WHAT IS THE GRACE PLACE WAY? We've been examining that question a lot this year. What started as a hashtag on social media has become a mantra—four small words that make a huge difference.

When a global pandemic shut down classrooms across the world, our steadfast community of donors, volunteers, partners, and teaching and administrative staff never wavered. We worked with Collier County Public Schools to ensure each of our families’ homes had access to the internet and technology. By July 2020, over 220 students were participating in virtual, in-person, or hybrid summer programs. Our food pantry never closed, serving as many as 475 families a week. Community is The Grace Place Way.

As the 2020–21 school year began, many of our students were not achieving at grade level. A robust network of support helped reinforce our commitment to our mission. It provided us the means to enroll 616 students in the academic year. Our administrative and teaching staff worked around the clock to help students and families in need of academic and social-emotional support. Ninety-two percent of our four-year-old preschoolers met or exceeded all Kindergarten Readiness indicators at the end of the school year. Resilience is The Grace Place Way.

For the eighth consecutive year, 100 percent of our high school LEAD seniors successfully graduated. In addition to our two Jubilee Scholarships, we announced the Opportunity Scholarship—a full ride to Florida Gulf Coast University. Because of your support, there are now three life-changing scholarships available each year. Generosity is The Grace Place Way.

Success was not limited to the classroom. Our administrative staff streamlined budgeting processes and integrated additional assessments and tracking to improve reporting transparency. We want our investors to know how their support is being utilized and to understand their impact more fully. Fiscal responsibility is The Grace Place Way.

Together, we embody The Grace Place Way. Our shared values and your generosity continue to fortify who we are and what we do. As you turn the pages, please join us in the celebration of the success we achieved together.

OUR MISSION
Grace Place puts faith into action, providing pathways out of poverty by educating children and families.

OUR VISION
That all families in Golden Gate have access to education to break the cycle of poverty.
The Grace Place Way | 2021 Impact Report

Over 1,750 books distributed

96% of full-time two- and three-year old students met or exceeded developmental benchmarks in social, emotional, physical, language, cognitive, literacy, and mathematics.

92% of high school students reported getting into college thanks to the Grace Place College and Career Access Program.

Our model fosters the development of early language skills in preschoolers while parents attend classes to enhance their abilities as their child’s first teacher. Kindergarten readiness is the goal — and it’s truly a family effort.

The Academy of Leaders afterschool programs for grades K-8 focus on academic achievement, health and wellness, and career exploration. The high school LEAD (Leaders Empowered to Achieve Dreams) program supports academic achievement, career exploration, and college preparation. Parent programs and adult education classes reinforce family literacy and the value of education.

Families are at the heart of Grace Place. And for many, Grace Place becomes a second family and a home away from home.

100% of parents who attended our LEAD high school program for three years or more have a 3.0 GPA or higher.

1,423 hours of afterschool and summer programming

90% of our middle school students met or exceeded grade-level standard in Algebra by the academic mid-year.

100% of middle school students reported this program has helped them with their academic performance.

Over $252,000 in scholarships earned

100% of high school students agree the LEAD program helped them understand how to make career choices.

13,568 individuals served through the Grace Place food pantry

Parents showed an average improvement of 1.0 grade level in reading. 100% demonstrated improvement in their listening comprehension.

Jubilee Scholarship recipient (2014) completed her Masters at Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies in Italy.

1,750 books distributed

97% of middle school students met or exceeded grade-level standard in writing by the academic mid-year.

100% of high school students agreed the LEAD program helped them understand how to make career choices.

100% of college and career access program

100% of participating seniors graduated

100% of full-time four-year-olds tested kindergarten ready.

100% of parents with children enrolled in Academy of Leaders after school programs reported improved parenting skills from adult events.

100% of parents who attended our LEAD high school program met or exceeded grade-level standard in Algebra by the academic mid-year.

100% of full-time students in two- and three-year old students met or exceeded developmental benchmarks in social, emotional, physical, language, cognitive, literacy, and mathematics.

100% of parents showed an average improvement of 1.0 grade level in reading. 100% demonstrated improvement in their listening comprehension.

12,568 individuals served through the Grace Place food pantry

7 adult students received Citizenship
THE GRACE PLACE WAY IS...

FAMILY

“My family and I have been coming to Grace Place for 16 years. I learned to speak English here. My children have grown up here. My son is going to college on a full scholarship because of Grace Place. Not only have they helped my family, but the people here have become family.”

ILSE CRUZ, alumna & volunteer member of the Grace Place family since 2005
**SUPPORT**

“Grace Place supported me through high school and helped me get a full scholarship to Florida Gulf Coast University. My studies there led to opportunities like climbing Machu Picchu and performing research in the Amazon - things I might have only ever dreamt of. Now, I am working at Grace Place while I attend grad school. It feels good to be part of the organization that gave so much to me and to now be supporting younger students.”

