

As Seen In...

Our City Pembroke Pines

COMMUNITY NEWS

BOOM! POW! KAPOW!

BY BEVERLY PERKINS

KAPOW! The fun word is often seen in cartoon format meaning a “cry out” of satisfaction, awesomeness, or accomplishment is well-suited for the organization bearing its’ same acronym. Kids and the Power of Work (KAPOW) certainly has accomplished a lot in its 28 years! The awesome group of individuals and community partnerships under the direction of Learning for Success/KAPOW President John Casbarro has grown immensely and successfully in the past couple of decades.

“The KAPOW program brings volunteers into schools and students into the workplace to help them connect their school experiences with its application in the workplace and life,” explained Casbarro.

Most recently, the outstanding organization recognized the City of Pembroke Pines for their nineteen-year partnership. This celebration included Mayor Ortis, the city manager, commissioners, city officials, the many school partners, and of course, the many volunteers who supported the 370 students from Pines/FSU Charter, Pines Charter West, and Silver Palms Elementary. It was also announced that the program will be launched at Pembroke Pines Charter East this year.

“I couldn’t be prouder of our staff and volunteers for partnering with KAPOW because this program truly changes children’s lives,” said Mayor Frank C. Ortis. “To discover and learn about all the various jobs in our community opens new worlds and opportunities for students who might otherwise not be aware of what’s out there. And, it’s a lot of fun for all involved.”

“Last year in KAPOW I learned valuable skills related to communication and team building. I also learned how these things help in a job and life. It will help me to succeed in school and in the future,” expressed Allyson Mendieta, a former 5th Grade KAPOW student.

The celebration concluded with an award ceremony and a legendary video created by Johnny Mullin from the PPF. The *KAPOW School Coordinator of the Year* was presented to Pines/FSU Charter teacher Lauren Hindmarsh. The *KAPOW Volunteer of the*

Year award was given to Andrew Feldman. City departments who hosted field trips for students also received awards and were accepted by Captain Cerino and Chief Picarello. Christina Sorensen accepted the award on behalf of the Cultural Arts Center. Lastly, to express KAPOW’s appreciation to the City of Pembroke Pines, Mayor Ortis, and the Commissioners were honored with the final award of the evening.

“We want to thank Charles Dodge for his leadership in initiating this program with the City, Aner Gonzalez, who helps coordinate our partnership, and the heads of all the Departments of the City who have supported the participation of employees in their departments throughout the years. It’s an honor and a privilege to work with the City and these partners,” added Casbarro.

