



2021 Annual Report

A year of reflection, renewal, and a resurgence in environmental focus. Education and restoration came alive in 2021 through the involvement of our community!



2021 Annual Report

Tampa Bay Watch has grown tremendously over the last 28 years of operation. Our mission has been focused on mobilizing the Tampa Bay community to participate in restoration and education programs. We have coordinated more than 250,000 volunteers, students, and campers, installed 15,000 oyster reef ball units and 2,500 tons of oyster shell to create miles of oyster shell reef communities, planted more than 1,000,000 salt marsh grass plants to restore 250 acres of coastal tidal ponds to Tampa Bay, and we still have much more to accomplish!

Now that the Discovery Center is up and running, our staff and board members identified this time as ideal to develop a new strategic plan to address the growth and needs of our operation. We developed a new vision and mission statement to reflect our goal to enact impactful change in support of the organization, our community, and the environment. The intent of the plan is to take Tampa Bay Watch to the next level of growth, addressing needs and infrastructure to ensure it will be an environmental mainstay for many generations to come.



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Tierra Verde, FL 33715
727-688-5285
tampabaywatch.org

Discovery Center at the St. Pete Pier
700 2nd Ave NE
St. Petersburg, FL 33701
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Mission:

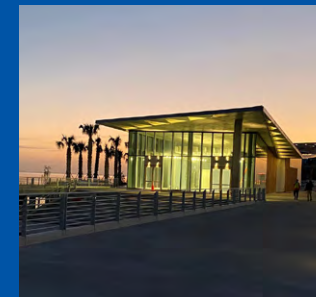
Tampa Bay Watch is dedicated to fostering a healthy Tampa Bay watershed through community-driven restoration projects, education programs, and outreach initiatives.



Our team

Marine Education Center
at Tierra Verde

Discovery Center
at the St. Pete Pier



Department Directors

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President

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Chief Executive Officer

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Director

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Development Director

Katie Mastenbrook
Director of Education

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Molly Robison
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Out of the pandemic: A new normal, a renewed vision

Letter from the president



Peter Clark, founder and president

Our crew began 2021 with cautious hope to get back to normal as vaccinations became available for COVID-19. The spring restoration projects continued to be supported by a small group of super volunteers and field trips were only available for private schools, home school groups, and community organizations.

Tampa Bay encountered a major setback in the spring through an emergency release of 215 million gallons of contaminated water from the aging stacks of Piney Point, the site of a former phosphate processing plant in Manatee County. Excessive nutrients in the bay resulted in a series of red tide and algal blooms

over the summer with fish and marine animal deaths, a negative impact on tourism, and decreased quality of life for residents. The bloom prevented our summer campers from getting in the water and forced us to cancel the annual Great Bay Scallop Search.

As the bloom eased, our fall restoration projects were opened back up to the public for volunteering and public schools were back to school field trips. Evening for the Bay, our fall fundraiser, returned by hosting over 300 guests on our lawn. The Discovery Center launched a new eco-vessel to educate locals and visitors alike on the bounty of Tampa Bay.

Now more than ever, we need your help to invest in the protection and restoration of Tampa Bay in order to prevent further deterioration. We must advocate for measures to ensure the Tampa Bay region is prepared to maintain and improve water quality well into the future. Each volunteer, member, partner, and sponsor plays a key role in the important work that we do at Tampa Bay Watch. Thank you all!

Sincerely,

Peter A. Clark,
President and Founder

Notable events by the year

From 1993 to 2021,
notable events in our
organization's history

1993

1993 Tampa Bay Watch is established as a nonprofit organization



1994

Bay Grasses in Classes constructs first nursery



1998

First oyster shell project completed at Crisp Park in St. Pete



2000

State of Florida and Pinellas County acquire Cunningham Key for our Marine Education Center



2002

Living Shoreline project starts at MacDill Air Force Base



2004

First derelict crab trap removal



2005

Dedication of the Tampa Bay Watch Marine Education Center in Tierra Verde

2006

Estuary EDventures field trips and summer camps begin



2015

- Seagrass growth returns to 1950s levels

- 400 volunteers plant 40,000 plugs of native grasses at Rock Ponds for largest volunteer planting in the history of Tampa Bay



2018

Celebration of 25 years of restoration and education



2020

Tampa Bay Watch Discovery Center opens its doors on the St. Pete Pier



2021

Discovery Center launches eco-vessel



Record Red Tide in Tampa Bay

Worst outbreak
since 1971

The algae that causes red tide is naturally found in the waters of Tampa Bay and the Gulf of Mexico. Unfortunately in the summer of 2021, Tampa Bay and the Gulf of Mexico experienced a significant bloom.

