ORCF Announces Record $1.6 Million in 2021 Community Grants

By Yurianna Mikolay, Executive Director Ocean Reef Community Foundation

The Ocean Reef Community Foundation’s annual grants program will provide more than $1.6 million to nonprofit organizations serving neighboring areas this year thanks to the Ocean Reef community’s generous participation in the 2021 All Charities effort.

Grants Committee Chair Janie Sims points out that “This is the first year we will grant more than $1.5 million and that funding is needed ‘More now. More than ever,’” in accord with the 2021 Auction Weekend theme. After a challenging year that set records for requests and saw both vetting of applicants and the All Charities Auction go virtual, she said, “It is extraordinary to be able to step up and meet the increased need.

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ORCF’s Community Grants Program funds dozens of worthy charities in the interest areas of Education, Youth, Health & Family Services and Community in the Upper Keys, Homestead and Florida City each spring. Including 2021 grants, the program will have donated about $13 million to improve the quality of life in the communities where Ocean Reef employees live since the All Charities collaboration began in 2008.

After months of careful vetting, a Grants Committee of your peers recommended the Foundation’s entire share of 2021 All Charities proceeds be distributed as follows:

- **ACT4Me** – Therapy programs for Homestead/Florida City children with neurological and genetic disorders – $35,000
- **Adrienne Arsh Center for the Performing Arts** – Learning through the Arts curriculum and live performance field trip for 5th graders in Homestead/Florida City Title I
- **Autism Society of the Keys** – Technology and therapy for autistic youth – $10,000
- **Branches Florida City** – Grow & Climb teen leadership development and employment mentoring program – $25,000
- **Tax Preparation/VITA and Savings Champion program for families** – $25,000
- **Burton Memorial United Methodist Church** – Food Pantry: Refrigerated truck usage to enable pick up of perishable donations from local grocery stores – $7,200
- **Pre-School: Summer Enrichment Program** – $7,000
- **Camillus House – CHER** – educational initiative to assist formerly homeless children in attending school and catching up with peers – $15,000
- **Caring for Miami** – Project Smile Mobile Dental Unit visits for the Upper Keys, Homestead and Florida City – $40,000
- **Centro Campesino – COVID-19 Pandemic Direct Emergency Financial Assistance** – $25,000
- **Chapman Partnership** – Mentoring Program at the Parent Institute at the Family Resource Center for families transitioning from homelessness – $10,000
- **Chapters Health Foundation** – Towards re-establishing a nonprofit Hospice and Palliative Care program in Monroe County (absent since Hospice VNA of the Florida Keys closed after Hurricane Irma) – $50,000
- **City Year Miami** – Holistic Student Assessment Pilot Program at Redlands Middle School – $20,000
- **Community Health of South Florida** – Children’s Crisis Center inpatient facility for children with severe mental health issues, at risk of harming themselves or others – $25,000
- **DMF Employment Opportunities** – Employment initiative for Homestead/Florida City individuals with intellectual and development disabilities – $15,000
- **Domestic Abuse Shelter** – Prevention programs for Upper Keys youth and training for key providers of youth services – $10,000
- **Faith Church of the Redlands School** – New desks for middle and high school classrooms for special needs students – $5,640
- **Family Central** – Expansion of the Benefits Enrollment Program to support vulnerable families in Homestead and Florida City – $25,000
- **Feeding South Florida** – Food delivery and distribution to six partner pantries in Homestead, Florida City and the Upper Keys – $120,803
- **Year-round “Backpack” weekend meals for disadvantaged children in the Upper Keys pre-schools** – $10,816
- **Florida Impact to End Hunger** – Creation of the Homestead Food Access Coalition in alliance with Baptist Homestead Hospital and the City of Homestead to address root causes of food insecurity, poor nutrition and untapped federal food programs – $22,676
- **Florida Keys Area Health Education** – In-school primary medical services program at Key Largo School and Coral Shores High School – $25,000
- **Florida Keys Children’s Shelter** – Recreation, Life Skills and Education Coaching Programs – $50,000
- **Florida Keys Foster Care** – Emergency assistance to foster parents – $10,000
- **Adoptive Parents Association** – Unfunded needs for children in Foster Care in the Upper Keys – $15,000
- **Florida Keys Healthy Start Coalition** – Upper Keys Child Safety Equipment, Early Childhood Education and Prenatal/Postpartum Support programs – $32,000
