



Contact Lynda Weinstein
E-mail lweinstein@fkcs.org
Phone 305.852.4246 x 222 or 305.775.9920

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 24, 2020

CHILDREN'S SHELTER PRESENTS "BEST KEYS EATS" WINNER AWARD

KEY WEST, FL - The Florida Keys Children's Shelter, serving more than 500 youths and families annually throughout the Keys, presented owners, Mike and Heather Barnes of *Mangia Pasta Café*, with the winning "Best Keys Eats 2020" virtual chefs' challenge award.

Last month's inaugural cooking competition involved chefs and restaurants that are members of the Keys' six chambers of commerce. Participants submitted a 3-minute video of themselves preparing their signature Keys dish. Chefs and restaurants were asked to promote the fundraiser on their social media platforms, encouraging fans and followers to donate to the nonprofit organization.

The panel of judges included Heather Carruthers (Mayor of Monroe County), Teri Johnston (Mayor of Key West), Steve Cook (Mayor of Marathon), Mike Forster (Mayor of Islamorada), Mark Charles (Past President of the Key Largo Chamber of Commerce), Margie Smith (President of the Ocean Reef Chamber of Commerce), and Leonel Dieujuste, the shelter's executive chef.

Serving the Florida Keys for 35 years, FKCS is the only licensed emergency shelter for children ages up to 18 and the only federally-funded drop-in center for runaway youth up to age 21 in the Keys.

"With the cancelation of crucial fundraising events, we were inspired to create a virtual experience that not only benefited our organization, but helped highlight our amazing Florida Keys restaurants," said Ben Kemmer, chief executive officer of the shelter. "One of the best things about living in the Florida Keys is eating the delicious foods prepared by our talented chefs. We were excited to team up with them for a great cause and will make this an annual event every May."

FKCS, with facilities in Tavernier and Key West, provides an emergency shelter, group homes, community-based counseling, respite services and meals, and a drop-in center for homeless and runaway youth.

For information about “Best Keys Eats 2020,” visit fkcs.org or call 305-852-4246.

About the Florida Keys Children’s Shelter

“Safe Kids, Strong Families, and a Healthy Community” drives every facet of Florida Keys Children’s Shelter programming. Serving Monroe County for 35 years, the nonprofit changes the lives of more than 500 youth annually with its free programs including an emergency shelter, group homes, community-based counseling, and drop-in center for homeless and runaway youth. For information, visit www.FKCS.org or call (305) 852.4246.

###

Photo Caption: BEST KEYS EATS 2020 Winner – Mangia Pasta Café. (Left to right: Mike Barnes - Owner, Glenna Barnes, MG Barnes and Heather Barnes - Owner.) Photo by Evan Weinstein.