



Becky and Edward Stewart Shea, III are the 2019 Leaders In Philanthropy Award honorees for Iberia Parish
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Becky and Stewart were guided by their parents' philosophy to support nonprofit organizations, churches, and schools in their community.

"My dad and mom were always generous to others," said Stewart. "I truly believe that charitable giving is in the DNA of most individuals and that when a person has the means to give, either time, talent, or treasure, they always do."

The Jerry Shea and Eddie (Buddy) Shea families operated The Bayou Companies for four generations before selling in 2009, at which time the companies had over 700 employees. The company encouraged other businesses to spread philanthropy.

Through Gerami School of Dance, Becky's mother promoted the arts. Today, Becky frequently encounters former students who show their appreciation of the life lessons they experienced through being taught by her mother. Her father gave many years of his time to Lafayette Mardi Gras.

"My parents Frank and Merry Joy Gerami inspired myself and my siblings to give back to the community," said Becky. "It's what Stewart and I love to do."

Through these examples, Becky and Stewart contribute to many arts organizations such as the Iberia Performing Arts League, Iberia Cultural Resources Association, and Bayou Teche Museum.

Becky and Stewart are passionate about supporting humanitarian organizations such as St. Francis Diner, Solomon House, and the Disch Declouet Social Service Center.

"Organizations such as these do essential work along with many volunteers on the front lines," said Becky.

As products of Catholic education, they have supported Catholic High School in New Iberia and Sacred Heart Academy in Grand Coteau with their capital campaigns and Dancing with the Stars annual fundraisers.

Their generosity extends to their local churches, the Carmelite Monastery, and the Bishop's Services Appeal.

Since 2000, Becky and Stewart have been annual contributors to Community Foundation of Acadiana in Lafayette and the Iberia Parish Foundation, an affiliate of CFA.