



SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

A PROUD BLUE ZONES COMMUNITY

The first certified Blue Zones Community® in the Southeastern U.S. invests in well-being for a more livable, vibrant, and healthy future.





CONGRATS, SOUTHWEST FLORIDA, FOR PUTTING WELL-BEING ON THE MAP!

You deserve a round of applause.
And maybe even a standing ovation.
Because together we made it happen.

Eight communities came together as one to
create a healthier tomorrow.

In the communities of Naples, Immokalee, Ave
Maria, Bonita Springs, Estero, Golden Gate, East
Naples, and Marco Island, we are seizing every
opportunity to move well-being in the right
direction. **After launching Blue Zones Project® in
Southwest Florida, we've seen tobacco use and
health risks fall, while physical, purpose, and
overall well-being are on the rise.** City leaders,
business owners, teachers, and volunteers are
coming together to transform our environments
into places where optimal health ensues and a
culture of well-being flourishes.

Southwest Florida has always been a great place
to live, work, and visit. And it's only getting
better.

We did this together. By putting our personal
and collective well-being first, we're making
healthy choices easier, creating more economic
opportunities, and ensuring a better quality of
life for everyone. Here's to making Southwest
Florida one of the healthiest regions in Florida,
where residents are living better, together.

THE JOURNEY TO BECOME A BLUE ZONES COMMUNITY

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Blue Zones Project® helps communities implement the longevity and happiness lessons learned from the world's extraordinary people and cultures to measurably improve well-being and create enhanced community vitality. The method of work is to drive community-led semi-permanent and permanent change in man-made surroundings. This approach is designed to make healthier choices easier, more ubiquitous, and sustainable. The effect: people moving more naturally, taking more time to downshift daily, discovering the power of purpose, eating wisely, and deepening their connections with friends, family, and their faith. Over time, these collective choices compound to sustainably improve well-being. In 2015, a broad base of Southwest Florida's leadership in Collier and Southern Lee Counties set a seven-year course to do just that.

The value of Blue Zones Project is measured by the engagement of its citizens; the number, type, and scope of semi-permanent and permanent changes implemented; the prevalence and incidence rates of lifestyle risks and disease; and measurable improvements in well-being; all of which ultimately led to lower medical costs, better workforce productivity, and a strengthened regional economy.

Since 2015, the Blue Zones Project communities of Southwest Florida have undergone their own community transformation, exceeding targets set to engage individuals and organizations and to implement sustainable policy changes. Well-being has reached new highs according to the most recent Sharecare Community Well-Being Index (CWBI) and other community indicators.

Our community saw statistically significant improvement in three key well-being areas measured by the CWBI—purpose, physical, and financial—and overall well-being improved by 3.6-points.

A broad coalition has supported Southwest Florida's efforts to adopt more than 60 policies and plans like Complete Streets, the SWFL Food Policy Council, and suggestive tobacco signage that will guide future decision-making toward an even more vibrant and active community. This work was bolstered by \$15.3 million in grant funding leveraged by the community with the support of Blue Zones Project.

The return on investment for the project is and will continue to manifest. The semi-permanent and permanent changes already made will continue to compound over time to produce an even bigger future return for Southwest Florida. The return on investment can be measured in a

myriad of ways, as the value captured is unique to each citizen, family, and organization. In this way, the eight communities making up the Southwest Florida footprint have been enriched as “choice communities”—places where more people and businesses choose to be. Conservatively, the seven-year estimated healthcare and workforce productivity savings for Southwest Florida totals \$190.2 million.

With sustained momentum, continued implementation of both county and city policy and plans, and advancement of the project in key areas, Southwest Florida stands to drive even greater improvements to community well-being in the future.

When Blue Zones Project first engaged Southwest Florida's leadership more than seven years ago, together we established an ambitious plan for the region to become Florida's first Blue Zones Community®. Today, Southwest Florida stands as a new benchmark across the state and country for what bold leaders can achieve when they invest in the health and well-being of their citizens. Congratulations for creating an even better Southwest Florida!

A man and a woman are standing on a wooden bridge with a wire mesh railing. The man is wearing a white polo shirt with a red 'M' logo and a white visor. The woman is wearing an orange polo shirt. They are both looking towards the camera. The bridge is set against a backdrop of dense trees and foliage, with the sun low on the horizon, creating a warm, golden glow. The bridge is supported by wooden posts and spans over a body of water, which reflects the light from the trees and the sky.

THE BLUE ZONES PROJECT STORY

What do Ikaria, Greece; Loma Linda, California; Sardinia, Italy; Okinawa, Japan; and Nicoya, Costa Rica, have in common? Their citizens lead vibrant, healthy, and amazingly long lives. These places are known as blue zones longevity hot spots, where people live measurably longer, with lower incidences of chronic disease and a higher quality of life.



More than 86 percent₁ of the nearly \$3 trillion in annual U.S. healthcare costs are spent on chronic disease₁. Yet much of this disease can be prevented and reduced in impact through lifestyle changes.

According to a long-term population study of Danish twins, 80 percent of a person's lifespan is determined by lifestyle choices, environmental factors, and access to care. Only 20 percent is genetic.₂ Unfortunately, in most places, our environment encourages unhealthy choices. Americans are bombarded daily with messages for unhealthy products and surrounded by modern "conveniences" that make us more sedentary and isolated.

DISCOVERING BLUE ZONES

In 2004, Dan Buettner teamed up with National Geographic, the National Institute on Aging, and the world's best longevity researchers to identify pockets around the world where people lived measurably better, longer. In the five original blue zones regions, they found that people reached age 100 at rates ten times greater than the U.S. average, with lower rates of chronic disease. These original blue zones areas are in vastly different parts of the world, from Sardinia, Italy and Ikaria, Greece to Okinawa, Japan, Costa Rica's Nicoya Peninsula, and stateside in Loma Linda, California. Studying the factors that influenced health and longevity in these places, researchers found that residents share nine specific traits. Dan Buettner captured these insights in his New York Times best-selling books, *The Blue Zones* and *The Blue Zones Solution*.



