

Mallets & Martinis



Vita Nova welcomed supporters, community leaders, and philanthropists to an unforgettable evening of purpose and celebration at its 9th Annual *Mallets & Martinis*, held at the National Croquet Center. Set against a picturesque backdrop of palm trees and manicured lawns, guests, dressed in “Chic Croquet Whites,” gathered for a lively night benefiting homeless youth in Palm Beach County.

Chaired by **Krysta and Luigi Fuoco**, this sold-out event seamlessly blended elegance with impact, featuring croquet on the lawns, signature martinis, live music, a plated dinner, and dancing late into the night.

The program was led by emcee **Tracy St. George** and featured a series of powerful and moving moments that highlighted Vita Nova’s mission. Vita Nova alum **Josh Caudill** delivered a heartfelt speech, followed by remarks from CEO **Jeff DeMario**. Guests were especially moved by personal stories shared by Vita Nova youth speakers **Naya** and **Georgina**, whose courage and resilience underscored the life-changing impact of the organization’s work.

“Every young person deserves a safe place to call home and the opportunity to build a future they’re proud of,” said Vita Nova CEO Jeff DeMario. “*Mallets & Martinis* is a powerful reminder that when our community comes together, we can change the trajectory of a young person’s life — from uncertainty to independence, from hardship to hope.”

A dynamic live auction, led by auctioneer **Jay Zeager**, energized the crowd with a curated selection of luxury trips and one-of-a-kind experiences. A highlight of the evening was a truly special collaboration: a painting created by renowned artist **Kyle Lucks** alongside two Vita Nova youth, symbolizing what Vita Nova means... “new life.” The unique piece was auctioned to enthusiastic bidders, further supporting Vita Nova’s programs.

Serving nearly 700 youth annually in Palm Beach County, Vita Nova acts as a safe bridge to independence for former foster youth and other homeless young adults ages 18 to 25. Through supportive housing, education, employment assistance, and essential life skills training, the organization is committed to eliminating youth homelessness and empowering young people to build stable, self-sufficient futures.

Mallets & Martinis is more than an elegant evening — it is a meaningful investment in hope, stability, and opportunity for vulnerable youth in the community. Proceeds from the event directly support Vita Nova’s *Housing Program* and *Independent Living Services*.

For more information about Vita Nova or to support its mission visit vitanovainc.org.

FIRST ROW: Jill and Jeff DeMario; Luigi and Krysta Fuoco; **SECOND ROW:** Margie Sweezer Fischer and Eric Carnegie; Jennifer LaFrance and Lisa LaFrance; **THIRD ROW:** David Lyons and Laura Sterlacci; Kathleen Joy, Dr. Vassilia Binensztok and Jose Coto; **FOURTH ROW:** Katherine Murphy and Kyle Lucks; Christy Masbach, Josh Caudill and Chessy Masbach.
PHOTOS: PALM BEACH PHOTO CONCIERGE

