

# The Naples 100

● CIVIC ADVOCACY



**MARY BETH GEIER**

Florida Director and Senior Program Officer  
Richard M. Schulze Family Foundation

Mary Beth Geier is responsible for the Richard M. Schulze Family Foundation's Southwest Florida areas of interest in grantmaking and community initiatives: human and social services, education, including college and early learning scholarship awards, and health and medicine. Prior to joining the foundation, Geier was the assistant principal of a parochial school in north central Florida. She serves on several local boards, including Champions For Learning; Florida Gulf Coast University Foundation; and the Greater Naples Chamber of Commerce.

**EDUCATION:** Florida Gulf Coast University (MEd)

**WHY I CHOSE THIS FIELD:** Working in service of others is the most gratifying feeling in the world. Knowing that, through my work and partnering with others, I can make our community a little better is the reason I do the work I do!

**HOBBIES:** Reading a book (with a glass of wine while sitting outside in the fresh air)

**FAVORITE COLLIER COUNTY RESTAURANT:** Caffé Milano

**FAVORITE TRAVEL DESTINATION:** San Juan Islands, Pacific Northwest

**BUCKET LIST:** Traveling to Greece (I crossed paragliding off my list two years ago.)



**MARIA JIMENEZ-LARA**

CEO  
Naples Children & Education Foundation

Maria Jimenez-Lara has been the CEO of Naples Children & Education Foundation (NCEF) since 2015. She previously served as director of foundation services and grants director for NCEF, responsible for overseeing the charitable grant process in conjunction with the Grant Committee. Jimenez-Lara's commitment to safeguarding the community's most vulnerable is a natural fit with NCEF's mission to support charitable programs that improve the physical, emotional, and educational lives of underprivileged and at-risk children in Collier County.

**EDUCATION:** Hodges University (MPA)

**NOTABLE ACCOMPLISHMENTS:** Champions For Learning Community Advisory Committee; District XI Juvenile Justice Board; Champions For Learning 2015-2016 "Education Champion"; *El Nuevo Miami Herald's* "Rising Latino Leader"; Lifetime Achievement Award, Homestead, Fla.; Rural Neighborhoods of Florida board member

**FIRST JOB:** Working with children in gangs on the streets of Miami

**FEW PEOPLE KNOW:** Everglades City was my home in Collier County for many years and I miss it terribly.

**FAVORITE COLLIER COUNTY SPOT:** Immokalee Farmers Market



**LISA B. LEFKOW**

CEO  
Habitat for Humanity of Collier County

Ordained in the United Methodist Church, Rev. Lisa Lefkow serves Cornerstone United Methodist Church as well as Habitat for Humanity. In ministry since 1980, she has led mission teams into impoverished areas. Habitat for Humanity of Collier County is one of the oldest and largest-producing affiliates in the United States and has been rated No. 1 nationally for community and housing development. More than 2,300 local families have purchased Habitat Collier homes through the past 42 years.

**EDUCATION:** Centenary College of Louisiana, United Theological Seminary

**LESSON LEARNED:** After a serious accident while he was in Washington, D.C. and I was in Miami, my husband was on life-support. I wasn't sure I'd see him again and had to "let him go." It was the most important lesson I've learned: never to take a single moment for granted and to remember that I am not in charge.

**BUCKET LIST:** After celebrating the weddings of our two children last year, we look forward to welcoming our first grandbabies. Moving into this chapter of helping to shape the next generation is a great joy.



**LINDA A. OBERHAUS**

CEO  
The Shelter for Abused Women & Children

Linda Oberhaus got her start as a lifelong advocate for vulnerable populations as a peer counselor in high school. For more than 30 years, she has worked in social justice and increasing civility in the public discourse, while ensuring every community member has a voice at the table. She has furthered her education with courses at Harvard Business School and the FBI Citizen's Academy. Her work has led to her becoming a certified auxiliary deputy with the Collier County Sheriff's Office so that she can directly assist victims of abuse and human trafficking.

**EDUCATION:** University of South Florida (MSW)

**HOMETOWN:** Boston, Massachusetts

**FUNNIEST WORKPLACE EXPERIENCE:** Stepping on the podium, notes in hand, and no reading glasses

**BEST ADVICE:** From the best grandmother ever: "Stay in school."

**SECRET TO SUCCESS:** Embracing a servant/leadership philosophy

**LESSON LEARNED:** You can learn as much from a poor leader as you can from a great one.

**FAVORITE MOVIE:** *The Pursuit of Happyness*

**FAVORITE BOOK:** *Man's Search for Meaning* by Viktor E. Frankl

**ADVICE TO 18-YEAR-OLD SELF:** Relax, you're going to be fine. Really...

## Tapestry of Talent

Whittling *The Naples 100* down to that number is a true challenge given the robust talent landscape of Collier County. Space limitations leave little room to highlight both young and minority professionals that deserve a place in the spotlight. Meet a small sampling of the bright ones to watch who are adding diversity and vibrancy to the local workforce.

### **BRYCE ALEXANDER**

**Executive Artistic Director**

#### **The Naples Players at Sugden Community Theatre**

Bryce Alexander relocated in 2016 from Colorado—where he was the artistic director of a theater comprised of professional actors with disabilities—to take the helm of The Naples Players, one of the nation's top community theaters that's now celebrating its 68th season.



### **ALEJANDRO CASTANO**

**Vice President, Marketing**

#### **Greater Naples Chamber of Commerce**

A Lely High School graduate, Alejandro Castano earned his Master of Business Administration from Wisconsin School of Business. He arrived at the Naples Chamber in February 2020 with 15 years of experience in brand management, leadership, development, and marketing. He is an assistant wrestling coach at Barron Collier High School.



### **LEEZA ARKHANGELSKAYA**

**Owner**

#### **East West Fine Art**

Leeza Arkhangelskaya opened East West Fine Art in Mercato in 2000 with her mother Olga. In 2013, the mother-daughter duo launched an initiative to establish the Russian-American Museum of Art locally. Arkhangelskaya gives presentations on Russian art topics to community groups and is a Leadership Collier Foundation graduate.



### **MACKINDY DIEU**

**Acute Care Administrative Supervisor**

#### **David Lawrence Centers (DLC)**

#### **for Behavioral Health**

Mackindy Dieu works with children and adults in crisis in the inpatient crisis stabilization and detoxification units at DLC. He is involved with the Naples Therapeutic Riding Center and The Shelter for Abused Women & Children.



### **LAURA BIDIREANU**

**Director of Education/Scholarships**

#### **Community Foundation of Collier County**

Laura Bidireanu has a master's in public administration with a concentration in public leadership and management from Florida Gulf Coast University and is dedicated to the nonprofit sector in Collier County, where she volunteers at St. Matthew's House and Grace Place for Children and Families.



### **ALINA DONAHUE**

**Human Trafficking Specialist**

#### **The Shelter for Abused Women & Children**

Alina Donahue is a certified human trafficking specialist and a co-creator of The Shelly Stayer Shelter's 18-month human trafficking residential program.

She provides adult survivors of sex trafficking with the intensive therapeutic services needed to heal and regain independence.

