



National Philanthropy Day 2018 Award Recipient Bio – Frank Franco

Born in 1925 to Italian immigrant parents, Frank graduated Reading High School and enrolled at Penn State in the pre-med program. He enlisted in the US Army during World War II and served as a Medic, landing in Normandy 2 weeks after the historic invasion. Ultimately Frank was stationed in Austria and stayed on during the post-war occupation, continuing to care for the wounded soldiers. He also met the love of his life, Paula while serving.

In the Fall of 1946, Frank returned to US to complete his studies at Penn State, followed by medical school at Hahnemann Hospital and post-graduate work at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital. Upon completion of his studies, he opened a family practice in Reading, serving the community for over 30 years.

Frank and Paula married in 1947 and had 2 children, David and Mary Jo. Today, he is grandfather to 4 and great-grandfather to 6.

During his years as a practicing physician, Frank served the State of Pennsylvania as a member of the medical review board for the Department of Labor, reviewing workers compensation and disability cases. He ultimately served 46 years with the State.

In the early 1960's, and at the encouragement of a fellow physician, Frank purchased WRAW and WRFY radio stations in Reading. For the next 30 years, he saw the radio stations take on a life of their own, under the watchful leadership of Frank's brother Tom Franco, and Frank's son, David. In the mid 1990's the stations were sold, and Frank became a full-time philanthropist.

He has spent the last 30 years of his life giving to others like few have ever done. A strong believer that a good education can make the difference in people's lives, Frank has provided gifts to fund scholarships at local elementary schools, including Sacred Heart School, W. Reading, St. Peter's, Reading, St. Catherine's, Exeter, and St. Ignatius, West Lawn. One of his favorite institutions is Berks Catholic, where Frank has contributed toward the school's expansion, as well as

scholarships. The John Paul II Center for Special Learning has also been a major recipient of Frank's support.

He is a friend to the local colleges and universities, supporting RACC, Albright, PSU Berks and Alvernia as both a major donor and board member. St. Joseph Hospital Foundation and Penn State Hershey Medical Center have also received his support over the years.

A proud patron of the Arts in Reading, Frank has supported The GoggleWorks, the Reading Music Foundation and the Reading Symphony Orchestra.

Frank also has supported many agencies that provide opportunities to the less-fortunate in Berks County, including Olivet Boys and Girls Club, The Salvation Army, and our furry friends at The Humane Society.