



Hearts of Gold

When charities are asked about their most successful auction lots or prizes, the answer is frequently a piece of exquisite jewelry. Local designers and purveyors are a giving group. Meet four of the Naples community's generous gems.

AMANDA JARON | A JARON FINE JEWELRY

While recently in the spotlight for launching the Glitter Foundation in February, a nonprofit that aims to help children through art therapy and education, Amanda Jaron has deep roots in charitable causes.

Early in her career at Avon, she crafted an annual breast cancer awareness piece, as well as the company's Heart of America pin, which raised \$7 million to support the victims' families from the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. The pace of her charitable efforts has only increased since she set up shop in Naples in 2004. Her early philanthropic efforts locally included Lucite Pink Ribbon Cuffs and Pink Rosebud pins to help the Cancer Alliance of Naples. Jaron makes them now in a rainbow of colors (left) to suit other charities.

Jaron is trained as a goldsmith and known for fine jewelry, but many of her charity pieces are less than \$100, allowing more people to give back. Since 2010, Jaron has produced 1,000-plus rings for PACE Center for Girls at a \$99 price, "which means there are 1,000 people in Collier and Lee counties wearing a \$99 ring who are on a mission to talk about PACE," she says. Jaron also co-chaired the David Lawrence Center gala this year and created a pair of gold and diamond earrings for the event.

WILLIAM BOYAJIAN | PORT ROYAL JEWELERS

As a native of Naples, William Boyajian sees his hometown as one that cultivates community responsibility and continued camaraderie through heartfelt service. As jewelry designer and owner of Port Royal Jewelers, Boyajian has partnered over the years with numerous nonprofit organizations that speak to his heart.

Every year he commits to designing exquisite jewelry for at least one organization in each of these charitable categories: children's health, cancer, education for underprivileged families, animal shelter, environmental stewardship, endangered animal protection, the arts, and disaster relief.

To decide what jewelry to design and donate to the selected nonprofits, Boyajian first works to understand each organization's mission. He connects with the staff and board of directors, and then creates a one-of-a-kind design that represents the cause and serves as a memento of his heartfelt support. This year he partnered with the Conservancy of Southwest Florida (for which he created the stunning ring shown above), the Garden of Hope and Courage, Opera Naples, the Guadalupe Center and the Naples Players, among others.

Looking ahead to next season, Boyajian says he will be working with 10 charities, and the Guadalupe Center has asked Port Royal Jewelers to be a sponsor for its event.

"We all have the ability to make a difference to individuals or a group within our community," Boyajian says. "The important thing is to inspire everyone to do the best that they can. My objective is not so much an amount to raise, but the ability to inspire through selflessness."



GARY AND KATHY BIGHAM | BIGHAM JEWELERS

The Bighams approach philanthropy with a "make-it-happen" mind-set.

Gary Bigham quietly devotes time and resources to many causes. He was featured as one of *AP's* "2015 Super Men" and has been honored by both Champions for Learning as a Man of Distinction and the local YMCA as Coach of the Year. Kathy has mentored and supported a teenage girl through the Guardian ad Litem Program for more than four years, and she leads the company's annual Christmas gift collections for Youth Haven and The Shelter for Abused Women & Children. The couple encourages employees to volunteer, often on the company's time. Their namesake jewelry company supported 34 area organizations in 2013 and 2014. Beneficiaries of Bigham Jewelers' initiatives include medical facilities like Golisano Children's Hospital and Naples Community Hospital, cultural institutions, such as Gulfshore Playhouse; children's causes, including the Boys & Girls Club of Collier County and Hedline Academies; and educational institutions, such as Fun Time Early Childhood Academy. For Florida Gulf Coast University's Athletics Department 2013 fundraiser the store donated an 18-karat white gold, sapphire and diamond bangle (pictured) and matching earrings, valued at \$14,300. The store also hosts event and jewelry shopping experiences, purchases ads and tables for numerous events; and opens its conference room to nonprofits' meetings.

"Good business and good corporate citizenship are closely interlinked," Kathy says.



DANNY GOVBERG | YAMRON JEWELERS

Four generations of Govberg family jewelers instituted a culture of philanthropic support in the Philadelphia community where they have been in business since 1922. So when Danny Govberg, a part-time Neapolitan, took ownership of Yamron Jewelers in 2012, he made it his mission to continue the Naples store's long-standing tradition of philanthropy in this area.

Last year, he established the Yamron Jewelers Charitable Giving program. It began with a donation of 18 stunning rings by celebrated designer Marina B. of Bulgari family fame, each valued at \$11,000, to 18 organizations. Two styles of her Twin Ring were chosen, featuring 18-karat yellow and white gold with amethysts and either blue topaz or citrine stones.

"I would be remiss to not discuss the significance of the number 18," Govberg says. "In Hebrew, 18 is the numeric value of the letters of *chai*, which means life, a value at the core of this initiative." A ring was added later for the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, bringing the total to 19.

The goal of donating the rings was to amp up excitement for the charities and raise significant dollars at each nonprofit's major fundraiser. The program's recipients represent a broad range of causes, from preserving nature (including Conservancy of Southwest Florida), to youth concerns (such as Boys & Girls Club of Collier County), to supporting the arts (including Naples Philharmonic League). Health-care nonprofits also benefited; in March, the Bosom Buddies Breast Cancer Support Inc.'s raffle for the Marina B ring raised \$10,000.

The inaugural year of the Yamron Charitable Giving Program was a big success, Govberg says, adding, "We are looking forward to building upon this foundation throughout the coming year." —K.S.

