IN MEMORY OF ELLY VILANO CHOVEL, FOUNDING MEMBER OF OPERATION PEDRO PAN GROUP, INC.

July 25, 2010 - 10:16pm | by administrator

We pay tribute to the memory of our friend and Pedro Pan sister Elly Vilano Chovel, who was a founding member of Operation Pedro Pan Group, Inc. in 1991 and was its driving force until her passing in August of 2007. Elly selflessly dedicated a substantial part of her life to the organization and its mission and is sorely missed by all.

Elly served on the first Board of Directors and later was the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees of Operation Pedro Pan Group, Inc. Previously, Elly served on the Board of Directors of Catholic Charities and became a Trustee. Her innumerable volunteer work included the boards of the Miami Ballet Society, Miami City Ballet, Community Relations Board, Creced, Catholic Home for Children, and Boys Town of Florida.

Elly was an extraordinary woman that was respected and admired by all for her contributions to the community and for the leadership she provided to programs that benefit children in need. One of Elly’s projects helped fulfill Monsignor Bryan O. Walsh’s dream by raising funds for Catholic Charities’ new home for unaccompanied minors in South Florida. The dream was fulfilled on September 20, 2006, with the ribbon cutting ceremony of the Monsignor Bryan O. Walsh Children’s Village and Memorial Square.

For her selfless dedication and commitment, Elly received the J.C. Penney Golden Rule Award (1995) and was named Woman of Impact (2000) by the Coalition for Women’s History of the Historical Society of Southern Florida.

Elly’s legacy will live on, and she will always be remembered with affection and admiration by those whose lives she touched and by all the members of Operation Pedro Pan Group, Inc.

Login or register to post comments.
ELISA VILANO OJEDA

Profile Photos (8) Story

Elisa’s Story

Through boundless energy, passion and sheer force of personality, Elly Vilano Chovel put a face to the name “Pedro Pan.” Formed in 1991, Elly was the driving force of Operation Pedro Pan Group for 16 years and worked tirelessly to pursue its goals of re-connecting Pedro Pans across the United States, documenting the history of this remarkable exodus of 14,000 unaccompanied minors and giving back by helping children in need.

Elly did everything she could to promote the Pedro Pan story from helping many authors and journalists with books and stories, accepting hundreds of interviews far and wide, even speaking at the Smithsonian Institute in Washington DC. She honored Monsignor Bryan O. Walsh with the devotion and dignity with which she dedicated her life to Operation Pedro Pan Group and accomplished many goals including the creation of a park at Camp Matecumbe and the Monsignor Walsh Children’s Village.

Donations may be made to the Elly Chovel Scholarship Fund established by the Green Family Foundation in her name through Operation Pedro Pan Group. The scholarship is awarded toward college tuition for children of Pedro Pans.

Elly’s daughter Brigid Prio has registered in the Miami Herald database on her behalf. The family welcomes all your prayers and sentiments. Elly is survived by two daughters, a son, five grandchildren, her mother and two sisters. She is always on our minds, in our hearts and in our prayers.

Elisa’s News Feed

Leave a public message to Elisa.

Ely may you rest in peace forever. I had the privilege to be a very close friend and I always remember your beautiful smile capable of lighting my life. Love you, Fidel Ros

Message by Fidel Ros | Jun 4th 2010

My querida Elly, como te extraño aun. Juanita aka Nita.

Message by Juanita Garcia | Feb 22nd 2010