

# **Congratulations to the 2019-2020 Florida PTA Award Winners!**

*Read more about these award-winning programs to consider your PTA, PTSA, and County Council programming and award application in the year ahead!*

## **Advocacy Award**

**Sunny Isles Beach PTSA,  
Miami - Dade County**

- Regular attendance at **School Board** and **Local Council Meetings**, and meetings with **elected state legislators**.
- Engaging membership in **advocacy** efforts.
- **Students also attended council meetings** and requested support for their **recycling program**.
- Students recognized the **opportunity** to share their voice, and their **influence** when unified for their cause.

**University High School PTSA,  
Orange County**

- Regularly **sharing legislative information** with members and **encouraging advocacy**.
- Joined the “**Rally in Tally**” with **OCCPTSA** with the support of school administrators for this educational field trip.
- **Broadened student understanding** of the work of legislators and activities within the Florida State House during session.
- Students expressed **interest in additional experiences** such as serving as a page or serving their communities in the future.

**Hillsborough County Council PTA**

- Built on previous advocacy for the half-cent sales tax education referendum, and **supported increased school impact fees**. The Board of Commissioners responded and doubled fees on new construction to support school needs.
- Applied for **National PTAs Advocacy Spotlight** and was selected to speak about school funding at National PTA Convention.

- **Awarded a grant to support Census** related messaging and participation.
- They have **increased representation** at Florida PTA Legislative Conference.
- Continue to **reaffirmed the relevance** of Hillsborough County Council PTA in Hillsborough County.

## Humanitarian Award

### Thompson Elementary School PTA, Hillsborough County

- Hosted a **Community Resource Fair** bringing together school families and the surrounding community
- The Fair was a free program with the purpose of **sharing local resources** including the library, tutoring services, pet services, health insurance and social service counselors, after school programs, produce co-ops and pick up location information, and more!
- They **collaborated with community partners** to provide craft supplies and snacks for all.

### Tech High School PTSA, Pinellas County

- **A Place to Sleep** was a day of service at the school which helped to give students a better understanding of others in their community.
- The students **built 40 bunk beds** for a local non-profit, **Sleep in Heavenly Peace**, that supports those in need.
- Bedding donations were also collected to complete the project which helped the **students understand homelessness** around them, and helped homeless children with a place to sleep.

### Duval County Council

- **“Duval PTAs Have Heart”** initiative brought local units together with the County Council to focus on the many needs in the community.
- Together they chose to **support a different organization monthly**, including Youth Crisis Center, Feeding Northeast Florida, the Giving Closet, Ronald McDonald House and more!
- The effort highlighted the **connection between PTA the local community**, and highlighted the **relevance of the relationship between County Council PTA and the local PTA**.

# Mentor - A - PTA Award

## Crystal Lake Elementary PTA, Seminole County

- Crystal Lake Elementary PTA focuses on inclusion of all students, including those with special needs.
- They included support of **UCP Seminole PTA** in their planning and budget
- They supported UCP PTA programs with volunteers, and invited UCP parents and students to the Crystal Lake PTA programs

## Crystal Lake Middle School PTSA, Broward County

- Supported new PTA leadership at **Margate Middle School PTSA** throughout the year during meetings, elections, membership opportunities and resource development.
- Margate PTSA President attended Crystal Lake PTSA meetings as well to observe and learn.
- Margate PTSA is now in compliance, increased membership, and raised funds for PTSA activities.

# Safety Award

## Apollo Beach Elementary School PTA, Hillsborough County

- Brought in a **guest speaker** to discuss **kindness, good character and mental health**. They discussed bullying, big feelings, and internet dangers.
- Furthered the program through a **meeting with parents**, offering dinner and babysitting, to learn how to discuss these issues with their children.
- Showed support for their **safety guards and student safety** by making posters and sharing snacks.
- This year's **Fun Run** helped promote exercise, teamwork and good character as it raised funds for programs.

## Coral Gables Senior High School PTSA, Miami – Dade County

- Coral Gables Senior High PTSA showed their focus on safety by **seeking grants** and **inviting guest speakers** to discuss important issues:
  - **suicide risk** factors and warning signs

- **firearm violence** and the **health of their communities**
- Coral Gables Senior High PTSA distributed newsletters addressing **sex trafficking** to help educate the students of the danger.
- They reinforced these issues and resources in social media throughout the year.

