

# Letter *from* Leadership

**T**HE REPUTATION OF GRACE PLACE as the “rising star” in the community, providing a pathway out of poverty through a strong comprehensive approach to family literacy and learning, is one that sets us apart from other nonprofits in Collier County. We are pleased to report that this past year has been one of exciting growth and development for Grace Place – both in program development and in the expansion of our campus facilities. We have worked hard to execute our strategic plan in order to enhance our cradle to career programming, and our reputation continues grow as an authority on family literacy and comprehensive educational support services.

We have many achievements to share with you from this past year.

By securing additional funding from the 21st Century Community Learning Center Program, we are able to extend the Academy of Leaders After-School program to our high school students in order to help them achieve a better educational foundation from which to graduate high school. By magnifying the academic support our high school students receive, we are able to increase their chances of success when they seek access to higher and post-secondary education as AP Leadership students.



Courtesy of J. Forrest

Dr. Tim Ferguson and Donald Grandi

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To support our students and their families in moving out of poverty through increased knowledge and education, leadership development has also been a major focus for us this year. To that end, we have made great progress in implementing our "7 Habits" and *The Leader in Me* culture, which has significantly improved student initiative, participation and behavior. In fact, our success has inspired schools such as Golden Gate Middle and Golden Gate High to solicit our expertise and guidance to create their own leadership programs.

In March, we opened the Van Domelen Education Center, which dramatically transformed our campus and significantly improved the learning and working environments for our students, families and staff. In July, we began construction on the McNamara Family Learning Center, which will house four fully equipped classrooms for educational programs and an upper level that will provide office space for Grace Place's administrative team.

*A Swing of Grace* was a phenomenal success, bringing in \$168,000 for our educational programs. We were also thrilled that twenty local philanthropists helped fulfill the \$350,000 matching gift challenge offered by The Schoen Foundation to help support our Campus Expansion Campaign. Through Give Where You Live Collier, a one-day online fundraiser hosted by the Community Foundation of Collier County and the Richard M. Schulze Family Foundation, we raised \$308,390. We are so proud that nearly \$1,000 of that amount came from our Grace Place families to demonstrate their deep appreciation for our services.

Ultimately, the continued success of Grace Place and its educational impact for children and families is the result of commitment on the part of our community and the ongoing support of our stakeholders in providing high quality, comprehensive family literacy and learning to break the cycle of poverty in Golden Gate City. We strongly encourage you to take a deeper look into the achievements of our programs and to consider supporting our family literacy mission and the vibrant community we serve.

