



Town of Palm Beach United Way

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Town of Palm Beach United Way welcomes Boca Helping Hands and Project LIFT as new partner agencies

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The Town of Palm Beach United Way is honored to announce the addition of two new nonprofit agencies to its list of member organizations: Project LIFT and Boca Helping Hands. Members of the Board of Trustees will welcome the agencies and hear from their executive directors at a meeting on March 11.

Boca Helping Hands provides basic needs such as food, medical and financial assistance, and also provides education, job training and guidance to help individuals become self-sufficient. Project LIFT improves the lives of at-risk teens and their families through substance abuse treatment, mental health counselling, mentoring and vocational skills training. Boca Helping Hands is based in Boca Raton and Project LIFT is located in Belle Glade.

“Both agencies are doing incredible work and supporting individuals and families in some very underserved parts of our county,” said Board Chairman Mary Freitas. “We welcome them to the United Way and look forward to helping them succeed in changing lives and creating lasting impact in our community.”

The Town of Palm Beach United Way opens its new agency application process each year to established health and human service nonprofit organizations in Palm Beach County. It is an extensive review process that involves strict qualifications, multiple interviews and thorough evaluation by experienced Town of Palm Beach United Way volunteers.

Once an agency becomes a partner it can apply for program funding through the Town of Palm Beach United Way’s grant allocation process. Since 2017, 32 agencies have applied for membership and three have been accepted.

“It’s an extremely thorough review process that we’re very proud of,” said Joyce Reingold, a General Chairman of the Allocation Committee in charge of reviewing applications. “We can guarantee donors that their dollars are going to well-vetted organizations with proven track records of solving unmet needs in our community and supporting residents who need it most.”

Founded as a modest soup kitchen in 1998, Boca Helping Hands has since transformed to offer a broad array of wraparound services focused on meeting the needs of the less fortunate in our community. The agency’s food programs, resource center, job training and mentoring programs serve more than 27,000 clients annually, improving their lives by providing the resources necessary to get back on their feet and gain self-sufficiency.

“Boca Helping Hands (BHH) is deeply honored to be selected as a partner agency of the Town of Palm Beach United Way,” said Executive Director Greg Hazle. “This new partnership is a fitting reflection of how BHH services have been steadily expanding northward from our base in Boca Raton and are now available to many families in northern Palm Beach County. We are hopeful that this relationship will be of great value as we seek opportunities to enhance the scope, reach and impact of the various BHH programs.”

Project LIFT (Life Initiatives for Teens) began in March 2010 when licensed psychotherapist Bob Zaccheo recognized the key to success when counseling teenage boys on substance abuse was to get them out of the office and provide incentives to keep them motivated toward life improvement. He rented a nearby garage and invited teens to participate in an intensive

14-week session combining vocational skills training, substance abuse treatment, group and individual mental health therapy and mentoring. The Glades area program now serves more than 150 at-risk teens each year.

"We are truly honored to be considered a premier program of the Palm Beaches, and we are grateful to the volunteers of the Town of Palm Beach United Way for taking the time to make sure we were a strong fit for the organization's high standards," said CEO Bob Zaccheo. "After committing to stay open during COVID to respond to increased mental health needs, our capacity increased by 41%. As a Town of Palm Beach United Way partner agency, we are now better equipped to meet this increased and ongoing need for at-risk youth in the Glades area."

The Town of Palm Beach United Way has a total of 47 partner agencies. Currently, 469,780 individuals are receiving help through Town of Palm Beach United Way funded programs.

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