### **Hillsborough County Council PTA**

- Hillsborough County Council PTA had a program in English and Spanish to educate parents and students on TikTok to support **internet safety**.
  - **Student panel** to help the parents gain insight into TikTok and some of the student's concerns.
  - **Spokesperson** to discuss internet safety and best practices.
  - **TikTok influencer** spoke to discuss their own experiences.
- Families were encouraged to sign an **internet safety agreement**

## **Special Needs Students With Unique Abilities Award**

### **Crystal Lake Elementary, Seminole County**

- All PTA programs planned with special needs students in mind:
  - **Sensory Room during STEM night**
  - **Sensory Trunk or Treat**
  - **Special Tea Connection** designed for parents to learn about available resources.
- Adopted PTA, UCP Seminole, parents and students are invited

### **Atlantic Coast High School PTSA, Duval County**

- Atlantic High School is an inclusive school and PTSA promotes interaction with all students.
- The PTSA donated funds to the **Rays of Hope Valentine's Day Dance**, and special needs students from Atlantic Coast High School were able to attend the dance.

# Student Advocate Award

**Gianna Aleman**  
**West Broward High School PTSA,**  
**Broward County**

Gianna Aleman, a junior and SGA Officer at West Broward High School, developed and led a project titled “Capes for Kids”. She brought t-shirts and cut them into capes for pediatric patients in a local hospital. She is an advocate for students and joined PTA to “Rally in Tally” where she advocated to fix certain issues in our school system, such as the need for more guidance counselors in our schools. She is now the Student Advisor to the Broward County School Board representing the students for the 6<sup>th</sup> largest school district in the country.

# Student Community Service Award

**Citrus Grove Elementary PTA,**  
**Volusia County**

- Student members of the **K-Kids After School Service Club** worked alongside their parents and Citrus Grove staff to distribute Blessing Bags and serve a meal to community members at the **Deland Interfaith Kitchen**.
- Students participated in **fundraising** for the necessary food items for the meal.
- They helped to collect toiletry and self-care items, and assembled them into **“Blessing Bags”** along with an encouraging note for each guest.
- Students assisted with set-up, serving food and refilling drinks, and cleaned up, and received lots of appreciation from guests and from the Interfaith Kitchen manager.

**West Boca Raton High School PTSA,**  
**Palm Beach County**

- Students adopted a Title 1 elementary school and were matched with a 4<sup>th</sup> grade class to focus on **activities in support of literacy**.
- Students read books, wrote letters with pen pals, and designed a **literacy center** within the classroom.
- With a pizza fundraiser, the students were able to purchase bean bag chairs, carpet squares, a book rack and books.
- Other activities with a literacy focus included a holiday literacy morning, a mural painting, and an elementary visit to the high school class for a day of space related activities.
- All students gained an appreciation for the importance of literacy.

# Student Involvement Award

## Boca Raton Community High School PTSA, Palm Beach County

- The PTSA is committed to providing **opportunities for students to volunteer, and to develop leadership and team building skills**. There are student leaders within the PTSA structure who meet regularly to plan student activities, speakers, and ideas for future meetings.
- Student leaders **help plan and participate PTSA activities** including back to school events, teacher appreciation, College Fair, Auction Fundraiser and membership activities. Student membership increased 19% this year.
- Students nominate and elect their student PTSA leaders, and share the benefits of PTSA in their section of the newsletter and in social media.
- Student involvement adds to the overall success of PTSA.

# Friends of the Environment Award

## Gulf Breeze Elementary PTA, Santa Rosa County

- Gulf Breeze Elementary PTA is eliminating plastic waste **“One Bottle at a Time”**.
- Teachers and families share information about **environmental impacts of plastics** and benefits of refillable water bottles
- PTA collaborated with school administration and SAC to gain approval for **water refill stations** on campus.
- A successful fundraiser purchased the stations which will be installed while students and teachers are away from campus.

## MAST Academy PTSA, Miami-Dade County

- Mast Academy is **Going for the Green!** with a goal to be the first zero net energy and zero waste school in Florida by 2022 and align STEM curriculum, environmental stewardship themes, and school operations and reduce environmental impacts to create a healthier, cleaner, and greener school.

- **PTSA Sustainability Committee** collaborated with Frost Science, the University of Miami, and the Key Biscayne Community Foundation to support programs at this **Green Apple Certified** school.
- **Green Champions** oversee a recycling program, an organic garden, a bike to school program, a mangrove eco-art project and more!
- PTSA Newsletter and a Green Champions What's App Chat.
- These activities have created a culture of **environmental stewardship**.

