



"Women are stronger together!"

August 2026 Newsletter

THE GRANT REVIEW PROCESS IS IN FULL SWING!

A total of 25 Letters of Intent were filed with the Community Foundation by the deadline. Each letter was carefully reviewed and assessed by each of the twelve members of the Grant Review committee: Cris Adams, Michele Buldo, Carol DeLoach, Lisa Derryberry, Lisa Floyd, Mary Jane Hopkins, Marsha Jones, Merilee Landrigan, Janet Maffucci, Kathy Sanders, Diane Stark-Kennedy and Lillian Torres-Martinez. On Wednesday, July 29th, under the direction of Ellie Gundrania of The Community Foundation, the twelve women met to discuss their rankings and decide which agencies would be asked to complete a full application. Eleven agencies were moved to the next level and will need to submit their applications by August 24th. The applications will be made available to the committee members on August 26th and our ratings will be due on September 14th. On September 16th, the committee will again meet to discuss their ratings and decide which agencies will become semi-finalists. Since this will not happen until mid-September, there will be no update in the September newsletter.

A NOTE FROM THE MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Hello, everyone! We, the Membership Committee, would love to give you an update. Janet has now passed the reins to myself (Veronica Montoya) and Merilee Landrigan as co-chairs. Together with a great team which includes Laurene McEneny, Janet Maffucci and Paulina Reddy, we hope to continue to grow and reach a higher membership in order to impact many more persons in St. Lucie County.

If you have input for our team or would like to participate in any committee, we would love to hear from you! Our ambassadors, who are an extension of our Membership Committee, will be reaching out to our membership in the near future. Our focus will be to stay connected with those of you who are not able to attend events so that everyone knows that she is an important part of our chapter.

Thank you to our ambassadors who have agreed to participate. Those ladies are Becky Fisher, Merilee Landrigan, Jane Bachelor-Ladefian, Linda Chastain, Gwen Cunningham, Binnie Luciano and Diane Leary. Be sure to thank them when you hear from them!

Addendum from Janet Maffucci:

Our membership drive for 2026 officially ended on June 30th. However, some additional renewals are still arriving. We are expecting our current membership total for 2026 to be 116, once all the funds are received. We are delighted to add the additional 15 members to our roster this year and hope to add even more next year. Please remember to tell your friends and family members about us. It is the only way that we will increase our membership. (My apologies for misspeaking on Thursday night. One of our members was inadvertently counted twice.)

SOCIAL COMMITTEE UPDATES

On Thursday, July 30th, about 45 members and guests enjoyed a fun-filled evening at Dave and Buster's! Our Christmas in July event recognized Little Birthday Angels, a local non-profit that provides birthday presents to homeless children. At least three large boxes of toys, hygiene products, Amazon gift cards and cash were donated by our attendees! We enjoyed great food and drink and excellent service and companionship, making new friends along the way. The highlight of the evening was the five Bingo games with the winners taking home cash prizes of \$30, \$40, \$50, \$70 and \$100! We had a lovely silent auction with gorgeous options for the lucky winners. This was a great kick-start to 2027 for Impact100 St. Lucie!



Check out "Reels" on our Facebook page for a video and look for our pictures.

The long, dog days of summer are here. We are taking a break in August but hope to have news of a social in September. TBA..

Save the dates!

OCTOBER 24 is our Annual Grant Celebration! We wait all year for this opportunity to vote and make a difference for one local nonprofit with a \$100,000

grant. Our keynote address this year will be given by Wendy Steele, the founder and developer of the Impact 100 model. Please put the date on your calendar now! More information will follow in October.

On DECEMBER 4th, at 11:30, we will enjoy our holiday luncheon at Casa Pasta in Fort Pierce.

Would you like to join the Social/Events Committee? If you have ideas, suggestions or want to help, call Diane Stark-Kennedy at 772-979-0903. This is a fun way to get to know other Impact100 St. Lucie members.

GIVE BACK SATURDAYS

On July 11th, our Give Back Saturday took us to the Treasure Coast Food Bank to sort a variety of household products into bins. Thank you to Ellen Contreras, Sue Roberto-Lawson, Diane Stark-Kennedy, Gwen Cunningham, Laura Stanton, Judy Salmon, Valerie Hellriegel, Diane Leary, Merilee Landrigan, and Ruth Stromak for participating.