In Partnership,

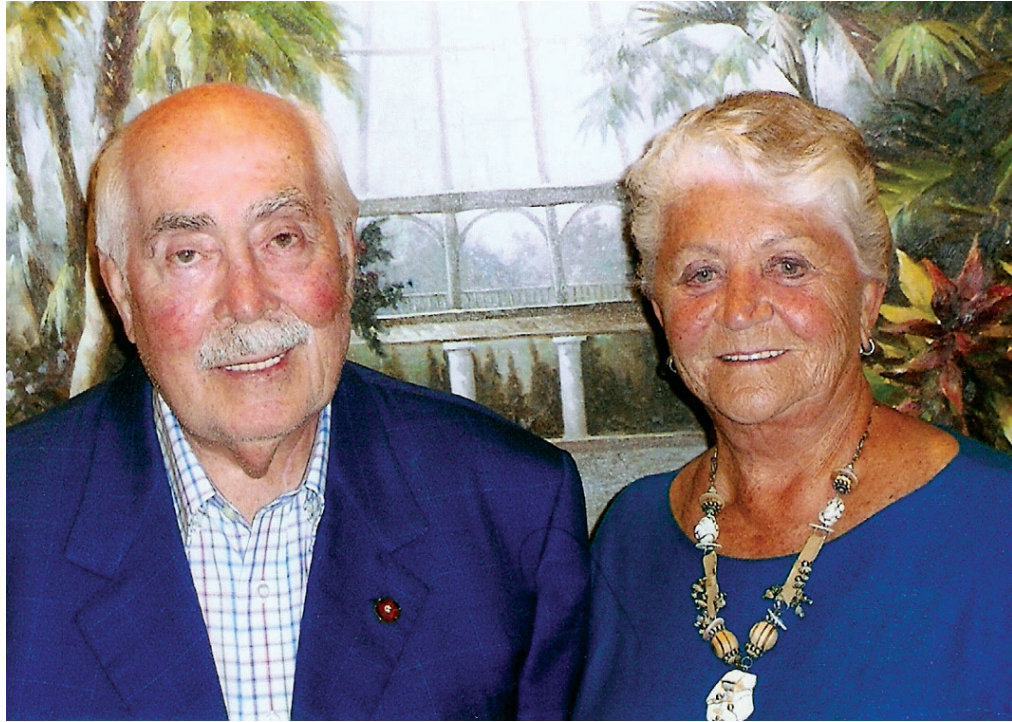
  
**Donald Grandi**  
Board Chair

**Dr. Tim Ferguson**  
Chief Executive Officer

“*As the son of an immigrant who went on to become Assistant Dean of Engineering at UCLA, I firmly grasp the transformative power of education.*”

- Don Grandi, Board Chair

Courtesy of Judy McNamara



## McN Meet the Namaras

**JUDY AND JOHN MCNAMARA** are year round residents of Naples, Florida. These high school sweethearts are originally from Chicago and celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary in June 2015. The McNamaras made their first gift to Grace Place in 2013 after touring the campus with their close friend Dick Gast, 2012 - 2015 Chair of A Swing of Grace, our signature fundraising event that Judy and John have participated in for the past two years as major sponsors.

After seeing the programs and the hard working families in action at Grace Place, Judy and John decided to make a significant investment to support the construction of the McNamara Family Learning Center, which broke ground in July. They have a great love for young people and they greatly appreciate the fact that Grace Place is not only for children; it is truly a place where whole families, including grandparents, can come to learn together.



The McNamaras believe that education is the answer to many of our nation's problems. Judy and John are particularly concerned about the welfare of people who cannot write and speak English in our society, and they applaud Grace Place's efforts to address these issues for the children and families in Golden Gate. They strongly feel that if everyone were educated, our economy would have the ability and resources to improve significantly.

Judy and John also strongly believe that families are strengthened when they learn how to work together to achieve a common goal. They see Golden Gate as a cultural melting pot where education is critical to solving challenges such as high poverty levels, poor living conditions and language barriers that beset this community and its children. Being in the heart of Golden Gate, Grace Place is perfectly positioned within the reach of families seeking pathways out of poverty through education.

The McNamaras acknowledge that it takes a village to raise a child. With the support of the full Naples community, they are confident that Grace Place's goals and family literacy mission can be easily achieved and expanded. Judy and John assert that more people need to become aware of the poverty that lives so close to home, and take action to help families help themselves. By making investments like these, we strengthen families and our community as a whole.



Courtesy of David Corban Architect, PLLC

***“ People need to become aware of the poverty that lives so close to home, and take action to help families help themselves. By making investments like these, we strengthen families and our community as a whole. ”***

# Understanding Family Literacy

## *and Cradle to Career Model*

**FAMILY LITERACY MATTERS.** Grace Place is the leading educational nonprofit and touchstone for Golden Gate City that specializes in breaking the intergenerational cycle of poverty through holistic “cradle to career” family literacy programming. Many of the families served by Grace Place face challenges stemming from their cultural, economic and limited educational backgrounds. Almost 50 percent of Golden Gate residents are first-generation immigrants, and nearly 97 percent of our families do not speak English in the home. In addition, 41 percent of our families at Grace Place have attained less than a ninth grade education, and only 40 percent have graduated from high school. Conditions such as these help create an environment in which parents lack the knowledge and skills needed to successfully navigate their children through the education system.

Grace Place’s educational programs and services support children and families in a variety of ways. Most importantly, we work to enable them to become their own advocates in order to empower them to achieve their life goals by teaching language, literacy and life skills. This is achieved by giving them a hand up, not a hand out of poverty. We achieve this by teaching financial literacy instead of providing support checks. We achieve this by teaching parental literacy instead of providing drop-off daycare. We achieve this by working extensively with students to provide them a solid foundation for academic and vocational success. Filling these achievement gaps lead Grace Place’s children and families toward the self-sufficiency needed to bring about lasting prosperity.

Courtesy of Alex Horn Photography



Courtesy of J. Forrest



Photos Courtesy of Alex Horn Photography

# Bright Beginnings

**T**HE BENEFITS OF FAMILY LITERACY and early childhood education are well documented. For children in high-quality early childhood education programs, the research shows improvement in overall academics last well into middle school, with fewer instances of behavioral issues and truancy. These children also have significantly lower teen pregnancy and incarceration rates compared to children from lower-economic backgrounds who did not attend early childhood education programs.