### **Broward County Council PTA**

- Broward County Council PTSA collaborated with Comcast, NBC Universal, and Broward Big Brothers and Big Sisters in a **revitalization project** at Dillard Elementary after being awarded a **Comcast Cares Grant**.
- Over 2000 volunteers participated throughout the day.
- To **enhance green spaces and garden areas**, volunteers cleared and removed old vegetation and planted numerous trees, annuals and ornamentals.
- Volunteers painted murals, **upgraded outdoor play courts** and Physical Education areas.
- Completely **revamped the campus** through teamwork, and had a positive impact on the students and on the environment.

## **Literacy Award**

### **Meadowbrook Elementary PTA, Alachua County**

Meadowbrook Elementary PTA developed 3 programs to support the Media Center and promote literacy:

- **Cookies for Your Class: Family Reading Program** encouraged families to read together to stimulate language and vocabulary, and model reading. The PTA purchased 40 additional copies of the selected books for the Media Center. At the end of the semester, a drawing was held for 2 students from each grade, so twelve winning classes enjoyed a platter of cookies and milk!
- A **Book Swap** was planned for the week before spring break. PTA coordinated donations and purchased books so each student walked away with at least one book. Unfortunately, the Book Swap was cancelled due to COVID 19 closures.
- The **Everyone Reads** program evolved due to closures and with teacher input each grade level read the same book. PTA sponsored the purchase of a book for each student.

## **Palmetto Middle School PTSA, Miami-Dade County**

- Palmetto Middle School **Media Center** is open from 8:30-11:00am, run by PTSA volunteers. They assist students with computer-based learning, printing assignments and checking out books.
- Middle School families generously donated new books, several new computers, and more modern furniture making the Media Center a more inviting area for students.
- PTSA hosted a **Literacy and Arts Night** where local authors, poets and artists participated in **interactive workshops** with students in addition to an **art and poetry contest** including an open-mic poetry reading. Awards were presented at each grade level. PTSA **distributed donated books** to each student.

## **Pinellas County Council PTA**

- Assist with **book fairs** when needed and provides **grants** to assist vulnerable children with book purchases.
- Provides **literacy programs** in collaboration with Readstrong Pinellas offering referrals for support services to students and families, and distributing books.
- Hosted a **Literacy Festival** with activities. Attendees came dressed as their favorite book character.
- Provides **training on the district Myon Service**, a digital library that provides access to relevant books in English and Spanish.
- Installed **two Little Free Libraries** in target areas to provide books to disadvantaged black and brown children.
- Continued to **distribute books and literacy resources** during school closures at various food distribution sites so children could continue to **“Feed Their Minds.”**

## **Thomas Newsletter Award**

The following units had excellent newsletters that included all the elements on the FLPTA check list including messages from the PTA President, a calendar of events, report on membership, information from national, county, state and local PTA and a proper masthead that included the pertinent information needed by members:

### **Sunset Lakes Elementary PTSA, Broward County**

### **Boca Raton Community High School PTSA, Palm Beach County**

### **Duval County Council**



# Outstanding Administrator Award

**Brian Hamilton, Principal**  
**Devon Aire K-8 Center PTSA,**  
**Miami – Dade County**

Mr. Hamilton is described as having commitment, leadership, and unwavering dedication. He shows continuous support for PTSA by attending meetings and including PTA leaders in team building activities.

**Martha Giancola, Principal**  
**Tech High School PTSA,**  
**Pinellas County**

Ms. Giancola attends PTSA meetings and seeks PTSA input. She was supportive of School of Excellence activities and other PTSA programs throughout the year.

**Jeff Eakins, Superintendent**  
**Hillsborough County Council PTA,**  
**Hillsborough County**

Mr. Eakins is a supporter of the PTA mission and county PTA Leadership. He attends General Meetings and events, includes a PTA voice in district decisions, and encourages PTA participation.

# Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Award

**Crystal Lake Elementary PTA,**  
**Seminole County**

- Events sponsored by PTA helped **eliminate barriers** from engaging, especially for families with special needs and Spanish speaking families, and created a culture of celebrating diversity and inclusion.
- Focused on **bilingual communication**, translation available at all events, translate bar on website
- Sensory room at STEM night, **Sensory friendly** Trunk or Treat time
- Other programs included International Coffee Connection, Special Tea Connection, and a **Multicultural Night**. This new program offered students to experience music, food, arts, crafts and entertainment from around the world with passports and boarding passes.

