

South Florida companies step up to help community with COVID-19 fallout



Those of us who work in South Florida know firsthand of the many winning executives and companies that routinely contribute to the region's nonprofits and charitable organizations.

In fact, philanthropy and community involvement is an important trait considered for many *Business Journal* honors and awards as we believe in the importance of businesses giving back to the communities they serve.

And I'm happy to say that the South Florida business community is known for supporting countless charities and for stepping up to the plate to help individuals, businesses and nonprofits.

This couldn't be more evident today as the Sunshine State – and the world – grapples with battling the spread of the novel coronavirus.

In just a few short weeks, this pandemic has already taken its toll, with many business owners

forced to let go of beloved employees to remain afloat and others wondering if their businesses will even make it through this challenging period.

But nary a day goes by without our editorial team learning of tri-county region businesses involved in charitable efforts to help those most impacted by this health scourge.

As journalists, it's rewarding to see how so many businesses are aiding others during this time of great uncertainty. It speaks to our business community's charitable spirit and resiliency.

And while it isn't humanly possible for us to write about all of these efforts, we've created this feature to encourage our readers to share how their companies are helping improve the lives of others during these disconcerting times.

Listed below are some recent examples of the ways our companies are making a difference.

Recent charitable efforts include:

- **The Knight Foundation** recently announced its contributing \$450,000 to **United Way Miami's** "Operation Helping Hands," \$250,000 to **The Miami Foundation Community Recovery Fund** and \$800,000 to the **Community Foundation for Palm Beach and Martin Counties COVID-19 Response Fund**. [Click here to learn more.](#)
- **NBCUniversal Telemundo Enterprises** announced April 1 it has launched "Nuestros Negocios" ("Our Businesses"), a nationwide campaign under its social responsibility platform "El Poder En Ti" (The Power in You). A partnership with the **U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce**, the multiplatform campaign will tap into Telemundo's network, local stations, digital and social platforms to spotlight small and medium-sized Hispanic-owned businesses impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and help promote their services. It will also provide resources to businesses in English or Spanish, including guidance on the latest government assistance programs. [Click here for details.](#)
- Health insurer **Florida Blue** announced April 1 that it will double the company's match to United Way on all employee contributions made during its 2020 employee giving campaign, to provide additional support in communities across Florida and the United States in response to urgent needs around the COVID-19 public health crisis. The company will match \$2 for every \$1 donated to the employee's local United Way impact fund.
- **Barry University** announced March 30 it will allow 17 students graduating in May from its College of Nursing and Health Sciences Cardiovascular Perfusion Program to graduate on April 11 in response to the dire need for health workers helping to battle the health pandemic. [Click here for more details.](#)

- **OrthoSpine Partners** in Scottsdale has teamed up with Weston-based **Swift Response** to help protect the nation's first responders. OrthoSpine announced April 1 that a donation from Swift Response will go toward the production of a life-saving device known as the Intubation Box. More than 100 boxes will be distributed across the U.S. this week alone, it said. [Click here for more details.](#)
- The **Miami Downtown Development Authority (DDA)** recently launched its "Go Local, Go Direct" campaign. The campaign offers discounts of 10% or more on delivery orders placed directly from dozens of downtown eateries and provides participating restaurants with targeted digital, social media, and email marketing services to reach the DDA's network of over 100,000 people. [Click here for more details.](#)
- Boca Raton-based **Rocket Matter** recently announced **Rocket Aid**, a virtual conference for lawyers on how to connect during this period of social distancing. The conference, which streams live April 16 & 17 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., costs \$25. Participants registration costs will be donated in full to **United Way's** COVID-19 Fund, **Pro Bono Net** and **Feeding America**, Rocket Matter said. [Click here for details.](#)
- **Baptist Health** recently announced its offering free online urgent care visits for a limited time for those experiencing cold or flu-like symptoms using the code CARE19. Users can access the service 24/7 on demand using the code CARE19 after downloading the app on their phones, tablets or computers. [Click here for details.](#)
- The **Greater Miami Convention and Visitors Bureau** has launching **Miami Eats - Order Out** to help restaurants and their employees by asking residents to consider ordering out when possible while taking advantage of some great deals. [Click here for details.](#)
- Fort Lauderdale's restaurant community, including **Old School Hospitality**, **Shooters Waterfront** and others, has launched a GoFundMe fundraiser called "**Hands for Hospitality**," to provide financial support to hourly workers furloughed or unemployed due to restaurant shut downs or limited service during the coronavirus pandemic. [Click here for details or to contribute to the fund.](#)
- New co-working space **Thynk Global** in Miami is offering rent-free work spaces to entrepreneurs displaced by coronavirus. They'll also be offering a series of free workshops to help them get back on their feet, including financial planning, marketing and public relations. [Click here to learn more about the company.](#)
- **Feeding South Florida** is looking for volunteers, sanitation and cleaning supplies and monetary donations to assist with COVID-19 relief efforts across South Florida. On March 31, the nonprofit distributed fresh produce, protein, dairy and shelf-stable items to 500 families in Lake Worth. Another 500 families will receive packages April 1 in Delray Beach, and another 500 are scheduled for April 2 in Boynton Beach. [Click here for details on food](#)

distributions and donations.