- **Florida Keys Outreach Coalition** – Quick Assist program to prevent homelessness – $7,500
- **Genesis Hopeful Haven** – Housing solutions for Homestead/Florida City youth aging out of foster care – $42,000
- **Good Health Clinic** – Program to donated medications through pharmaceutical assistance program, national aggregate supplies and discounted distributor rates – $8,128
- **Greater Miami Youth for Christ** – Teen Indigenous Leaders development and employment mentoring program at West Homestead KIX – $41,000
- **Greater Miami Youth Symphony** – Music lessons program at schools in Homestead/Florida City – $7,500
- **Guidance/Care Center** – Computerized assessment tool for diagnosing ADHD in children and adults in the Upper Keys – $14,790
- **Guitars Over Guns Organization** – Music instruction programs and mentors for at-risk Homestead/Florida City youth – $25,000
- **Habitat for Humanity of the Upper Keys** – Towards building two of four affordable housing units at Key Heights in Islamorada – $50,000
- **Health Information Project** – Peer-to-peer, comprehensive Health Education Program at four Homestead High Schools – $25,000
- **ICU Baby** – Transportation Assistance Support to enable Upper Keys and Homestead/Florida City families to visit their babies in NICU in Miami hospitals – $15,180
- **Jacobs Aquatic Center** – Renovation to meet accessibility requirements for handicapped patients – $15,000
- **Kids On The Move** – After school and summer programs for at-risk children in Homestead/Florida City – $25,000
- **KinderCare Learning Centers** – Classroom renovation grants to Homestead/Florida City day care centers – $25,000
- **Lighthouse Training Academy** – Fundraising for new head start classroom – $25,000
- **Literacy Matters** – Reading intervention for at-risk upper Keys students – $25,000
- **Lynx Transportation** – Van service for homeless veterans – $25,000
- **Maternal and Infant Health Services** – A program to support new mothers and their babies in Homestead and Florida City – $10,000
- **Medical Action Center** – The only women’s health center in Homestead – $25,000
- **Miami-Dade County Public Schools** – Special education technology equipment – $25,000
- **Miami-Dade Fire Rescue** – Project to equip fire trucks with 911 emergency calling systems – $25,000
- **My Neighbor** – Food delivery for seniors in Homestead and Florida City – $24,880
- **National Breast Cancer Foundation** – Breast Cancer awareness – $25,000
- **New Horizons** – Preventing childhood obesity in Homestead/Florida City schools – $25,000
- **Our Lady of the Winter Keys** – After school/summer/fin de semestres programs for at-risk children in Homestead – $25,000
- **Pieter Beekman Foundation** – Hurricane recovery – $25,000
- **Polaris Foundation** – Sponsored children in Cuba – $25,000
- **Plantation Next Generation** – Uplifts the Feast of the Assumption diocese – $25,000
- **Plantation School of the Arts** – Special education programs – $25,000
- **Police Athletic League** – Police mentees in Homestead and Florida City schools – $25,000
- **Project Smile** – Mobile dental unit visits to the Upper Keys, Homestead and Florida City – $40,000
- **Providing Options for Autism** – Provides autism spectrum diagnostic work up – $25,000
- **Recreation Center** – Construction and renovation – $25,000
- **Rear Window** – A new spay/neuter clinic in Homestead/Florida City – $25,000
- **R Street School** – Special education program – $25,000
- **Safety Village** – A new safety village in Homestead – $25,000
- **Seminole Gulf Railway** – Restoration of the historical train in Homestead – $25,000
- **Standing Tall Program** – Stabilization for veterans in Homestead/Florida City – $25,000
- **Stonebridge Elementary School** – Special education programs – $25,000
- **Surfside Girls Club** – Support for at-risk children – $25,000
- **Tax Preparation/VITA and Savings Champion program for families** – $25,000
- **Teens in Paradise** – Youth mentoring program – $25,000
- **Upper Keys Boys and Girls Club** – Youth Mentoring programs – $25,000
- **Upper Keys Community Action Program** – assists seniors and individuals with limited incomes – $25,000
- **Upper Keys Democratic Club** – Hurricane Harvey recovery – $25,000
- **Upper Keys United** – Fundraising for new R Street School – $25,000
- **Upper Keys Veterans Commission** – Veterans programming – $25,000
- **Victorian Children’s Home** – A non-profit residential children’s home – $25,000
- **Ward Key Reading Center** – Reading instruction for children in Homestead and Florida City – $25,000
- **Western Homestead Community Foundation** – A program to support seniors – $25,000
- **Wings of Hope** – Fundraising for women in need – $25,000
- **Wood Haven School** – Special education programs – $25,000
Key Largo Summer Camp