### **Coral Way K- 8 Center PTSA, Miami - Dade County**

- The **board is representative** of this largely minority population, meetings and newsletters are **bilingual**, and board members can communicate in five languages to be responsive to members' needs.
- Programs in **support of bilingual literacy** include book fairs for all grade levels, Reading Under the Stars, support of i-ready in the curriculum, Fitness Challenge to Change, Healthy Lifestyles, art program with presentation by Okuda, a Spanish graffiti street artist, and a Top Chef Challenge in **collaboration with the Spanish International Parents Association (SIPA)** affiliated with the Spanish Ministry of Education in Miami.
- This successful collaboration led to school recognition as **2020 School of the Year by the Spanish Embassy in the United States**.

### **Coral Gables Senior High School PTSA, Miami - Dade County**

- This PTSA responds to the needs of a **diverse population** of students from socio-economics, to language, to learning abilities.
- Programs **support all students including those in need** of uniforms, resources for immigration issues, those in Foster care and more.
- This year they expanded the College and Career Fair to include a day for **International Colleges and Universities** to share opportunities with interested students, especially those whose first language is not English.

### **Pinellas County Council PTA**

- Diversity Equity and Inclusion **training quarterly** to units, and included information and **Leadership Lessons in monthly newsletters**.
- **Programs** included an African American Heritage Trail hike in Pinellas County with lunch at a black owned restaurant along the way, attendance at a presentation by Dr. Ibram X Kendi, author of How to be an Antiracist at the Center for Health Equity, and support of the local Special Olympics with students pre-K thru 5<sup>th</sup> grade with various exceptionalities.
- Other planned programs, focusing on local Native Americans and Hispanic Culture, and the annual showcase providing ESE resources, were cancelled due to district closures.
- PTA leaders participated in a **reading group** with books on antiracism and equity, and installed a **Little Free Library** in a Latinx neighborhood with literature providing "windows and "mirrors".

# Membership Plus Awards

**Pinecrest Elementary PTA,  
Miami-Dade County**

increased membership by **421**

**Dr. Phillips High School PTSA,  
Orange County**

increased membership by **724**

# President's Membership Award

**Sunny Isles Beach PTSA,  
Miami - Dade County**

Sunny Isles Beach completed the business of PTA and was able to increase membership by **200**

**Julia Landon College Preparatory PTSA,  
Duval County**

Julia Landon accomplished so much this year, and increased their membership by **116**

# The Region Cup

**Region 2**

# Local Unit Achievement Award

**Crystal Lake Elementary PTA,  
Seminole County**

- Board Members attended training and reviewed resources.
- Met all **compliance requirements** for PTA.
- Held required General Meetings, increased their Membership this year

- **Communicated with members** through a variety of platforms and in multiple languages.
- **Successful programs** including Multicultural Night, STEM Night, Veteran's Day Program, Be Internet Awesome, and a day of **service** at Tools 4 Seminole Schools the Foundation for SCPS Teacher/Student supply store.
- They followed through on the required procedures and **made an impact** in their school community.

### **Stanton College Preparatory PTSA, Duval County**

- Participated in board activities as well as completed the essential **compliance** items required of 501(c)3 associations.
- Reviewed resources to stay **informed and knowledgeable** of PTA policy and procedures.
- **Supported community** members with hurricane preparedness, and shared mental and emotional health education for students and families during “Wellness Wednesdays”
- Bi-annual **Campus Clean Up project** – a day full of hard work, leadership, organization, and team work to achieve a beautiful and positive school environment.

## **President’s Local Unit Achievement Award**

### **Sunny Isles Beach PTSA, Miami – Dade County**

- Actively guaranteed completion of **essential compliance items** required of 501(c)3 associations.
- Board members **attended training** events and had access to Florida PTA resources so as to stay informed and knowledgeable of PTA policy and procedures.
- The PTSA held required **General Meetings, actively communicated** to its membership through several different formats, and increased membership this year.
- **Programs** this year included Safety Nights and providing assistance to the community through food distributions, and a drive through family picnic during the pandemic.

### **Boca Raton Community High School PTSA, Palm Beach County**

- Participated in several board activities and completed the essential PTA **compliance requirements**.
- Reviewed Florida PTA resources to assure access policies and procedures. Conducted an **end of year transition meeting**.
- **Communicated regularly** with members and increased membership this year.
- **Service projects** focused on support of student body: Homecoming Closet with clothing for homecoming and job interviews; an Anti-bullying program with their club, We Dine Together; and the Boca High School PTSA College and Career Fair, “providing all the resources to help empower students to collaborate with their parents in pursuit of their dreams.”