Grace Place is committed to providing educational resources for families in Golden Gate City, where there is a dire need for high-quality early childhood education. To address this unmet need, Grace Place has enhanced its Bright Beginnings program to place more emphasis on quality early child education, while maintaining the integrity of the existing family literacy portion of the program. Unlike most educational institutions, we are not a drop off center. Parents must be enrolled in Beginnings 101, Beginnings 201 or Mom and Tot Literacy, to learn critical language and literacy skills to support their children's developmental and academic success, while their child is enrolled in the early childhood education portion of the program. The results have been amazing so far. Our parents feel so empowered by the Bright Beginnings program that they frequently return as volunteers and act as ambassadors, strongly encouraging new members to the community to enroll at Grace Place to increase their chances of achieving success for their children and breaking the cycle of poverty.

*In 2013, the American Community Survey estimated that Golden Gate City had a population of 28,250 people with a population density of 6,404 people per square mile. Of the total population, 2,543 are under age five.*

GOLDEN GATE CITY POPULATION



*Academy of Leaders*

# After-School Program

**A**CCORDING TO THE NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH, the educational level of a parent is a significant predictor of a child's educational achievements and behavioral outcomes. Parents, who are educated, raise children to have higher self-perceptions when it comes to their academic abilities. These parents engage their children in intellectual activities that help them develop a healthy attitude about learning, and generally have children with fewer behavioral problems that may hinder their learning experiences. Twenty percent of the parents at Grace Place report no formal educational experience and only 40 percent have graduated from high school. In addition, 97 percent of our students come from families who speak languages other than English at home, all of which greatly hinders their academic success.

With grant funding from the 21st Century Community Learning Center Program, Grace Place offers a seamless pipeline of educational support for students in grades K – 12. Using Florida-certified instructors, trained staff and dedicated volunteers, Grace Place provides after-school and summer programming to improve student achievement in core academic subjects, develop leadership habits and provide opportunities for students to learn the 21st century skills needed to be college and career ready. Solidifying the impact of family involvement, the 21st CCLC funds also support the launch of special sessions of Parent Academy to foster positive parenting and ensure a high level of adult family member participation and integration into their child's education.



Photos Courtesy of Alex Horn Photography



*AoL Elementary students maintained or improved reading scores by 85 percent and mathematics scores by 87 percent. AoL Middle School students maintained or improved reading scores by 74 percent and mathematics scores by 68 percent.*



*Our 12 AP Leaders completed forty-eight college applications, applied for 102 scholarships, and 100 percent of the seniors have been accepted into one or more colleges.*



Courtesy of Alex Horn Photography



Courtesy of J. Forrest

# AP Leadership

**R** **RESEARCH FROM THE PELL INSTITUTE** indicates that for most of the 4.5 million first-generation students from households with low-income backgrounds enrolled in post-secondary education today (approximately 24 percent of the undergraduate population), the path to a bachelor's degree will be long, indirect and uncertain. These students were nearly four times more likely to leave higher education after the first year. Six years later, nearly half (43 percent) of first-generation students from low-income backgrounds had dropped out of college without earning their degrees, and among those who dropped out, nearly two-thirds (60 percent) did so after the first year. However, with effective preparation and support during high school, students have a much higher rate of success.

The AP Leadership program provides a wraparound for our 21st Century Community Learning Center after-school program. The 21st CCLC program focuses on academic preparation and development, and the AP Leadership program remains focused on college access. AP Leadership students work with our college access counselor to seek access to higher education, in addition to receiving assistance with scholarship applications, mentoring with experienced professionals and developing leadership skills by assisting younger students in the Academy of Leaders After-School program.

*“In addition to earning a promotion at work because of my hard work and English language classes at Grace Place, I can now follow along with my children’s academic success. My daughter brings me a book every night; she reads to me and sometimes she teaches me new words. I’m so proud of her. I love to think about what she will be someday.”*

**BENJAMIN H., ADULT EDUCATION STUDENT**

Courtesy of Alex Horn Photography



# Adult Education

**R**ESearch shows that adult learning significantly improves employability and income, especially for groups such as immigrants and women from ethnic minorities. The mission of the Adult Education program is to furnish the knowledge and skills necessary for adult learners to succeed in the acquisition of the English language and to nurture the assimilation process to the culture of the United States.

