

Women in Business awards: 28 named Volusia-Flagler's 'most influential.' Here's who won.

Clayton Park

The Daytona Beach News-Journal

DAYTONA BEACH — As CEO of the Family Life Center in Bunnell, Trish Giaccone oversees a social services agency that aids victims of domestic and sexual abuse. On Wednesday, she was recognized for those efforts by being named the Volusia-Flagler area's "Most Influential Woman of the Year."

The following are this year's other "Women in Business" honorees: Abha Bhandair, Amanda Sarnes, April Ritz, Carmen Ruiz, Colleen Girvan, Dana Syens,



Jenneffer Pulapaka, Jessica Scott, Katy Tarcco, Larissa Mavronas-Kovacs, Leslie Ann Bass, Megan Tully, Michaelene Achorn, Monaca Campbell, Muriel Fuqua, Patrizia Rubin, Samantha Tribble, Sarah Beliza Tucker, Sheena Joyce, and Toni N. Wright. A special section featuring this year's "Women in Business" honorees and award winners will appear in

Sunday's print edition of The News-Journal. It will also be available online at <https://news-journalonline.gannettcontests.com/2021-Women-In-Business-Winners/gallery/305381708/>.

The award was presented to Giaccone during a News-Journal-sponsored luncheon to honor 28 "Women in Business" honorees for their accomplishments within as well as their involvement in the community.

"I'm humbled and surprised at receiving this award," said Giaccone who added that she declined to address the audience because she was "speechless."



Giaccone will also receive a \$500 donation from The News-Journal to be given to the charity of her choice. "My charity of choice is going to be the Family Life Center because the women who are there need it. It's such a necessary donation."

The award was presented to Giaccone by Julie Turpin of Brown & Brown Insurance, who was last



year's "Most Influential Woman of the Year" winner. "This award is given to the woman who exemplifies overall outstanding leadership, professional

accomplishments, and service to our community," Turpin said.

In addition to leading the Family Life Center, Giaccone is a psychotherapist who works directly with people needing mental health counseling at The House Next Door. She also spearheaded a fund-raising campaign to keep the center's emergency shelter open and helped it receive state certification as a rape crisis center. Most recently, the center added a kennel for pets of victims of domestic abuse. In addition, she volunteers both at Palm Coast United Methodist Church and Flagler County Schools.

How the winners were chosen

Nominations for Wednesday's awards were submitted by News-Journal readers. A panel made up of last year's "Women in Business" special award winners made the final selections.

The event at the Hard Rock Hotel in Daytona Beach also featured a keynote address by Shannon Miller, the most decorated Olympic gymnast in United States history. Miller is a seven-time Olympic Games medal winner. She also is a cancer survivor who recently marked her 10th anniversary of being cancer-free



Miller stressed the importance of visualizing one's goals, maintaining a positive attitude even in the face of adversity, and committing to "giving 100%" in anything done, whether it's big or small.

"Those little things really do add up," she said.

Seven others receive special awards

In addition to Giaccone, seven other women received special awards:

Brittany Gloersen of Landis Graham French law firm in DeLand won "Civic Leader of the Year." Lori Gillooly, CEO of Habitat for Humanity of Greater Volusia County, won "Nonprofit Woman of the Year." Samantha Crouch, executive director of the Holly Hill Chamber of Commerce, won "Rising Star of the Year." Belkys Stallings, director of training and diversity initiatives at Security First Insurance in Ormond Beach, won "Private-Sector Woman of the Year." Trish McEver, president of Flying Z Stables in Port Orange, won "Small Businesswoman of the Year." Helga van Eckert, economic development director for Volusia County, won "Public-Sector Woman of the Year." Cydney Reagan, broker/owner of Reagan Realty in Ormond Beach, won "Most Charitable Woman of the Year."