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HEA

Voorhees family receives award

The Fiorentino family of Voorhees was recently honored with Goodwill's coveted Helms Award at the nonprofit agency's 2008 Annual Awards Dinner & Silent Auction. The fundraising event, which took place at Tavistock Country Club, also commemorated Goodwill's 60th year of turning on the power of work for local residents with disabilities and disadvantaging conditions.

Tina and Rocco Fiorentino are the founders of The Little Rock Foundation, a 501 (c)(3), 100 percent volunteer driven organization dedicated to improving the lives of children who are blind or visually impaired. It was established in 1997 after the birth of their son, Rocco.

Born four months premature, Rocco's only lasting medical condition is blindness. After finding very few resources for families of children with visual impairments, the Fiorentino's encouraged guests at their annual Halloween party to make donations to support what would become The Little Rock Foundation.

Through the Foundation, they established resource centers packed with information on services available to youngsters with visual impairments at CHOP and Wills Eye Hospital; they started Camp Little Rock, a one-week summer camp program at Camp Ockinickon in Medford; and they formed a scholarship fund. Beyond services, the Fiorentino's lobbied the NJ State Legislature for millions of dollars worth of services, including Braille education.

Today, Rocco is an accomplished musician and pianist with gigs all over the country, an honor roll student and a lobbyist in Trenton. The Little Rock Foundation remains 100 percent volunteer driven.

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Rocco Sr. is the Chairman; and Tina is Executive Director. Every bit of money they raise goes straight into services.

For these accomplishments and many others, the Fiorentino family was recognized with Goodwill's most prestigious honor, the Helms Award.

CBS-3 Anchor and Guest MC Larry Mendte and Goodwill President & CEO Mark Boyd presented the Fiorentino Family with the Helms Award, calling them "remarkable human beings who do good things from the bottom of their hearts."

Founded in 1948, Goodwill Industries of Southern New Jersey is a nonprofit, community-based organization. Its mission is to provide education, job training and employment services that prepare individuals with disabilities or disadvantaging conditions for competitive employment in the community.

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