



The Stuart News

SCRIPPS TREASURE COAST NEWSPAPERS

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■ **Charles L. Bender III**, founding executive director of **Place of Hope**, was welcomed as a new member to the **Economic Council of Martin County, Inc.** He joins the group on addressing issues that affect the local economy. Since 1985, the council's mission has been to provide a healthy economy and improve the quality of life for Martin County residents. As Place of Hope's executive director since 1999, Bender has guided the operations of the largest child welfare organization in Palm Beach County, which recently expanded into the Treasure Coast. Bender's ability to merge private and corporate phi-



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Charles Bender III

lanthropy with the needs of local foster children has enabled Place of Hope to serve hundreds of children daily on its campuses.

"On the Treasure Coast, Place of Hope has already reached nearly 25 licensed foster homes, and we have cared for 38 foster children in our homes," Bender said. Place of Hope (<http://www.placcofhope.com>) was named one of "11 Top-Rated Charities That Changed The World in 2014" by Charity Navigator and The Huffington Post. It is a faith-based, state-licensed children's organization that provides family-style foster care (emergency and long-term); family outreach and intervention; maternity care; safety for domestic minor sexually trafficked victims; transitional housing and support services; and foster care recruitment