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**Edison State College honors Naples Children & Education Foundation
with 2011 L.I.F.E. Award**

NAPLES, Fla. (Nov. 23, 2010) – The Naples Children & Education Foundation, the founding organization of Naples Winter Wine Festival, has been selected to receive the 2011 Holland T. Salley Leadership in Fostering Education Award. Established in 2003 by Edison State College Foundation, the L.I.F.E. Award honors those who have made outstanding contributions toward advancing academic opportunities for the citizens of Collier County. Previous recipients are interior designer Holland Salley (2003), former NCH Healthcare Systems CEO Ed Morton (2004), Kraft Construction Company CEO Fred Pezeshkan (2005), Barron Collier Companies Board Member Judy Sproul (2006), Raymond and Scott Lutgert of The Lutgert Companies (2007), Naples Trust Company President Adria Starkey (2008), former State Rep. Dudley Goodlette (2009) and Philharmonic Center for the Arts Founder and CEO Myra J. Daniels (2010).

L.I.F.E. Award honorees must meet criteria in one of four categories: distinguished service, professional service, citizen leadership and outstanding contribution to state legislation. NCEF, and its 72 trustees, were selected as the 2011 L.I.F.E. Award honoree in recognition of their outstanding support for education in two categories: citizen leadership and distinguished service.

NCEF, which was founded in 2000 by a group of Naples families to improve the physical, emotional and educational lives of underprivileged and at-risk children in Collier County, has raised \$82.5 million to date. The foundation provides yearly grants to children's charities and funds long-term strategic initiatives aimed at filling the most severe gaps in services for the area's neediest children.

"Not only does NCEF provide grants to nonprofits that benefit children, NCEF has taken the lead in examining the needs of Collier County children, then creating solutions to meet such needs," said Jeff Allbritten, Edison State College Collier campus president, citing the example of the NCEF Pediatric Dental Center, which opened in fall 2008 and serves thousands of children each year. The impetus for the center came from a 2005 needs assessment commissioned by NCEF that revealed an estimated 17,000 Collier County children were without adequate dental care, a proven formula for severe tooth decay, pain and disruption in children's ability to learn. NCEF trustees spearheaded the building of the dental center in collaboration with state university systems and other community partners.

"Over the past 10 years, NCEF grants have touched the lives of more than 100,000 children, helping them to reach their potential and, in many cases, making a profound and sustaining difference in their quality of life," said Bob Scott, NCEF chairman. "Our efforts are collaborative. We work in concert with many different organizations, and are thankful for the tremendous generosity of our sponsors, patrons and volunteers – all working on behalf of children who deserve a chance at a decent life."

The Naples Winter Wine Festival is the fundraising arm of NCEF. The festival is ranked by Wine Spectator as the most successful charity wine auction in the nation since 2004 and a top 10 event for wealthy Americans by the Luxury Institute.

The 9th Annual L.I.F.E. Award luncheon is Thursday, Feb. 24, 2011 at the Naples Grande Beach Resort. Tickets are \$150 per person; table prices are available. For more information, contact Kevin Miller at 239-732-3718 or ksmiller3@edison.edu.

The Edison State College Foundation Inc. is 501(c)(3) nonprofit, direct support organization of Edison State College. Edison State serves more than 24,000 students across the five-county region. For more information, contact Communications Specialist Nicole Angelo at 239-732-3957 or nangelo@edison.edu.