Coming up on August 8th is our Give Back Saturday at Mustard Seed Thrift Shop in Fort Pierce. Please contact Ruth Stromak at rstromak48@gmail.com if you would like to participate.

Please also save the dates for the upcoming volunteer opportunities:

September 5th Up Center

October 17th Heathcote Botanical Gardens

November 14th Graceway Village

MEMBER HIGHLIGHTS



Ellen Contreras

We asked Ellen Contreras, our social media maven, to introduce herself to all of you. We hope that you enjoy finding out about her.

I was born and raised on Long Island and lived in Amityville - yes ,the town with "the house" and I lived in the same neighborhood. I graduated as valedictorian and summa cum laude with a degree in Computer Information Systems from Briarcliff College. I moved to Dania Beach in 2001 and promptly went through the "Floridafication" process which toned the "New York" right out of me!

I ended up in Vero Beach in 2008 to be closer to my mom to help her through some health issues and, since Vero is known as "Velcro Beach", I fell in love with the area and never moved back down to Broward. It was also because I met and married Omar in 2011 after being labeled the runaway bride in my 20s and 30s. I guess that label is appropriate because I kept returning diamond rings during that time...three times!

For a while, I attended Give Back Saturdays before officially becoming a member of Impact 100 St. Lucie. I've always believed in lending a hand to help nonprofits accomplish important projects and tasks. Many operate with a small staff because

labor is one of their largest expenses, which means volunteer support can make an enormous difference.

Because I live in Vero Beach, more than one person has asked why I chose to become involved with Impact 100 St. Lucie. The answer is simple. My work spans the entire Treasure Coast, and I wanted to put my efforts here. Impact 100 Indian River has more than 500 members, while Impact 100 St. Lucie currently has just over 100. I wanted to bring my time, experience and enthusiasm to a chapter where I could help build momentum.

Collectively, the members are already doing a wonderful job encouraging others to join, and I'm hopeful that the social media content I create will help introduce even more people to our mission. Wouldn't it be fantastic to see Impact 100 St. Lucie one day reach membership levels like the Indian River chapter? Just imagine how many more local nonprofits we could support and how much greater our collective impact could be!

I've already created a list of content ideas designed to generate excitement and encourage people to learn more about Impact 100 St. Lucie. There is also one simple way every member on Facebook can help: invite your friends to follow our page.

Visit [Facebook.com/Impact100StLucie](https://www.facebook.com/Impact100StLucie) and look for the ellipsis (...) on the right side of the page. Click it, select "Invite Friends" from the menu, and then choose "Select All." Your friends will receive a notification inviting them to follow the page. This small action can go a long way toward increasing our reach, helping the Facebook algorithm, and perhaps even inspiring future members to join.

Very soon, you'll also see video clips featuring Janet and me during a taping of my iHeart radio and podcast talk show, Treasure Coast Connector. For more than seven years, I've had the pleasure of interviewing local business owners, nonprofit directors, community leaders, and other fascinating people from across the region. The show airs on 107.9 FM and 1370 AM WCZR on Saturdays and Sundays at 3 p.m. and is also available on all major podcast platforms.

When I'm not taping my show or helping small businesses with marketing and sales communications, you can usually find me at home being entertained by my two capricious cats, Mr. Skitters and Princess Nola. I'm also their social media

manager so, if adorable cat shenanigans are your thing, you can follow them on Instagram at @The_Contreras_Cats.

I look forward to meeting more of our members, whether it's at an upcoming social or while working side by side during a Give Back Saturday. I'm excited to be part of Impact 100 St. Lucie and to help share the incredible difference we can make together.

Be sure to visit our website (www.impact100slc.org) and our Facebook page.

Impact 100 St. Lucie Executive Committee Members

Cris Adams, Secretary
Gwen Cunningham, Treasurer
Marsha Jones
Janet Maffucci, President ♦mrsjfooch@gmail.com ♦914-424-6728
Veronica Montoya
Judy Salmon
Rene Smith
Diane Stark-Kennedy
Ruth Stromak
Dr. Lillian Torres-Martinez
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