

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Grace Place Receives \$25,000 Grant from Webster Education Fund to Continue Middle School Choice Academies

Naples, FL – July 26, 2024 – Grace Place for Children and Families is pleased to announce it has received a generous grant of \$25,000 from the Webster Education Fund of the Collier Community Foundation. This funding will support the continuation of Grace Place's after school Choice Academies, providing engaging STEM and career exploration enrichment for 130 middle school students in the Golden Gate community.

Recent Choice Academies have included BMX and STEM, Fashion Design, Dance, Healthcare, Bridge Club, Leadership, Basketball and STEM, and others. Every 5 weeks, students choose a new academy led by volunteers to join, leading up to a final competitive Showcase attended by local community leaders. Notably, Grace Place students at Golden Gate Middle School performed 14% higher in English Language Arts and Math than their non-participating peers, highlighting the effectiveness of the Choice Academy model.

The Webster Education Fund, managed by the Collier Community Foundation, focuses on promoting educational initiatives that empower local youth. This grant highlights the Foundation's commitment to supporting programs that make a meaningful impact in Collier County.

"We are deeply grateful to the Webster Education Fund and the Collier Community Foundation for their generous support," said Lära Fisher, Chief Executive Officer of Grace Place. "This \$25,000 grant will allow us to continue our Middle School Choice Academies, empowering middle schoolers with the skills and opportunities they need to succeed academically and beyond."

ABOUT GRACE PLACE FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Grace Place for Children and Families, celebrating its 20th year, is a nonprofit family literacy center committed to providing pathways out of poverty by educating children and families. Grace Place enrolls over 1,200 individuals in its education programs each year, offering the nationally recognized early learning initiative Bright Beginnings (nursery to 4 years old), which involves a parent in the early learning needed to be kindergarten ready, and comprehensive School Age Programs (grades K-12) funded by the Florida Department of Education. The organization also provides Adult Education courses and operates a Food Pantry serving hundreds of families weekly. For more information about

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Grace Place for Children and Families and to explore volunteer opportunities, visit www.graceplacenaples.org.

ABOUT THE COLLIER COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Established in 1985, the Collier Community Foundation is a tax-exempt, public, charitable organization dedicated to increasing and focusing on local private philanthropy. Managing over 850 funds and working with numerous nonprofits, the Foundation has granted over \$328 million to nonprofit organizations, community programs, and scholarships. For more information, visit colliercf.org or call 239-649-5000.

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