the announcement. Telling her we were going to build her a new playground was the cherry on top!

Julia Kadel
Founding Partner

Impact 100 PBC enhances the lives & health of our community's children with special needs.

- When a child needs therapy that's expensive & financially inaccessible, the Equine-Assisted Therapies of South Florida steps in to help.
- Through a **\$100,000 GRANT** from Impact 100 PBC, they sponsored therapy sessions for children who otherwise could not have afforded it.



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Equine-Assisted Therapies of South Florida

By Sandi Schwartz

Riding horses is more than just for cowboys and racing at the track. A plethora of research confirms that horses can be effective for therapeutic purposes, referred to as equine-assisted therapy. Caring for a horse by feeding and brushing it can be quite soothing and builds confidence and patience in both children and adults. Learning to ride a horse also has tremendous benefits, such as figuring out how to calm oneself down, building focus and mindfulness, and working collaboratively with the animal. The physical contact with the horse and the rhythmic movement while riding can also be relaxing.

One of the first grants awarded by Impact 100 Palm Beach County was to support Equine-Assisted Therapies of South Florida (EATSF) for their project in 2013-2014 to provide equine therapy scholarships to single parent special needs children residing in Palm Beach County. This demographic was a priority because increased medical costs, medications, therapies, and after school care cause stress and anxiety for economically challenged families with special needs children. Plus, families with special needs children have almost twice the divorce rate. Equine therapy has demonstrated the ability to not only improve the life of the special needs child, but also to reduce the stress and pressures of the entire family.

Founded in 1982 by the name Horses and the Handicapped of South Palm Beach County, EATSF is located in Tradewinds Park and Stables in Coconut Creek, yet over half of the individuals they serve live in Palm Beach County. The organization provides therapeutic riding and equine activities to children and adults with special needs so that they can benefit physically, mentally, and emotionally. This is accomplished through four types of programs: Therapeutic Riding (TR) to ride gently and rhythmically; Hippotherapy (HIPPO) that utilizes equine movement facilitated by a physical, occupational, or speech therapist typically used for those with physical challenges; Unmounted Horsemanship (UH), a learning-based program focused on horsemanship and horse care; and Equine-Assisted Psychotherapy (EAP) in which a licensed mental health professional works with the participant and horse to explore feelings and behaviors. The disabilities of their students vary, with the majority being autistic and others having cerebral palsy; down syndrome; developmental delays; multiple sclerosis; and brain, speech, or stroke disabilities.

Participating in equine-assisted programs positively impacts individuals of all ages and ability levels. All programs at EATSF work toward achieving specific physical and developmental goals. Individuals with cognitive, emotional, and physical special needs can experience numerous benefits from being involved in a mounted or unmounted program at EATSF. These benefits include improving balance, coordination, fine and gross motor skills, confidence, muscle strength, processing ability, and social interaction, while decreasing anxiety and depression.

Because of its popularity and effectiveness, EATSF programs are not that easy to get into. They typically serve about 100 participants at a time who need to have a written diagnosis to participate. There is often a waiting list to start a 10-week long session. Once in the program, participants can stay as long as they want. Some have been with EATSF for 30 years.

As with many other organizations, the Impact 100 grant helped them secure funding from additional sources after the grant ended. "The grant really opened the door to a group of people who didn't know about us and didn't realize the impact of our services. Just getting in the same room with organizations doing similar work and the support of the women at Impact 100 helped elevate our mission and how we are seen in the community," expressed Molly gratefully.

“

At the time, the only form of assistance was Medicaid. This grant really allowed us to not only support families we were currently serving but also bring in new participants off the waiting list and to expand our services to more people who could benefit from them.

Molly Murphy
Executive Director

Impact 100 PBC

ensures our brightest lights from underprivileged communities are prepared for college.

With a **\$100,000 GRANT** from Impact 100 PBC, Bound for College helped motivated students attain their academic dream of going to college.

"Thanks to BFC, I'm proud to be the third member of my family headed off to a Florida university."



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To learn more, visit our website: www.impact100pbc.org

Bound for College: Providing Life-Changing Educational Opportunities to Local Students

By Sandi Schwartz

Public education is facing a crisis of epic proportions, and one local teacher decided to do something about it. Mark Sauer held senior management positions with three professional sports franchises, but when it was time to retire, he decided to step into the classroom. He was a teacher in the School District of Palm Beach County for six years, and from that experience, decided to create Bound For College (BFC) [formerly Delray Students First Inc.] in 2012.

BFC provides free college readiness resources to underprivileged and underserved students to help them prepare for, enroll in, and succeed at a first-rate post-secondary institution. This includes counseling and advising support to prepare for the SAT and ACT, submit quality college applications, and apply for and obtain scholarships and financial aid.

Working with three local schools—Atlantic Community High School, Boynton Beach Community High School, and Village Academy in Delray Beach—BFC focuses on ACT and SAT tutoring after school. "Most money from our organization goes right back into the schools. We provide books and training to deliver a high-quality tutoring program," Mark explained. There is tremendous cooperation and gratitude at the partner schools for the program. Each school has a coordinator that hires teachers to tutor after school.

