Telling Stories That Make a Difference
The Golden Gate Senior Center
by Jeff Lytle

On a routine Monday morning at the Golden Gate Senior Center—a converted old library next door to the new public library off Golden Gate Parkway—the Community Foundation’s Performance and Outcomes Committee is there to learn about the results of a $12,000 grant for Catholic Charities to pilot a mental health counseling program for senior clients.

The information comes swiftly and surely from staffers from both Catholic Charities and the center, which is run by a coalition of private sector agencies and has nearly 800 members after only two years. Staff says most of the center members are from the immediate neighborhood, though some come from as far away as Marco Island, and most of them are women.

This is where Hernan Pinilla comes in. He is the counselor delivering the services of the grant, which lets him work at the center every Monday morning. When he is not directly counseling per se, he is mingling with members to become that “trusted person” to turn to. The women, staffers report, are more likely to seek help with issues, ranging from housing anxiety to loneliness to family tension, and they are more likely to warm up to a male counselor.

Hernan (pronounced herr-NAHN) has the added attraction of being from Colombia, which resonates with center clients who may feel like strangers in a strange land, either separated from

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As the Community Foundation of Collier County finishes up another successful and busy season, I would like to take a moment to thank everyone in our community, from our donors, to our local nonprofits, organizations and individuals who have contributed to a great year of connecting people who care with causes that matter.

In the 3rd quarter of our fiscal year (Jan 1-March 31, 2017), the Community Foundation distributed over $1.6 million in distributions to nonprofit organizations, including over $1.1 million from Donor Advised Funds to help nonprofits locally and around the world. We currently manage more than 510 funds, collaborate with more than 400 nonprofits, and hold nearly $152 million in charitable assets.

The Community Foundation also awarded approximately 103 new student scholarships this fiscal year totaling more than $507,000 and are working with 172 students receiving more than $850,000 in scholarship support! Our Scholarship Connector website, which matches students to scholarships for which they qualify, lists nearly 260 potential local scholarship opportunities. More than 3,200 students have used the Scholarship Connector in just the past 3 months.

In addition, we will continue our collaboration with Future Ready Collier, a network of organizations, businesses, schools and community members working to ensure every child in Collier County, Florida, is ready for Kindergarten, and every young person enters adulthood with a vision and plan to accomplish that vision.

The 2017 Give Where You Live Collier, our third annual giving day in Collier County held on February 15-16, generated 1,847 donations to raise more than $4 million in 24 hours for 40 local nonprofits. The online giving campaign attracted 463 new donors this year—a 116% increase over 2016!

We were also proud to support the Satisfy the Hunger Food Drive again this year. This initiative of the Naples Daily News helps stock the shelves of Collier County food pantries during the lean days of summer, the off-season of giving, when shelves are the barest and the needs of families are the greatest. We are happy to announce that this effort raised over over $111,000, an increase of 85% over last year! Your gifts will allow others to eat tomorrow.

We live in an incredibly philanthropic community that believes strongly in giving back and is passionate about making a difference. Together, we can make Collier County somewhere we all love to live. Thank you for another great year and for everything you do!
An innovative donor-advised grant to Collier County Public Schools is bridging home-bound students with their teachers and peers in the classroom.

A Community Foundation grant gave the District the ability to purchase its first VGo robot, an in-class avatar that is remotely operated in real time via video conferencing by the student at home. Students in the classroom can interact with their off-site peer, who can “move about” to visit the teacher’s desk, zoom in on hands-on projects or “participate” in story time. The convalescing student also can “travel” the hallways, playground or lunchroom, providing opportunities to socialize.

“There is a dual benefit,” says Alex Vance, who made the $4,625 robot package possible through the fund he administers with his wife, Pat, at the Community Foundation of Collier County. “The student who’s using it benefits, obviously, from being able to participate remotely in the classroom. And the students are stimulated by seeing technology being used creatively by seeing this mobile robot and interacting with a student who is not in the classroom.”

There are a host of reasons why students, whether in kindergarten or high school, cannot attend bricks-and-mortar classes, including immune deficiencies, cancer treatment, severe allergies, injuries and surgical recovery. Collier Assistive Technology Specialist Sherry Wiseman has worked with home and hospital-bound students for years to help them keep up with curriculum. She remembers when a large monitor on a cart had to be rolled from classroom to classroom to facilitate remote learning. “This will be a fantastic opportunity to make a connection for students missing their peers,” she says.

The Vances’ donor-advised focus is on supporting blended and personalized learning enhancements in K-12 public education—creative solutions that supplement the teacher’s instruction while helping students learn at their own pace. “We’re happy to have our fund help out with this pilot program,” Alex Vance says.

You Make A Difference...We Make It Easier

At the Community Foundation, our mission is to improve the quality of life in Collier County by connecting donors to community needs and provide leadership on critical community issues. For Good. Forever.
Scholarship Connector Matches Students to Opportunities

People with higher levels of education typically earn more throughout their lifetime and are productive contributors to local and state economies. For many in Collier County, higher education is a once-in-a-lifetime chance to break out of poverty. 67 percent of the public-school student body faces economic need according to federal poverty guidelines.

That’s why the Community Foundation of Collier County has become a game-changer in helping aspiring students not only get to college, but graduate, too. The Foundation has untangled the messy web of scholarship research with its year-old Scholarship Connector. The website (colliercountyscholarships.org) allows students to input their information and it automatically searches nearly 260 potential local scholarship opportunities, generating a list of the ones for which that student qualifies. This cuts down on arduous, time-consuming searches that lead to dead-ends, resulting in frustration to the point that students may stop looking—and that scholarships go unnoticed and never attempted.

