



Trustee Luncheon | September 10, 2025 | Jungle Island

NONPROFIT **NOVO** AWARDS

Recognizing nonprofit program innovative excellence

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WELCOME TO THE 24TH ANNUAL NOVO AWARDS

As a signature program of the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce, the NOVO Awards have been honoring Nonprofit Businesses for 24 years. Nonprofits play a vital role in the economic, social, and cultural fabric of Miami-Dade County. They feed, heal, shelter, educate, inspire, enlighten, nurture, and contribute to the overall well-being of the community. The NOVO Awards recognize programs and individuals that have made a difference in the lives of the people they serve, produce outcomes that exemplify innovative excellence, and feature best practices of not-for-profit businesses.

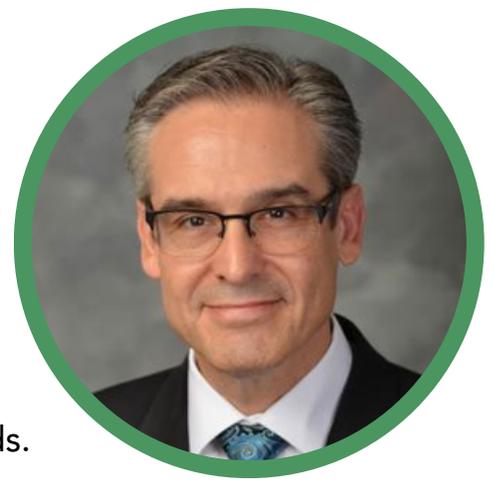
Awards are presented in three categories:

- Innovative excellence in a nonprofit organization with a budget of less than \$2 Million
- Innovative excellence in a nonprofit organization with a budget of more than \$2 Million
- Outstanding Board Leader that exemplifies the best in nonprofit board service

We thank you for joining us today as we honor these exceptional organizations and individuals.

September 10, 2025

The Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce is proud to present the 24th Annual NOVO Nonprofit Business Awards.



The NOVO Awards recognize programs and individuals that have made a difference in the lives of the people they serve, produce outcomes that exemplify innovative excellence and feature best practices of not-for-profit businesses. They celebrate not only the achievements in philanthropy but also the essential role of altruism in our society.

According to the Florida Nonprofit Alliance, in 2023 the more than 2,500 nonprofits in Miami Dade County generated over \$25.5 billion in revenue and employed approximately 76,000 individuals, paying over \$5.1 billion in wages. These statistics underscore the vital role nonprofits play in strengthening our community by addressing unmet needs, promoting equity, and enhancing quality of life. They often step in where government and private sectors fall short. They provide essential services, foster community development, enrich cultural life, and contribute to the overall welfare of our community. Their work not only addresses immediate challenges but also builds a stronger, more inclusive, and resilient community.

We commend the finalists in all the categories. They represent the very best of the best.

On behalf of the Greater Miami Chamber, our congratulations to all honorees today.

Sincerely,

Alfred Sanchez
President & CEO
Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'AS', located to the right of the typed name and title.

NONPROFIT BUSINESS CHAIRS



**Nonprofit Business
Committee Chair**
Deborah Koch
Executive Director
American Red Cross of
Greater Miami and the Keys



**Nonprofit Business
Committee Vice Chair**
Arlene Peterson
Executive Director
WOW Center of Miami





JUDGING PANELISTS

Craig T. Bond

Senior Vice President | Commercial Relationship Manager
United Community Bank

Natasha Lowell

Senior Vice President | Senior Wealth Strategist
Grove Bank & Trust
2023 NOVO Outstanding Board Leader

J Martinez

Chief Executive Officer
Hope For Miami

Patrick Morris

Office of Mayor Daniella Levine Cava
Director of Civic and Philanthropic Partnerships
Miami-Dade County

Jorge Plasencia

Co-Founder, Chairman & Chief Executive Officer | Republica Havas
Founder & Board Chair | Amigos for Kids
2024 NOVO Outstanding Board Leader

Joseph T. Scargle

Vice President - Revenue Cycle
UHealth and Miller School of Medicine
University of Miami



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Innovative Excellence in a Nonprofit Organization

Organization Budget Under \$2 Million

Finalists



Established in 2015, The de Moya Foundation has dedicated itself to a mission of creating long-term, meaningful employment for individuals who often face significant barriers in the workforce. Through resilience, innovation, and a vision of inclusivity, the de Moya Foundation has built strong partnerships with local employers, ensuring that every opportunity provides mutual benefits for both the employee and the business. With over 160 young adults successfully employed across a variety of fields, The de Moya Foundation has demonstrated that young adults with unique abilities are essential to the workforce.