BFC also organizes college tours for kids who would otherwise never get a chance to step foot on a college campus. In addition to the traditional tour, BFC alumni meet with the current students to highlight on and off campus resources like student jobs, support services, food pantries, and affordable housing. These tours are quite popular; the last one had about 50 students and they had a blast.

The success of the program continues to expand as more BFC students graduate high school and head off to college to pursue their dreams. Each year, about 200 students (including 60 seniors) are positively impacted by everything BFC has to offer. During the 2020-2021 school year, students participated in 2,100 hours of tutoring, increased their ACT/SAT national percentile ranking by an average of 23%, and the majority attended college debt-free.

Mark and Kamilah Jones, Director of Development, credit the recent success of BFC with winning an Impact 100 grant in 2016. "It is truly a transformational gift and a critical funding pipeline in Palm Beach County," Kamilah said of Impact 100. Because of the grant, they were able to hire a program coordinator, improve and expand their operations, create a manual that serves as a blueprint for future schools, get accredited by Nonprofits First, add a program in Atlantic Community High School, and acquire funding from United Way to support work in Boynton Beach Community High School. Receiving the grant has helped them secure additional funding.

They can even draw a direct correlation between the Impact 100 grant and several student success stories. One student, who was unable to speak English when she enrolled at Atlantic Community High school after arriving from Haiti, now attends FAU's nursing program. She participated in BFC tutoring for two years, and not only mastered English, but became an A student and earned a Bright Futures Scholarship, a Viner Community Scholarship, and a Teamwork Education Foundation Scholarship.

BFC not only changes lives but is working towards generational change to break the poverty cycle. As Mark explains, "Everything feeds on itself. One of the unforeseen results is how the kids help themselves. Younger students in the schools hear about kids getting into college and they want to join the program. Students post about college tours on Instagram so others want in. It is all interconnected. It's about cultural change."



If Impact 100 didn't put us in Atlantic Community High School, we would never have grown to help more students. The grant helped us scale up.

Mark Sauer
Founder

Impact 100 PBC brings green spaces & vibrant tree canopies to urban neighborhoods in our community.

- The women of Impact 100 PBC funded a **\$100,000 GRANT** to Community Greening to plant trees in parks, schools, and neighborhoods in urban areas.
- Greenspaces provide vital environmental and health benefits to our communities' residents.



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To learn more, visit our website: www.impact100pbc.org

Community Greening: Community Tree Champion

By Sandi Schwartz

Did you know there are communities that do not have any trees lining their streets or yards? Tree cover is correlated to the economics of a neighborhood, which is unfortunate since trees provide many health and emotional benefits. According to research, residents in urban areas have better overall health and a lower risk of developing stress if they have more trees within a walkable distance from their home. Without trees, communities miss out on these critical health benefits.

That is where Community Greening steps in. Co-founders Mark Cassini and Matt Shipley started Community Greening in 2016 to address a need they saw to bring more green space to urban areas and to people who traditionally have not had resources to green their neighborhood. This urban forestry non-profit based in Boca Raton has quickly expanded throughout the region. The group works with local organizations and residents to improve the environment and community by planting trees. They lead tree plantings in low tree canopy and food desert neighborhoods in Delray Beach, Boynton Beach, and Boca Raton to help create sustainable greenspaces.

Since its founding, the organization has planted over 10,000 trees in parks, schoolyards, residential yards, and urban orchards with the help of over 8,000 volunteers. They also now have several full-time staff located between their offices at Lynn University's Social Impact Lab and their nursery in West Boca that contains about 5,000 trees.

In 2020, in the midst of the global pandemic, Community Greening won an Impact 100 grant in the Environment & Animal Welfare category for their Community Tree Champion program. The funds were used to hire, equip, and train a full-time Tree Champion who also leads youth tree teams and recruits volunteers and community partners. They were able to purchase a truck to transport teen volunteers and trees to planting events. The grant also allowed Mark, Matt, and another staff member to visit leading urban forestry programs throughout the country. They learned a tremendous amount of information from these visits and brought home tips and resources from these invaluable mentors.

The organization is so grateful for the help they received from Impact 100. "Being able to tell other donors and supporters that we won an Impact 100 grant has opened so many doors for us." It also provided them with security and support during Covid, which was critical as they lost some corporate contracts during that challenging time.

They recently got a contract with the City of Delray Beach to plant 8,000 trees in the next four years. The city created a tree planting campaign, which highlights the importance of tree canopy. Community Greening is also involved in Boynton Beach's campaign to plant 45,000 trees by 2035. "We are working closely with city sustainability managers in Boca, Delray, and Boynton to help with tree plantings and tree giveaways." The US Fish and Wildlife Service is also funding the youth tree team that involves teens getting paid to work with Community Greening to help maintain and plant trees.