215 million gallons of wastewater was dispersed from Piney Point from March 30 to April 9, 2021. The estimated nutrient load from this incident is equivalent to approximately 200,000+ bags of fertilizer delivered over the course of one or two weeks.

The additional nutrients coupled with lack of rainfall in May and the amount of nitrogen and phosphorus in the water fueled the bloom with no end in sight. The effects of the red tide bloom continued for months due to the abundance of nutrients in the bay fueling the bloom of the red tide.

The effects of the red tide have not only impacted our estuary and cherished marine life, but also directly impacted our economy as local businesses such as

restaurants, hotels, tourism destinations, and charters. Red tide prevented visitors from spending the tourism dollars that our local economy depends on, and residents from enjoying the beauty and activities that make living here so appealing.



Discovery Center Records Successful Year

The Tampa Bay Watch Discovery Center on the St. Pete Pier continued to work towards the goal to advance environmental stewardship by engaging, informing, and inspiring visitors to the St. Pete Pier about the recovery of Tampa Bay. In 2021, the Discovery Center had 50,578 visitors and over 20,000 participants in free environmental education programs. The center educates local, national, and international visitors of all

ages about the importance and value of protecting the marine environment. Eighty-three percent of the visitors are from Florida, with the majority being local (Pinellas & Hillsborough Counties), so there is a great opportunity for increased awareness locally.

The Discovery Center launched a brand new 45' USCG-certified catamaran at the St. Pete Pier in 2021. This floating classroom—the *MV Discovery*—was launched thanks to the generosity of The Spurlino Foundation, and provides on-the-water family-friendly public cruises and private field trips throughout the week. Eco-tours explore Tampa Bay history and the marine life you'll find in and above the bay. Activities include a fisheries trawl, bird spotting and identifying specific traits, and dolphin and manatee

identification and behaviors, all while enjoying a relaxing bay cruise.

Thank you to our 2021 supporters of the Discovery Center

Milkey Family Foundation
Margaret Dickins Foundation
Dream Big Fund
General Dynamics
Roger and Kathy Herrnsteeen
Dean Jollay
Francis & Gertrude Levett
Foundation
John and Emilie Marvin
Rays Baseball Foundation
Mary Ann and Gary Renfrow
Saunders Foundation
Ken and Vicki Wilson



Restoration:

The act of restoring; renewal, revival, or reestablishment; the state or fact of being restored; a return of something to a former, original, normal, or unimpaired condition; restitution of something taken away or lost.



Declining Sea Grasses

Ten-year low
recorded



There are three main species of seagrass in Tampa Bay: manatee, shoal, and turtle grass.

Scientists with the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) released the results of their 2020 seagrass mapping study showing that between 2018 and 2020, Tampa Bay has lost approximately 16% of our seagrass habitat for a total that is a 10-year low of 34,297 acres. It is believed that this could be the result of a wetter rainfall pattern that we have seen over the last couple of years that is resulting in the greater availability of nutrients in the bay which has caused some die-offs. Another cause is a greater abundance of attached algae which can be out-competing seagrass.

Seagrass has many benefits to Tampa Bay: it is a vital nursery habitat for marine animals, it helps stabilize shifting sands on the bottom of the bay and improves water clarity by trapping



Image credit: NOAA

fine sediments and particles. Documenting the extent of seagrass and how it changes overtime is a valuable tool for scientists throughout Florida as seagrasses are an important barometer of a bay's health because they require relatively clean water to flourish, thus they are sensitive to changes in water clarity and quality.

What can you do to help?

- Consider native plants instead of grass. Ask yourself which is more important: a green lawn, or a blue Tampa Bay?
- Volunteer and/or support Tampa Bay Watch
- Contact your elected officials at the local and state level (city council representatives, congressional representatives) and ask them to commit to stronger water quality protections, to support continued monitoring, and to fund emergency cleanup efforts.
- Follow county ordinances of summertime fertilizer bans.

Restoration by the numbers

Projects
persevered
despite the
pandemic



Oyster shell bars

Improving water quality by reducing shoreline erosion and promoting oyster habitats. **72** volunteers created **2,000** square feet of oyster reef with **35** tons of fossilized oyster shell.



