GREATER MIAMI CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

2027 Nomination Form

WHO IS A HEALTH CARE HERO?

An individual, institution, professional, student, volunteer, or program who, through their individual or collective actions, has made an extraordinary impact in the South Florida health care community. The nominee might be working in one of the following fields: biomedical, community health, education, private practice, government, public service, or the news media.

Their acts of heroism represent a display of dedication to excellence in their area of expertise beyond the scope of their jobs. Through their commitment to their profession and community, they serve as an inspiration to others in an effort to improve the quality of health care and discover new ways to assist those in need.

I am nominating: (check one*)

Award categories are intentionally broad to recognize the many ways individuals, organizations and programs contribute to impacting health care in South Florida. If a nominee's work spans multiple areas, please select the category that best reflects their primary contribution.

Category	Description
☐ **Health Care Professional**	Recognizes health care professionals whose clinical expertise, leadership, research, education, administration, innovation, or patient care has made an extraordinary impact on the health of our community. Examples include physicians, dentists, health care administrators, researchers, academics, inventors, case managers/social workers, dietitians, mental health professionals, speech, physical and occupational therapists, and other allied health professionals.
☐ **Nurse**	Recognizes nurses whose clinical excellence, compassion, leadership, education, research, innovation, or advocacy has made an extraordinary impact on patient care and the health of our community. Eligible nominees include Registered Nurses (RN), Licensed Practical Nurses (LPN), Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRN), Nurse Practitioners, Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNA), nurse leaders, nurse educators, and other nursing professionals across all care settings.
☐ **Individual of Merit**	Recognizes individuals whose leadership, philanthropy, advocacy, communications, volunteerism, public service, or community engagement has significantly advanced health care in South Florida. Examples include: board members, philanthropists, journalists, government officials, company or foundation executives, community leaders, volunteers, and others whose contributions have strengthened the health of our community.
☐ **Organization/ Program**	Recognizes an organization, department, team, or program that has demonstrated excellence through patient care, research, education, innovation, technology, workplace culture, employee wellness, community outreach, or public health initiatives. Eligible nominees may include health care providers, government agencies, schools, foundations, associations, companies, or other organizations dedicated to improving health and wellness.
☐ **First Responder**	Certified first responder, individual or service (fire, medical, police, military), who has made a significant impact in South Florida for dedication, responsibility, professional behavior, special skill, or insight in the Emergency Medical Services environment.
☐ **Youth Volunteer**	Any student, under the age of 19, who voluntarily offers their services without solicitation or payment. A $1,500 scholarship will be awarded to the winner of this category.
☐ **Equitable Advisors Lifetime Achievement Award**	Designed to honor an individual who, over their lifetime, has made a significant impact or changed history in the health care industry in South Florida, showcasing an exemplary body of work of a long, productive career. The winner of this award will be selected by the judges from all nominees submitted for this award and will be announced prior to the event.

☐ By checking off this box you elect to allow the judges the freedom to consider the nomination for a category other than the primary one indicated above.

Nominations must be received by 5:00 p.m. on December 15, 2026.

Health Care Heroes is a Trademark registered by its respective owners and administered by Equitable Advisors' South Florida Branch.

Finalists and recipients will be honored at the **Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce Health Care Heroes® Awards** luncheon on May 13, 2027.

NOMINEE: ***(type or print)***

Name: _____

Title: _____

Organization: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____

E-mail: _____

What is your relationship with the nominee? _____

Please submit the following three items as part of your nomination:

1. In a concise, bullet-point format, please provide the **TOP THREE REASONS** this nominee should be considered a Health Care Hero.

2. Attach a **BRIEF DESCRIPTION** (**maximum of 750 words**) of the nominee's achievements and contributions. Explain how these achievements **go above and beyond the scope of the nominee's job**. Describe the specific contributions beyond their regular responsibilities and the impact of those contributions. Your explanation of why your nominee should be called a Health Care Hero will be a primary consideration of the judges' decision. Your explanation should demonstrate **impact** by providing concrete metrics (e.g., years of service, patients impacted, policy changes, research published, community impact).

