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## ***Finalists Named for the Eighth Annual WEDU Be More Awards™***



**DECEMBER 21, 2012, Tampa, FL** — Continuing the tradition of honoring Tampa Bay area nonprofit organizations, dedicated staff, volunteers and individuals, the eighth annual **WEDU Be More Awards™** will take place on **Thursday, February 21, 2013** at the A La Carte Event Pavilion in Tampa. The annual community event will begin at 11:00am with the *Hall of Heroes* followed by an inspiring luncheon and awards ceremony starting at 12:00pm.

Utilizing a panel of impartial judges who spent five weeks reviewing applications and nominations, **WEDU**, west central Florida's primary PBS station and public media source, recognizes nonprofit organizations and individuals who have applied or were nominated for honors in a variety of categories - culminating with one organization being named *Nonprofit Organization of the Year* (2012).

### **WEDU Be More Awards™ Finalists:**

***Be More Informed, Marketing Campaign Award*** | This award recognizes the execution of creative and results-driven original marketing campaigns using multimedia platforms including, but not limited to, broadcast, print, social media and/or grassroots awareness campaigns. The applicant should demonstrate direct impact to established goals.

- **Children First, Inc.**
- **Children's Board Heart Gallery of Tampa Bay**
- **Starting Right, Now**

***Be More Entertaining, Special Events Award*** | This award recognizes the uniqueness and effectiveness of a special event and the success in achieving outlined objectives.

- **Are You Safe, Inc.**
- **Heartbeat International Foundation, Inc.**
- **Housing & Education Alliance**
- **Lazy Days Employee Foundation & Stageworks Theatre**
- **Pinellas PACE Center for Girls**
- **Wheels of Success**

***Be More Brilliant, Innovation Award*** | This award recognizes initiatives, projects, and/or services that are unique, creative, or innovative and will be presented to the organization responsible for the development, coordination, delivery, and results of the project.

- **Children’s Board Heart Gallery of Tampa Bay**
- **Circle of Friends Ministry**
- **Gulf Coast Dental**
- **Tampa Crossroads, Inc.**
- **Tampa Metropolitan Area YMCA**
- **The Pier Aquarium**

***Be More Enriched, Arts & Culture Award*** | This award recognizes culturally-based organizations that contribute to the spirit of adventure and exploration through education in the arts and culture by creating an exciting and engaging museum experience to visitors.

- **Art Center of Sarasota**
- **Asolo Repertory Theatre**

***Be More Knowledgeable, Educational Outreach Award*** | This award will recognize the organization that through a specific project offered guidance, knowledge, emotional or physical support, and/or a mentorship program aimed at improving specific aspects of community life. The project should introduce and/or conducting programs to enrich and empower the community.

- **CASA**
- **Community Tampa Bay**
- **Florida Studio Theatre, Inc.**
- **More Health, Inc.**
- **Tampa Metropolitan Area YMCA**
- **The Family Literacy Academy at Lake Wales**

***Be More Humble, The People’s Choice Award*** | This prestigious award exhibits the connection and relationship the organization has with the community and the people it serves by allowing area citizens to honor the nonprofit that they feel most exemplifies the spirit of the community.

- **Children First, Inc.**
- **Coordinated Child Care of Pinellas, Inc.**
- **Junior League of Tampa; Religious Community Services, Inc.**
- **Tampa Metropolitan Area YMCA**
- **The Pier Aquarium**

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***Be More Relevant, Best Use of Video Award*** | This award requires entrants to submit a short video that tells a compelling story about the organization that has the power to compel someone to seek services, volunteer their time, or support the organization financially.

- **Big Cat Rescue**
- **Children’s Board Heart Gallery of Tampa Bay**
- **Early Learning Coalition of Pinellas County**
- **Enable America**
- **Suncoast Hospice**

***Be More Involved, The Mason Dixon Award for Volunteerism*** | One person can make an extraordinary difference. Mason Dixon, community philanthropist and WRBQ radio personality, will ultimately choose and present the award to the most-deserving recipient.

- **Dr. Anthony Gayoso**
- **Lila Mulholland**
- **Martin Rainey**
- **Krista Sparkman**
- **Timmie Weisbaum**
- **Brent White**

***Be More Inspiring, Rising Star Award*** | This award will recognize an individual, under the age of 21, who has distinguished himself or herself in the community directly accredited to their inspiration, dedication, motivation, or acts of kindness.

- **Haley Greene**
- **Devante Robinson**
- **Jahouda Santos**
- **Hailey Scheinman**
- **Chaiara Simeoni**
- **Chanel Torres**

***Be More Entrepreneurial, Engaged Philanthropist Award*** | This award will recognize an individual who has distinguished himself or herself in the nonprofit community by engaging entrepreneurial skills to build a successful nonprofit endeavor.

