

# Delray Forum

March 9, 2016

## Unsung Heroes Volunteer supports Place of Hope's children

BY JENNIFER  
SHAPIRO-SACKS  
Special Correspondent

**Name:** Tiel Vilanni  
**Age:** 39  
**Residence:** Delray Beach  
**Birthplace:** Allendale,  
S.C.  
**Family:** Husband Tony,  
daughters McKnight and  
McKellan  
**Career:** RN for 16 years,  
but currently working with  
XPE Sports

**Organization:** Place of  
Hope at the Leighan and Da-  
vid Rinker campus in Boca  
Raton is the largest chil-  
dren's organization in Palm  
Beach County that provides  
a full continuum of care for  
children and youth in need.  
Place of Hope provides fos-  
ter care, family outreach and  
intervention, transitional  
housing and support as well  
as other services.

**How long have you been  
volunteering there?**

A little over a year.

**Why do you volunteer?**

I volunteer because I was  
raised by family who always  
found ways to help in our  
community. There were nu-  
merous Christmases that my  
family had less to give one  
another because my dad had  
given Christmas to several  
other families. It was just  
understood that you give to  
and think of others before  
yourselves.

**Why did you choose this  
organization?**

I chose Place of Hope be-  
cause of their dedication and  
support for children in fos-  
ter care to have the utmost  
opportunity in the areas of  
education, community in-  
volvement, socialization and  
overall well-being.

**Describe your volun-  
teer role.**

I am an Angel Mom with  
Place of Hope, which means  
I do anything as small as



Tiel Vilanni has been involved with Place of Hope for more than a year.

showing up at an event to  
show support for the organi-  
zation, to cooking for the  
kids, cooking with the kids,  
hosting pizza night for the  
kids at XPE Sports, helping  
kids with homework, serv-  
ing on committees within  
Place of Hope and any small  
need that arises. The beauty  
of being an Angel Mom is it  
only takes as much or as lit-  
tle time as I have available.  
It's amazing what time I  
have found when it comes to  
these kids.

**What are your goals  
when you volunteer?**

Talking with them, get-  
ting to know their strengths  
and interests, and then hear-  
ing of all their defeats and  
setbacks. It reminds me how  
capable and resilient these  
kids are. They are so  
thoughtful, giving, sweet,  
funny, talented and smart  
despite their situation

**What does your organi-  
zation need?**

We also need to raise  
awareness in our communi-  
ty about the needs of chil-  
dren right here in our back-  
yard. There is no such thing  
as too small a donation of  
money nor time.

**Are any special events**

**coming up?**

Feb. 6, Men's All-Star  
Dinner and Auction at XPE  
Sports Academy in Boca,  
time to be announced. Feb.  
7, Super Bowl Sunday Family  
BBQ at Place of Hope at 12  
and April 21, Angel Moms  
Third Annual Brunch and  
Benefit at the Boynton  
Woman's Club at 11 a.m.

**Is there a specific mem-  
orable moment that  
stands out to you during  
your time volunteering?**

I have had so many mo-  
ments with these children  
that remind me why I vol-  
unteer. I almost feel selfish  
for volunteering because I  
always feel like I got more  
out of it than they did.

Visit [placeofhoperinke-  
r.org](http://placeofhoperinke-<br/>r.org) or call 561-483-0962.

*If you know a Palm Beach  
County resident who  
deserves recognition for  
volunteer work, email the  
information to  
[tan90210@aol.com](mailto:tan90210@aol.com).*

*Nominations should include  
volunteer's name, city of  
residence, a contact name  
and phone number, and a  
brief description of why this  
person deserves special  
recognition.*