

Paul Baldino, Government Leadership Award

In a county without Paul Baldino, LFI '94 and former executive director of the Fairfax County Park Foundation, it's quite possible that disabled kids would never know the joys of playing at the fully-accessible Clemyjontri playground, underprivileged kids would spend summers unsupervised instead of enrolled in day camp, and millions of dollars—along with thousands of acres of land—would never have been set aside for the enjoyment of all.

It's a legacy that Baldino played an enormous role in creating during his eight years with the Park Authority and Foundation, as he helped carry out the Foundation's mission of raising private funds, obtaining grants and creating partnerships to pick up where tax dollars leave off in meeting community needs for parkland, facilities and services.



The result includes a specially-designed swing for children in wheelchairs—one of only seven in the entire U.S.; a fully accessible tree house; camp scholarships; free summer concerts; adapted swimming and bike-riding programs for disabled children; trails construction; environmental education; and a counterpart to Clemyjontri in the Lee District.

"I'm gratified and humbled to have been selected for this Leadership Award," Baldino said, "as so many community leaders are making extraordinary things happen. It's been an honor to serve for an organization that opens the door to philanthropy and serves so many."

Nicole Ferraro, Nonprofit Educational Leadership Award

A diagnosis of a rare form of thyroid cancer would stop many people in their tracks, but for Nicole Ferraro, a senior at Chantilly High School, it had the opposite effect: Within two weeks, she launched a "Bite Me Cancer" campaign that put her and her 30 teammates at the top of the



Vienna Relay for Life's fundraising rankings and spurred her into creating a foundation that she vows will be a lifelong mission.

"I couldn't sit around and be upset," Ferraro said. "With God's guidance, I wanted to use 'my situation' to benefit others, and a relay team seemed the best way to turn my diagnosis into something positive."

After raising more than \$20,000, Ferraro has since created big plans for her foundation, primarily centered around a Web site (www.bitemecancer.org) that will sell products such as t-shirts, lanyards and awareness bracelets. Since many months are dedicated to raising awareness about a particular type of cancer (i.e. September is Thyroid Cancer Awareness Month) Ferraro is planning to donate all funds raised during a particular month to the corresponding type of cancer research.

"It was never my intention to make this a one-time project," Ferraro said, "and although I'm not doing this for an award and never, ever expected to win, it's so cool. I'm really honored!"