

Citizens' Committee of Recognition - Nominee Descriptions

Citizen of the Year – Jim Ellis

Jim Ellis has been President and Chairman of Ellis Diversified, Inc. (EDI) since 1990. A real estate developer, investor and entrepreneur, Mr. Ellis directs the operations of EDI.

Mr. Ellis' principal focus is on creating exceptional products and services that have the scope and innovative qualities to enrich our communities. Accentuating his many business ventures, Mr. Ellis has been successful at developing underutilized real estate into exceptional properties.

To date, Mr. Ellis and his company have identified, selected, financed and/or developed over 10,000,000 square feet of retail, residential and commercial real estate. His projects include diverse and innovative residences from exclusive, multi-million dollar single family estates to award-winning, competitively priced and luxuriously appointed multi-family developments. Prior to forming EDI, Mr. Ellis was Founder, President and Chief Executive Officer of Movies To Go, Inc. He grew Movies To Go from one video store located in St. Louis, Missouri to 29 stores in three states. When Blockbuster Entertainment, Inc. purchased it in 1987, Movies To Go was the largest privately held, independently owned video store chain in the country.

A passionate advocate for children, Mr. Ellis serves on the Board of Jack & Jill Children's Center, a non-profit organization that provides care for the children of low-income, one-parent working families. He also serves on the Board of Directors of the Museum of Discovery and Science and is a member of the Riverwalk Trust.

In addition, Mr. Ellis played a key role in spearheading a dramatic turnaround of the Lauderdale Beach Home Owners Association and has been actively involved in the revitalization of Flagler Village.

Distinguished Citizen – Carolyn Michaels

Carolyn Hartling Michaels Executive Vice President of the Greater Fort Lauderdale Chamber of Commerce and has been with the Chamber since June of 1983 and is a graduate of the United States Chamber of Commerce Institute a six-year summer program at the University of Georgia.

Carolyn is a graduate of the Fort Lauderdale Citizens Police Academy and Leadership Broward class 13.

Born and raised in the gold mining community of South Porcupine, Ontario, Canada (400 miles north of Toronto) Carolyn became a professional figure skater with the world famous Ice Capades and for 15 seasons traveled worldwide to include all of North America, Hawaii and Australia as understudy to two world Champions, featured performer, show publicist and line captain.

Following Ice Capades, Carolyn moved to Fort Lauderdale with her son (Marc Guiseppi) in 1975 to perform as a featured performer and line captain with "Stars On Ice" for another 10 seasons at the Sheraton Yankee Trader hotel and also performed in the First Baptist Church Christmas pageant for several years, working with such notables as Johnny Cash and Sandy Patty.

With the Chamber of Commerce, Carolyn has traveled throughout Europe, Asia, Canada and the USA promoting the Chamber, its members, the City of Fort Lauderdale and Greater Fort Lauderdale.

Her responsibilities at the Chamber include overseeing more than 140 events and programs including managing six area councils, (Beach Council, Downtown Council, Weston Business Council, Oakland Park/Wilton Manors, GLBX and the Women's Council) Director of Leadership Fort Lauderdale, Senior Executive Orientation program, (a leadership program designed for CEOs), as well as overseeing tourism and business issues, special events, along with other programs pertinent to the success of the Chamber and its members.

Carolyn was honored by Travelhost Magazine in the publication's 20th Anniversary issue entitled, "Profiles in Tourism: Twenty Leaders." She received the International Hospitality Sales and Marketing "H.S. Emmy Award for Excellence," and is a recipient of the "Award of Appreciation" from the Greater Fort Lauderdale Convention & Visitors Bureau in recognition of her outstanding contributions to tourism.

Honored Founder – Sandy Casteel

Sandy Casteel has spent more than four decades providing leadership and community service to a variety of non-profit organizations throughout South Florida. She has a passion for historic preservation, citizens' issues, responsible growth, and children and families. Sandy is an active member of First Baptist Church of Fort Lauderdale, serving as a Sunday School Teacher, and a member of the Building, Finance and Family Book Store Committees. She received the Broward County Historical Commission Heritage Award in 1986; was named Citizen of the Year by the City of Fort Lauderdale in 1986; and received the Historic Preservation Service Award for Service from 1975 to 1993. The City Commission honored Sandy by proclaiming September 24th, 1993 as "Sandy Casteel Day" in the City of Fort Lauderdale. Sandy currently serves as a member of the board of directors for Historic Stranahan House, Bonnet House, and the Junior League of Fort Lauderdale. She is a past board member of Sheridan House Family Ministries and she played a key role in the celebration of Fort Lauderdale's 100th Birthday as a member of the City's Centennial Celebration Committee.

Exemplary Former Employee - David Deal

As a life-long resident of the City of Fort Lauderdale, David Deal's heart has always been with serving the community. During his tenure with the City, David put in countless volunteer hours, assisting programs, announcing for community events, giving blessings or just lending a hand. While working as a Recreation Coordinator, David was called to preach the Word of God. In 2000, David was ordained a minister and served as Associate Minister of Mt. Calvary Baptist Church. His calling brought him back to Fort Lauderdale, where David currently serves as Pastor of Every Christian Church. Continuing his service, David joined the McDonald Lodge #70 Masonic Order where he currently holds the position of Senior Warden. He is a member of the Oasis Temple #18 and is 32nd Degree Mason. David is currently enrolled in Jacksonville Theology Seminary and is a member of the Florida Baptist Convention and Gulf Stream Baptist Association.

David Deal is the true representation of an individual who gives back to the community. He is a recreator at heart, always striving to improve the programs in his community. David is an upbeat, pleasant individual who always has a smile on his face. Over the years, David worked in numerous capacities within the City of Fort Lauderdale Parks & Recreation Department. Whether

on a pool deck, a ball field or in a community center, David always gave it his all. The patrons were his number one priority. No request or job was ever too much for David. He was our go to man. David would always find a way to get the job done, with a smile on his face. Anyone who has crossed paths with David instantly likes him. His charismatic personality would win anyone over. The Parks & Recreation Department and most importantly, the Fort Lauderdale community is a better place due to David's years of service.

From 1973-1975, David attended Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University on a football scholarship. From 1976-1981, he served in the United States Marine Corps and from 1982-1983, David worked part-time with the City of Fort Lauderdale. David began his full-time work with the City of Pompano Beach as an Aquatic Manager from 1983-1990. In 1990, David accepted a full-time position with the City of Fort Lauderdale and he retired from his full-time duties with the City in August of 2013.