Oyster reef balls

Stabilizing shorelines, building hard-bottom habitats for wildlife, enhancing water quality. **702** volunteers built **950** oyster reef balls and installed **1,060**.



Coastal cleanups

Protecting wildlife and people from trash and marine debris that floats onto shorelines. **161** volunteers removed **3,097** pounds of debris through coastal cleanups and a derelict crab trap removal.



Fishing line recycling

Helping protect wildlife from unnecessary injury or death by collecting and recycling monofilament fishing line. **63** volunteers recovered and recycled **583** miles of fishing line from **212** monotubes.



Native plantings

Strengthening healthy shorelines to withstand effects of storms and provide essential habitat. **78** volunteers estored **18,263** square feet of shoreline through the planting of **12,300** plugs of native grasses.



Education:

The act or process of imparting or acquiring particular knowledge or skills, as for a profession; a degree, level, or kind of schooling; the result produced by instruction, training, or study; to show one's education; the science or art of teaching.





Students examine a vertical oyster garden on Tampa Bay Watch's dock.

Winds of Change

Generous Support Brings New Faculty Name

Tierra Verde Marine Education Center becomes Auer Marine Education Center

Tampa Bay Watch is thrilled to announce that the Auer Family has generously funded the program and building improvements to the Tampa Bay Watch education center in Tierra Verde. The building

currently named Tampa Bay Watch Marine Education Center will now be known as "Auer Marine Education Center." The Marine Education Center is the base for the established Estuary EDventures educational program. The funding provided by the Auer Family will help Estuary EDventures continue to enhance and evolve the program's reach and capacity, provide resources to run

existing programming and staff, and also allow the creation of new STEM and Citizen Science programming and curriculum for both on-site and off-site participants.

This critical support will allow Estuary EDventures to continue offering free and reduced-cost programming to Title I and academically at-risk schools and community

Continued from
previous page

members, which currently accounts for more than 50% of Estuary EDventures programming. The Auer Family's donation also provides resources to help with the upkeep, management, and enhancement of the 2,500 sq. ft. educational classroom space. This community classroom includes observation tanks, an outdoor wet lab, collective 10,000-gallon open-air observation tanks, the 32-foot Beach Cat classroom vessel, and Palm, the Ornate Diamondback Terrapin, our original resident animal ambassador.

Each of these components are critical to the success of the Estuary EDventures programming serving Tampa Bay's children.



New Terrapin Exhibit at the Discovery Center

In addition to the enhancements to our education building and programs, the Auer Family also gifted a new terrapin exhibit at the Tampa Bay Watch Discovery Center on the St. Pete Pier.

The 240-gallon exhibit is home to Bertha and Ruby, two rare Ornate Diamondback Terrapins, classified as vulnerable species. The exhibit teaches visitors all about

terrapins and what makes them different from turtles and tortoises.

The diamondback terrapin is the only turtle in the U.S. that inhabits estuaries, tidal creeks, and salt marshes where the salinity often comes close to that of the ocean. It thrives in estuaries like Tampa Bay where it can dine on crabs, snails, shrimp, fish, mussels, clams and other crustaceans.

Education by the numbers

Hands-on
immersive
experiences
for Tampa Bay
students



Summer camps

Day camps give kids the opportunity to explore the bay by snorkel, kayak, and boat. **99** summer campers participated in **35** days of camp. **9** were provided scholarships.



iSeahorse

A database for monitoring global seahorse populations and conservation efforts. **305** students identified **26** seahorses.



Bay Grasses in Classes

School-based native plant nursery program growing native plants. **740** students in **11** schools restored **6,070** square feet of shoreline by planting **2,281** plugs of native grasses.



Florida Microplastic Awareness Project

Supported by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). **98** volunteers and **84** students were educated in FMAP program.



Field trips and virtual education

Engaged **1,133** local school children on **80** immersive field trips and served **1,167** students through virtual education.



Earth Echo database monitoring

62 students collected local water samples and contributed their findings to Earth Echo's database monitoring the health of the world's oceans.

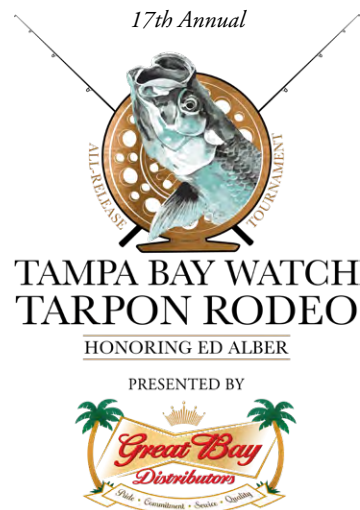


First-place Guardian Division winners: Team Bonefish Grill and Capt. Jared Simonetti.



