

# Naples Children & Education Foundation awards more than \$20M to improve lives of at-risk children

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The Naples Children & Education Foundation has awarded more than \$20 million in grants to 43 local nonprofit agencies that help improve the lives of at-risk children in Collier County.

The funds are raised from the annual Naples Winter Wine Festival, the signature event that was started in 2001 by the foundation and to date has raised more than \$212 million.

The wine festival event Jan. 25 held at The Ritz-Carlton Golf Resort in North Naples raised \$20.5 million.

“The 2020 Naples Winter Wine Festival was a record-breaking event with our largest attendance ever and generating the highest proceeds in our 20-year history,” Joe Masterson, grant committee chairman in 2020, said in a news release.

“We are proud that every dollar raised under the tent of our live auction goes right back into the community, improving the lives of the county’s most vulnerable children,” Masterson said.

Agencies that receive grant funding help disadvantaged children in Collier achieve improved physical, emotional and educational well-being for better futures.

The breakdown is \$7.1 million to agencies and \$15.1 million for strategic initiatives that are ongoing, according to the foundation.



Meet the Kids Day NCEF representatives post for photos during Meet the Kids Day, Friday, Jan. 24, 2020, at Artis—Naples. (Photo: Jon Austria/Naples Daily News USA TODAY NETWORK - FLORIDA)

There are 33 nonprofits receiving grants and 10 additional agencies that are part of the seven-year initiatives.

All agencies that receive support take part in a detailed application and review process.

In addition, the foundation emphasizes collaboration among the nonprofits and helps bridge public resources with private resources that is a blueprint to help change childrens’ lives.

“Our blueprint partner program is an endorsement of those strategic initiative partners who are able to have the greatest impact by leveraging resources, creating systems, aligning protocols and eliminating duplication of services,” Maria Jimenez-Lara, CEO of NCEF, said in a statement.

This year’s wine festival also enabled the foundation to allocate \$1.8 million for future strategic initiatives including early learning, healthcare, hunger, mental health, oral health, out-of-school time and vision.

NCEF has impacted the lives of 275,000 children with services to date through 45 nonprofits.

## Here is the breakdown of grant awards:

- ABLE Academy, \$180,000
- Avow Hospice, \$102,950
- Better Together, \$150,000
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Sun Coast, \$100,000.
- Boys & Girls Club of Collier County, \$502,950.
- Brighter Bites, \$200,000.
- Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation, \$135,000.
- Catholic Charities, \$286,000.
- Champions for Learning, \$141,450
- Children’s Advocacy Center, \$657,735.
- Collier Child Care Resources, \$150,000.
- Conservancy of Southwest Florida, \$120,425.
- Friends of Foster Children Forever, \$402,950.
- Fun Time Early Childhood Academy, \$157,000.
- Gargiulo Education Center, \$125,000.
- Grace Place for Children and Families, \$410,000.
- Guadalupe Center, \$600,000.
- Leadership Collier Foundation, \$50,000.
- Legal Aid Service of Collier County, \$517,820.
- Literacy Volunteers of Collier County, \$60,000.
- Music Scores!, \$50,000.
- Naples Therapeutic Riding Center, \$227,950.
- One by One Leadership Foundation – Taste of Immokalee, \$62,950.
- PACE Center for Girls, \$59,000.
- Pathways Early Education Center of Immokalee, \$250,000.
- Safe & Healthy Children’s Coalition of Collier County, \$50,000.
- Special Olympics, \$85,250.
- St. Matthews House, \$100,000.
- The Shelter for Abused Women & Children, \$270,000.
- United Arts Council, \$50,000.
- Valerie’s House, \$102,950.
- YMCA of South Collier (formerly known as The Greater Marco Family YMCA) \$400,000.
- Youth Haven, \$300,000.

**TOTAL: \$7,057,980.**

## Strategic Initiatives

- Early Learning: \$1,190,000.
- Healthcare: \$1,063,699.
- Hunger: \$2,520,000.
- Mental Health: \$4,100,990.
- Oral Health: \$1,962,000
- Out-of-School Time: \$2,148,950
- Vision: \$1,526,080.
- Collier County Capacity Building: \$600,000

**Strategic Initiative Total: \$15,111,719.**