# GNL 2024-2025 IMPACT REPORT

## Our Mission

To educate and inspire a network of service-minded leaders to impact positive change in our community.

Greater Naples Leadership (GNL) provides exceptional opportunities for its members to continually enrich their lives and improve their community through:

- Unique first-hand learning experience
- Rewarding relationships with accomplished professionals
- Access to meaningful board and volunteer roles

GNL is a non-political, nonprofit organization. Our members are committed to giving back and making a difference in Collier County. GNL by the numbers:

- Established in 1996
- Over 1100 Masters Class graduates
- Over 600 active members
- Members serve over 200 non-profit and civic organizations

Our Masters Program educates members about the issues and needs of Collier County and provides a comprehensive review of community organizations. Today, our members serve as volunteers, board members, and leaders of nonprofit and civic organizations in Naples. GNL leaders have also founded non-profit organizations where they saw a need and were passionate about making a difference.

### The Needs Are Great, The Call to Service is Growing

- >400 non-profit organizations in the greater Naples metro area
- Many have less than 20 employees and revenues less than $250K
- Smaller organizations struggle for recognition and resources
- Opportunities to serve and the need for volunteers continue to grow

## GNL MEMBERS MAKING A DIFFERENCE – A FEW EXAMPLES

### Joanne Wyss, Books for Collier Kids

In 2005, Joanne Wyss (Class III) and her husband, Karl (Class IX), founded and led Books for Collier Kids (formerly First Book-Collier County) after learning that many of the children they tutored had no books at home. This nonprofit has now given over one million books to disadvantaged young children in Collier County, from pre-K through second grade. Today, some 10,000 disadvantaged young children across Collier County receive a new book monthly.

### Vincent A. Keeys, NAACP Collier, President

During Hurricane Ian, when River Park, a traditional African American neighborhood, was flooded, Vincent Keeys (Class XXV) rapidly organized food and clothing donations from nonprofit organizations, developed temporary shelters in hotels, and obtained funding to pay for rent where needed. Post Ian, he organized donations of building materials, free labor to repair houses and furniture, and was instrumental in getting $2.5 million in hurricane relief funds to elevate the homes above the floodplain.

# GNL MEMBERS MAKING A DIFFERENCE – A FEW EXAMPLES

### Carleton "Cleve" Cleveland, Immokalee Fair Housing

After Hurricane Irma tore through Immokalee in 2017, the housing crisis in that agricultural area became even more unbearable. A group, including GNL Class XXII members, led by Carleton "Cleve" Cleveland (Class XXII), sought a way to provide decent, affordable housing for Immokalee farmworker families and low-income residents. In partnership with government agencies, churches, companies, and nonprofits, they created the Immokalee Fair Housing Alliance (IFHA) and the initial fundraising plans. Today, families are moving into the first of eight buildings in the new housing complex, and the second is under construction. Ultimately there will be 128 units with rents at about 30% of the resident's income. Six GNL members remain active volunteers for the IFHA.

### Gary Personette, High School Entrepreneurship Program

Gary Personette (Class XVII) successfully introduced the Collier County Public Schools (CCPS) to an Entrepreneurship Program that offers project-based authentic learning in a real-world environment. Students enrolled in the Entrepreneurship Program learn and apply business start-up practices and concepts to projects they're passionate about to foster deeper learning and skill-building. CCPS high school teachers collaborate with volunteer business professionals who mentor student teams and provide real-world context. Champions For Learning recruits volunteers, many of whom are GNL members.

### Jean Ann Lynch, President, Baby Basics

When Jean Ann Lynch (Class XI) realized that many low-income working families did not have enough money to provide an adequate supply of diapers for their babies, she decided to do something about it. She founded the first Baby Basics program over 30 years ago in Ridgewood, NJ, and the Collier County program 19 years ago, so all babies have a chance to grow and thrive. There are now 14 programs nationwide, which is the only organization that provides free diapers consistently to low-income working families.

### Some of the Nonprofit and Civic Leaders who are GNL Members

- Jim Barton (Class XIV), Chairman of Collier Senior Resources, established the Golden Gate Senior Center in 2014
- Jessica Campbell (Class XXVI), Executive Director, Fun Time Academy
- Eileen Connolly-Keesler (Class XVIII), President/CEO, Collier Community Foundation
- Rita Cuddihy (Class XXIV), Commissioner/Chair, Naples Airport Authority
- Jackie Faffer (Class XVIII), President/CEO, Baker Senior Center
- Lara Fisher (Class XXVII), CEO, Grace Place
- Karen Govern (Class XXVIII), CEO of STARability Foundation
- Donna McGinnis (Class XXII), President/CEO, Naples Botanical Garden
- Dawn Montecalvo (Class XXIV), President, Guadalupe Center
- Linda Penniman (Class VII), Naples City Council Member
- Kevin Rambosk (Class XXVIII), Sheriff, Collier County

Our members are focused on community service. GNL educates and inspires members, serving as a springboard for them to engage in nonprofit and civic activities. We organize a group "Done in a Day" community volunteer series to complete projects for nonprofits, such as the Shelter for Abused Women & Children, Habitat for Humanity, and Harry Chapin Food Bank.

GNL also hosts free community forums to spotlight important issues, highlight local needs, and encourage community members to get involved and take action.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION ON GNL VISIT WWW.GNLWEBSITE.ORG