BLUE ZONES POWER 9

The secrets to well-being and longevity are found in the Power 9®—nine common principles from the world’s blue zones longevity hot spots. They can be grouped into four categories. These principles are the basis for how Blue Zones Project impacts communities to make healthy choices easier:

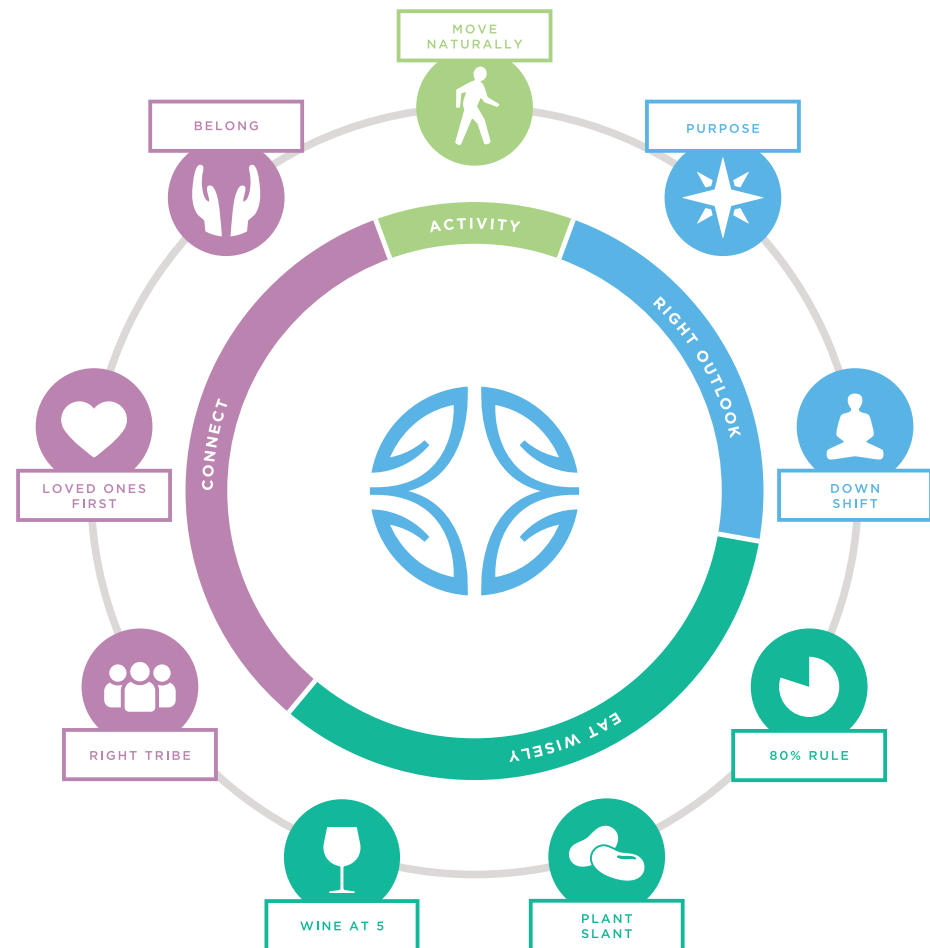
Move Naturally. Homes, communities, and workplaces are designed to nudge people into physical activity. Focus should be given to favorite activities, as individuals are more likely to practice them regularly. For example: gardening, walking, or biking to run errands, and playing with one’s family are great ways to incorporate natural movement into the day.

Right Outlook. Individuals know and can articulate their sense of purpose. They also take time to downshift, ensuring their day is punctuated with periods of calm.

Eat Wisely. In most cases, fad diets do not provide sustainable results. Individuals and families can use time-honored strategies for healthier eating habits, including:

- Using verbal reminders or smaller plates to eat less at meals
- Adopting a diet with a plant slant
- For adults with a healthy relationship with alcohol, drinking a glass of wine with friends.

Connect. Research indicates it is exceedingly important that people surround themselves with the “right” people—those who make them happy and support healthy behaviors. Put loved ones first by spending quality time with family and friends, and by participating in a faith-based community.



BLUE ZONES PROJECT LIFE RADIUS

Blue Zones Project takes a unique, systematic approach to improving well-being by focusing on our life radius.

Blue Zones Project is based upon Dan Buettner's discoveries and additional well-being research. A community-led well-being improvement initiative, Blue Zones Project is designed to make healthy choices easier through permanent changes to a community's environment, policy, and social networks. More than 70 communities have joined the movement since the first pilot project in 2009. Southwest Florida is the first community in the state to make the commitment to transform well-being with Blue Zones Project.

Because healthier environments naturally nudge people toward healthier choices, Blue Zones Project focuses on influencing the Life Radius®, the area close to home in which people spend the majority of their lives. Blue Zones Project best practices use policy, places, and people as levers to transform those surroundings. Our communities have populations with greater well-being, improved health outcomes, reduced costs, stronger resiliency, and increased civic pride, all of which support healthy economic development.





SHARECARE COMMUNITY
WELL-BEING INDEX

The world’s most definitive
measurement of well-being

Based on over 4M surveys and over 600 elements of social determinants of health data, Sharecare’s Community Well-Being Index serves as the definitive measure of community well-being across and within populations. Measuring well-being gives policy, community, and business leaders the data to benchmark populations, understand gaps and opportunities, and then prioritize interventions to measurably improve well-being. Improving well-being has been shown to lower health care costs and increase worker productivity, in turn, enhancing organizational and community competitiveness.



MEASURING THE IMPACT

Change requires action. It isn’t enough to do something one time; lasting change, which is a central tenet of Blue Zones Project, must be created from permanent and semi-permanent changes and alterations to the environment, policies, programs, and social networks. These actions allow healthy choices to become easy choices today and for many years to come.