For nearly three decades, MUJER has served as a lifeline for survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault in South Miami-Dade County. As a certified rape crisis center, MUJER specializes in supporting immigrant and underserved communities through a trauma-informed, culturally responsive lens. The organization provides a continuum of care that includes crisis intervention, therapy, legal advocacy, case management, and a 24/7 Sexual Assault Helpline, empowering survivors to reclaim their lives and thrive. MUJER exemplifies nonprofit innovation, compassion, and resilience. By addressing the root causes of violence and uplifting the voices of those with lived experience, MUJER continues to break cycles of trauma and build stronger, more equitable communities.



NAMI Miami-Dade County, the local affiliate of the National Alliance on Mental Illness, is the region's support, education, and advocacy organization serving individuals with mental health conditions (peers) and their families. Founded in 1982, NAMI Miami-Dade County has since experienced transformative growth, directly serving nearly 14,000 individuals with its programs, as well as reaching over 90,000 individuals with its outreach and community awareness efforts in 2024 alone—a 200% increase from 2023. NAMI Miami-Dade accomplishes its mission of championing community awareness and education about mental health while providing dedicated support and advocacy for individuals living with mental health challenges and their loved ones.



Innovative Excellence in a Nonprofit Organization

Organization Budget Over \$2 Million

Finalists



Chapman Partnership is a regional leader in redefining emergency housing through innovative, forward-thinking solutions that advance economic mobility. The Park Stewards Program, launched in April 2025 in partnership with The Underline and The Lennar Foundation, is a transitional employment program training individuals experiencing homelessness in horticulture and public space stewardship, while maintaining The Underline. Upon completion, Chapman's employment specialists support participants in securing permanent employment in either the public or private sector. The program serves as the pilot for CPWorks, a scalable workforce model.



Educate Tomorrow is dedicated to postsecondary access and success for students who have experienced homelessness or foster care, and families looking for educational opportunities and community to enrich the lives of their children. Its mission is to have a positive and enduring impact on those it serves, helping them mature into strong, contributing members of the community. Educate Tomorrow provides holistic support services to youth and families who are currently in or aged out of foster care and/or are experiencing housing instability. Educate Tomorrow connects families to internal and community resources.



Sunrise is one of the largest, private 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organizations in the country dedicated to serving people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. (IDD). For over 60 years, Sunrise has been a visionary leader in the deinstitutionalization movement, collaborating closely with state agencies to enable individuals to transition from institutional settings to inclusive, community-based living. At the core of Sunrise's mission is a steadfast commitment to promoting independence, dignity, and a high quality of life for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). Sunrise offers a comprehensive array of support including community-based residential programs, family model placements, Adult Day Training/Life Skills programs, supported living, community engagement options, and drop-in services.

Outstanding Board Leader

Finalists



Barbara Fonte is Chair of the Board of the **Health Foundation of South Florida** and Chief Impact Officer at Jackson Health System. A visionary leader and tireless advocate for equity, she has dedicated her career to advancing health outcomes, building strategic partnerships, and expanding opportunities for South Florida's most underserved communities. Under her leadership, the Health Foundation has deepened its investment in high-impact, community-centered initiatives — from increasing access to healthcare, improving maternal health outcomes, expanding insurance enrollments, and establishing collaborations between health systems and community-based organizations to better address social determinants of health. Barbara was pivotal in supporting innovative programs like the Circle of Brotherhood's Peacemakers initiative, the Doctors Within Borders free clinic, and a wellness center for foster youth at His House Children's Home.



Ben Gerber's leadership with **Big Brothers Big Sisters of Miami** is the embodiment of long-term commitment, heart-driven service, and community-centered impact. His journey with the organization spans over 15 years, beginning not in the boardroom, but in the heart of the mission, as a mentor. Whether mentoring directly or supporting the organization at a strategic level, Ben leads with compassion and purpose. Since joining our board in 2022 and recently being elected co-chair, he has brought both financial acumen and mission alignment to the forefront. His role at Related Group allows him to connect youth with real opportunities, while his perspective as a former Big keeps our work grounded in what matters most, relationships. Ben is a connector, a champion, and a living example of what it looks like when mentorship doesn't stop at one relationship, it grows into a lifelong commitment to shaping futures and strengthening communities.



