



CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE: Roy and Lea Black at the 15th Blacks' Annual Gala at the Fontainebleau Miami Beach in 2010; I Have a Dream Foundation president Stephanie Trump mentoring a student; snack time during the I Have a Dream after-school program at Hibiscus Elementary School in Miami Gardens; Women of Tomorrow's Marisa Toccin (LEFT) and Jennifer Valoppi

Miami Is a Town of Giving

Philanthropy is no longer just a social tool here—it has become our way of life. **By Roy Black**

Once the bold headlines spoke of Miami's race riots, drug trafficking, hit men and Paradise Lost, but no longer. Now they speak of a city, arising Lazarus-like, led by a select group of social changers. This is a new breed of entrepreneur, one not obsessed with the bottom line but with a social mission. They are not patrons of your grandmother's charity or the fashionable ladies who lunch. They use businesslike discipline to tenaciously attack a crisis. They harness their skills not for profit-making but to improve education and healthcare and eradicate poverty.

Bobby Kennedy issued a clarion call: "Each time a man stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope.... Those ripples build a current that can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance." Who are Miami's ripples of hope?

Stephanie Trump (I Have A Dream Foundation); Tracy Wilson Mourning (Honey Shine Mentoring Program) and Alonzo Mourning (Overtown Youth Center); Nicholas Buoniconti (The Miami Project to Cure Paralysis); Emilio and Gloria Estefan (Gloria Estefan Foundation); Michael Capponi (obsessed with rebuilding Haiti); Barton G. Weiss (The Barton G. Kids Hear Now Foundation); Jennifer Valoppi and Marisa Toccin (Women of Tomorrow); and many others.

I also witness my wife Lea's dedication firsthand. She's the creator and force behind The Blacks' Annual Gala and The Consequences Foundation, and uses her decades of experience in marketing and infomercials for fashioning new approaches to old problems, with innovative fundraising and efforts to educate and rescue kids.

These new entrepreneurs see a problem and want to fix it, they see suffering and want to

relieve it, they see a world in distress and want to heal it. They aren't doing it because they are told to, they do it because something in them drives them to it. They do it because they must. They don't just live an average life. They don't just pass time. They are here to make an impact.

And we need more of them. Here's why: Every 3.5 seconds someone dies of hunger; every 11 seconds someone dies of AIDS; every 15 seconds a child dies from a waterborne illness; 2 million children die each year from a lack of vaccines; 11 million children die each year before age five; there are 153 million orphans in the world; 1.1 billion people have no access to clean water; 2.6 billion people don't have basic sanitation. These are shocking statistics. Bobby Kennedy hoped that we would use "a shared determination to wipe away the unnecessary sufferings of our fellow human beings." Together, as conscientious Miamians, we can start a ripple.