When Blue Zones Project launched in Southwest Florida, overall community well-being sat at 68.6 according to Sharecare Community Well-Being Index (CWBI) data. **Today, overall well-being in Southwest Florida is 72.2, a statistically significant 3.6-point increase.** This improvement highlights the intentional efforts to improve the health of Southwest Florida’s residents.

Well-Being on the Rise in
Southwest Florida

	2015	2021	Percent Change
Overall Well-Being Score	68.6	72.2	5.2% ↑
Purpose Well-Being	64.7	69.6	7.6% ↑
Social Well-Being	71.3	70.6	.98% ↓
Financial Well-Being	66.4	69.8	5.1% ↑
Community Well-Being	71.0	71.3	.42% ↑
Physical Well-Being	67.3	73.4	9.1% ↑





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IN COMMUNITIES WITH HIGHER WELL-BEING, WE HAVE FOUND THAT PEOPLE LIVE LONGER, HAPPIER LIVES AND BUSINESS AND LOCAL ECONOMIES FLOURISH. A RELIABLE WELL-BEING METRIC PROVIDES COMMUNITY AND BUSINESS LEADERS WITH THE DATA AND INSIGHTS THEY NEED TO HELP MAKE SUSTAINED TRANSFORMATION A REALITY. AFTER ALL, IF YOU CAN'T MEASURE IT, YOU CAN'T MANAGE IT.

Dan Buettner
New York Times best-selling author
National Geographic Fellow
Blue Zones founder

A woman with short brown hair, wearing a pink and white striped shirt and blue shorts, is walking a small, fluffy grey dog on a leash. They are walking on a paved path that curves to the right. Above them is a wooden trellis structure heavily covered with green vines and clusters of small purple flowers. The scene is bright and sunny, with shadows cast on the path.

PUTTING WELL-BEING ON THE MAP IN SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

As a pioneer in innovation, Southwest Florida is the first region in the state to embark on its journey to transform well-being with Blue Zones Project.

Collier and Lee Counties are prioritizing the health of their neighbors and investing in policies and programs to improve health equity for those who need it most. Our neighbors, employers, teachers, and community leaders have made tremendous strides in optimizing the places where we all live, work, learn, and play.

Southwest Florida is a community to be proud of, and our well-being transformation is only just beginning.

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BLUE ZONES
[PROJECT] IS
STRONG IN OUR
COMMUNITY
BECAUSE THE
MESSAGE IS THE
SAME WHEREVER
YOU GO. YOU
GET IT AT HOME,
AT SCHOOL
AT WORK, IN
RESTAURANTS...
BLUE ZONES IS
HEALTHY LIVING.

Mark Lemke
Health Department, Immokalee
Administrator

A COMMUNITY IN ACTION

The landscape for well-being in America cannot be improved without committed partnerships. That’s why leaders across many sectors joined forces to take action and positively impact our residential and business communities. This broad, holistic approach is making healthy choices easier.

A vital part of Southwest Florida’s well-being improvement initiative, Blue Zones Project encourages changes to our community that lead to healthier options. When our entire community participates—from our worksites and schools to our restaurants and grocery stores—the small changes contribute to huge benefits for all of us: lowered healthcare costs, improved productivity, and ultimately, a higher quality of life.

Local businesses, organizations, residents, and community leaders came together to make incremental changes that caused a ripple effect, improving well-being across the city and bringing individuals together to create lasting change.

People of all ages and backgrounds participated in Blue Zones Project Southwest Florida: as many as 275,000 residents. They adopted healthy food policies, attended in person and virtual cooking demonstrations, and joined committees to make active transportation safer and more accessible for residents. They attended Purpose Workshops and donated their time toward volunteer opportunities in their communities..

A critical mass of places optimized their environments for healthy living. **More than 835 organizations participated in Blue Zones Project.** Worksites, schools, restaurants, grocery stores, faith-based organizations, homeowners associations, and community groups made changes that produced new gardens, brought attention to healthier foods, created safer walking routes, offered space to de-stress, and energized employees, members, and residents with new connections and purpose.



From a policy standpoint, Southwest Florida is creating, supporting, and implementing:

- A six-year plan to increase access for safe walking and biking for residents of Bonita Springs and improve the city's air quality
- The installation of 150 signs to encourage residents who visit ball fields, parks, and beach access points in Collier County to refrain from smoking
- The creation of the Southwest Florida Food Policy Council to look at opportunities within each of Blue Zones Project Southwest Florida's eight communities to adopt healthy food policies
- Traffic calming measures including traffic circles, bike lanes, reduced speeds, improved lighting and signage, planned or installed on main thoroughfares in Naples, Marco Island, Immokalee, Golden Gate, East Naples, Estero, and Bonita Springs

- A corner market makeover to increase access to fresh produce and other healthy food options in a historically under-served community in Immokalee

Working together with partners across the Southwest Florida region, **more than \$15.3 million in grant funding has been secured to help support these and other policy initiatives across Collier and Lee Counties.**



THE WORLD IS WATCHING

Blue Zones Project has attracted local and national recognition, with more than 9,800 media mentions to date.

Blue Zones Project Southwest Florida has been heralded for innovative approaches to population health management in various publications, including those noted below.



Naples Daily News



GULFSHORE LIFE

News-Press.

Forbes



SHAPE



Estero
Life Magazine

Life in Naples
THE MAGAZINE OF NAPLES



NAPLES
ILLUSTRATED

**BLUE ZONES PROJECT
SOUTHWEST FLORIDA IN
THE NEWS**

9,859

Total Mentions

18 Billion+

Total Reach

\$35.67 Million

Total Publicity Value*

**Publicity value calculated using Cision
Media Monitoring service.*





POLICY

In partnership with community leaders and coalitions, Blue Zones Project Southwest Florida set and achieved ambitious policy goals designed to maximize the ability of residents to move naturally, connect socially, access healthy food, and improve quality of life.