In addition, Community Greening is involved in tree plantings at schools in the area. Schools typically have minimal tree canopy and shade, so adding trees helps to provide a more pleasant environment including cooler, shaded spots around campus. More trees also provide better stormwater management, cheaper energy bills, and better overall air quality. In fact, a recent Community Greening tree planting event at Atlantic High School in Delray was featured by WPBF News.

"We really want to thank Impact 100 for helping us do what we do. It has been a great partnership. We really liked being involved with the group and hope to do it again with another grant soon," Mark said in gratitude.



Winning the grant helped give us more credibility and it has led to more opportunities, such as new projects and funding sources.

Being able to tell other donors and supporters that we won an Impact 100 grant has opened so many doors for us.

Mark Cassini
Co-Founder

Impact 100 PBC educates and protects our communities' middle schoolers.



Palm Beach County ranks third in the State for human trafficking which endangers our teenagers. Impact 100 PBC's **\$100,000 GRANT** to Palm Beach Dramaworks brought awareness to this issue by educating middle schoolers through a play and related programming. Teens learned how to recognize risk factors and avoid being ensnared by traffickers.



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Palm Beach Dramaworks: Bringing Awareness and Education through Art

By Sandi Schwartz

Did you know that Florida is the third-largest hub for human trafficking in the country and that Palm Beach County consistently records the third-highest number of cases of human trafficking in the state? Human trafficking is the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of another person for the purpose of exploiting that person for either commercial sex activity or labor services through the use of force, fraud, or coercion. There are an estimated 400,000-650,000 victims of human trafficking in the United States, and shockingly 13 is the average age of children forced into these horrific situations.

Traffickers tend to target vulnerable populations, such as those experiencing isolation, emotional distress, homelessness, family dysfunction, substance abuse, disabilities, those who identify as LGBTQ, poverty, neglect, history of foster care, and history of juvenile justice involvement. Victims are often reached through social media and online game portals or public apps. In fact, approximately one in seven youths (10 to 17 years old) receive a sexual solicitation or are approached by adults over the internet at some point.

This uncomfortable topic is often swept under the rug because nobody expects it to affect their family or community. That is why Impact 100's grant in 2019 for Palm Beach Dramaworks' One Humanity Tour is so vital and powerful for our local community. With the motto "Theater To Think About," Palm Beach Dramaworks is a professional theater company in West Palm Beach that has an educational engagement program focused on using the power of storytelling and performing arts to provide free, engaging programs to students around pertinent ethical dilemmas and social topics.

Palm Beach Dramaworks received the grant to develop a play and program for local 7th graders to raise awareness about teen human sex trafficking. Experts focus on this grade because the average age of sex trafficked children in Palm Beach County is 12-13 years old. Also, puberty is the time when children tend to turn away from their parents and start exploring their sexuality.

Not only did the grant pay for playwright Eric Coble to write the play *Live to Tell*, but it also covered hiring a director and cast, purchasing tech equipment, and developing portable sets to easily transport to local schools.

The play involves three vulnerable teens sharing their firsthand stories of being trafficked. "The play is so powerful because these dialogues are based on real stories from interviews with trafficked women," Gary said. In addition, *Live to Tell* was created with assistance from the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office Human Trafficking Task Force, the West Palm Beach Police Department SVU, The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, and the Human Trafficking Coalition of the Palm Beaches.

After students watch the performance, there is a group discussion to explore key messages and what students can do in such situations. Students leave the production with a heightened awareness of vulnerabilities and risk factors, including the dangers of social media and other online interaction. A teacher resource guide with extension activities is also provided to schools. What's more, the program addresses Florida State Standards including responsible decision making, relationship skills, social awareness, self-management, and self-awareness.

Although the project hit some schedule changes due to Covid, over 3,500 students have seen *Live to Tell* so far and provided feedback about how impactful and eye-opening it was. While the grant period is over, Impact 100's involvement will live on. "Palm Beach Dramaworks is fully committed to doing this annually and in perpetuity," Gary acknowledged.

They continue to receive support, such as a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to expand the play to the northern part of the county. Gary shared that there is also a very exciting opportunity on the horizon, as a publisher has expressed interest in licensing *Live to Tell* so that everyone in the world can have access to it. "It would be very exciting if what Impact 100 helped create was available for the entire world to see."



We are committed to our motto to provide performances to young people to make them think. The play teaches kids about the dangers of social media and helps them think more critically.

Gary Cadwallader

Director of Education & Community Engagement

IMPACT 100 PALM BEACH COUNTY IS A COMMUNITY OF WOMEN TRANSFORMING LIVES THROUGH COLLECTIVE GIVING.

Lang Realty is pleased to support Impact 100 PBC and their commitment to improving our community through high-impact grants to nonprofit organizations in southern Palm Beach County. We are proud that many of our Lang agents are committed to the mission of Impact 100 PBC and serve in a leadership capacity as Board Members and as general members. We wish them success in making an excellent impact in the community we call home!