Boats return after fishing during the Tarpon Rodeo.

Fundraising: Tarpon Rodeo



Thank you to everyone who made Tarpon Rodeo 2021 a huge success! Anglers embarked on a mission to find the silver king during this popular all-release tournament on June 11. More than \$93,000 was raised for our programs, and 11 tarpon were caught during the all-release tournament!

Congratulations to our winners:

- 1st place, Guardian Division: Team Bonefish Grill and Capt. Jared Simonetti
- 1st place, Sport Division: Team Tampa Bay Yacht Management
- 2nd place, Guardian Division: Team Hancock Whitney and Capt. Kyle Applefield
- 3rd place, Guardian Division: Team Scooter Foundation and Capt. Steve Barron

Event sponsors:



Guests enjoy dinner on the lawn as the live auction begins.



300 guests wine and dined to raise funds to restore the Tampa Bay watershed.



Fundraising: Evening for the Bay: Return to Paradise

It was a slightly chilly Return to Paradise, presented by Honest-1 Auto Care on Saturday, November 6, but fun was had by all!

300 guests enjoyed a fantastic evening of food, drinks, auctions, car show, wine toss, vendors, and more!

We cannot thank our sponsors and guests enough for their support of *Evening for the Bay* which generated over \$134,000 to support our mission and programs. It was truly wonderful to gather together again to support Tampa Bay Watch.

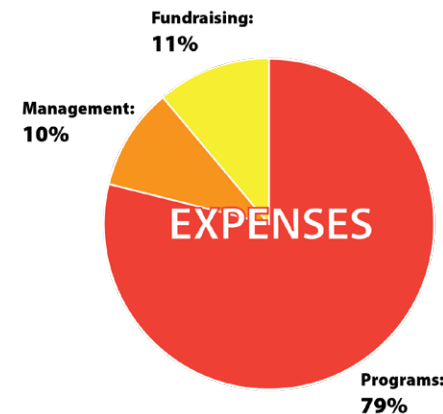
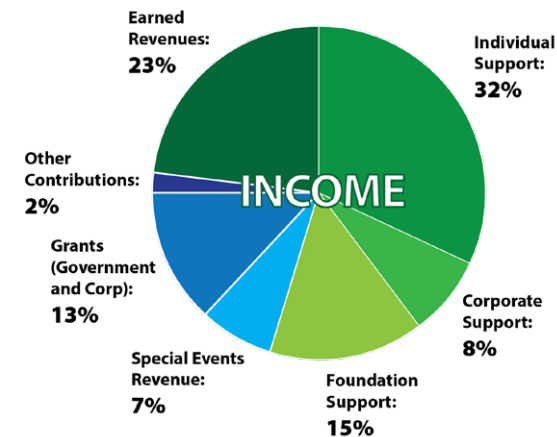


Event sponsors:



Financial snapshot

The Discovery Center on the St. Pete Pier was open for its first full year of operation, which increased our annual budget and earned revenue through admission and program fees. Special event income was down again this year since the pandemic prevented large indoor gatherings like Castaway Soiree at Tarpon Rodeo. Foundation support increased to make up for the decline of special event income.



Sustainable giving:

Tampa Bay Guardians



The Tampa Bay Guardians support Tampa Bay Watch's mission to restore and protect the Bay with a three-year pledge of at least \$1,000 annually. Guardians are key to sustaining weekly restoration projects, daily marine science education, and local volunteer efforts in their community.

A special thanks to our 2021 Guardians:

Russell and Susie Bolton

Pat and Paul Brown

Bobby and Elena Bussey

Jeff and Linda Carbiener

Frank X. and Dana Dalton

Jonathan and Nikki Day

Kathryn Howd and Edward
Rucks

Beth and John England

Christopher French

Kathy and Roger Herrnsteen

Janet and Harold Hurwitz

Erik Lieberman and Family

Jerry Fletcher and Liza Carter

Dr. James Pascia

Drs. Eli and Janet Marley
Rose

William and Dyreese
Sweeney

Mike and Rita Wilson

Sustainable giving:

Corporate Members



Corporate members are active partners in restoring Tampa Bay through their generous support. Our unique estuarine environment helps drive the local economy, provides habitat for a variety of important wildlife, and is a primary factor in the quality of life for the region.