These policies have already had a tangible impact of improving community infrastructure and will continue to influence development in ways that benefit the well-being of residents and visitors.

BUILT ENVIRONMENT

We generally exercise too hard or not at all. However, the world's longest-lived people don't pump iron, run marathons, or join gyms.

Instead, they live in environments that constantly nudge them into moving without thinking about it. They live in places where they can walk to the store, a friend's house, or places of worship. Their houses have stairs. They have gardens in their yards. It's not just about moving; it's about moving naturally.

The built environment can support—or discourage—moving naturally. Complete Streets Policies and Active Transportation Plans help communities move away from automobile-centric development to better accommodate all users and modes of transportation.

Why It Matters

About 69 percent of the American population can be classified as overweight

or obese.³ Our children's life expectancy is projected to be shorter than that of their parents for the first time in history. Obesity is not just a health problem, it's an economic one, too. **The estimated annual health care costs of obesity-related illness are a staggering \$190 billion, or nearly 21 percent of annual medical spending.** Childhood obesity alone is responsible for \$14 billion in direct medical costs.⁴

The good news is there is a solution for this growing issue. Increasing simple movements like standing, walking, stretching, and bending can help burn an extra 350 calories a day. **Studies show that just by making our communities more walkable, the prevalence of obesity can decrease by more than 10 percent.**⁵

That adds up to even bigger possibilities like lowered incidences of heart disease, diabetes, and respiratory issues and increased productivity, vitality, and years of quality life.

Policies that support natural movement can shift the dynamics in any community toward more physical activity. Southwest Florida has made the move, with 38 built environment policies adopted.

Every community in the Blue Zones Project Southwest Florida footprint underwent full road audits complete with walkability studies with local planners, policymakers, and residents to discuss design options for improved safety, connectivity, and access. The result? Each community has since implemented at least one Complete Streets project, with six completed so far and two currently in their design phases.



GRANT FUNDING FOR COMPLETE STREETS

The Immokalee Community Redevelopment Agency was awarded a \$22.8 Million TIGER grant to support Complete Streets plans and, in part, improve the Lake Trafford Road corridor. The project includes design and construction of 20 miles of concrete sidewalks, a bike boulevard network, shared-use path, improved street lighting, seven bus shelters, a new transit center, landscaping, drainage improvements, and intersection and traffic calming retreats.



IMPACT OF COMMUNITY DESIGN IMPROVEMENTS

- 20.1 percent more people are exercising at least 30 minutes a day, three days a week
- The installation of Eco Counters in Immokalee helped illustrate how many people were walking on a daily basis with 16,000 pedestrians counted in two locations over a two-week period
- 2,000 Naples residents participated in engagement opportunities that informed the 2022 Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan update
- The City of Naples received a Bike Friendly Community Silver Medal from the American Bicycling Association
- Crashes along Yellowbird Road declined to an average of one per year after a Marco Island's first roundabout was installed
- Ten transportation, connectivity, and walkability projects were initiated along the Bayshore Triangle in 2021



Above: Local partners celebrate completion of work on Marco Island's Yellowbird Road.

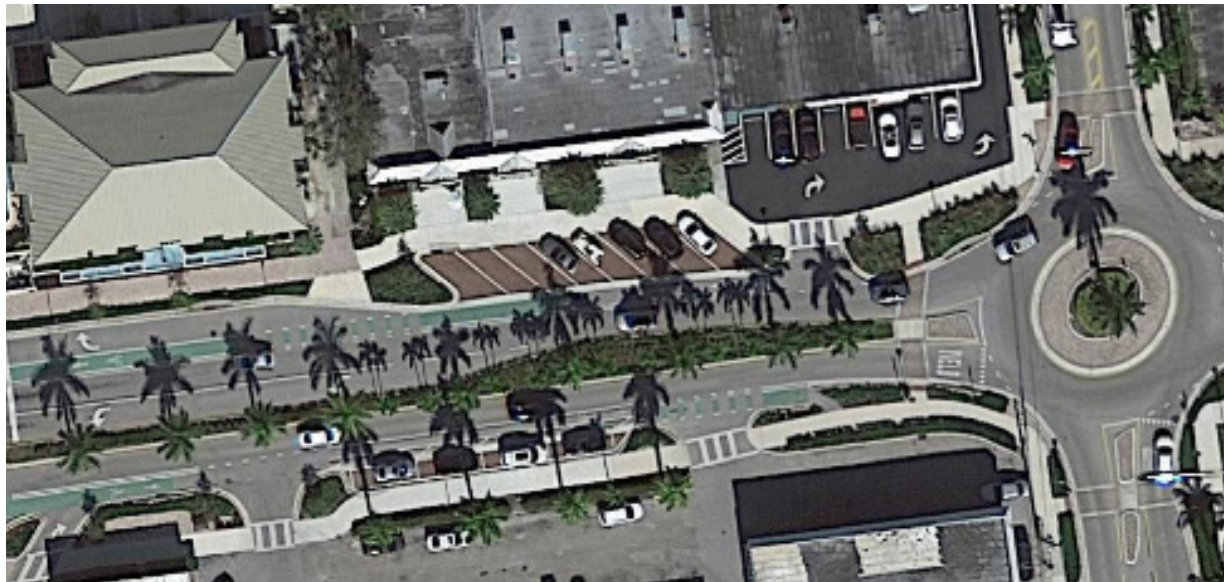


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OF THE TENS OF
THOUSANDS OF
ROADWAYS I HAVE
EVALUATED, I NOW
CONSIDER THIS THE
BEST REMADE STREET
IN NORTH AMERICA.

Dan Burden

International Walkability Expert



The City of Naples redesigned Central Avenue to increase pedestrian and cyclist access and safety, as well as accommodate alternate modes of transportation to improve connection to commerce along the corridor and Baker Park.

Figure one shows the initial rendering while figure two shows a satellite image of the completed work.

