

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Grace Place for Children & Families Welcomes New Board Members and Ambassador Board

Naples, Fla. (March 17, 2025) – Grace Place for Children & Families is thrilled to welcome two exceptional leaders to its Board of Directors, further strengthening its mission to break the cycle of poverty through education.

Suzanne Berry brings a wealth of experience in governance and strategic development. She is an active volunteer and presenter with the American Society of Association Executives (ASAE). Her expertise in organizational leadership and passion for community impact make her a valuable addition to the Board.

Andrew Buschle also joins the Board, bringing a strong background in finance and education advocacy. He is a Senior Vice President and Private Client Advisor with Bank of America Private Bank. Passionate about supporting students, he has extensive experience serving on local education nonprofit boards.

In addition to these new appointments, Grace Place has elected **Debbie Mathews Finch** as Chair, **Patrick Cassidy** as Vice Chair, and **Cesar Taveras** as Secretary. The organization also extends its deepest gratitude to **Jim Bosscher** and **Reverend Craig Goodrich** for their dedicated service as they conclude their terms.

With these leadership transitions, the Board now comprises 14 dedicated professionals committed to expanding educational opportunities for children and families in need. "The collaboration between our Board and staff is vital to our success at Grace Place. Our newest members will help us build on 20 years of academic programming while increasing visibility and resources to support the students of Golden Gate," said Lara Fisher, CEO of Grace Place for Children & Families.

Grace Place's **Board of Ambassadors**, comprised of young professionals dedicated to driving positive change in their community, has also elected new leadership. **Dallas Clarke** has been named Chair, and **Emily Shafer** will serve as Vice Chair. This group had a successful year, hosting the inaugural *Dodge for a Cause* dodgeball tournament at Grace Place.

Dallas Clarke is a graduate of the University of Akron and currently serves as the Product Improvement QE Supervisor at Arthrex. Before his role at Arthrex, he was the Validation Engineering Senior Supervisor for Catalent Pharma Inc. in Bloomington, Indiana.

Emily Shafer, a Florida native, is a motivated leader in the medical device industry, working at Arthrex, Inc. in Naples, Florida, since 2016. She is a Florida Gulf Coast University alumna and

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current MBA student, holding a master's degree in industrial engineering from the University of Central Florida.

Grace Place for Children & Families looks forward to the invaluable contributions of its new board members and ambassadors as it continues to empower families with access to quality education.

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 1200 individuals in its education programs each year. Its nationally recognized Bright Beginnings program, a Grace Place Family Literacy Model®, serves preschool children and their parents. Grace Place School Age Programs, funded by the Florida Department of Education, provides afterschool, summer, and college access programming to K-12 youth. The Adult Education program at Grace Place offers English language, literacy, computer literacy, and citizenship courses. Additionally, the Food Pantry at Grace Place serves over 300 families each week. Collaborating with community partners, we offer medical and mental health screenings, referrals, and financial literacy classes in Golden Gate. Explore volunteer opportunities in literacy, mentoring, adult education, and more at www.graceplacenaples.org.

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