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Magazine[®]

FEBRUARY 2025



A whimsical mural helped
a Windsor home become a

**WELCOMING
WONDERLAND**



CARLY LENHARDT

PHILANTHROPY

Thriving Together

THE POWERFUL PHILANTHROPY OF IMPACT 100 SHOWS WHAT A GROUP OF DETERMINED WOMEN CAN ACCOMPLISH



BY JEFFREY R. PICKERING

A woman without a man is like a fish without a bicycle. This well-known feminist slogan from Australian filmmaker and writer Irina Dunn was the first thought that popped into my head when Indian River Impact 100's president, Suzi McCoy Shriner, asked me to deliver remarks at the organization's Season

Kickoff last November. I was honored by the invitation; however, I was also certain that this formidable gathering of more than 400 women philanthropists who regularly award \$100,000 grants was capable of launching its 16th season without an endorsement from some dude. There would be no "mansplaining" about the value of charitable giving or the

best way to practice effective philanthropy from me. Instead, I shared what I know about Indian River County's nonprofit marketplace and the role of philanthropy in addressing community needs. According to the Community Foundation's nonprofit sector market report, these needs are numerous and are being addressed by a multitude of

Sadie Collet (pictured with her son) is the assistant director at Child-care Resources, which promotes quality early childhood education.

INDIAN RIVER INSIGHTS

United Against Poverty has a Member Share Grocery Program.

501(c)(3) nonprofit charitable organizations—almost 900 in Indian River County. Approximately 200 of these earn more than \$50,000 per year in revenue and are required to file an IRS form 990 as a tax return. The greatest number of charities fall into the categories of human services (21 percent), education (14 percent), health (12 percent), and arts and culture (11 percent). The rest include animal welfare, the environment, and others.

Data from the latest filings show that all Indian River County charities earned a total of \$384 million, with 73 percent earning less than \$1



STEVEN MARTINE

million annually. Investment income of \$18 million made up 5 percent, government contributions of \$58 million equaled 15 percent, earned income of \$149 million was 39 percent, and contributions of \$159 mil-

lion accounted for 41 percent of total revenue.

This last statistic on contributions makes Indian River County the eighth most generous of Florida's 67 counties. Impact 100 certainly plays an

important part.

As for expenses, it cost approximately \$300 million to operate all Indian River County charities last year. This figure is almost equivalent to what it costs to run the



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INDIAN RIVER INSIGHTS



Hope For Families Center, left, helps families rise out of homelessness; Randee Ganser-Bok, below, is a prevention intervention specialist at The Learning Alliance.

school district and twice the amount it costs to run the sheriff's office. About \$100 million is paid in wages to approximately 2,100 employees. This is more jobs than Publix and Piper Aircraft—the two largest private-sector employers in the county—combined.

Philanthropy plays a key role in maintaining our county's quality of life; however, there are some concerning statistics related to community needs that require more attention.

In the area of health, 11 percent of Indian River County's population is uninsured—almost 50 percent higher than the national average. Last year this equaled approximately 18,000 of our friends and neighbors. Access to primary medical care, dental care, and behavioral health care is worse in Indian River County than in Florida overall, due to shortages in doctors, dentists, and licensed mental health care practitioners. In addition to Cleveland Clinic Indian River Hospital, nonprofits such as Treasure Coast Community Health, Whole Family Health, and the VNA are doing their best to meet this need.

Teen pregnancy rates are on the rise, higher than Florida's average. So is the percentage of women who do not access prenatal care in the first trimester, currently 36 percent. Unfortunately, this correlates with higher rates of infant mortality, which, after a long decline, has been rising, and is still almost three-times higher





Boys & Girls Clubs of Indian River County

Celebrating a Quarter Century of Caring



For 25 years, the Boys & Girls Clubs of Indian River County has been a cornerstone in the community, serving those who need us most and helping them become productive, responsible, and caring citizens. With three locations in Vero Beach, Sebastian, and Fellsmere, we support over 800 children and teens annually through our after-school and summer programs, preparing them for a brighter future.

We invite you to join us in making a lasting impact on kids in our community for the next 25 years!

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March 11th, 2025**

25 years of changing lives!

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Consider supporting this milestone event by sponsoring vital programs and scholarships for the kids. Learn more at www.bgcirc.org or scan the QR code.



INDIAN RIVER INSIGHTS



CARLY LENHARDT

GYAC offers a multitude of programs for local children.

among the Black population than the white population. Indian River Healthy Start Coalition is dedicated to turning this around.

As for education, 55 percent of children starting school are not ready for kindergarten, 42 percent of students are not proficient in third-grade reading, and 44 percent of students are not proficient in eighth-grade math. While high school graduation rates are the highest in the county's history, only 33 percent of the population 25 years and older have a college degree. Childcare Resources, the Economic Opportunity Council, The Learning Alliance, Crossover Mission, Gifford Youth Achievement Center, and Youth Guidance Mentoring Academy are just some of the local charities addressing one or more of these issues.

When it comes to economic opportunity, almost 50 percent of our community's population is either in poverty or one paycheck away from it. In 2022, it cost \$63,000 for

a family of four to survive in Indian River County, while the average wage for a family of four is just \$54,000. That's two parents working full-time jobs making \$13 dollars an hour. Hopefully, their children are of school age and attend one of our A-rated public schools.

However, if the children are infants or toddlers, the shortage of affordable, high-quality early education options likely means that one parent stays home, or one works the day shift while the other works the night shift. United Against Poverty is doing its part to help where it is needed most.

Finally, for housing, 50 percent of our community's households are considered "housing cost burdened," paying more than 30 percent of their income for housing expenses, leaving much less for healthy food, medications, or time off work to recuperate from an illness or injury.

Perhaps the most troubling statistic is that last year there were more than 500 students

Indian River County is the eighth most generous of Florida's 67 counties.

in our school system who were homeless. You don't need research to know that kids living doubled or tripled up in apartments, spending the night in cars, or sleeping outdoors are going to have medical, dental, and behavioral health problems, and will have trouble thriving at school. The Homeless Children's Foundation, Hope for Families Center, Samaritan Center, and Indian River Habitat for Humanity are all working hard to help.

More information about community needs can be found at Indian River Indicators (irindicators.org). It is a tool developed by the Community Foundation to help our clients and other funders, such as Impact 100, practice more effective philanthropy.

Data is important. However, this data has a personal story.

In one of Impact 100's many video testimonials on its website (impact100ir.com), Chuck Bradley, executive director of Camp Haven, shares Tim's story and the positive changes he was able to make in his life because of the generosity of the women of Impact 100.

"Tim came to us from the woods. He literally had not eaten in 30 days. He suffered from a mental illness. With your support, over time Tim was able to learn how to cope with his mental illness and restore his credit. Soon, Tim will leave our program as a homeowner. We think this is one heck of a return on Impact 100's investment."

I'm just grateful to live in a place where, as Suzi McCoy Shriner enthusiastically likes to say, "we can thrive together."

Thrive together. I can't say it any better. ✨



CARLY LENHARDT

The Gifford Youth Achievement Center opened its doors in 1998 and serves the youth of Indian River County.



GYAC

GIFFORD YOUTH ACHIEVEMENT CENTER



GENERATIONAL GENEROSITY

is one of
GYAC'S GREATEST GIFTS.

“My GYAC story starts with my dad, Ken Mindt, GYAC's board treasurer. Now, more than ever, I love the GYAC family!”

Grace Mindt,
GYAC Volunteer & Intern

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Start Changing Lives,
Changing Futures!**

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Freddie Woolfork with Julie & Ken Mindt.



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