

Collier County children and families in need to receive 1,000 Thanksgiving turkeys

NAPLES, Fla. (Nov.17, 2011) – Naples Children & Education Foundation – founders of Naples Winter Wine Festival – and Harry Chapin Food Bank today announced that NCEF is funding a Thanksgiving turkey distribution that will reach 1,000 Collier County children and their families. The families, who have been prequalified by Collier County schools based on financial need, will receive turkeys handed out by Harry Chapin Food Bank from NCEF's Lunch Boxes of Love mobile pantry at Golden Gate Elementary, Mike Davis Elementary and the Boys & Girls Clubs of Collier County during the next week.

The turkey distribution, which also includes fresh produce such as corn, onions, carrots, sweet potatoes and apples, is one of several holiday-season food distributions. On Nov. 7, 250 Lely Elementary School families received a Lunch Boxes of Love food distribution at the school. In addition, NCEF's mobile pantry will be at Parkside Elementary Dec. 5 and Golden Gate Middle School Dec. 13.

Since NCEF's Lunch Boxes of Love hunger initiative began in February, Harry Chapin Food Bank has made weekly distributions totaling nearly 500,000 pounds of food to school children and their families. The children receiving the food distributions are among 63,405 Collier County children who qualify for free or reduced lunches.

According to Al Brislain, Harry Chapin Food Bank executive director, NCEF is on the leading edge of socially responsible initiatives. "Working in partnership with our food bank and the Collier County School System, NCEF is developing a highly efficient food distribution and storage system to help ensure that Collier County's underprivileged and at-risk children don't go to bed hungry."

"The foundation's trustees recognize that when school is out, there is a significant gap in feeding Collier County's most vulnerable children," said Karen Scott, NCEF trustee and liaison to the Lunch Boxes of Love initiative. "Because of the foundation's nimble grant making, trustees are able to respond swiftly to close these critical gaps in service."

Lunch Boxes of Love was launched thanks to \$630,000 raised through a special fund-a-need auction lot at the January Naples Winter Wine Festival. Using a specially outfitted mobile food pantry branded with Lunch Boxes of Love, Harry Chapin Food Bank gets nutritious food to children in need, making deliveries at child-focused agencies in areas with the most underserved and at-risk children in the county.

Harry Chapin Food Bank solicits, collects and stores quality food for distribution to families in need through a network of 150 local nonprofit agencies who provide food to more than 30,000 people monthly. Over 1 million pounds of food are distributed monthly. For every dollar donated, about \$6 in food value goes back to the community. In the past fiscal year, Harry Chapin Food Bank distributed 12.5 million pounds of food and other grocery products; this was a 31 percent increase over the previous year.

For additional information or to contribute financially to the Harry Chapin Food Bank, contact 239-334-7007 or go to www.harrychapinfoodbank.org.

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 the county. Through the Naples Winter Wine Festival, NCEF has raised more than \$94.5 million since 2001, and proceeds have impacted more than 125,000 children through a total of 37 charities. In addition to yearly grants for individual charities, funding is provided for five strategic initiatives: early learning, medical/oral health, out-of-school programs, behavioral health and childhood hunger. Major initiatives NCEF has funded in collaboration with other private and public entities have included a pediatric dental clinic and an early learning center.

The sole fundraiser for NCEF is the Naples Winter Wine Festival. The 2012 festival will take place Jan. 27-29. For more information about the Naples Winter Wine Festival and Naples Children & Education Foundation, visit www.napleswinefestival.com or call 888-837-4919.

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Lunch Boxes of Love

**End Childhood
Hunger Today!**