Paving the Way for a Safer Place to Live, Work, and Play

In 2017, Bonita Springs was the fastest-growing city in Florida and a popular tourist destination. Rapid growth in the community's residential areas leaving residents disconnected from basic services coupled with an aging demographic led to high crash rates and a need for safe alternatives to driving. Bonita Springs wanted to develop a more connected pathway for residents and tourists that would provide walking and biking routes to basic services, schools, and parks.

The Terry Street Project was chosen specifically to address these issues with proven safety countermeasures and innovative solutions. The **City of Bonita Springs** chose to partner with Blue Zones Project Southwest Florida as they have shared goals of increasing multi-modal pathways and systems for residents while increasing natural movement and improving air quality.

A cross-section of leaders including state senators and congresspeople, **Lee County MPO** and government officials, **BikeWalk Lee**, the **Bonita Springs Ped Bike Safety**

Advisory Committee, local utilities service providers, and **Lee County Human and Veteran Services** partnered to make West Terry Street improvements. Work was driven in support by funding won through a Community Development Block Grant as well as BUILD and TIGER grants.

Key Actions and Innovations

- Supported Bonita Springs in developing and adopting its first Ped-Bike Master Plan that included projects, community surveys, and meetings to identify the long-term vision for complete streets in the city
- Measured baseline crash data and pedestrian/bike counts
- Completed street improvement project between November 2019 and January 2021, which included buffered bike lanes, a widened multi-use path, pedestrian crossing lights, and improved crosswalks

Prior to completing the West Terry Street improvements, pedestrian and bicycle counts totaled 335 daily users (March 1, 2018 – March 30, 2019). Nine percent of Bonita Springs crashes occurred along

the corridor, averaging three crashes per week between 2012 and 2017. Since the project's completion in 2021, safety has measurably improved. **Between January 2021 and January 2022 a total of 14 crashes occurred along the corridor compared to an annual average of 156 before undertaking the infrastructure improvements.**

The City of Bonita Springs has continued plans to update the remainder of Terry Street and provide additional connectivity and multi-modal pathways for all. Approved construction plans for West Terry Street will address utility relocation, sewer systems, and runoff to eliminate flooding in late 2022 and early 2023.



ALL EYES ON BONITA SPRINGS

With the nomination by Blue Zones Project Southwest Florida, Bonita Springs was named "Tree City USA" in 2018 by the Arbor Day Foundation and one of "The Best Complete Streets Initiatives 2017" by Smart Growth America.

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IN THE PAST THREE YEARS, THE CITY OF BONITA SPRINGS HAS TAKEN ITS GAME TO THE NEXT LEVEL, GUIDED BY A CLEAR VISION FOR ITS FUTURE. THE CITY OF BONITA HAS A PROVEN TRACK RECORD AND HAS DEMONSTRATED POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND COMMITMENT TO A NEW DIRECTION. THERE ARE NOW PROJECTS ON THE GROUND THAT ARE DEMONSTRATING THE SAFETY, QUALITY OF LIFE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BENEFITS OF A COMPLETE STREETS APPROACH, FURTHER BUILDING COMMUNITY SUPPORT.

Darla Letourneau
BikeWalkLee



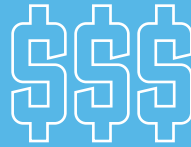


LOCAL BUSINESS

Walkers and bicyclists tend to spend more money at local businesses than drivers. Complete Streets are more accessible to walkers and bikers, which improves traffic to local businesses. Residents are more likely to shop locally along Complete Streets, which invests in local businesses and creates job growth.⁶

60%

Sales increase in shops in San Francisco's Mission District after the area became more friendly to pedestrian and bicycle activity.⁶



COMPLETE STREETS DRIVE ECONOMIC VALUE



PROPERTY VALUES

Walkable communities with tree-lined streets and slowed traffic increase neighborhood desirability and property values. Homes located in very walkable neighborhoods are valued \$4,000 to \$34,000 more than homes in neighborhoods with average walkability.⁷



EMPLOYMENT

Complete Streets projects that add pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure can double the amount of jobs created in an area. Complete Streets projects create 11-14 jobs per \$1 million spent while automobile infrastructure projects create only seven jobs per \$1 million spent.⁸



WALKABLE COMMUNITIES THRIVE

55%

of Americans would rather drive less and walk more.⁹

73%

currently feel they have no choice but to drive as much as they do.⁹

66%

of Americans want more transportation options so they have the freedom to choose how they get where they need to go.⁹

TOBACCO

City policies have a lasting, community-wide impact on shaping our environments to support well-being.

Smoking-related illness in the United States costs more than \$300 billion each year, including nearly \$170 billion for direct medical care and more than \$156 billion in lost productivity.¹⁰ Comprehensive community policies can limit exposure to second-hand smoke and lead to lower use of tobacco and e-cigarettes overall.

Despite Florida state preemption laws, Blue Zones Project, **Tobacco Free Collier**, **Tobacco Free Lee**, and the **Department of Health** partnered with organizations like the **Collier County Parks System** and **Bonita Springs Parks and Recreation** to deter smoking at public parks and beaches.

A Plan to Reduce Smoking in the Parks System

Blue Zones Project Southwest Florida partnered with Collier County and Tobacco Free Collier to get the installation of suggestive non-smoking signage approved within the Collier County Parks System. Signs were purchased and designed throughout the partnership and installed in ball fields, parks, and beach access points.

Similarly, Tobacco Free Lee and the Department of Health worked with Blue Zones Project to design signage for Bonita Springs Parks and Recreation, as well as window clings for area businesses—including restaurants and worksites—discouraging tobacco use on the grounds.

While municipalities cannot ban smoking in parks because of Florida's preemption laws, asking residents to refrain from smoking has proved to be an effective and respected policy.

