

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Grace Place for Children and Families Receives \$210,000 Multi-Year Grant from the Women's Foundation of Collier County

Naples, FL — June 3, 2025 — Grace Place for Children and Families is pleased to announce it has received a \$210,000 grant from the Women's Foundation of Collier County. These funds will support the launch of a new pilot initiative: the *Middle School Career Discovery Academy*.

This innovative program is designed to expose middle school girls to high-demand careers and industries, while providing mentorship opportunities with professional women in those fields. Students will focus on four critical and fast-growing sectors: Manufacturing, Healthcare, Technology, and Entrepreneurship. Guided by instructional specialists and industry partners, students will develop critical industry knowledge alongside the durable skills needed in all careers. This initiative will empower girls to see themselves in well-paying and essential fields, equipping them with the confidence to succeed in tomorrow's workforce.

"This grant is a powerful investment in the potential of young girls in Golden Gate," said Lara Fisher, CEO of Grace Place. "By opening doors to career paths they may have never considered—and connecting them with women who are thriving in those fields—this program will empower girls to envision bold futures and equip them with the confidence to pursue them."

The *Middle School Career Discovery Academies* are set to launch in Fall 2025 and will be developed in collaboration with community partners and industry professionals.

The Women's Foundation of Collier County awards annual grants through a competitive application and review process. Funding is made possible by donors who believe in the Women's Foundation and its ability to identify and grant to the most pressing needs of women and girls in Collier County.

About Grace Place for Children and Families

Grace Place for Children and Families is a nonprofit family literacy center committed to providing pathways out of poverty by educating children and families. Grace Place enrolls over 1,300 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 350 families each week. Collaborating with community partners, Grace Place offers 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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About the Women's Foundation of Collier County

The Women's Foundation of Collier County (WFCC), established in 1996, is a field-of-interest fund administered by the Collier Community Foundation. Its mission is to be a catalyst for change in the lives of women and girls in Collier County through grantmaking, advocacy, and education. WFCC has granted over \$1,000,000 to local women's programs and organizations. Learn more at wfcollier.org.

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