3. **SUPPORTING INFORMATION** (**up to 5 pages**): Attach a list of the nominee's activities, programs, in-kind contributions, and other efforts that directly benefit health care in South Florida. Provide SUPPORTING INFORMATION **to illustrate the involvement and any measurable results attributable to the contribution of the nominee.**
Important: if supporting information exceeds 5 pages, your application WILL NOT be considered.

Your Name: _____

Title: _____

Organization: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____

E-mail: _____

The information contained in this application will remain confidential and will be used solely for the purposes of the award selection. A short description on the finalists will be printed in the newspaper and program. Materials submitted will become the property of the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce.

Nominations must be received by 5:00 p.m. on December 15, 2026, to be eligible for the award.

If your nominee is not selected as a recipient this year, would you like them to be automatically considered as a nominee for the following year?

☐ **Yes**

☐ **No**

I certify that the information submitted is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

_____

Nominator's Signature

GUIDELINES / INFORMATION ON SUBMITTING ENTRIES

What you should know:

1. Three finalists, in each category, will be selected by a panel of judges. (Exception #1: The winner of the EQUITABLE ADVISORS LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD will be selected by the judges from all nominees submitted for the EQUITABLE ADVISORS LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD and will be announced prior to the event. Exception #2: The winner of the Youth Volunteer category will be selected by the judges from all nominees submitted for the Youth Volunteer category and will be announced prior to the event.)
2. All nominees will be notified by email that they have been nominated for a Health Care Heroes® Award.
3. All finalists will be **a)** notified by email that they have been selected as a finalist, and **b)** will be asked to submit several photos (One portrait and 10 candid photos – alone or in a group, preferably pertaining to the nomination.) These photos will be used for the program as well as the video presentation to be shown at the Health Care Heroes® Awards luncheon.
   If your nominee is selected as a finalist, **YOU** will be scheduled to appear on the video describing the qualifications, achievements, and contributions of the candidate. The video shown at the Health Care Heroes® Awards luncheon will feature all finalists.
4. One winner in each category will be announced at the luncheon.
5. Nomination Forms and materials accompanying the nomination form will become the property of the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce. A short description on the finalists will be printed in the newspaper and program.
6. DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTING ENTRIES: **5:00 p.m. on December 15, 2026.**

HOW TO SUBMIT

Please combine the following into ONE PDF:

- **Completed Nomination Form**
- **Top Three Reasons**
- **Written Description**
- **Supporting Documentation**

Submit via email to tvalenzuela@miamichamber.com.
For info and questions, call Tania Valenzuela at 305-577.5491.