Community partnerships like these have resulted in a substantial reduction in cigarette butt litter at Southwest Florida's parks and beaches, including **a 40 percent litter reduction in Collier County**

Parks since 2017, as well as increased compliance to refrain visitors from smoking.

Now, tobacco use and vaping in Southwest Florida is at an all-time low of 3.6 percent (down from 8.8 percent) compared to 18.6 percent across the state and nation.

A New Policy is Passed

Since the plan to encourage visitors to refrain from smoking through suggestive signage in Collier and Lee Counties was implemented, Florida House Bill 105 was passed, now permitting Florida municipalities to ban smoking in parks and beaches.

Going forward, suggestive signage will remain in place in Collier and Lee County until decision-making leaders can determine if public areas will become tobacco free. Tobacco Free Lee and Tobacco Free Collier will continue to work to increase educational opportunities about the dangers of tobacco use and vaping in K-12 public schools.

FOOD

Food policy has the power to improve the availability of produce across neighborhoods.

A 2011 analysis of U.S. Census data by the Center for Social Inclusion reveals Latino, Native American, and African American communities are two to four times more likely than Whites to lack access to healthy foods.¹¹ Collaborative, community-based policies can foster a healthier local food system, improving access and making produce more visible via schools, corner markets, farmers markets, neighborhood gardens, mobile businesses, and more.

It is estimated that by 2030, if current eating and exercise habits remain the same, 86 percent of the American population will be overweight or obese.¹²

Food is fuel, and what we eat impacts our productivity too. A 2012 study revealed that unhealthy eating is related to a 66 percent increase in the risk of lost productivity. Health-related employee-productivity loss accounts for 77 percent of all productivity loss and costs employers up to three times more in annual healthcare expenses.¹³

In addition to looking and feeling better, the benefit of healthy eating in the U.S. is financial, estimated to be \$114.5 billion per year (in 2012 dollars) in medical savings, increased productivity, and reductions in heart disease, cancer, stroke, diabetes, and osteoporotic hip fractures.¹⁴ Poor diet is a major risk factor for these five health conditions, all of which reduce life expectancy.

Blue Zones Project focuses on shaping food policy to increase consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables, in part ensuring access for all residents. Southwest Florida has adopted policies that remove barriers and improve access to healthy food across the region, exceeding initial Blueprint targets.

Southwest Florida's cuisine is known for its diverse blend of Southern, Latin American,

Creole, and other cultural influences. With its warm climate and proximity to the ocean, residents and visitors of Collier and Lee Counties have access to fresh seafood, vegetables, and fruit year-round—all the ingredients needed for a healthy diet.

Blue Zones Project has helped increase both local awareness of the benefits of eating a plant-forward diet and access to more fruits and vegetables.

Key Actions and Innovations

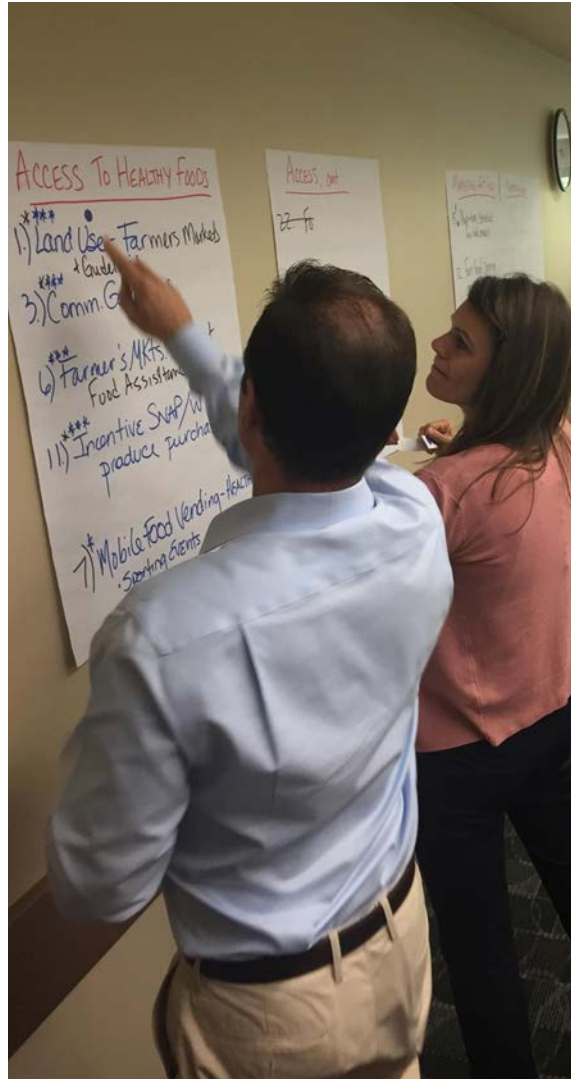
- Engaged grocers, restaurateurs, UF/IFAS Extension Agents, local university and college professors, farmers, policymakers, and school program administrators in the Blue Zones Project Food Policy Committee to look at opportunities to adopt healthy food policies.
- Sponsored a food policy summit in November 2019 where experts like Blue Zones Project's National Policy Consultant Dr. Maggi Adamek presented the current state of the region's food system and how the Food Policy Committee could begin to address issues noted.



POLICY: FOOD

- Helped form the SWFL Food Policy Council in 2020 and **worked with partners to secure \$1.2 million in grant funding** through the SWFL Regional Planning Council from sources including the USDA, Aetna Foundation, and Community Development Block Grants.
- In April 2021, the SWFL Food Policy Council introduced the MEANS Database food rescue program that now has 16 participating organizations (six of which are Blue Zones Project Approved). **The program has since preserved more than 134,000 pounds of food—mostly fresh produce—from going to waste by putting it into the hands of local food banks and pantries.**

Additional funding will be leveraged to continue food policy work in the areas of emergency food access planning, regional needs assessment, local food procurement, and helping regional farms increase the marketability and demand for local, fresh produce. Concurrently, the SWFL Food Policy Council will advocate for innovative policy, systems, and environmental changes that increase access to healthy, affordable foods for all individuals in the region.