Ultimately, Grace Place works to provide all of its adult learners with a sense of self-empowerment and sustainability to enable them to break the cycle of poverty by providing courses in English language learning, financial literacy and citizenship. During the 2015 program year, 4,798 hours of English language and citizenship instruction were provided. At year’s end, eight students received their citizenship; of the students tested for Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) listening, 70 percent showed improvement; and of the students tested for CASAS reading, 64 percent showed improvement.

# Friday Food Pantry



Courtesy of J. Forrest

**A**LTHOUGH EDUCATION IS THE core focus of the organization and its mission, Grace Place's Friday Food Pantry, which is the largest food distribution point for the Harry Chapin Food Bank in Collier County, serves over 2,500 families a year. Recent trends in rising housing costs and public assistance reductions have forced more people to seek support from Grace Place. In the past year, the amount of people over the age of 65 coming to the Friday Food Pantry has doubled to 598 from 290 visitors, which exceeds growth rates for all other groups. For parents with children at Grace Place, the Friday Food Pantry provides some relief to address the rising costs of grocery items such as fresh fruits and vegetables. In fact, the families enrolled in our programs typically decline items they can afford themselves, leaving them to help others. They strongly value their self-sufficiency, so they tend to take advantage of the Friday Food Pantry only when their finances are hit by seasonal job fluctuations or unexpected expenses. Our Friday Food Pantry also assists families with budget management when they face difficult decisions between paying the rent or feeding their children.

Hunger awareness has been a big issue within our community this year, especially during summer, the "off-season of giving," which puts a strain on food pantries when the need is greatest. To bridge the gap these families face during the summer months, Grace Place was a part of the Satisfy the Hunger Community Food Drive, which was a collaborative initiative between the Community Foundation of Collier County, Richard M. Schulze Family Foundation, United Way of Collier County and the *Naples Daily News*. Grace Place also collaborates with Publix Super Markets, Collier Harvest, Naples Harvest, Meals of Hope, Panera Bread Company and Empire Bagels to help address the area's desperate need for nourishment, which is essential for effective learning.

***The Friday Food Pantry distributed food to 2,500 local families; 350,000 pounds of food including dairy, meat and produce; Roughly 210 bags of food are distributed each week, totaling 10,920 bags a year.***

FRIDAY FOOD PANTRY

## ASSETS

### CURRENT ASSETS

Operating Funds	524,622
Capital Development Funds	660,209
Endowment	194,710

### CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

Pledges Receivable	1,300,752
Total Other Current Assets	314,127

### TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS

**2,994,420**

### FIXED ASSETS

Fixed Assets	5,531,866
Accumulated Depreciation	(531,645)
Total Net Fixed Assets	5,000,221

### TOTAL ASSETS

**7,994,641**

## LIABILITIES AND EQUITY

### LIABILITIES

Total Current Liabilities	133,311
Mortgage Payable	582,329

### TOTAL LIABILITIES

**715,640**

### TOTAL EQUITY

**7,279,001**

### TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY

**7,994,641**

## SOURCES

General Donations	1,833,747
Directed Donations	538,316
Capital Donations	1,878,387

### TOTAL FUNDS RECEIVED

**4,250,450**

## USES

Operating Expenses	1,779,540
Capital Expenditures	2,415,810
Directed Spending	538,316
Endowment	54,217

