



## **Naples Children & Education Foundation Set to “Raise the Grade” on Education as Vital Initiatives are Identified for 2022 Naples Winter Wine Festival Fund a Need**

**Naples, FL** (November 29, 2021) – The Naples Children & Education Foundation (NCEF) today announced that its annual Fund a Need at the 2022 Naples Winter Wine Festival will support its education initiatives for the underserved children of Collier County. The vision for “Raise the Grade” is that every dollar raised during a special call to action auction lot will go to support the strategic initiatives of Early Learning, Out-of-School Time, and Career and College Readiness.

Founded by NCEF, the Naples Winter Wine Festival enters its 22<sup>nd</sup> year and ranks as the most successful international charity wine auction in the world, raising nearly \$220 million for local children’s causes. At the 2022 Festival, guests will have a chance to show their support through a live auction on Saturday, January 29<sup>th</sup>, while supporters across the country who are unable to attend the Festival will be able to participate in an online auction starting Friday, January 21<sup>st</sup>.

“Our investment in a child’s education goes far beyond reading, writing and arithmetic,” said John Walter, NCEF Trustee and 2022 Grant Committee Chair. “From early learning to high school graduation, children who participate in NCEF-funded programs receive a safe, nurturing environment and are set up for success in the post high-school graduation years. Our investments are designed to have life-long impacts on the children who receive these essential services.”

Research shows that children’s experiences in their school-age years can have a dramatic impact on their outcomes as adults. Here are statistics supporting the education initiatives:

- **Early Learning:** A child without an early childhood education is 25 percent more likely to drop out of school, 40 percent more likely to become a teenage parent and 70 percent more likely to be arrested for a violent crime. When children have the benefit of a high-quality early childhood education, they make cognitive and social gains that prepare them to start school and enter kindergarten ready to learn and succeed.
- **Out-of-School Time:** One in five children across America are alone and unsupervised after school. The hours of 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. are the peak time for juvenile crime. For many children, unsupervised after-school hours and unoccupied weekends can lead to experimentation as well as risky and dangerous behaviors. NCEF invests in programs that provide homework help, mentorship, focused academic support and enrichment during non-school hours.
- **Career and College Readiness:** Only 36 percent of young adults in Collier County have attained a high-quality degree or credential. Regardless of whether they plan to attend college or not, students need to learn the skills that will allow them to navigate the peaks and valleys of life after school. NCEF supports programs that provide access to college readiness for those continuing their education or career focused opportunities for those who decide college is not their path.

Since its inception, NCEF has become the single largest source of funding for essential services for at-risk and underprivileged children in Collier County. Through its annual grants and strategic initiatives, NCEF has impacted more than 50 of the most effective nonprofits in the community, providing more than 275,000 children with the services and resources to live happier, more fulfilling lives.

NCEF 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 basic children's services and develop long-term, collaborative solutions. These strategic initiatives address gaps in the areas of early learning, healthcare, hunger, mental health, oral health, out-of-school time and vision.

"From the very young child in need of quality early learning to the older child who needs something to do after school or tutoring all the way to at-risk teens and young adults needing career and college support, our education initiatives provide the most fragile children with the tools they need to succeed academically and thrive," said NCEF Chief Executive Officer Maria Jimenez-Lara.

Here are some examples of how contributions to "Raise the Grade" can last a lifetime:

- \$100,000 provides 360 at-risk high school students a chance to graduate on time
- \$50,000 provides 50 children a year of after-school programming
- \$25,000 provides 13 children scholarships for year-round early learning
- \$10,000 provides 10 high schoolers with a career-focused internship
- \$5,000 provides 10 early learning classrooms with reading libraries
- \$1,000 provides 8 children, who are experiencing behavioral challenges, with assessments and therapies

Every dollar raised will go to support NCEF's education initiatives to focus on the future of local children. For more information or to make a donation, please visit [www.napleswinefestival.com](http://www.napleswinefestival.com).

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### **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.

### **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 more than 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.

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

