

All Charities Announces 2018 Distributions

Record Amounts Raised for Charities On & Off The Reef

by Yurianna Mikolay,
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Ocean Reef Community Foundation

The Ocean Reef community's support of the 2018 All Charities giving program will result in \$6+ million in donations to local nonprofit organizations, besting the previous record by a remarkable \$1.5 million, increasing the proceeds to all Ocean Reef Partner Charities and doubling the amount the Ocean Reef Community Foundation will grant to charities outside the gates.

ORCF Vice President **Michael Berman**, Co-Director of All Charities with **Michael Jones**, calls the outpouring of generosity "extraordinary," still marveling that it came on the heels of the community raising an unprecedented \$2.3 million for Hurricane Irma relief. The new All Charities record brings the total raised between the two efforts this season to almost \$8.5 million, with close to \$5 million going to neighboring communities.

The All Charities giving program is comprised of the annual Ocean Reef Club Dues Statement Donation and the All Charities Auction Weekend held each February. The effort consolidates fundraising for the nonprofit institutions at Ocean

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Reef and the Greater Ocean Reef Community, through resulting gifts from the Foundation and Ocean Reef Conservation Association.

This year's All Charities distributions to benefit Ocean Reef directly include \$1,399,033 to the Medical Center at Ocean Reef, \$1,055,874 to the Cultural Center at Ocean Reef, \$686,318 to The Academy at Ocean Reef, \$343,159 to the Ocean Reef Art League and \$104,190 to ORCAT.

This year's distributions to largely benefit charities beyond Ocean Reef's gates include \$2,022,636 to the Ocean Reef Community Foundation, \$343,159 to the Ocean Reef Conservation Association and a second gift of \$100,000 for the Baptist Hospital Helipad (part of the Foundation's \$1 million commitment to enable fast, lifesaving access to South Florida's only comprehensive stroke center).

The Foundation's Community Grants program, which awarded more than \$1 million to charities in surrounding areas for the first time in 2017, will announce 2018 grants totaling more than \$1.45 million to charities in Homestead, Florida City and the Upper Keys in next week's paper. The remaining balance of the Foundation's proceeds will fund strategic projects, including longer-term hurricane recovery initiatives, which will be fully reported at a later date.

ORCF Chairman **Bill Nutt** noted that "during the decade from 2008 to 2018, All Charities has raised \$33,634,698 for charities both on The Reef and outside the gates." He added, "With this year's combined donations of almost \$5 million going to Homestead, Key Largo and the most affected communities of the Lower Keys, the percentage of the total going beyond our gates has risen dramatically and is projected to continue to do so."



Coral Restoration Foundation nursery.

Coral Restoration Foundation Rebuilds Carysfort Reef

by Holly Houser,
Ocean Reef Press Editorial Assistant

According to the 2015 Census, the Florida Keys location was a top reason why Members chose Ocean Reef Club (following only friends and family and the activities as reasons #1 and #2). Therefore, preserving our natural resources and beautiful environment for future generations is of paramount importance. That is why five years ago the Club, Ocean Reef Conservation Association, and the Coral Restoration Foundation (CRF) partnered to replenish Carysfort Reef.

What is the Coral Restoration Foundation?

Founded in 2007, CRF is a Key Largo-based nonprofit created to develop offshore coral nurseries and restoration strategies for critically endangered coral reefs. What began as a local effort, spearheaded by CRF founder and president Ken Nedimeyer, has grown into a globally recognized organization. CRF has been successfully growing and transplanting corals for more than a decade throughout the Keys, the Caribbean and South America. The

restoration process involves growing staghorn and elkhorn corals for about a year in an underwater nursery until they are large enough to be outplanted on a reef.

Rebuilding Carysfort Reef

In December 2013, the Club and Ocean Reef Conservation Association became CRF's first community donor and two years later, together established a five-year goal to plant 20,000 corals by year 2020 and restore Carysfort Reef to what it looked like 40 years ago.

Just five miles from the shore of Ocean Reef Club, the iconic Carysfort Reef, like many reefs in the Florida Keys, has seen its population of staghorn and elkhorn coral decline by more than 90 percent since the 1970s due to various environmental stressors. In the last two years, support by the Club, donations by individual Members, ORCA, Ocean Reef Conservation Association, Ocean Reef Community Foundation and the Club's business partners, has helped CRF work towards the goal of completely rebuilding Carysfort Reef. When complete, it will be the first total restoration of a coral reef anywhere in the world. As of March 2018, 4,311 staghorn and 3,253 elkhorn have already been outplanted at Carysfort Reef.

How You Can Get Involved

Over the years, many Ocean Reef Members have gotten involved in the restoration

either through dive trips to help transplant corals, or through the "adopt a coral" program. Through this program, Members may adopt an individual staghorn (\$250) or elkhorn (\$500), a personally identified staghorn cluster (\$1,000), or a family planting trip where they can plant an entire staghorn tree nursery (\$5,000). Throughout the year, Members can also coordinate dive trips through Cristal Clear Charters to the Carysfort nursery and lighthouse.

If you're interested in learning more about these efforts, visit www.coralrestoration.org or www.oceanreefconservationassociation.org, and participate in the complimentary Coral Nursery Dive Trip & Presentation on **Tuesday, April 10**. The day begins with an 8:30 a.m. Coral Nursery Dive Trip leaving from Cristal Clear Charters where certified divers can join the CRF Team in putting life back into our oceans. Then at 5 p.m. in the Tarpon Room, enjoy cocktails while you listen to "Carysfort Reef: State of the Coral" and learn about the current state of Carysfort Reef, as well as other local coral nurseries. Both the dive trip and presentation are complimentary, sponsored by the Ocean Reef Conservation Association. Reservations for the diving trip are required, so call the Club Concierge at 305-367-6516 to make yours.