“The Scholarship Connector helped level the playing field,” said Sharon Bayata, Community Foundation Education, Scholarship Director. “Not only that, but it gives all students—no matter their background—an easy opportunity to research and narrow their search. Some students don’t know where to begin, but with a tool like this at their fingertips, they’ll be more willing to try.”

The site is gaining recognition as students become familiar with its ease and usefulness and is logging some heavy traffic. Since January 1, 2017, the Scholarship Connector has had over 50,000 visitors. More than 6,000 scholarship seekers have used the Connector so far this year and of those, about 44% are new users to the site.

University of Florida freshman Bensey Pierre-Louis, who was born and raised in Collier County by parents who emigrated from Haiti, is thrilled with the Scholarship Connector. He earned the Frank and Ellen Daveler Educational Scholarship, which covered half of his tuition. He keeps checking back because the Foundation is continually adding new ones, some deadlines had passed, and some funding opportunities apply to juniors and seniors in their majors.

“The format has been easy for me,” said Pierre-Louis, 19, who plans to become a physician’s assistant. “My parents weren’t able to provide for me, so I relied on scholarships to attend school this year.”

Over the past 20 years administering scholarships, the Community Foundation has helped launch hundreds of futures, like Bensey’s. This year, the Foundation is working with 172 students receiving more than $850,000 in scholarship support. Bayata points out that “we couldn’t have this arm of the foundation without the amazing people who start scholarships.” The Foundation has more than 40 scholarships and is actively working to grow its scholarship resources.

Learn more online at: colliercountyscholarships.org.
Strategic Tax Planning With Your Donor Advised Fund

by William H. Myers

With all that is going on in Washington, D.C. these days and the flurry of news surrounding the healthcare plan and tax reform, it recalls one possible tax planning strategy that can be accomplished with a Donor Advised Fund.

In the tax arena President Trump has announced some proposals for tax reduction, both corporate and individual. The current top rate for individuals is 39.6 percent. If you make a charitable contribution to your Donor Advised Fund (or other qualified charity) and you are taxed at the top rate you will be able to deduct (subject to certain limitations) what you give. For every $100 you give it will save you $39.60 in taxes.

“What’s so great about that” you say, “it has always been that way.” Well, maybe, but not for long. President Trump’s proposal is to reduce income tax rates to as low as 15 percent. In that scenario, a $100 deduction would only benefit you to the tune of $15. Quite a reduction in your tax savings!

So, what do you do? How about you “front load” your contribution for ten years, but do it this year while rates are still high. A $1,000 contribution this year would save $390.60 in taxes. On the other hand, if you contributed only $100 this year and $100 for each of the next nine years the tax savings could be only $174.60.

Using these small numbers doesn’t really do justice to the strategic planning strategy being proposed. Let’s say you contribute $100,000 up front this year instead of smaller $10,000 annual contributions over the ten years. The tax savings could be as much as over $22,000 greater. That makes it worth considering. And, you still have the $100,000 in your Donor Advised Fund to make grants when you choose and to whom you choose.

Planning of this nature always requires working closely with your tax advisor to assure you achieve the benefits sought. This way you can continue to support your favorite charities for many years to come.

Grants at a Glance

The Community Foundation of Collier County has distributed $1,604,894 in 314 grants which were made to nonprofit agencies in the 3rd quarter of The Foundation’s fiscal year (Jan 1 – Mar 31 2017).

Over $1.1 million of the grants came from donor advised funds. The largest donor advised grants funded to Collier County nonprofits included $50,000 to New Horizons of SWFL, followed by $36,000 to Collier Harvest and $30,000 to United Church of Marco Island.

For more information, please visit cfcollier.org/news.
Save the Date for Our Upcoming Events!

The Community Foundation of Collier County is proud to continue our tradition of engaging events that celebrate the philanthropic and leadership contributions of local individuals and organizations.

**Celebration of Philanthropy**

**November 3, 2017 | Naples Grande Beach Resort**

This event sponsored by the Trustees Emeriti of the Community Foundation is a salute to individuals, nonprofit organizations, corporations and civic groups that demonstrate passion about charitable giving and inspire others to do the same.

Join us to honor:

- **Patty and Jay Baker** - Robert C. Cosgrove Award
- **The Conservancy of Southwest Florida** - Harvey Kapnick Award
- **Wynn’s Market & Catering** - Outstanding Corporate Philanthropy Award
- **The Latchkey League** - Excellence in Civic Leadership Award *(sponsored by Naples Daily News)*

**Power of the Purse**

**December 1, 2017 | Naples Grande Beach Resort**

This Women's Foundation of Collier County event brings together civic-minded leaders whose charitable activities help improve the well-being of at-risk women and girls in our community, as well as drawings for fabulous designer handbags.

**Guest Speaker: Ann Curry**

Ann is an award-winning journalist and photojournalist, a former NBC News Network anchor, an international correspondent and has also been given numerous humanitarian awards. Join us to hear her speak on women and girls’ issues—locally, nationally and worldwide.

**Women of Initiative**

**April 6, 2018 | Naples Grande Beach Resort**

The 20th anniversary of this Women’s Foundation of Collier County event celebrates women who, through their leadership styles, are an inspiration to all women seeking to make a difference through philanthropy and civic engagement.

For ticket or sponsorship information for these events, contact Carri Kreisman at ckreisman@cfcollier.org or 239.649.5000.