



## **Boca Raton Historical Society & Museum**

### **Celebrate at the Boca Raton Historical Society's 23rd Annual Walk of Recognition on November 6, 2019**

Boca Raton, FL -- The Boca Raton Historical Society & Museum will be honoring four distinguished individuals and one noteworthy institution, for the upcoming annual Walk of Recognition celebration. Now in its 23rd year, the Walk of Recognition award ceremony and reception will be presented by the BRHS&M on Wednesday, November 6, 2019. This popular event will run from 6:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m., at The Addison, in Boca Raton. This year's induction ceremony and celebration will recognize Arthur Adler, Kerry B. Koen, the late George Barbar, the late Dr. Merrilee R. Middleton, and Florida Atlantic University. These individuals, and this institution, have truly served in the interest of the community and have enriched the lives of the citizens of Boca Raton. The ceremony will also include recognition of all past inductees to the Walk of Recognition. This year's individual winners will receive a special Walk of Fame medallion and this year's institutional winner will receive a special desk-top award. The Walk of Recognition event's Presenting Sponsors are Marta and Jim Batmasian; the Committee Co-Chairs are Marta Batmasian and Joyce DeVita; and the Committee Members are Denise Alman and Ann Schauer.

Instituted in 1997, the Walk of Recognition award has previously been presented to 94 deserving members of the community. Each inductee's name will also be inscribed in a granite plaque on the "Walk," or on the Wall of Honor (for those who are deceased), which will be set into a commemorative monument--featuring the mission of the program--beneath the Mizner statue, in Royal Palm Place, in Boca Raton. The plaques are underwritten by Marta Batmasian, as part of her commitment to her community.

BRHS&M Executive Director Mary Csar states, "The Walk of Recognition is my favorite event because we have the opportunity to honor the outstanding individuals and institutions who have built our community. We are proud to recognize people from all walks of life, along with a wide range of institutions, who have made a positive impact on the quality of life here."

The reception and the induction ceremony, at The Addison, is free for this year's honorees and for all past inductees. After the ceremony, and the presentation of medallions and desk-top awards, guests will be able to enjoy a delicious dinner-by-the-bite, at a wide variety of food stations, a host of refreshing libations, entertainment, and dancing under the stars in the lovely courtyard. The Addison is located at 2 East Camino Real in Boca Raton.

Tickets--which are available to residents and visitors--are \$85, per person, and can be purchased by calling the BRHS&M at 561.395.6766, Ext.101, or by going online to [www.bocahistory.org](http://www.bocahistory.org).

## **2019 WALK OF RECOGNITION WINNERS**

Arthur Adler is being recognized for his outstanding work, over the past ten years, with the Boca West Children's Foundation. After co-founding the BWCF in 2010, he has been active as the chairman since its inception. Adler is proud that the BWCF reaches 5,000 children in need, each day, and has distributed over \$8 million since 2010. The Foundation helps underserved kids by providing funds to 24 non--profit children's organizations in Palm Beach County. He has also developed 20 years of scholarship funding at Lynn University. Adler has been involved in numerous local charities and organizations, including the Boca Raton Regional Hospital, the Boca Raton Police Athletic League, Boca Helping Hands, and KidSafe Foundation. He is also on the board of the Kelly/Strul Emerging Scholars Program at Florida Atlantic University.

Kerry B. Koen had a distinguished 38-year career as a professional firefighter and fire officer, including a term as Fire Chief in Boca Raton. He is proud to have pioneered the installation of fire sprinklers in high-rise buildings; the development of the city's patient transport program (which ensured continuity and quality of care by skilled paramedics); and the expanded use of ladder trucks that also pumped water (which lowered insurance premiums). He also established many community outreach programs, including Smart Heart, with Boca Raton Community Hospital, which provides blood draws and health screenings and CPR classes, to promote community wellness. Additionally, Koen served on the Zoning Board of Adjustment and the City of Boca Raton Planning and Zoning Board and he specialized in life safety aspects of proposed building plans.

The late George Barbar founded The Barbar Group, in 1975 in Boca Raton, and was a pioneer in creating innovative and attractive commercial and community-oriented residential real estate projects. His company has been widely recognized as a leading force in the growth and development of South Palm Beach County. Some of Barbar's most notable accomplishments include Woodfield Country Club, Regency Court, and Woodfield Hunt Club. He served on the boards of the Florida Atlantic University Foundation, the Greater Boca Raton Chamber of Commerce, and Lynn University, and he was appointed as a State Commissioner of the Florida High Speed Rail. He was involved in numerous charities and organizations and he won many awards, including the Spirit of America from the U.S. Olympic Committee.

The late Dr. Merrilee R. Middleton was widely recognized as a pioneer in local mental health counseling and her contributions have impacted many lives in the community. A teacher, a counselor, a psychologist, and a leader of volunteers, Middleton was the force--with the late Dr. Elizabeth Faulk--behind the Faulk Center for Group Counseling. She was appointed by the Governor to the National Summit for America's Promise and she is a founder of Boca Raton's Promise. The latter achieved three national firsts: Hospital of Promise; College of Promise; and University of Promise. Middleton educated individuals, of all ages, on the effects of stress in the lives of children and she organized and implemented peer counseling programs in Palm Beach and Broward Counties.

Florida Atlantic University was founded in 1964 and has grown into a major state institution, currently serving more than 30,000 undergraduate and graduate students, with an estimated annual economic impact of \$6.3 billion. In addition to bringing in world-class faculty and students, to live and work in the area, FAU's Tech Runway program has helped to grow a number of local startup businesses that have created high-paying jobs in the city. FAU also has one of the largest percentages of students, of non-traditional age, among the state universities. Whether through creating jobs, attracting new residents, educating local professionals, or bringing national attention to Boca Raton through major sporting events, FAU has a long history of service to the city.

### **Boca Raton Historical Society & Museum**

The mission and the purpose of the Boca Raton Historical Society & Museum is to collect, preserve, and present information and artifacts, relevant to the past and evolving history of Boca Raton, and to maintain a visible role in education and advocacy of historic preservation in our community.