Thank you to our 2021 Corporate Members:

4th Street Family Dentistry

Affinity CPA, P.A.

Amuni Financial

Argos USA LLC

Bloomin' Brands

Dolman Law Group

Don CeSar Hotel

DSK Law

ECOmersion Kayak and
Paddleboard

Edge Marine Construction

Elite Watersports

Freedom Boat Club

General Dynamics

GPZ Services Inc

Grand Central Brewhouse

Great Bay Distributors

Greenacre Properties, Inc.

Gulfeagle Supply

HH Insurance Group, LLC

JL Marine (PowerPole)

McNichols Company

Mosaic

Pascia and Pascia Dentistry

Precision Painting Group, Inc

Premier Sotheby's International
Realty

Randy Wayne White Doc Ford's

Resort Realty

SaltyScales

Southern Pension Services

Southport Financial Services

Tampa Bay Pilots Association

Tampa Bay Rays

Tennant Special Risk, Inc

The Florida InfoGuide

Tier 1 Pest Solutions

TradeWinds Resort

TJM Properties

Wireless Time Partners

Sustainable giving:

Legacy Society



The Tampa Bay Watch Legacy Society recognizes those who have included Tampa Bay Watch in their will or estate plans to help ensure a healthy bay for generations. Legacy gifts help us to achieve long-term financial stability and sustainability that provide for the future of Tampa Bay Watch's work to protect and restore the Tampa Bay estuary and create a lasting legacy. We're forever grateful to our Tampa Bay Watch Legacy Society Members.

2021 Legacy Society members:

Anonymous donor

Peter & Marion Clark

Al Donn & Dorothy Holle

Stephanie Green

Joan & Dick Jacobs

Donald James Lyons

Captain Steve McCreary

Drs. Eli and Janet Marley Rose

Rosemarie Williams



Volunteer:

A person who voluntarily offers himself or herself for a service or undertaking; a person who performs a service willingly and without pay.



Volunteer participation is essential to our mission

Tampa Bay Watch couldn't accomplish our mission without amazing volunteers. As in 2020, we began the year by relying upon a small, but mighty group of committed volunteers, also known as our all-stars, to support a slate of spring projects. We limited each project to a maximum of twenty people including staff in order to accomplish oyster reef ball construction and installation, oyster shell bar installations, native plantings, and fishing line cleaning. We enforced safety requirements for the well-being of all participants including temperature checks, face

masks, and social distancing. A special thanks to our all-stars for working side by side in a safe way to fulfill our mission! We were happy to make the call to open up our fall projects to the public and get back to normalcy. From installing reef balls and planting native grasses at MacDill Air Force Base to building reef balls at our headquarters in Tierra Verde, and beginning a three year project to build a living shoreline at Lassing Park in St. Pete, volunteers were eager to get back to our projects to restore beautiful Tampa Bay.

Volunteer Spotlight:



Betsey & Gerry Stupiansky

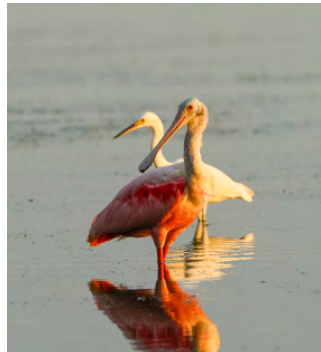
We would like to recognize Betsey & Gerry Stupiansky who have been active volunteers with since 2011! They come to every restoration project and also assist with special events and outreach. Betsey and Gerry are always eager to help and are outstanding at taking initiative at all of the projects by helping and encouraging other volunteers to get the job done, but always with a smile on their faces.

Our sincerest thanks to Betsey and Gerry for their efforts to restore Tampa Bay.



Thanks to the givers

Generous
donors of 2021



Roseate spoonbills wading in
Tampa Bay.