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FOOD POLICY COUNCILS, MORE THAN EVER, HAVE A KEY ROLE TO PLAY IN CONNECTING THE DIFFERENT STAKEHOLDERS IN THE FOOD SYSTEM TO CREATE THE FAIREST, MOST PRODUCTIVE FOOD SYSTEM. THE AMERICAN PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION (APHA) AWARDED THE SOUTHWEST FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL (SWFRPC) A HEALTHIEST CITIES AND COUNTIES CHALLENGE (HCCC) GRANT TO INITIATE THE COLLIER COUNTY FOOD POLICY ON JULY 1ST, 2020. THROUGH THIS PARTNERSHIP, OUR TEAM, INCLUDING BLUE ZONES PROJECT OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA, CONTINUE TO WORK TOWARDS POLICIES AND PROGRAMS AIMED AT IMPROVING FOOD SECURITY THROUGH COLLABORATION AND EVIDENCE-BASED STRATEGIES.

Asmaa Odeh
SWFL Food Policy Council Coordinator

New Food Policy Helps Transform Market Into Healthy Food Hub

LeGrand Caribbean Market is a smaller-scale market that has been serving a diverse community in Immokalee since 1997. With nearly 37 percent of local individuals fall below the poverty line and living in a food desert, the market carries a variety of products from meats and produce to household necessities at price points its neighbors can afford.

A warning from his personal doctor and a cue from his brother-in-law to learn more about Blue Zones Project led LeGrand Caribbean Market's owner, Franck Legrand Jr. to adopt a plant-slant diet to lose 100 pounds and improve his own health. This personal transformation motivated Legrand to take the first step in agreeing to partner with Blue Zones Project Southwest Florida on a corner store pilot program that would help his customers eat healthier on a budget.

After being hit with significant damage from Hurricane Irma, Blue Zones Project

Southwest Florida put Legrand in touch with the Wynn family (Wynn's Market) to brainstorm rebuilding and success strategies. LeGrand Caribbean Market reopened in January 2018 with a host of new improvements including a new roof, registers, lighting, and coolers.

The store went through a market makeover which included:

- Expanded produce availability and relocated the produce display to front of store
- Purchased additional coolers to stock healthy options and prominently feature them
- Installed 22 feet of dry produce storage with the help of Blue Zones Project market makeover dollars
- Installed a bike rack outside to encourage natural, healthy movement and provide safe storage for customers while shopping

During this process, Legrand Jr. worked with UF/IFAS Extension and Blue Zones Project Southwest Florida to become an authorized EBT (SNAP) and WIC

retail food store. Blue Zones Project also introduced the market to FEEDING FLORIDA for consideration as a pilot market for FRESH ACCESS BUCKS (FAB). FAB is a program that matches or discounts what a SNAP cardholder spends with free Fresh Access Bucks to spend on Florida-grown produce.

In 2019, 55 percent of LeGrand's sales were paid with SNAP dollars and 25 percent of those purchases were for fresh produce. These sales demonstrate that having SNAP and FAB capabilities at the market are helping Immokalee residents access not just typical corner store foods, but fresh local produce as well. Legrand Jr. is committed to remaining an EBT (SNAP) and WIC vendor to sustain his bottom line and keep his products accessible for neighbors on a fixed income.



WHY IT MATTERS

According to a report by the USDA, an estimated one in eight Americans are food insecure, totaling 42 million people, including 13 million children. Rural and isolated communities and those with low income and high unemployment rates are particularly at risk for experiencing food inequity.¹⁵

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EVERYBODY THAT COMES IN FEELS MORE WELCOMED, MORE INVITED. WE PUT ALL THE PRODUCE UP FRONT SO THEY COULD GET TO IT BETTER. JUST SWITCHING IT FROM THE BACK TO THE FRONT HAS DOUBLED SALES IN PRODUCE. MAKING THESE CHANGES HAS IMPACTED CUSTOMER'S BUYING DECISIONS IN A VERY POSITIVE WAY. KNOWING THE EFFECT THAT A PROPER DIET HAS HAD ON MY LIFE, I AM HAPPY TO INCLUDE FRESH ACCESS BUCKS TO HELP CUSTOMERS FURTHER EXPERIENCE THE BENEFITS OF HEALTHIER EATING.

Franck Legrand Jr.
Owner and Manager
LeGrand Caribbean Market





In Southwest Florida, a critical mass of worksites, schools, restaurants, and grocery stores have optimized their environments for healthy living.

By working together to make permanent or semi-permanent changes, healthy choices have become the easy choices in all the places we live, work, learn, and play.



PLACES

WORKSITES

Worksites engage employees and support healthy choices.

Employers are in a powerful position to help us move more, eat better, and connect. About one-third of our waking hours are spent at work. Fewer jobs require moderate physical activity, a percentage that has fallen from 50 percent in 1960 to 20 percent today.¹⁶ Some 70 percent of Americans eat at their desk several times a week.¹⁷ As waistlines expand, so do medical costs for employers. Creating healthier work environments can shift that trend, trimming costs and enhancing productivity.

Thousands of Southwest Florida residents, including employees at 80 Blue Zones Project Approved worksites, now find it easier to make healthy choices during the workday.

Participating worksites implemented a variety of Blue Zones Project best practices to engage employees. Actions included the introduction of healthier on-site eating options, establishing Moais to get colleagues moving together, champion exercise breaks to burn energy and improve focus, and adding or improving fitness facilities, walking paths, downshifting spaces, and more.