- **Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital Foundation** staffers recently shared food staples to its frontline workers as part of the **Anthony Rizzo Family Foundation's** recent efforts to aid hospital workers. **(See attached photos.)** The Rizzo foundation distributed more than 800 meals to healthcare workers at Joe Dimaggio's in Hollywood and at Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital and Advocate Illinois Masonic **Meunkin' Joy in Childhood Foundation** recently awarded an emergency grant of \$10,000 for **Feeding South Florida**. It's one of hundreds of grants awarded nationwide by the group to help communities during this time of need, the foundation said. [Click here to learn more.](#)

- After Miami Beach ordered hotels to shutter to battle the spread of COVID-19, the **Shelborne South Beach** hotel donated more than 400 pounds of dairy, proteins and bakery items to **Feeding South Florida**, which distributed more than 62 million pounds of food to over 700,000 South Floridians in 2019.

- Miami-based **Red Rooster Overtown** has partnered with **World Central Kitchen** and **Food Rescue US** to offer to-go meals. Launched March 27, the partnership will offer packaged to-go meals on M. On March 28, the **Fort Lauderdale Country Club** in Plantation will provide essentials in demand during the coronavirus crisis to its senior members 65 or older. Products include paper goods, cleaning items, food, and more. Call 954-587-4700 to preorder packets and visit www.fortlauderdalecc.com for details.

- **The Wells Fargo Foundation** will donate \$45,000 to **United Way of Broward County** and \$45,000 to **United Way of Miami-Dade County** to support the community response to COVID-19 in South Florida. The funding is part of a \$300,000 donation to nonprofits across the state. [Click here to learn more on the company's coronavirus-related relief efforts.](#)

- Miami Beach-based **Oolite Arts** announced March 26 the creation of a relief fund for artists impacted by COVID-19, which has caused the closing of exhibitions, galleries and layoffs in the arts community and beyond. Visual artists living in Miami-Dade County can apply for up to \$500 in relief. [Click here for additional details.](#)

- The Food Network & Cooking Channel have launched the **SOBEWFF & FIU Chaplin School Hospitality Industry Relief Fund** to aid independently-owned and operated restaurants and bars impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic in Miami-Dade, Broward, and Palm Beach counties. The fund was launched with \$1 million, including a founding donation of \$500,000 by the Chaplin School. [Click here for details and an application.](#)

- **United Way of Miami-Dade County** and the **Miami Herald** launched Operation Helping Hands, an emergency response initiative to aid small businesses and families with rent/mortgage assistance, food, medication and more. **Health Foundation of South**

Florida, The Miami Foundation, Greater Miami Convention and Visitors Bureau and The Frederick A. DeLuca Foundation provided the combined seed funding of \$500,000. [Click here for more details.](#)

- **Gift of Life Marrow Registry** announced March 27 that it donated 10,000 swabs to **Baptist Health's** Boca Raton Regional Hospital to aid in testing patients for COVID-19. The donation comes as area hospitals, like others across the country, are short of the supplies needed to identify coronavirus cases.

- Health insurer **Florida Blue** announced March 19 that it will make four gifts of \$500,000 each to address urgent COVID-19 health and safety issues across the state. The funding will address food needs for seniors and kids, support hourly workers, address behavioral health needs and more. It also implemented an extended grace period through May 31, 2020 for customers unable to pay premiums that would otherwise have been subject to termination of coverage. [Click here for details.](#)

- On March 25 and 26, **Feeding South Florida**, a charitable organization that distributed over 62 million pounds of food to more than 700,000 people in 2019, partnered with **Boys & Girls Clubs of Miami-Dade** for drive-thru food distributions for the club's members and families.

- **Bacardi Ltd.** announced on March 26 that it launched its #RaiseYourSpirits campaign to provide financial support, meals and other necessities to those in the food and beverage industry. The company, which has its U.S. operations in Miami, committed \$3 million in financial aid. [Click here to read more.](#)