Kira Grossman's unwavering dedication to **Voices For Children's** mission to bring hope to children in foster care is both inspiring and transformative. A passionate advocate with expertise in law and social work, her career spans roles as a family law attorney, Assistant City Attorney for Miami, and social worker. Since joining the Board in 2012 and becoming Chair in 2022, Kira has been a powerful voice for our mission, elevating visibility, forging partnerships, and inspiring community investment. Under her leadership, Voices For Children's budget has grown by more than \$1.5 million—reaching \$6 million for the 2025–2026 fiscal year. Our Children's Needs Program, providing essentials like rent assistance, dignity items, and enriching experiences, has doubled in scope. She guided a seamless CEO transition in 2022, expanded staff from 4 to 12 with critical new positions, and championed the creation of the Comfort Closet, which last year alone provided over 1,100 youth with immediate resources.

2024



PAST NOVO AWARD RECIPIENTS

Innovative Excellence in a Nonprofit Organization

	Innovative Excellence in a Nonprofit Organization Organization budget \$2 Million & Above	Innovative Excellence in a Nonprofit Organization Organization Budget Under \$2 Million
2024	Alliance for Aging, Hospital to Home (H2H) Program	Junior Achievement of Greater Miami, Inc. JA Company Program
2023	Miami Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired	The Key Clubhouse of South Florida
2022	Jewish Community Services of South Florida, Inc.	305 Pink Pack Inc
2021	Guitars Over Guns	Sofia's Hope (Pediatric Cardio-Oncology Research program)
2020	Chapman Partnership	ICU Baby Transportation Assistance Program
2019	Branches	Council for Educational Change
2018	Carrfour Supportive Housing	"I Have a Dream" Foundation of Miami
2017	His House Children's Home	Ladies Empowerment Action Program (LEAP)
2016	The Sundari Foundation Lotus House	The Women's Fund of Miami-Dade
2015	Take Stock in Children	PACE Center for Girls
2014	Miami Children's Museum	Educate Tomorrow
2013	Switchboard of Miami	Casa Valentina
2012	The Posse Foundation Posse Miami	Strong Women, Strong Girls South Florida Mentoring Program
2011	Big Brothers Big Sisters of Greater Miami, Inc.	Belafonte TACOLCY Center, Inc.
2010	United Homecare Services	Human Services Coalition
2009	ACCION USA	The Education Fund
2008	Goodwill Industries of South Florida, Inc.	The Women's Alliance, Inc.
2007	Kristi House	The Children's Bereavement Center
2006	Teach for America – Miami-Dade	Women's Advocacy Project
2005	DFYIT	Heiken Children's Vision Fund
2004	Family Services Program	Trauma Resolution Program
2003	Catholic Charities Legal Services	Non-Violence Project
2002	Camillus House	Girls Advocacy Project

PAST NOVO AWARD RECIPIENTS

OUTSTANDING BOARD LEADER			
2024	Jorge Plasencia	Founder and Chairman Emeritus	Amigos for Kids
2023	Natasha Lowell	Board Chair	Casa Familia Inc.
2022	Amaka Amalu	Board Member	Branches, Inc.
2021	Nancy Hector	Board Treasurer	His House Children's Home
2020	Allan J. Pekar	Board President	Key Clubhouse of South Florida
2019	Amy McClellan	Board President	Key Clubhouse of South Florida
2018	Gerald Grant, Jr	Trustee	Florida International University
2017	Harry Kelton	Secretary	Pelican Harbor Seabird Station
2016	Ed Deppman	Board Treasurer	Branches
2015	Bob Dickinson	Chairman of the Board	Camillus House
2014	Darryl K. Sharpton	Chairman of the Public Health Trust Board of Trustees	Jackson Health System
2013	Rodney H. Bell	Board Chair	Branches, Inc.
2012	Richard Brilliant	Treasurer and Finance & Audit Committee Chair, Board of Directors	FIU Foundation, Inc.
2011	Alex Montague	Board Chairman	Children's Bereavement Center

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