### TOTAL FUNDS USED

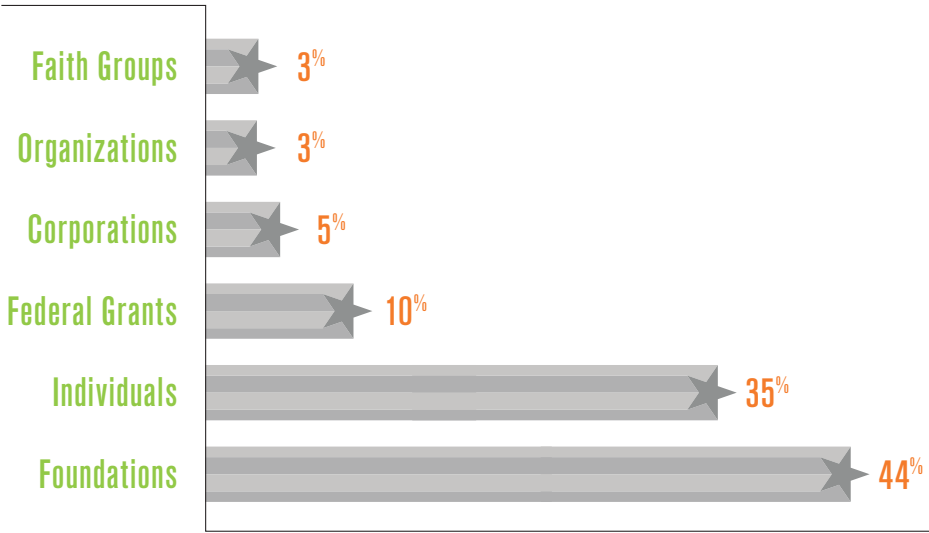
**4,787,883**

### NET FUNDS USED FOR CAPITAL

**(537,433)**

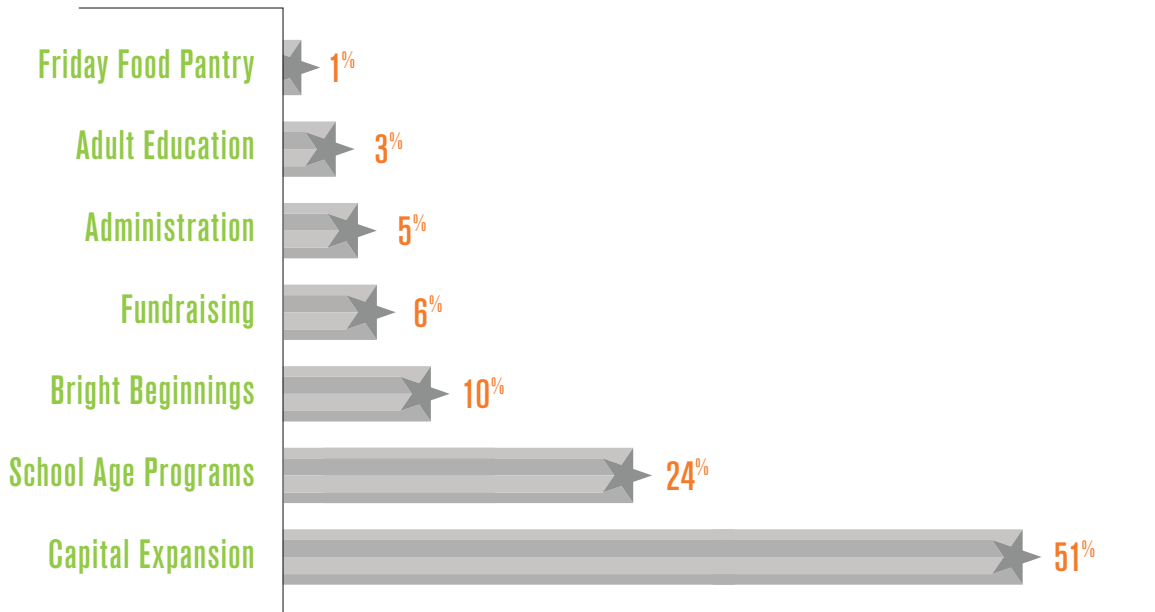


# GIVING BY SOURCE



*By demonstrating strong financial health and commitment to accountability, Grace Place has earned a 4-star Charity Navigator rating, which sets our organization apart from our peers and demonstrates our trustworthiness and transparency.*

# USAGE OF FUNDS



*Volunteers are indispensable to our everyday operation and mission at Grace Place. We have 250 regular volunteers and over 500 additional volunteers throughout the year helping others help themselves. Because of our volunteers' tireless dedication, our children and families have a chance to shine and to make their educational dreams a reality.*