\$50,000+

John and Sheila Auer
City of St. Petersburg
Milkey Family Foundation
Neptune Flood Insurance
Restore America's Estuaries Program
Raymund Foundation, Inc.
The Francis and Gertrude Levett
Foundation
The Mosaic Company Foundation

\$25,000-50,000

Randy and Sharon Cochrane
Cynthia Fletcher
General Dynamics
Hough Family Foundation, Inc
Jabil
Margaret E. Dickins Foundation
Rays Baseball Foundation
Mary Ann and Gary Renfrow
Mike Schutt
The Spurlino Foundation
Honest 1 Auto Care

\$10,000-25,000

Alvah H. and Wylene P. Chapman
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Aveda Corp. and Aveda
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Directed Capital Resources,
LLC
Duke Energy Foundation
Elite Watersports
Frank E. Duckwall Foundation
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Rob and Diane Klingel
Clayton and Mary McNeel
OSI Restaurant Partners
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Tampa Electric Company
TSP Institute Inc.
Charles Webster and Deb
Doud

Rosemarie Williams
Kenneth and Vicki Wilson

\$5,000-10,000

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Biltmore Construction Co., Inc.
Calhoun International
Jeff and Linda Carbiener
Mark Chmielewski and Linda
Jantschek
Covanta
Frank and Dana Dalton and the
Dalton Family Foundation
Dream Big Fund
GPZ Services Inc.
Gulfeagle Supply
Donna Hearn
Liz Heinkel

JL Marine Systems
 Dean Jollay
 Elaine Koziar-Jordan and Craig Jordan
 Steven and Ashley Lay
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 Mary and Bob Sierra Family Foundation
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 Rawson Charitable Foundation
 Raymond James and Associates Resort Realty
 Robert F. Schumann Foundation
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 Tampa Bay Beaches Chamber of Commerce
 Tampa Bay Estuary Program
 The Boeckman Family Foundation
 TJM Properties
 Lawrence Weiner and Yvonne Grimm
 Wells Fargo Foundation
 Mike and Rita Wilson

\$2,500-4,999

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 Bobby and Elena Bussey
 Catalina Marketing Charitable Foundation
 Chronos Wealth Management
 Erica and Johnson Clark
 Edge Marine Construction
 Beth and John England
 First Citrus Bank
 Jerry Fletcher and Liza Carter
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 HH Insurance Group, LLC
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 Kevin and Amy Kelso
 Lewis Longman and Walker
 Erik Lieberman
 MC Consulting LLC
 Kevin R. Milkey
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 Smitha Prasanna
 Redstone Investments
 Saunders and Walker P.A.
 Shutts and Bowen, LLP
 Tennant Special Risk, Inc
 Valley Bank
 Fred and Carol Whaley
 Yale Capital

\$1,000-2,499

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 AW Bar, LLC
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 McNichols Company
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Patricia and James Ostrosky
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Parkshore Grill
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Al and Sandee Steinberg
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Gloria Sterling
Edwin and Dorothy Sved

Tampa Bay Parrot Heads In
Paradise Club
Tampa Bay Rays
Tampa Bay Yacht Management
The Florida InfoGuide
The Hickey Family Foundation
Kira Walsh
Michael West
West Marine BlueFuture Fund
Dan and Elizabeth Winegrad
Patricia Wojtowicz

\$500-999
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Angela Moralevitz
Lynne Donahoe
Daniel and Christine Fisher
Verizon Foundation
Community Foundation of Tampa
Bay
The Refillery
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Kris Walker
Celeste Noren
Cason Photography
Karen Eckles
TradeWinds Island Resorts
Harry Hedges
Tim Steele

Karen Cooper
Sherri Crouse
Kathleen Giblin
John and Lois Glasscock
Laurie Harris
Tracy Hayes
Laura Jenkins
Lari Johnson
Carol Marks
A. J. Arango
Stephen Aversa
Ann Beaman
Richard and Linda Brown
Charles and Joan Claar
Gary and Anne Clark
Geoffrey Cooper
Pete and Sharon Dagostino
John Daily
Hellen and Walt Driggers
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Ed Glazer
Eileen Grove
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Alan Donn and Dorothy Holle
Fran and David Huey
John Ingram
Roberta Jordan
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Stephen H. and Elizabeth Reynolds
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Andy and Karen Ritter
John Rumery
Benjamin Schick
Naomi and Jon Vichich
Timothy and Marcia Wise
Rick and Amy Yarrington
Debbi Young
Steven and Lisa Zaritsky

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Peggy C. Akery
Alexion Pharmaceuticals
James S. Allen
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Jim and Lee Anderst
Bjorn Andren
Brett Andress
Nick Armstrong

Steve and Alona Arsht
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Susan Beaven and Ted Mallin
Vivian M. Benci
James Bennett
Sarah Bennett
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Larry Binder
Kathryn and James Blair
Ed and Jean Blattler
Bill Blonkowski
Sharon and Steve Blust
Mary Lynn Bodalski
Fernando Borges
Tracy Bowers
William Breaden and Deborah
Eagan
Ruby V. Brembs
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