PAST RECIPIENTS

Equitable Advisors Lifetime Achievement Award

Carlos Migoya, Jackson Health System (2026)
William W. Culbertson, IV, MD,Lou Higgins Chair in Ophthalmology, Bascom Palmer Eye Institute, University of Miami Miller School of Medicine (2025)
Nelson L. Adams, III, MD, FACOG, Metro-Miami OB/GYN Associates, PA (2024)
Daniel Armstrong, PhD, University of Miami Miller School of Medicine (2023)
Roberto C. Heros, MD, FACS, Jackson Health System / University of Miami Miller School of Medicine (2022)
Charles L. Vogel, MD, FACP, Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center at Deerfield Beach, University of Miami Health System, Miller School of Medicine (2019)
Mary Bartlett Bunge, PhD, University of Miami Leonard M. Miller School of Medicine (2018)
Dr. Eugene R. Schiff, MD, UHealth-University of Miami Health System/ University of Miami Miller School of Medicine (2017)
Thelma Vernell Anderson Gibson, President Emeritus, Theodore Roosevelt Gibson Memorial Fund, Thelma Gibson Health Initiative, Inc. (2016)
Col. Brodes Hartley Jr. (Ret.) President and CEO, Community Health of South Florida, Inc. (2015)
Bernard J. Fogel, MD, Dean Emeritus, University of Miami, Miller School of Medicine (2014)
Michael S. Gordon, MD, PhD, Michael S. Gordon Center for Research in Medical Education UHealth /University of Miami Miller School of Medicine (2013)
Thomas J. Balkany, MD, FACS, FAAP, UHealth / University of Miami Miller School of Medicine (2012)
James Roderick Jude, M.D., Co-Inventor of CPRand Retired Cardiac and Thoracic Surgeon (2011)
W. Jarrard Goodwin, M.D., F.A.C.S., Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center/UMHC, University of Miami Health System/Miller School of Medicine (2010)
Barth A. Green, M.D., University of Miami Health System/University of Miami Leonard M. Miller School of Medicine and The Miami Project to Cure Paralysis (2009)
Kathie Sigler, Ed.D., Miami Dade College Medical Center Campus (2008)
Evalina W. Bestman, Ph.D., New Horizons Community Mental Health Center, Inc. (2007)
John G. Clarkson, M.D., UM Miller School of Medicine (2006)
Gerard A. Kaiser, M.D., Jackson Health System (2005)
Jay W. Weiss (posthumously) (2004)
Leonard A. Wien, Sr., Mount Sinai Medical Center (2003)
Hubert L. Rosomoff, M.D., D. Med.Sc., F.A.A.P.M. (2002)
Rosebud Lightbourn Foster, Ph.D. (2001)
Pedro J. Greer, Jr., M.D. (2000)

First Responder

Jeanette Harrington, Miami-Dade Fire Rescue (2026)
Maria Ortiz, Miami-Dade County Fire Rescue (2025)
Willie Williams, Miami-DadeFire Rescue (2024) Robbie Meek, EMT, CDR Health
Care, Inc. (2023) Keith Tyson, Firefighter Cancer Support Network (2022)
Mario Gonzalez, Miami-Dade Fire Rescue (2019)
Julio Puentes, Firefighter/Paramedic, Miami-Dade Fire Rescue Department (2018)

Biomedical

H.Thomas Temple, MD, Nova Southeastern University (2017)
Elizabeth J. Franzmann, MD, Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center (2016)
Richard Cote, MD, UHealth-University of Miami Miller School of Medicine (2015)
Mary Bartlett Bunge, PhD, Christine ELynn Distinguished Professor of Neuroscience, Professor, of Cell Biology, Neurological Surgery and
Neurology, UHealth – University of Miami Miller School of Medicine (2014)
Joshua M. Hare, MD, FACC, FAHA, Interdisciplinary Stem Cell Institute, UHealth /University of Miami Miller School of Medicine (2013)
Anuradha Godavarty, Ph.D., Florida International University (2012)
Ronald DeMeo, M.D., M.B.A., Meridian Spine & Interventional Pain Medicine (2011)
Norma Sue Kenyon, Ph.D., University of Miami Health System/Miller School of Medicine (2010)
William P. Murphy, Jr., M.D., Founder and Former Chairman, Cordis Corporation (2009)
Leonard Pinchuk, Ph.D., D.Sc., Innovia LLC and Affiliates (2008)
Mel Rothberg, Rothberg Associates, Inc. (2007)
Camillo Ricordi, M.D., UM Miller School of Medicine (2006)
Neil Flanzraich, IVAXCorporation (2005)