Jan Abbott, Marcie Acevedo, Mary Agnew, Mario Aguilar, Luis Aguirre, Sharon Ahern, Kubra Akyuz, Nazmiye Akyuz, Carlos Amaris, Stephen Anderson, Maria Anez, Amy Angeles, Delilah Archibald, Linda Badge, Lance Baker, Vicky Baker, Virginia Ball, Kay Barton, Margaret Bastow, Rachel Beasley, Ellen Bechthold, Barbara Bennett, Summer Billie, Debra Blaine, Marion Bohall, Helen Bohn, Deborah Boissoneau, Karen Boles, George Bond, Ricki Bond, Michelle Borders, Marilyn Borowsky, Jim Bosscher, Pat Bosscher, Maria Botana, Julia Brackett, Kay Brandon, Christine Briggs, Kate Briscoe, Emily Brovey, Dona Brown, Thelma Brown, Mary Bryant, Wes Bryant, Jeanne Bucklin, Rod Bucklin, Emily Budd, Joan Byerhof, Mark Cabral, Daisy Calderon, Barbara Campasano, Leesa Carls, Ginette Carrier, Isabel Castillo, Allen Caswell, Betsy Cernosia, Hellwy Chahin, Samantha Chlominsky, Kenneth Cihiy, Thomas Clark, Karen Clemens, Bonnie Clukey, David Cole, Edith Cole, John Collins, Karen Confoy, Lisa Connors, Carla Corban, Teresa Cornett, Sue Cornwall, Jean Corson, Darcy Cox, Reese Cumming, Sandra Cunningham, Lou D'Amico, Janet DasVarma, Connee Dawson, Patricia Day, Jennifer DeLony, Ruth Ann DeLuca, Skip Deneka, Virginia Deneka, Demi DeRose, Myrlande Desire, Diane Devermann, Sonia Diaz, Linda DiGiorno, Martha Doherty, Ramon Dominguez, Merrilee Doyle, Michael Angelo Duenas, Diana Edwards, Penny Felix, Mark Fiebrink, Jordan Fleury, Marzinior Fleury, Wealtha Flick, Carol Fox, Kathy Freeman, Bob Furek,

**“ For a small, monthly investment of time, you can actually make quite a difference in a young adult’s life that is trying to better themselves through education. And they will never forget whatever level of help or advice you may give them. ”** Michelle Borders, Mentor

Judy Gaffney, Abril Galicia Ayala, Roxie Gallagher, Pilar Garcia, Isabel Gareau, Gabriella Garnett, Yaneth Garza, Dick Gast, Marci Gast, Mary Lynn Geier, Shannah Gillespie, Arletys Gomez, Yenniffer Gomez, Albert Gonsalves, Carlos Gonzalez, Florita Graf, Don Grandi, Kathy Grandi, Luanne Gregas, Valerie Gresham, Coleen Grieb, Dolores Gruca, Mary Guillermo, Dennis Gulley, George Gulley, Pat Gulley, Nancy Hahn, Pat Hamann, Al Hannigan, Terry Haralson, Trish Hare, Erin Harris, Bill Harrison, Naneve Hawke, Elizabeth Hazelbaker, Gabriela Hechavarria, Ashlea Heck, Judy Hester, Sherry Hoffman, Karen Hogarth, Gail Hoopes, Alexis Horn, Allen Hoverson, Kathy Hoverson, Louise Howard, Mary Hubert, Linda Hutchings, Sara Illum, Ann Janyja, Stephanie Jean, Doug Jensen, Holly Jensen, Brad Johnson, Kelly Johnson, Tiffany Johnson, Cindy Jonckheere, David Jonckheere, Brian Joseph, Nora Kasten, Jerri Kautsky, Theresa Kemly, Kevin Keyes, Jerry Kimble, Gail King, Leo King, Nancy Kirschner, Rich Kirschner, Jacob Klein,

“ *As a former elementary school teacher, I’ve seen firsthand how important it is for youngsters to get a strong start in the fundamentals and to enjoy learning. It sets them up for success later. I love working in the reading lab because I feel I am helping give girls and boys a key to a productive and proud future. The children at Grace place have many challenges but if they become avid readers the path ahead will be much brighter.* ”

