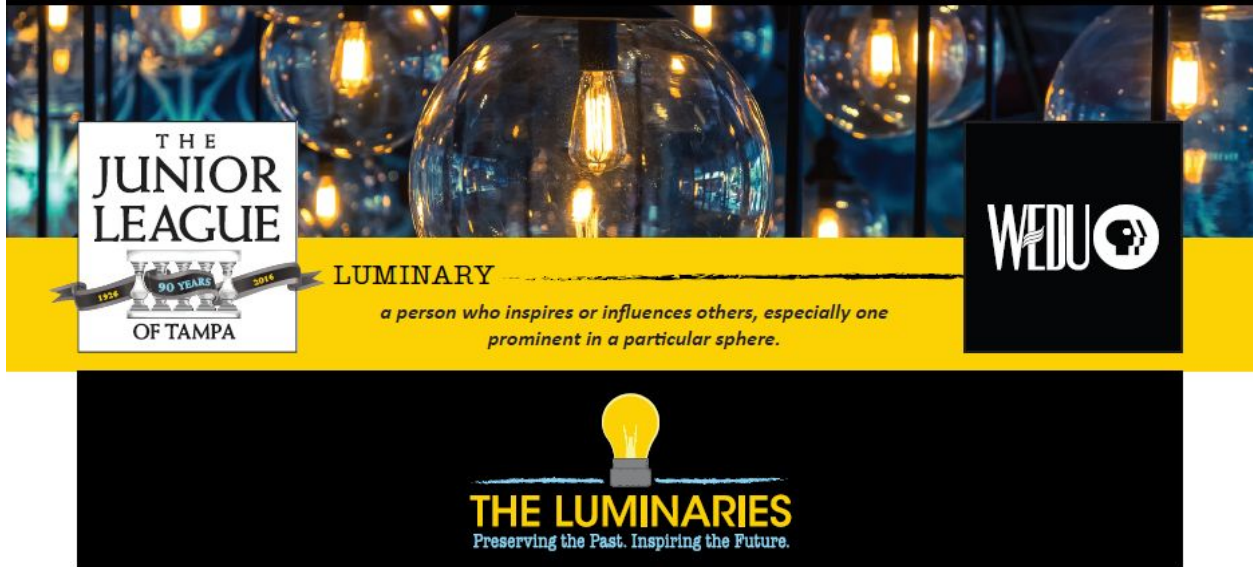


THE LUMINARIES 2017



Announcing the 2017 Luminary Award Honorees

The Honorable Betty Castor



Elizabeth "Betty" Bowe Castor, a native of Glassboro, New Jersey, moved to Florida in 1966, where she became a politician, a proponent of educational causes, and the first female president of the University of South Florida. Castor's career has spanned continents, bridged social and political gaps, and afforded numerous awards, honors and appointments.

Betty Castor's life is a story of firsts - first to lead an all-female climbing expedition to the top of Mt. Kilimanjaro; the first woman elected to the Hillsborough County Commission and the first woman elected to the Florida Cabinet. Besides being the mother of two daughters who followed her into politics, and a son who's a judge in Palm Beach County, Castor has been a teacher in Miami, a state senator from Tampa, a League of Women Voters pioneer and the first woman president of the University of South Florida. Castor supports several USF programs including endowments in Music, Women's Athletics, the College of Public Health, Women in Leadership & Philanthropy (WLP), the College of Arts and Science, the USF Library and WUSF. Currently, she chairs the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board.

Many women hold leadership roles today, but in Florida and in our community, Castor helped break the glass ceiling. She remains an insightful, engaged, committed community leader and inspiring role model to many.

The Honorable Judge Katherine Essrig



The Honorable Judge Essrig, a Tampa native and graduate of Duke University for undergraduate and UF Law for law school, presides in Hillsborough's family dependency and child welfare court and has drawn state and national attention for her work on and off the bench.

She has served as a systemic change agent in establishing services and programming for children and families through her representation on the Children's Board of Hillsborough County for fifteen years. Judge Essrig serves on numerous boards, panels, workgroups and committees locally, statewide and nationally regarding the welfare of children. As the need has arisen in more recent years, Judge Essrig has also been involved in the handling of unaccompanied minor cases and immigrant juvenile cases. Judge Essrig's commitment to the children of Hillsborough County has been influencing reforms in the court system, child welfare, early learning and prevention and intervention programming and has resulted in decreased rates of repeat maltreatment, innovative leadership in the establishment of early childhood court, and a demonstrated commitment to collaboration which resulted in achieving more successful outcomes for children.

J. Thomas Touchton



J. Thomas Touchton is Chairman of The Witt-Touchton Company LLC, a private investment company in Tampa, Florida. He was born in Dade City, Florida, has lived in Tampa since August, 1964 and is married to the former Lavinia Lee Witt of Tampa.

Mr. Touchton served for 23 years as a member of the Boards of Directors of TECO Energy, Inc. and its principal subsidiary, Tampa Electric Company. He also served for 25 years as a trustee or director of more than two dozen investment companies sponsored by Merrill Lynch & Co.

Mr. Touchton was the Founding Chairman from 1989-2000 of the Tampa Bay History Center which opened in downtown Tampa in January, 2009 as the most comprehensive history museum on the West Coast of Florida, and he continues to serve on its Board of Trustees. He chaired the History Center's successful \$32 million Capital Campaign which provided private sector support for the building, exhibits and endowment. Mr. Touchton's contribution through the Tampa Bay History Center lays a strong foundation around community identity.