Homestead Afterschool Program at the Homestead Police

• ProjectArt – Youth art education program at the Homestead Public Library – $5,000
• Redlands Christian Migrants Association – Replacement of unsafe, failing playground equipment – $12,500 (MATCH REQUIRED)
• South Florida Council of Boy Scouts – Scouting expenses for disadvantaged youth in the Homestead area – $20,000
• South Florida Science Center & Aquarium – Bringing the Science Passport educational program to Title 1 elementary schools in Homestead/Florida City and the Upper Keys – $25,000
• Special Olympics Florida Monroe County – Programs to serve 284 Upper Keys individuals with intellectual disabilities – $18,000
• St. John’s Episcopal School – 25 laptops for Coding & Computer Engineering Program – $6,225
• St. Justin Martyr Catholic Church – Replacement of school’s failing decking, stairs and fencing for safety – $11,350
• Star of the Sea Outreach Mission – Upper Keys Hunger Relief Program – $36,000
• Start Off Smart
  • Homestead Police Department “See Something, Say Something” Youth Community Service Campaign – $19,902
  • Two Police Academy Scholarships for locals committed to serving in the Homestead Police Department – $15,000
• Take Stock in Children
  • College scholarships (matched by the Florida Pre-Paid College Foundation) for Upper Keys youth mentoring program – $75,000
• The ARC of South Florida
  • Roof repairs, ramps and turf projects at three Homestead/Florida City school facilities – $17,881
• The Children’s Alliance
  • Clothing & Resource Hub Trailer for Families in Need – $20,000 (MATCH REQUIRED)
• The College of the Florida Keys – COVID-related Financial & Academic Student Support – $60,000
• The Motivational Edge – The Transition to Adulthood Program for Homestead youth aging out of foster care – $10,000
• Three Virtues Organization – Freezer and used box truck to increase capacity of Homestead food pantry – $13,292
• TIPS – Florida Keys Youth Basketball League – $6,000
• Touching Miami with Love
  • (West Homestead Site)
  • Youth Development Job Training Program – $25,000
• USCG Auxiliary Flotilla 13-04 – Maintenance of the flotilla vessel – $8,000
• United Way of the Florida Keys – Expansion of the Early Literacy Program to the Upper Keys to an additional 60 pre-school children – $9,000
• VOICES for Florida Keys Children – Children’s Welfare Program to assist families through the 16th Judicial Court Guardian Ad Litem – $7,500
• Wellspring Counseling

– Bathroom updates and ADA Chair Lift at Key Largo Community Pool – $15,000

• Key Largo School
  • AVID college readiness program, college trips and teacher training – $9,700
  • Transportation for the 5th grade class to participate in the Arts & Learning Through the Arts performance – $1,000

• Kids 4 Kids USA – Red Cross Certified Water Safety/Swim Program for youth with special needs – $5,950

• Kids Come First in the Florida Keys – School supplies, basic and seasonal needs for disadvantaged Upper Keys youth – $7,500

• Kristi House – Emergency Client Needs and establishment of Homestead Drop-In Center for Trafficked Kids – $19,500

• MARC House – Materials and furniture to outfit an outdoor space for the Monroe Association of RemARCable Citizens Upper Keys Group Home – $5,000

• Mexican American Council
  • College & Career Readiness Program for seniors from families of farm workers at Homestead high schools – $26,750

• Miami Dade College – “New Normal” Hospitality Training Program at the Homestead Campus – $42,500 (MATCH REQUIRED)

• Miami Lighthouse for the Blind – Children’s Vision Program for 800 in both service areas – $10,000

• MUJER – Breaking the Secret Workshops w/ University of Miami and follow up therapy for 40+ abused children – $48,316

• Ocean Studies (Public)
  • Charter School – Flying Start to Literacy program to help close the “learning loss gap” for students behind due to the pandemic – $14,625

• PATCHES PPEC – Taking Medical Records of Pediatric Daycare from paper to digital for efficiency and cost savings – $32,59 (MATCH REQUIRED)

• ProjectArt – Youth art education program at the

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