- **Karen Mertes**
- **Natasha Nascimento**
- **Harold Oehler**
- **Alisa Savoretti**
- **Ginger Willms**

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***Be More Empowered, Small Nonprofit Award*** | This award will recognize the small nonprofit that best demonstrates the truth in statement that “big things come in small packages.” This award will recognize organizations with a budget under \$500,000 and despite its modest size, has a major positive impact on our community.

- **Ad 2 Tampa Bay**
- **Casey’s Cookies**
- **LAMPLighters**
- **Music Sweet Music, Inc.**
- **OASIS Network**

***Be More Giving, The Ryan Nece Foundation Power of Giving Award*** | This honor will be bestowed upon the individual or family who by the use of a simple altruistic gesture of time, talent or treasure, made a tremendous impact in someone’s life. Ryan Nece, former NFL player and founder of The Ryan Nece Foundation will review, select and ultimately announce the winner.

- **Cpl Lonnie Bingnear & Officer Michael Jasiukiewicz**
- **Mario De Armas**
- **Carole Binkowski**
- **Nurse Tammy Martin**

***Be More Encouraged, Judges’ Choice Award*** | The Judges’ Choice Award is given to an organization demonstrating an overall appeal due to its original and extraordinary approach to its respective project. This award is decided entirely by the WEDU Be More Award™ judges based on majority vote and consensus.

- **CASA**
- **Florida Studio Theatre, Inc.**
- **Ruth Eckerd**
- **Starting Right, Now**
- **Tampa Crossroads, Inc.**

***Be More Unstoppable, Nonprofit Organization of the Year*** | Selected from all submitted applications, the criteria to win this award consists of overall organizational excellence; fulfillment of the Four Commitments to the Community, including service to the organizations’ constituency, level of community impact, financial viability and embodiment of overall community goodwill.

- **Asolo Repertory Theatre**
- **CASA**
- **Children’s Board Heart Gallery of Tampa Bay**
- **Florida Studio Theatre, Inc.**
- **Gulf Coast Dental**

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Tampa Bay's own Lissette Campos, award-winning journalist and host of the *Positively Tampa Bay* segment seen weekdays on ABC Action News along with **Jack Harris**, legendary media personality and co-host the WFLA radio morning show will serve as the **2013 WEDU Be More Awards™** co-hosts.

Tickets for the **WEDU Be More Awards™** luncheon and ceremony taking place on **Thursday, February 21, 2013** at the A La Carte Event Pavilion are \$50 per person, \$600 for Community Heroes table for 10, or \$1,000 for a Philanthropist table of 10. For more information or to make reservations for the WEDU Be More Awards™ – an inspiring celebration of community goodwill – visit [wedu.org/BeMore](http://wedu.org/BeMore) or call WEDU at (800) 354-9338 ext 2241. **The deadline for reservations is February 14, 2013.**

The 2013 ceremony, celebrating outstanding achievements by individuals and nonprofit organizations in west central Florida, is supported in part by ABC Action News, The Bank of Tampa, Happy Feet Plus, The Tampa Tribune & TBO.com, Pender Newkirk and Associates, Bernard F. & Mary Ann Powell Foundation, A La Carte Event Pavilion, AVSS, and American Marketing and Mailing Services.

#### **ABOUT THE WEDU BE MORE AWARDS™**

Created by WEDU, the WEDU Be More Awards™ has become a nationally-recognized, award-winning program and special initiative of PBS stations throughout the country who can best tell local success stories of their unsung heroes, generate awareness for nonprofit organizations and celebrate the spirit of goodwill throughout their own communities. There is no charge for a nonprofit organization to apply for recognition, and the exposure provided by the PBS station throughout the program offers substantial credibility and promotion of an organizations' mission. Additionally, the Be More Awards program serves as a fundraising and community partnership event for each PBS station, also a deserving nonprofit organization in their individual community.

#### **ABOUT WEDU**

WEDU is west central Florida's leading PBS station and public media company reaching 16 counties through media platforms including on-air programming and online experiences that broaden horizons, transport and transform and open gateways to new ideas and new worlds. Financially supported by the community, the organization offers a wealth of award-winning inspirational, educational and enlightening content over a variety of multi-media platforms including: television programming, station's website, [wedu.org](http://wedu.org) and various social media platforms, monthly member magazine *Premiere*, educational outreach activities and a myriad of special events. WEDU's focus on the local community has resulted in the station being regarded as a beacon of trust for men, women and children of every walk of life no matter their age, ethnicity or socio-economic status. WEDU is a treasured community resource; a window to the world for the homebound and a vital educational source for the youngest members of society. WEDU prides itself on its position in the Tampa Bay community as a leader, partner, informed citizen and a member of PBS, the most trusted institution in America (Harris Interactive Trust QuickQuery, February 2012).

For more information, program schedules or to support WEDU visit [wedu.org](http://wedu.org); WEDU Public Media on Facebook and Twitter or call 813.254.9338.

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