Health Care Professional

Mark Rabinowitz, MD, FACOG, Miami Beach Community Health Center (2026)
Armen Henderson, MD, MBA, Dade County Street Response (2025)
Nicholas Namias, MD, MBA, FACS, FCCM, Jackson Health System (2024)
Lilian Abbo, MD, FIDSA, Jackson Health System / UM Miller School of Medicine (2023)
Joseph Lamelas, MD, University of Miami Health System (2022)
Reynald Jean, MD, MPH, MSN, AGPCNP-BC, Florida Department of Health in Miami-Dade County (2019)
Rodrigo Vianna, MD, PhD, Miami Transplant Institute, UM/Jackson (2018)
Hansel Tookes III, MD, Jackson Memorial Hospital Jackson Health System (2017)
Lillian Rivera, RN, MSN, PhD, Florida Department of Health in Miami-Dade Cou (2016)
Dr. Eduardo H. Bancalari, MD, Jackson Memorial Hospital/University of Miami Miller School of Medicine (2015)
Tina Carroll-Scott, MD, Medical Director, South Miami Children's Clinic (2014)
Erin Kobetz-Kerman, PhD, MPH, Jay Weiss Institute for Health Equity at Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center, UHealth /University of
Miami Miller School of Medicine (2013)
Cathy Herring, CTRS, Jackson Rehabilitation Hospital (2012)
G. Patricia Cantwell, M.D., Holtz Children's Hospital and University of Miami Miller School of Medicine (2011)
Athena C. Pefkarou, M.D., Miami Children's Hospital and UOTS Cancer Camp (2010)
Judy Schaechter, M.D., University of Miami Health System/Miller School of Medicine (2009)
Fatima Zafar, M.D., Jessie Trice Community Health Center, Inc (2008)
Si Mai Pham, M.D., UM/Jackson Memorial Medical Center (2007) Daniella David, M.D., Miami VA Healthcare System (2006)
Janvier Gasana, M.D., Ph.D., Florida International University (2005)
Moises Simpser, M.D., Miami Children's Hospital (2004)
Robert Schwartz, M.D., UMSchool of Medicine (2003) Barbara Russell, R.N., Baptist Hospital of Miami (2002) Deise C. Granado-Villar, M.D.,
Miami Children's Hospital (2002)
George Battle, M.D., Private Practice (2001)
Walter Livingstone, Miami-Dade Health Department (2001)
John Hall Bowker, M.D., UM School of Medicine (2000)
Walter F. Lambert, M.D., UM Children Protection Team (2000)
Arnon Krongrad, M.D., Veterans Affairs Medical Center (1999)
Carolina Calderin, Pan American Hospital Health Network (1999)
Theodore I. Malinin, M.D., UMSchool of Medicine Tissue Bank (1998)
Ira C. Clark, Public Health Trust (1998)

Individual of Merit

Redmond Burke, MD, Nicklaus Children's Hospital (2026)
Juliette Fabien, MBA, RN, The Children's Trust (2025)
Jayne Sylvester Malfitano, Harcourt M. and Virginia W. Sylvester Foundation (2024)
Bridget Lisa McKinney, Professionals Sharing with a Purpose and Scott Lake Elementary (2023)
Tiffany Field, PhD, University of Miami Health System (2022)
Michael Fux, Nicklaus Children's Health System (2019)
John A. Rock, MD, Florida International University Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine (2018)
Linda S., Quick, Quick Bernstein Connections Group (2017)
Juan Manfredi, Holtz Children's Hospital Jackson Health System (2016)
Fred Lippman, RPh, EdD, Nova Southeastern University's Health Professions Division (2015)
Carlos A. Migoya, President & CEO, Jackson Health System (2014)
Sonia Perez, Angel's Pediatric Heart House (2013)
Pete Gutierrez, MD, MMS, PA-C, Miami Dade College Medical Center Campus (2012)
Marc A. Buoniconti, The Miami Project to Cure Paralysis/University of Miami Health System and The Buoniconti Fund to Cure Paralysis (2011)
Constance Collins Margulies, The Sundari Foundation, Inc. (2010)
Lawrence S. Forman, Comprehensive Rehabilitation Consultants and Children's Rehab Network (2009)
Paul R. Ahr, Ph.D., Camillus House (2008)
Thelma V. Anderson Gibson, Theodore R. Gibson Memorial Fund, Inc. (2007)
Judge Steven Leifman, Miami-Dade County Court 11th Judicial Circuit of Florida (2006)
Paul G. Hale, Miami Children's Hospital Foundation (2005)
Marisel Losa, St. John Bosco Clinic (2004)
Grandma" Patty Wilson, Jackson Memorial Hospital (2004)
Thomas C. Doherty, Miami Veterans Affairs Med. Ctr. (2003)
Mayra R. Lichter& Cecile Sardo, Creutzfeldt-Jakob Foundation (2003)
Ambassador David M. Walters, Miami Children's Hospital Foundation (2002)
Kevin Packman, Esq., ALS Recovery Foundation (2002)
David Lawrence, Jr., The Early Childhood Initiative Foundation (2001)
Ady Viera, Mercy Hospital (2001)
Lois B. Pope, Leaders in Furthering Education (2000)
Annie Taylor, Cedars Medical Center (2000)
John H. O'Neil, Jr., Health Foundation of South Florida (1999)
Irving Cypen, Miami Jewish Home & Hospital for the Aged (1999)
Bessie Garrett, Miami VA Medical Center (1998)
The Student Body, UM School of Medicine (1998)

