

SOUTH FLORIDA

# SunSentinel

March 20, 2016

2 | Sun Sentinel SunSentinel.com Sunday, March 20, 2016 NE

## People & Places

# Gala honors county's nonprofits



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Dana Somerstein and David Gillis attend a recent celebration for 2-1-1 Broward in Fort Lauderdale.

**BY HELEN WOLT**  
Staff writer

Decisive leadership and an ability to adapt to change are traits that colleagues of Emilio Benitez appreciate in his role as CEO of ChildNet, a Broward-based nonprofit that assists abused, abandoned and neglected children in the community.

Recently, 2-1-1-Broward named Benitez as Nonprofit Organization Staff Leader of the Year during the South Florida Community Care Network Nonprofit Awards in Hollywood. Benitez was one of 10 award recipients. Each group received \$1,000.

Evan Goldman accepted the Nonprofit Organization of the Year award for Helping Abused Neglected Disadvantaged Youth. This marks the third year in a row HANDY has collected a

golden trophy at the ceremony.

About 750 nonprofit leaders and local notables attended the sixth annual gala.

"It's a testament to 2-1-1 that so many organizations are here," said Broward Mayor Marty Kiar. The event earned a proclamation of "2-1-1 Appreciation Day."

Sheila Smith, CEO of 2-1-1 Broward, said the goal is to recognize agencies and individuals that "standout in making our community better."

The title holders were selected from more than 50 nominations. The Publix Community Choice Award, in which the public votes online, went to Take Stock in Children of Broward County.

Other winners were Hab-

itat for Humanity's Nancy Daly who won the Nonprofit Board Leader of the Year; and retired Memorial Healthcare Systems CEO Frank Sacco for the Lifetime Achievement award.

Five category winners took home gold. In the Arts, Fort Lauderdale's Children's Theater; for Collaboration, United Way Broward County Commission on Substance Abuse; Innovation went to Pace School for Girls; the Rising Star is Taylor's Closet. The Collective Impact for Youth honor went to FLITE Center.

"It's really about drawing attention to the people who do extraordinary things," Smith said. "People don't realize what they do so quietly every day."

Helen Wolt can be reached at [hwolt@tribpub.com](mailto:hwolt@tribpub.com).