**Paula Stone, Elementary Volunteer**

Rebecca Knowles, Mindy Kozeluh, Carol Kreckman, Fred Kreckman, Nancy Kunz, Katie Kyle, Claude Lacoste, Brittany Lacroix, Marian Lanten, Will Lara, Elizabeth Lavin, Melanie Leach, Linda Lee, Mary Ann Lee, Sara Leuthner, Priscilla Lewis, Kathy Long, Itzel Lopez, Erik Lutgert, Karen Macallister, Rick MacClugage, Stew MacFarlane, Deborah Mackerwicz, Andrea Madariaga, Miguel Madariaga, Charles Mahan, Connie Sue Mahan, James Maloni, Marci Maloni, Paula Mangan, Susan Mann, Elodia Maria, Nancy Marino, Daniel Martinez, Eric Martinez, Pilar Martinez, Karen Martonik, John Matuska, Paulette Matuska, Lydia McCurdy, Amber McDonald, Noreen McEnery, Gerri McEnroe, Doug McFerren, Kathy McFerren, Diane McGrath, Gwendolyn McLaughlin, Judy McNamara, Helene McPeak, Juliana Meek, Brandon Mendez, Minerva Mendez, Arjani Mendoza, Ray Merz, Sue Merz, Fred Mesler, Jessica Meza, Harold Milkey, Gerri Miller, Marian Miller, Diedre Milligan, David Mills, Tracy Moffatt, Rick Moore, Sylvia Moore, Michelle Mora, Kathy Morgan, Carol Mullen, Dick Munro, Paul Myrin, Judith Naldiva, Patricia Napor, William Needham, Herb Newman, Jessica Newton, Lesley Nietzman, Katie Nunner, Lise O’Brien, Rosemary O’Connell, William O’Connell, Petey O’Donnell, Nick Olivastro, Diane Olivio, Elisa Olmeda, Patricia Olsen, Adrian Orelie, Kathy O’Renick, Ken O’Renick, Ana Osorio, Emily Osterhaus, Monica Osterhaus, Norma Pence, Elizabeth Penzo, Betty Perez, Eve Perni, Emily Peters, Russ Peterson, Bethany Petry, Kristen Petry, Barbara Pierce, Florie Pierre, Sheenyamenson Pierre, Phil Plessinger, Brandon Poli, Len Price, Betty Pursley, Maria Ramirez, LouAnn Ransom, Nita Rapp, Tom Rauschenberger, Nancy Rawe, Angelina Raye, Pat Reid, Missy Renzetti, Belle Reyes, Lynn Rhodes, Alvin Richards, Patty Richards, Linda Riddle, William Riddle, John Roberts, Mary Ellen Roberts, Bill Roberts, Jacklyn Robinson, Meg Robinson, Gloria Rogers, Amanda Roland, Martha Rombach, Sugar Rubin, Carole Russell, Jan Russell, Stan Russell, Patricia Sacks, Mary Margaret Sampson, Ricardo Sanchez, John Scalli, Sydney Seaton, Christina Sharp, Harry Sharp, Betty Sheridan, Donald Shippey, Karina Sierra, Patricia Sierra, Janet Silloway, Nancy Simpson, Christina Skivicki, Arthur Smith, Audrey Smith, Regina Smith, Shirley Smith, Bev Spees, Larry Spees, Ellen Spencer, Beth Spicka, Paul Spiesman, Steven St. Surin, Laura Stacell, Donna Stapleton, Diane Stites, Donald Stitt, Mary Stone, Paula Stone, Kathy Stried, Robert Stried, Stanley Surin, Annie Tatigian, Bob Teitelbaum, Terri Teitelbaum, Roger Thomas, Beth Thompson, Rooseveline Toussaint, Rosie Uribe, Judith Valdivia, Altanice Valentine, Grace Valle, Mario Valle, Julia Van Domelen, Xiomara Vargas, Corey Walker, Linda Walker, John Wasmer III, Robert Weiser, Betty Carol Whealy, John Whealy, Kay Wilson, Kathleen Wilson, Robert Wilson, Arthur Winterhalter, Christina Woodhouse, Sally Worker, Jan Wright, Richard Wright, Barbara Zack, Mary Zimmermann.

## Mom Mentors

Maria Acevedo-Rechtin, Xiomara Anderson, Evelyn Arrigada, Ilse Cruz, Pilar Cruz, Carmen Espirtu, Noemi Gomez, Irma Daniela Guterrez, Maribel Lopez, Maricela Lopez, Martha Lopez, Renette Majuste, Miguelina Maldonado, Dolores (Lolita) Manzo, Cintia Mata, Cecilia Mirzaie, Marissa Orellana, Elizabeth Pineda, Jennifer Ramos, Dulce Rodriguez, Mariana Rodriguez, Veronica Saavedra, Yelicza Sanchez, Estela Sierra, Maximina Sotelo, Silvia Soto, Claudia Trujillo, Claudia Vega.



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Four Star Charity



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[www.graceplacenaples.org](http://www.graceplacenaples.org)