## Local Unit Program Award

### Orange Grove Elementary PTA, Pinellas County

- Orange Grove PTA hosted a **Grandparents Day Luncheon** in celebration of National Grandparents Day and to increase the bonds between students and their grandparents, or the family member or care giver of their choice.
- An opportunity to **promote PTA Membership and benefits to extended family**.
- This annual event is anticipated each year, and all enjoy eating together outside.
- PTA collaborated with a local florist to provide flowers for all.

### Hagerty High School PTSA, Seminole County

- HHS PTSA used **grant funding** and **collaborated with mental health and social service professionals** to present a **Family Mental Health Program** this year to educate students, parents, and staff about mental health well-being and issues related to teens.
- Goals included raising awareness, identifying issues, locating resources and finding help, all to **improve the mental wellness climate** of the school community.
- **Positive messaging** continued on social media platforms, sticky notes on lockers, yard signs along the parking areas, and with snacks to ease stress during testing.

### Pasco County Council PTA

- PCC **collaborated with the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention** during Suicide Awareness Week in September with an informative program directed toward middle and high school students and families, but open to all.

- **Community partners provided refreshments** for those who attended the program.
- **Activities to promote awareness** took place throughout the week including wearing purple in support of Suicide Awareness.

## The President's Program Award

### Sunny Isles Beach PTSA, Miami - Dade County

- Brought the school and the community together with a **Drive Thru Picnic**.
- Their team **collaborated** with school administration and community partners including a grocer, law enforcement, municipal leaders, a caterer, a non profit with locally sourced vegies, and more to provide **service to the community**.
- Used the school facilities to cook, bag, and distribute 700 meals with handwritten notes to students and families who appreciated support and a nutritious meal, and enjoyed the **social connection**.

### Seminole High School PTSA, Seminole County

- PTSA is involved with the school's growing **College & Career Center** sharing college and career information, scholarship information, **essay writing** tips and **resume building**, and a **data base** available to students and families.
- Held a **College & Career Night** where students and families had the opportunity to ask questions and gather information about colleges, courses, applications and scholarships.
- PTSA assured that **administrators and guidance counselors** were available. Refreshments were provided.
- This PTSA team hopes to make students' potentials a reality for years to come

### Hillsborough County Council PTA

- Using a **PTA grant** to promote the **National PTA STEM initiative**, the council held **two STEM Night events** within the county.
- Events were **hosted within Title 1 schools**, provided dinner for students and their families attending. The event included presentations in **English and Spanish**.
- **Collaborated** with Mathnasium and MOSI, the Museum of Science and Industry, and included interacting with robots, and activities like making slime and ice cream to **promote learning opportunities even outside the classroom**.

- The council has also **used grant funds to purchase supplies and prepare a kit to loan to local units** who want to do a STEM program of their own.

## All Children Are Our Children Award

### Sterling Park Elementary PTA, Seminole County

- Sterling Park Elementary PTA works tirelessly in the **Pantry Program**.
- Extended it beyond food and **toiletries** to add **basic household items**.
- Used Scholastic dollars to allow the students in need to purchase a book from the Book Fair to help promote reading.
- They enjoy **Lunch Bunches** together and play games. This became the idea for their holiday donations to each family, board games!
- Collaborated with local Girl Scouts to make **Birthday Bags** for those in need, complete with candles and a card.

### Palmetto Middle School PTSA, Miami - Dade County

- Engaged with underprivileged families with struggling students.
- The PTSA provided several **"Family Dinner and Date Night"** to the families with struggling students.
- During the event, **in addition to dinner, they provided families with information** to assist in tracking their child's academic progress.
- Hosted this event at a local elementary school and offered this program in **English and Spanish**.
- **Offered free tutoring** to these students to help fill in that academic gap.

### Alachua County Council PTA

- Worked with schools, Family Network of Disabilities, the School District and many other organizations to **advocate for children with special needs**.
- Held **workshops to assist parents** in understanding the terminology used and prepare for district meetings and keeping binders to organize 504 plans and IEPs.
- Offered the workshops in **English and Spanish** and worked toward making the events **virtual** for families.
- **Collaborated with their legislator to co-sponsor the Dyslexia Bill** to help those students with special needs to reach their full potential.