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Iconic Islander

Lilly Leas Ferreira, granddaughter of Lilly Pulitzer, maintains her family's fashion legacy as the general manager at The Royal Poinciana Plaza.

By **Clarissa Buch**

From as early as she can remember, Lilly Leas Ferreira, 30, the granddaughter of designer and Palm Beach icon Lilly Pulitzer, was taught to dream big. Pulitzer, fondly remembered as the “Queen of Prep,” instilled a sense of female empowerment in Ferreira that is still very much present today.

“I had a little girl a few months ago,” says Ferreira, speaking of her newborn daughter, Lillian, marking the fifth Lillian in the family beginning with Ferreira’s great grandmother. “Thinking about growing up with ‘granny’ and now having a daughter, it’s all coming full circle. I’m so fortunate to have had her in my life. She brought such a special type of energy and liveliness to my family.”

This past January, Ferreira, who was born and raised in Palm Beach, was appointed general manager of The Royal Poinciana Plaza, an upscale mall known for its food, fashion and entertainment. That, too, was a full-circle moment, she says.

“My grandmother taught me through example,” she says. “She always took on new challenges, and that’s certainly something I try to emulate. My grandmother is so well known for the brand and lifestyle she created, but she also left behind a legacy of inclusion, compassion and empathy, which together helped her find success. Now as a young professional trying to make my own mark, I make sure kindness and empathy are part of my own mantra too.”

Ferreira, who attended Florida Atlantic University, has always had an entrepreneurial spirit, opening her own public relations firm a few years after graduation and later selling it to attend the University of Florida for an accelerated MBA program.

“Opening the firm was an incredible experience,” she says. “I grew the company from three accounts to more than 30. It was all pos-

sible by constantly saying yes and stepping inside shoes that were a little bigger than what I had on. In all that I’ve done, it’s about rising to the occasion.”

She worked in project management at NextEra Energy, parent company of Florida Power & Light, before settling at The Royal Poinciana Plaza.

In her new role as general manager, Ferreira is responsible for the property’s overall success, serving as a liaison between the destination and the community. Currently, she’s focused on activating the plaza and building relationships by creating programs and experiences that position The Royal Poinciana Plaza as a hub for the Palm Beach community and grow its reputation on a global scale.

“Right around the same time as the MBA program and my experience at NextEra, The Royal Poinciana Plaza was going through a major revitalization,” she says.

“I’ve been a fan and a patron for many years, so when the opportunity opened up as general manager to help add value to the project, I couldn’t pass it up. It’s not just a company. These are my friends and family.”

The Royal Poinciana Plaza is at full capacity, and Ferreira says there are more than 300 events scheduled for the year. In addition to her work on the island, she is also a consultant for Lilly Pulitzer, where she advises the brand on marketing to align with her grandmother’s original vision.

“We’re at a peak of energy and excitement with The Royal Poinciana Plaza,” she says. “There’s this uncapped potential and endless opportunity to make this place special. Something I’m really excited to be working on is our new initiative, Together, where we support female empowerment and female entrepreneurship. There’s just so much we can do, and we’re just getting started.” ■

