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## GIVING BACK

# SafeSpace director honored by friends of law library

**BY JESSICA LAYNE**  
YourNews contributor

**FORT PIERCE** — Each year, the Rupert J. Smith Law Library of St. Lucie County recognizes two St. Lucie County citizens for their incredible commitment to the community. This year, Art Ciasca, the Director of Development at SafeSpace, was among the esteemed recipients of the "Honored Local Heroes" award.

Ciasca joined Scott Van Duzer of the Van Duzer Foundation to be recognized during the annual Law Day Celebration ceremony on May 1 at the Fort Pierce Courthouse. Fort Pierce Police Chief Sean Baldwin and St. Lucie County Commissioner Paula Lewis were on hand to present the community leaders with their awards.

For the past four years, Ciasca has worked to increase awareness about the prevalence of domestic violence throughout the Treasure Coast with SafeSpace, a local nonprofit organization and the only domestic violence outreach center on the Treasure Coast. In addition to providing emergency shelter with its two 24-bed facilities, SafeSpace provides outreach services and counseling, as well as legal and children's advocacy, to domestic violence victims and their dependents. In the last fiscal year, SafeSpace served nearly 1,000 victims and their children and provided more than 13,000 safe nights of service to women and their children.

But Ciasca's dedication to his community extends

further than his work at SafeSpace. For more than 25 years, Ciasca has been involved with human services organizations throughout the Treasure Coast. Prior to joining SafeSpace, Ciasca worked at New Horizons of the Treasure Coast, the Wound Healing Center and Savannas Hospital.

"I am more than honored to receive this award," Ciasca said. "Working at SafeSpace means that every day I am faced with stories and statistics that are upsetting to say the least. But it's the milestones we have reached as a community, the amazing advocates that I work with along the Treasure Coast and most importantly, the success stories, that make this work so rewarding."



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Art Ciasca, director of development at SafeSpace, left, stands for a photo with Fort Pierce Police Chief Sean Baldwin after receiving the Friends of Rupert J. Smith Law Library Award for Community Outreach from St. Lucie County Commissioner Paula Lewis.