

*The
2015*

WOMEN
OF
INITIATIVE

an èBella exclusive



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Women Working to Impact Women

The Women's Initiative Network of the Community Foundation of Collier County is making a major impact in the lives of local at-risk women and girls.



THE WOMEN'S INITIATIVE
OF THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF COLLIER COUNTY
Investing in the Potential of Women and Girls

To serve the current and changing needs of at-risk women and girls in Collier County through grantmaking—that is the powerful mission of the Women's Initiative Network, a field-of-interest fund held at the Community Foundation of Collier County.

"Women's funds appear in many settings—public charities, private foundations and funds within community foundations like ours," says Eileen Connolly Keesler, president/CEO of the Community Foundation. "The good news? Surveys reveal that funding for women and girls by the broader foundation community has grown at a faster rate than foundation giving on the whole."

But, as a share of overall foundation giving, Connolly-Keesler notes that funding for women and girls has remained below 7.5 percent for more than 15 years—a shockingly low number. Our interpretation: Funders are aware of the potential for change by investing in women, but awareness that sparks giving must be intensified.

AT-RISK WOMEN AND GIRLS IN COLLIER COUNTY

Here is a snapshot of statistics from Women in America and the Community Foundation's 2014 Vital Signs Report:

Human Trafficking: The U.S. Department of State estimates that 600,000 to 800,000 people—mostly women and children—are

trafficked across national borders each year. Florida ranks No. 3 for reported human trafficking cases.

Poverty: Women are more likely than men to be in poverty. Since 1966, poverty rates for unmarried female householders with children has been consistently two to three times higher than overall male and female poverty rates. In Collier County, there was a dramatic increase in the number of female-headed households in poverty between 2010 and 2013—higher than Florida or national rates. A higher percentage of public school children K-12 are eligible for free and reduced lunch compared to the state's average of 45.58 percent.

Seniors: Almost 11 percent of women age 65 and older are poor, compared to 7 percent of men age 65 and older. Poverty rates among older women in general have soared in the past few years. For women living alone, that number was 4.7 percent compared to 3.6 percent in 2011—an 18 percent uptick in one year. In Collier County, there were 12,769 women living alone compared to 5,851 men in 2011. ❁

Craig Jones is the director of marketing for the Community Foundation of Collier County and believes strongly in creating opportunities for women and girls to triumph in work, school and life.

Champion of Causes

BETTE AYMAR'S PHILANTHROPIC ENTHUSIASM INFLUENCES A HOST OF CHARITIES.



It's been a little more than a decade since Bette Aymar moved to Naples. In that time, she has worked with Conservancy of Southwest Florida, Fun Time Early Childhood Academy, League Club, Naples Winter Wine Festival, Shelter for Abused Women and Children, Community Foundation of Collier County, Naples Zoo, and many other organizations. Her involvement takes the shape of volunteering, securing donations and serving on committees.

If you could only choose one charity, what criteria would be important to you in making that decision? Great causes attract great people. Great people create great organizations. My one charity would have all three and, most important, would give me the opportunity to make a difference.

What difference do you want to make in this community? I want to help pass on the organizations that are important to me in better shape than when I got here.

What do you appreciate more as you age? Quite simply, Naples. We didn't know a soul when we moved here. The future was unknown. We gambled...and we won. The opportunities are endless, and I appreciate them more every day in paradise.

What flaw would you not change about yourself? Flaw? Well, I just can't say NO. Sure, I'm overextended, but there's important work to be done, right? When do I start? ❁

fun facts

What is your favorite morning ritual?

Going for a five-mile walk and then a cup of coffee

What's your guilty pleasure?

Chocolate and "Dancing With the Stars"

Divulge one thing about you that most people wouldn't know.

I would have loved to be a dancer like Gene Kelly and Fred Astaire. As a child, I used to jump off the couches in my home like they did—off the wall.

Philanthropic Fashionista

KIRSTEN FERRARA EMBRACES THE BEST OF CLOTHING, FINE ACCESSORIES AND CHARITY.



As the owner of Heart and Soul Boutique, Kirsten Ferrara puts her own heart and soul into both her business and philanthropy—frequently blending the two. Along with her staff, she supports the Shelter for Abused Women and Children, taking part in several events. She has also been involved with Cancer Alliance Naples, Golisano Children’s Museum of Naples, American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, NCH’s Magnolia Ball, Humane Society Naples and the Naples Winter Wine Festival.

If you could only choose one charity, what criteria would be important to you in making that decision? It must be lifesaving to the recipient person or animal.

What do you appreciate more as you age? I have become more sensitive to and aware of the needs of others.

What flaw would you not change about yourself? My Sicilian passion—I love having it and taking it with me through life, but it can get me into trouble.

How do you conquer worry and fear? With my strong religious upbringing. I believe in a higher power that will help me to overcome. ✿

What’s your guilty pleasure?

A small cheeseburger from Burger King and then across the street to Grace and Shelly’s Cupcakes at Mercato. The chocolate-covered pretzel is my favorite.

Name three things in the bottom of your purse.

My cordless portable battery charger, tinted blue sunglasses, and the emergency money that I pretend to forget about until I need it

Originally from? New York, N.Y.

What was your first volunteering gig?

As a teenager, serving meals to the homeless as often as I could, but especially on holidays. I loved making them smile.

fun facts

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