

## **TONY SALADINO - ALICE B. TOMPKINS COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD WINNER**

Tonight, it is my pleasure to introduce this incredible community-minded person who was nominated for the 2019 Alice B. Tompkins Community Service Award.

This year's nominee is a life-long resident of Hillsborough County who attended area schools and obtained a degree from the University of Tampa.

This locale became home and it was clear that many things make up a community. Neighborhoods, recreation areas, cultural opportunities, restaurants, churches, and schools are critical components to the growth of families. The needs of early Brandon residents were a concern.

Not one to sit on the sidelines, an idea was hatched, and, action was taken to fill the void. Experience and connections created the opportunity for success in Brandon.

Numerous area schools benefited from the direction demonstrated by this coach. In addition, Special Olympics and various anti-drug campaigns (Walk Against Drugs, and the Children's Gasparilla Parade Against Drugs) became causes which utilized the support of this teacher.

Baseball has played an important part in the life of this year's recipient. Playing the game was more than a pastime. Being a member of several leagues is indicative of the talent and passion for the game for this nominee. The positions of Shortstop, 2nd Base, and 3rd Base were all played at one time or another. Claiming this man as part of their team were the Sandlot League (Tampa Clippers), American Legion (Posts 5 and 248), and the Municipal Semi-Pro Leagues

Work did play a role in defining the character of this recipient, after all, there was a family to support. The City of Tampa hired him and not to be left out, Hillsborough County Parks & Rec employed him as well. Teaching and coaching at Forest Hills and Seffner Elementary Schools, to name a few, gave him the chance to educate impressionable minds.

Generosity and drive was recognized in multiple public accolades. Awards from the Tampa Sports Club, University of Tampa Alumni Achievement

committee, and Who's Who Among American Teachers only begin to scratch the surface of recognition for him. He was featured in *Sports Illustrated's* Hometown Hero and in the Hometown News in *Florida Sports Fan* magazine.

His wife Bertha, also assisted him in improving the Greater Brandon area. Together, they are known for establishing the complex on Bryan Road.

I am honored to present the Alice B. Tompkins Community Service award to my first baseball coach, Tony Saladino. Congratulations!