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Charitable grants of \$7.43 million awarded by Naples Winter Wine Festival founders

Underprivileged and at-risk children benefit from 24 grants and funding of three strategic initiatives

NAPLES, Fla. (March 26, 2012) – Trustees of Naples Children & Education Foundation, founders of Naples Winter Wine Festival, presented \$7.43 million in grant checks to charitable organizations that serve Collier County’s underprivileged and at-risk children.

During the March 26 ceremony at The Old Collier Golf Club, 24 charities received grant checks totaling \$6.18 million to help fund programs and services over the next 12 months. Grants ranged in size from \$25,000 for St. Matt’s Kids Camps to \$1 million for Boys & Girls Club of Collier County. The grants will fund early learning programs, after-school and summer programs, physical and mental health services, and counseling and services for foster children and other at-risk youth.

Four organizations received NCEF grants for the first time: Golisano Children’s Museum of Naples for access and special programs; Legal Aid for Collier Kids providing legal services for at-risk children; Cal Ripken Senior Foundation for baseball program support in conjunction with East Naples’ Boys & Girls Club and Baltimore summer baseball camp; and Naples Botanical Garden for science-based summer school program. Guadalupe Center of Immokalee and Greater Marco Family YMCA received large grants to fund after-school and summer programs. Children’s Advocacy Center of Collier County received a grant to fund services for child victims of sexual and physical abuse, neglect or exposure to domestic violence.

In addition, grants totaling \$1.2 million were awarded for three multi-year, strategic initiatives aimed at providing out-of-school programs in Immokalee; addressing behavioral health issues; and improving children’s vision through screening and providing prescription eyeglasses – the 2012 festival’s fund-a-need cause.

“During 18 months of planning the wine festival, everyone stayed focused on the children who would benefit,” said Bob Clifford, NCEF trustee and 2012 festival co-chair with his wife Joan. “This is the culmination of so many chefs, vintners, sponsors, volunteers and patrons’ generosity. Together we are bringing magic into children’s lives, and it is an honor for NCEF trustees to represent all our supporters as we present grant checks.”

Joan, NCEF trustee and newly appointed vice chair of the grant committee, added, “Our foundation is driven by trustees passionate about helping underprivileged and underserved children. We are able to act quickly to close service gaps and step in with funding. It may sound cliché, yet it’s true: the festival is all about the kids.”

Following is an alphabetical list of 2012 NCEF grants awarded:

ABLE Academy	\$300,000
Boys & Girls Club of Collier County	\$1,000,000
Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation	\$100,000
Catholic Charities	\$119,000
Children’s Hospital of Southwest Florida	\$62,000
Children’s Advocacy Center of Collier County	\$484,000
Early Literacy and Learning Model Program	\$350,000
Friends of Foster Children of Southwest Florida	\$350,000
Fun Time Early Childhood Academy	\$126,000
Golisano Children’s Museum of Naples	\$200,000
Greater Marco Family YMCA	\$265,000

Guadalupe Center of Immokalee	\$700,000
Immokalee Child Care Center	\$235,000
Immokalee Housing & Family Services	\$60,000
Legal Aid for Collier Kids	\$115,000
Naples Botanical Garden	\$53,000
Naples Equestrian Challenge	\$100,000
Redlands Christian Migrant Association	\$315,000
Shelter for Abused Women & Children	\$313,000
Southwest Florida Workforce Development Board	\$340,000
St. Matthew's House/St. Matt's Camps for Kids Program	\$25,000
Tutor Corps	\$76,000
YMCA of the Palms	\$440,000
Youth Haven	\$50,000
Strategic initiative grants:	
H.U.G.S. (Health Under Guided Systems) mental health initiative	\$200,000
"Now You See It" pediatric vision/prescription eyeglass initiative	\$750,000
Out of School Time Program – Immokalee	\$300,000
Total	\$7,428,000

Most social service agencies in Collier County are dependent on funding from foundation grants, fundraisers and private donations in order to remain viable. For charities that apply for NCEF grants, there is a rigorous vetting process, and those receiving grants are monitored to ensure dollars are effectively administered. NCEF also requires that charities act collaboratively to fill gaps in service. "We follow a prescriptive grant-making process in that we research needs and award grants based on organizations' abilities to fill those needs," said Bob Scott, NCEF trustee and board chair. "When charities work together, dollars go further and more children benefit."

Since 2000, Naples Children & Education Foundation has been dedicated to making a profound and sustaining improvement in the lives of underprivileged and at-risk children in Collier County, where pockets of poverty threaten thousands of children's ability to thrive. Through the Naples Winter Wine Festival, NCEF has raised \$107 million since 2001, making it the most successful charity wine auction in the world. Proceeds have impacted more than 150,000 children through 37 charities, and major initiatives funded in collaboration with other private and public entities have included a pediatric dental clinic and an early learning center.

The 2013 Naples Winter Wine Festival will take place Jan. 25-27. For more information about Naples Winter Wine Festival and Naples Children & Education Foundation, visit www.napleswinefestival.com or call 888-837-4919.

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