Organization/Program

The Miami Project to Cure Paralysis at University of Miami Miller School of Medicine (2026)
Jewish Community Services of South Florida (2025)
Baby Steps: Nurse Led Transition of Care for NICU Infants and Caregivers, Nicklaus Children's
Hospital (2024)
Miami Transplant Institute, Jackson Health System/University of Miami Health System (2023)
Florida PACE Centers at Miami Jewish Health (2022)
Roxcy Bolton Rape Treatment Center at Jackson Memorial Hospital (2019)
Jackson Health System (2018)
Community Outreach Program to Miami Rescue Mission, Broward Outreach Centers at Barry
University (2017)
The University of Miami/Jackson Memorial Burn Center (2016)
Chapman Partnerships Miami Hope Clinic (2015)
Miami Children's Hospital Intensive Care Units (2014)
PATCHES (Pediatric Alternative Treatment, Care, Housing & Evaluation Services) (2013)
Angel Flight Southeast (2012)
Health Foundation of South Florida (2011)
Miami-Dade County Health Department (2010)
Ryder Trauma Center, University of Miami/Jackson Memorial Medical Center (2009)
Miami Beach Community Health Center, Inc. (2008)
Mitchell Wolfson, Sr. DOCS Program, UM Miller School of Medicine (2007)
Jackson Health System Primary Care Initiative (2006) Baptist Health Expands Charity Care Program
(2005)
Community Health of South Dade, Inc. (2004)
Pediatric Intensive Care Unit-Holtz Children's Hosp. (2003)
Miami Jewish Home and Hospital for the Aged (2002)
HSC's Comprehensive Health Outreach Program (2002)
Miami Children's Hospital (2001) University of Miami/R.R. Moton Health Center (2001)
San Juan Bosco Clinic (2000)
Maternal/Child Case Management Program (2000)
Good News Care Center (1999)
Camillus Health Concern (1999)
Visiting Nurse Association (1998)
Pediatric Mobile Clinic (1998)

