



Naples Children & Education Foundation Dedicates New Permanent Home, Supporting Future Generations of Children in Collier County

Naples, FL (November 10, 2021) – The Naples Children & Education Foundation (NCEF), the founding organization of the highly successful Naples Winter Wine Festival (NWWF), today officially cut the ribbon on its new permanent headquarters, a symbolic ceremony marking the organization’s long-term mission of improving the lives of underprivileged and at-risk children in Collier County.

Located at 2590 Goodlette-Frank Rd. N., the approximately 13,500-square-foot building will serve as home to NCEF’s operations which provide, on average, a \$15-million investment in community programs serving more than 30,000 at-risk and vulnerable children annually. Prior to opening this new building, NCEF worked in rented, borrowed and donated space throughout the community.

Since its inception in 2000, NCEF has evolved into a major philanthropic force in Collier County with 136 Trustees, 15 employees and about 300 volunteers. NCEF also has broadened its role over the years from traditional grant-making to local charities on an annual basis by adding seven strategic initiatives to fill gaps in children’s services and develop long-term collaborative solutions.

“To meet the challenges associated with our continued growth and increasing demands, we launched a capital campaign to generate the funds needed to secure the land, construct the building and meet appropriate furniture/fixtures and equipment requirements,” said NCEF Chief Executive Officer Maria Jimenez-Lara. “It is important to note that the capital contributions came from Trustees and community members, independent from their generous support of the annual Naples Winter Wine Festival; thereby not compromising our signature event’s proceeds, which fulfills NCEF’s commitment to supporting the children of Collier County.”

NCEF has become the single largest source of funding for essential services for at-risk and underprivileged children in Collier County. Its efforts have contributed to improvements in such areas as school attendance, standardized test scores and high school graduation rates, while dramatically mitigating rates of school suspensions, juvenile delinquency and teen pregnancy, which have all declined over the last decade. The new headquarters will further develop a central hub for child wellbeing forums, educational seminars, training and non-profit development.

“Our investment in a dedicated headquarters building will establish a place of permanence and allow NCEF to build upon its momentum as the premier funding provider for youth services in Collier County,” said Bob Clifford, a Lifetime Trustee who spearheaded the building project. “We are proud to be deepening our roots in the community, ensuring a bright future for local children.”

With modern, dedicated headquarters, NCEF can now leverage a greater number of resources to benefit the strategic initiatives and traditional grant programs that receive funding. For example,

the new building will allow for appropriate and permanent recognition of NCEF's founders, donors and supporters and help improve operating efficiencies by consolidating activities under one roof.

Among the unique building features are:

- Board Room to accommodate up to 25 people with a uniquely designed board table exclusively designed and donated by Thomas Riley Artisans' Guild.
- Non-Profit Community Resource Room for organizations to share best practices, host board or committee meetings, retreats or presentations when not in use by NCEF.
- Recognition Wall to celebrate and honor the time, talent and treasure of the many Trustees, chefs, vintners, volunteers and beneficiary partners who help fulfill NCEF's mission.
- Technology to host virtual meetings, teleconferences and to create the highest-level of efficiency for staff and volunteers.

The stylish, new headquarters was completed via a collaboration of NCEF, local real estate developers Fred and Alex Pezeshkan, general contractor DeAngelis Diamond Construction, and John Cooney and Randall Stofft along with Renee Zepeda of the award-winning architectural firm Stofft Cooney Architects.

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About Naples Children & Education Foundation

The Naples Children & Education Foundation, the founding organization of the Naples Winter Wine Festival, is improving the educational, emotional and health outcomes of underprivileged and at-risk children. Through its annual grants and strategic initiatives, NCEF has impacted over 50 of the most effective nonprofits in the community, providing more than 275,000 children with the services and resources they need to excel. NCEF's unique approach, which emphasizes collaboration between organizations and bridges public and private resources, has become a blueprint for how to transform a community, one issue at a time.

About Naples Winter Wine Festival

The Naples Winter Wine Festival, one of the world's most prestigious charity wine auctions, offers a weekend of unforgettable memories. Guests enjoy world-class food and wine during intimate dinners in private homes and are invited to bid on once-in-a-lifetime travel and wine experiences during an electrifying live auction. Since its inaugural event in 2001, the NWWF has raised nearly \$220 million, making a profound difference in the lives of hundreds of thousands of children.

For additional information on the Naples Children & Education Foundation or the Naples Winter Wine Festival, contact Lisa Juliano at lisa@napleswinefestival.com or 239-514-2239.