

## NEWS RELEASE

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For immediate release

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### **Town of Palm Beach United Way honors Jack Scarola for 45+ years of transforming the lives of the most vulnerable**

*Jack Scarola receives the prestigious Nettie Finkle Award.*

The [Town of Palm Beach United Way](#) recently honored Jack Scarola with the prestigious [Nettie Finkle Award](#) for his 45+ years of transforming the lives of the most vulnerable individuals and families in Palm Beach County.

The annual award honors an individual who exemplifies volunteerism and whose commitment to bringing hope, promise, and opportunity into the lives of others has left a lasting, positive impact on a person, group, or community at large.

Scarola is a generous giver of his time, talents, and treasure. He is a founding member of The Lord's Place and has served on its board for more than 45 years.

According to Kerry Diaz, interim CEO of The Lord's Place and who nominated Scarola for the award, "Jack is not your typical board chairman who limits his involvement overseeing the policies of a nonprofit organization. He has literally been on the ground and in the trenches—or to be more exact, in the dumpster—with our organization since its beginning."

In the early 1980s, Scarola joined the late Brother Joe Ranieri, founder of The Lord's Place, sleeping on the steps of St. Ann's Church and later helped him as he spent weeks living in a dumpster to call the attention of the community to the problem of homelessness and to solicit financial support. Since the beginning days, Scarola and his wife, Anita, and children have been steadfast supporters of The Lord's Place and participants in the agency's various events—from Dumpster Days to SleepOut to this year's inaugural March to End Homelessness. In addition, it has become a Scarola family Christmas tradition to play "Santa Claus" for the children and parents residing at the agency's family campus. Scarola has continued to help The Lord's Place grow to become the leading organization serving those experiencing homelessness in Palm Beach County.

“He has not only made a profound contribution in helping to build The Lord’s Place into the nationally-recognized agency that it is today, he has also walked the walk in every aspect of his life,” added Diaz, “Jack and Anita have instilled in their five children, 20 grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren the values of respect for all people, the duty to help others less fortunate than ourselves, and the responsibility to speak out and stand up against injustice in the community and the world.”

Scarola’s charitable contributions extend beyond The Lord’s Place, providing support for The Guatemalan-Maya Center, Easter Seals, The Legal Aid Society, Guild of Catholic Lawyers, The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, Palm Beach County Justice Association, and others.

In Debra Vasilopoulos’ presentation of the award, she told the story of how Scarola and his wife helped the Velascos, a Guatemalan immigrant family. In 2015, after learning about the Velascos’ plight to seek asylum from horrific violence, including rape and death threats, the Scarola family took the mother and two of her children into their home for five months.

“The Scarolas helped their children enroll in school, helped the mother get a job as a nanny and helped pay for an attorney to handle their asylum case. They are just one of several families who the Scarolas have befriended and assisted in this way,” shared Vasilopoulos, board secretary for United Way.

In his career as a senior partner in the law firm of Searcy, Denney, Scarola, Barnhart & Shipley, P.A., Scarola has taken on the cases of innumerable members of the public who were wronged and won justice for them—taking a personal interest in their plight and providing care for them beyond the courtroom and their court case. For this, he has been honored with the Florida Bar President’s Pro Bono Service Award and the Legal Aid Society’s Community Service Award.

In his acceptance speech, Scarola attributed “at least equal credit, if not more” to his wife: “All of those things have always been a family effort. And it has been an enormous satisfaction to be able to give back to this community in exchange for all that we have received from this community for more than 50 years we have been part of it.”

He thanked United Way for its “enormous contributions to contributing to the quality of life in Palm Beach County, to maintaining and elevating that quality of life.”

Scarola shared these lines of poetry, “It’s not the things you do my friends but things you leave undone that cause you a bit of heartache in the setting of the sun.”

He then emphasized, “There is much that remains undone as our neighbors face a tremendous assault as a consequence of the economic pressures that are being brought to bear upon them attempting to live in this community. And to have added to those economic pressures, political



pressures as well, make their lives extraordinarily difficult. Your work is essential. Thank you for doing it.”

In addition to Scarola receiving an award, the Town of Palm Beach United Way added his name to the Nettie Finkle Award plaque which lists all [past recipients](#) and presented The Lord’s Place with a check for \$2,000 in Scaorla’s honor.

All Town of Palm Beach United Way nonprofit partner agencies are eligible to nominate a volunteer for the annual Nettie Finkle Award.

#### **PHOTO IDs:**

##### ***Photo Credit: Capehart Photography***

[001](#): Debra Vasilopoulos and Jack Scarola

[002](#): Pamela McIver, Jack Scarola, and Kerry Diaz

[003](#): A few members of the Scarola family: (L-R) Caroline Kirk, Ellie Bischoff, Janna Scarola Bischoff, Jack Scarola, Anita Scarola, Cara Scarola Hansen, David Scarola, Annette Mendoza

#### **About Town of Palm Beach United Way**

*The Town of Palm Beach United Way was founded in 1945 with the objective to raise and allocate funds to area charitable and philanthropic organizations. Its mission is to create long-lasting and measurable changes that improve lives and build strong communities throughout Palm Beach County by ensuring everyone has access to the building blocks for a good quality of life: education, health, and financial stability. Over the years, the Town of Palm Beach United Way has raised over \$133 million to help those in Palm Beach County who need it the most. For more information, visit [www.palmbeachunitedway.org](http://www.palmbeachunitedway.org).*

#### **About The Lord’s Place**

*For 45 years, The Lord’s Place, a non-sectarian agency, has been working to break the cycle of homelessness for men, women, and children in Palm Beach County, FL, through innovative, compassionate and effective services. The Fortin Family Campus in West Palm Beach provides training and support services including: the operation of Café Joshua; job training and placement services; clinical and care coordination; community engagement services; and a reentry program helping men and women transitioning from incarceration. The agency also owns or rents 15 supportive and graduate housing locations, as well as 85 scattered site apartments, to help house about 300 individuals every night. For more information, visit [thelordsplace.org](http://thelordsplace.org).*

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