Nurse

Marie O. Etienne, DNP, ARNP, FNP, GNP, PNP, PLNC, FADLN, Miami Dade College (2026)
Ademola "Ayo" Akinkunmi, BSN, MHA, PMP, FACHE, Jackson Memorial Hospital (2025)
Elizabeth Joseph, APRN-BC, MPH, Jackson Memorial Hospital (2024) Tami Thomas, PhD, RN, APRN-
CPNP, FAANP, FAAN , FIU Nicole Wertheim College of Nursing & Health Sciences (2023) Bridget
Pelaez MA, BSN, RN, EMT-P, CEM®, Florida International University (2022) Linda Washington-Brown,
PhD, EJD, APRN-C, MSN, FAANP, Miami Rescue Mission Clinic (2019) Rose Anderson, MSN, ARNP,
Camillus House – Project Lazarus (2018) Jackie Gonzalez, DNP, ARNP, MBA, NEA-BC, FAANNicklaus
Children's Hospital (2017) Beverlin Allen, PhD, ARNP, Sister Emmanuel Hospital (2016) Kimberly
Juanico, RN, BSN, CHPPN, Jackson Health System (2015) Shakira Henderson PhD(c), DNP(c), MS, MPH,
MSN, RNC-NIC, IBCLC, Nurse Scientist, Baptist Health South Florida - South Miami Hospital (2014)
Nancy Auster, RN, BSN, CHPN, VITAS Innovative Hospice Care (2013) A. Kris Kist, RN, South Miami
Hospital, Baptist Health South Florida (2012)
Ann-Lynn Denker, Ph.D., A.R.N.P., Jackson Health System (2011)
Annette R. Gibson, M.S.N, ME.d, R.N., Miami Dade College Medical Center Campus (2010)
Carrie Feinroth, R.N., M.S.N., Holtz Children's Hospital, Jackson Health System (2009)
D. Jane Mass, RN, MSN, CNAA, Jackson Health System (2008)
Dorothy J. Thomas, RN, BSN, CIC, Miami Children's Hospital (2007)
Nilda P. Peragallo, Dr. P.H., R.N., F.A.A.N., UM School of Nursing and Health Studies (2006)
Connie Barden, RN, MSN, CCRN, CCNS, Mercy Hospital (2005)
Frances Aronovitz, RN, Ph.D., MDC School of Nursing (2004)

Youth Volunteer

Avery McCray, Founder, Game Day Grannies; Student at Robert Morgan Education Center (2026)
Jasmine J. Williams, Student, The Children's Trust Youth Advisory Board (2025)
Aiden Barreras, Special Olympics Unified Partner and Ana Pujol, New World School of the Arts (2024)
Shawn Martinez, AVUS Connect & Belen Jesuit Preparatory School (2023)
Justice Garcia, American Senior High School (2022)
Isabella Allen, Holtz Children's Hospital, Jackson Health System (2019)
Maritza Allen-Brown, American Red Cross; and Coral Reef Senior High School (2018)
Megan Zou, Nicklaus Children's Hospital, Student, Ransom Everglades High School (2017)
Lilyveth Mesa, Student, Miami Springs Senior High (2016)
Dimitri A. Godur, University of Miami Miller School of Medicine (2015)
Sima Vazquez, Student, Carrollton School of the Sacred Heart (2014)
Cesar Castillo, Miami Springs Senior High School, Medical Hawks Club, HOSA (2013)
Jamie Henschel, National Psoriasis Foundation (2012)
Diamond Sims, Student, Miami Central Senior High School (2011)
Samantha DePriest-Capparelli, Coral Reef Senior High School (2010)
Stephannie Berrios, Miami Springs Senior High School (2009)
Michelle Wu, youth volunteer, Mercy Hospital (2008)
Elsa Cassandra Santillana, VITAS Innovative Hospice Care (2007)
Sarah S. Shafi, Miami Beach Senior High (2006)
Patrick Jean Baptiste, BEAM Academy NMB High (2005)
Harley Gould, Cleveland Clinic Florida (2005)
Marre Smith, NMB High; Uzma Gulamali, Coral Gables High (2004)
Carlos Larcada, Belen Jesuit Preparatory School (2003)
Tina Fregeolle, MAST Academy (2002)
Kyle T. Amber, Palmetto Middle School, (2001)
Fahim Siddiqui, South Miami Senior High School (2000)
Heather J. Wilson, college student (1999)

Past Honorees (1992-1993)

Pedro J. Greer, Jr., M.D.
Overtown Community Health Center (Leonard Turkel) Baptist Hospital
Miami Project to Cure Paralysis
Jose Cancea (Chairman, Public Health Trust)
Lourdes Auila (Director, La Liga Contra El Cancer) Bernardogel, M.D.
Daniel Seckinger, M.D. Wayne Brackin
Rev. Hugh Westbrook

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