ALEX AMADOR, alumnus & staff
member of the Grace Place family since 2012

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**HOPE**

“The Grace Place Way to me means hope. Believing that by helping all of the families in the Golden Gate area we are helping them to create a better future for themselves and the generations to come. They believe in us to be able to help them and we believe in them that they can be the change that they need to succeed in life.”

SHAGA FRANCOIS, teacher
member of the Grace Place family since 2016
CONNECTION

“When I think of Grace Place the first thing that I think of are transformational opportunities. Growing up in a low-income area, there are not that many high-quality educational resources compared to my counterparts. Lucky for me, I have access to one right in my backyard. Grace Place is not only a crown-jewel in my community, but it has also brought new ways for young children, students, and even adults to grow and expand their knowledge. I have been with Grace Place since the 4th grade and have seen lives be truly transformed. It has not only been a very valuable resource for me, but has brought so many opportunities into my life that have set me apart from other students my age. Grace Place has been my secret weapon in growing my career and I could not have imagined being in the place I am now if it was not for them.”

Prisca Paul, LEAD high school student & intern member of the Grace Place family since 2014

“Grace Place has helped us connect and make a strong bond with our kids and our family, but has also created connections with strangers that have become friends, and now family. My children call my Bright Beginnings classmates “tía”. I look forward to raising our children together.”

Usbeidy Gutiérrez, Bright Beginnings student & volunteer member of the Grace Place family since 2017

TRANSFORMATION

“When I think of Grace Place the first thing that I think of are transformational opportunities. Growing up in a low-income area, there are not that many high-quality educational resources compared to my counterparts. Lucky for me, I have access to one right in my backyard. Grace Place is not only a crown-jewel in my community, but it has also brought new ways for young children, students, and even adults to grow and expand their knowledge. I have been with Grace Place since the 4th grade and have seen lives be truly transformed. It has not only been a very valuable resource for me, but has brought so many opportunities into my life that have set me apart from other students my age. Grace Place has been my secret weapon in growing my career and I could not have imagined being in the place I am now if it was not for them.”

Prisca Paul, LEAD high school student & intern member of the Grace Place family since 2014

“Grace Place makes learning fun, sometimes I don’t even know I’m doing it. I have so much fun here, and my mom is happy that I’m doing so good in school.”

Stanjio Stacoo, Academy of Leaders elementary student member of the Grace Place family since 2018

“Grace Place is preparing me for my future, helping me learn about all the opportunities out there for me if I work hard. It makes me dream of what is possible.”

Roodnelsa Lemorin, Academy of Leaders middle school student member of the Grace Place family since 2015

FRIENDSHIP

“The Grace Place Way is friendship. Friends are very important because you need people who are kind to you, who make you happy, and make you laugh in bad times.”

David and Sophia, Academy of Leaders elementary students members of the Grace Place family since 2017

DREAMS

“Grace Place is preparing me for my future, helping me learn about all the opportunities out there for me if I work hard. It makes me dream of what is possible.”

Roodnelsa Lemorin, Academy of Leaders middle school student member of the Grace Place family since 2015

FUN

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Usbeidy Gutiérrez, Bright Beginnings student & volunteer member of the Grace Place family since 2017
EFFECTIVE
*Grace Place establishes a clear path out of poverty through education for Golden Gate children and adults to succeed in today’s world.*

BILL SAFRIN, volunteer member of the Grace Place family since 2018

ACCEPTANCE
*Grace Place accepts, supports, and values all aspects of every child in the program. Children are encouraged to be independent and curious while at the same time learning to respect others and follow rules.*

KAREN BACH, volunteer member of the Grace Place family since 2019

OPPORTUNITY
*Over the last ten years, I have seen the mission change lives. They have provided a pathway for language, literacy, and life skills that have given families the ability to go to school, college and apply for jobs they wouldn’t have gotten without their education at Grace Place. The opportunities are endless. I’m proud to be a part of Grace Place.*

NITA RAPP, donor & volunteer member of the Grace Place family since 2011

PARTNERSHIP
“When thinking about The Grace Place Way, the word that comes to mind for me is partnership. During the last 5+ years that I have supported Grace Place, I have witnessed how the students, their families, the staff, the board, and all of our wonderful volunteers have developed amazing partnerships that have had long-lasting repercussions in the Golden Gate community and beyond. We all work together in doing our part to break the cycle of poverty while empowering the kids and families to reach for their goals. Thanks to these symbiotic partnerships, we all walk away with our hearts filled with joy and gratitude knowing that lives are being positively changed for generations to come while remembering that there is still work to be done.”

CESAR TAVERAS, board member & donor member of the Grace Place family since 2015
### LEADERSHIP

“Grace Place has led me to find my role in my life. When I first entered Grace Place, I had low grades and was still getting used to being in high school. This organization has led me and so many families into excellence by giving us the opportunity for a better education. The program leaders at LEAD are always encouraging us to focus on our studies and they remind us we are the leaders of tomorrow. I am now part of the JROTC program here at Golden Gate High School and I feel like a leader to the rest of my peers.”

WOOD BIEN-AIME, LEAD high school student member of the Grace Place family since 2018

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