Impact of Healthier Work Places

- Between 2020 and 2022, staff at **The Guadalupe Center** saw their overall well-being and purpose scores increase by 2.41-points and 6.14-points respectively
- **Collier County Public School District** increased employee retention to 91 percent compared to a national average of 84 percent
- Approximately 80 percent of food offered to **FineMark Bank** staff meets Blue Zones healthy catering guidelines
- One-hundred percent of **Grace Place** colleagues completed Sharecare's RealAge Test and had an average RealAge score of 4.29 years younger than their biological ages
- Staff at **Bonita Springs Charter School** saw well-being improvement in all five well-being domains, with their overall score increasing 4.11-points in just one year.



WHY IT MATTERS

According to a Quantum Workplace report, employees are 14 percent more engaged when given time off to recharge, 18 percent more engaged when given time for healthy activities, and 10 percent more engaged when provided healthy good options at the workplace.¹⁸



The JW Marriott Helps Employees Eat Better, De-Stress, and Prioritize Mental Well-Being

The JW Marriott is the premier hotel beach resort and the largest employer on Marco Island. The resort is a key economic and tourism driver in the area and its leadership staff is heavily involved in the policies, systems, and environmental enhancements that impact the entire community.

As a corporation, employee well-being and advancement opportunities are top priorities and the robust wellness program reflects this. However, the hotel's location and seasonality of Florida's tourism industry present unique challenges for staff. Housing and transportation are significant concerns in addition to language barriers. The JW Marriott leadership team wanted to ensure that local employees' needs were being met. By collaborating with Blue Zones Project and local transit partners, the organization helped improve employee transportation, housing, and dining options, as well as language education opportunities for non-

English speaking staff.

Above all, leadership wanted to set an example for other worksites to follow on Marco Island as a leader in wellness tourism by offering both their guests and staff healthier meals and ensuring employees had time to downshift and connect with each other. Inspiring changes like these earned the JW Marriott the distinction of becoming a Blue Zones Project Approved worksite:

- Adopted a healthy catering and meal planning policy for staff
- Installed a bike rack near the spa entry for both guests and employees
- Created full immersion downshift room with sofas, video screens, and surround sound
- The wellness team hosted an entire mental health month and hosted their Aetna representative weekly to support employee health and well-being
- Through collective advocacy and coordination, Collier Transit Authority is working on adding two additional bus routes on Marco Island to support more varied employee schedules

In 2019, the JW Marriott's overall employee engagement satisfaction survey score was an impressive 77 percent. By 2021, despite the pandemic, the same indicator rose seven percent to an almost unprecedented 84 percent while increasing their workforce by about 200 employees.

”

THE VALUE OF BECOMING A BLUE ZONES PROJECT APPROVED WORKSITE TO OUR ASSOCIATES AND OUR GUESTS IS TO HELP THEM LIVE A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE. WHAT BLUE ZONES PROJECT STANDS FOR RESONATES WITH US. MR. MARRIOTT SAYS, 'WHEN YOU TAKE CARE OF THE ASSOCIATES, THE ASSOCIATES TAKE CARE OF THE GUESTS.' WE ARE ALL ABOUT TAKING CARE OF OUR ASSOCIATES FIRST!

Frank Mioli
Director of Human Resources
JW Marriott Marco Island

”

OVER 50 PERCENT OF OUR EMPLOYEES PARTICIPATED IN MOAIS. ONE OF THE CHANGES THAT WE HAVE IMPLEMENTED IN OUR BLUE ZONES JOURNEY IS THE TRANSFORMATION WE HAVE MADE IN OUR CAFÉS. WE HAVE INCREASED VEGGIE SALES ALMOST 100 PERCENT. WE HAVE INCREASED OUR WATER SALES DUE TO REMOVING ADDED SUGAR BEVERAGES. WE HAVE ALSO OFFERED PURPOSE WORKSHOPS AND THEY CREATE A LOT OF INSPIRATION FOR OUR EMPLOYEES TO VOLUNTEER IN THE COMMUNITY.

Heather Imsdahl
NCH Wellness Director
NCH Healthcare System



NCH Leads by Example

NCH Healthcare System is a large community hospital organization with two full-service hospitals, two free standing Emergency Departments, numerous out-patient clinics and specialized providers, and two wellness centers that are open to the public. In season, the hospital system employs nearly 6,000 staff and operates a robust employee wellness program to support colleague mental, emotional, and physical well-being.

As the sponsor of Blue Zones Project Southwest Florida, NCH wanted not only to set an example for the community by taking the lead and becoming the first certified worksite, but to also show the benefits and savings a comprehensive wellness program can bring to an organization.

The NCH leadership team is committed to enhancing their employees' quality of life both in and out of the hospital. The organization has regularly taken steps to bring more social engagement, financial services, and wellness offerings, and now provide free healthcare through their internal employee health clinic.

NCH is one of only ten organizations in the nation to achieve Certified Blue Zones Worksite™ status. To achieve this designation, the hospital system took the following steps:

Made systemic and environmental changes in their hospital cafés, removing oil-fried foods, sugar sweetened beverages and ensuring that Blue Zones-inspired plant-based meal options are offered daily. These menu items were extended to the hospital patient menu as well.

- Adopted a no tobacco policy requiring all current and newly hired employees to be tobacco-free, which included random tobacco testing.
- Moved to free health insurance and opened a free internal health clinic for employees
- Launched a farmer's market for employees, patient families, and the community.
- Instituted Walking Moais, Purpose Workshops, volunteer opportunities, and employee appreciation initiatives to engage staff.

Within six years of adopting policy, systems, and environmental changes

to improve employee well-being, **NCH saved \$27 million in employee health care costs—a 54 percent reduction.** The hospital has also seen strong retention and recruitment numbers and increased participation in their online wellness classes. According to the Well-Being 5 survey, NCH employees saw their overall well-being improve by 5-points over a three-year period.



NCH BY THE NUMBERS

- Staff smoking rate dropped from 2.8 to 0.2 percent between 2015 and 2018, while the state rate was 18 percent at the same time
- 24 percent increase in staff with ideal HbA1c values between 2014 and 2018
- 1,958 NCH employees participated in a moai between 2015 and 2018
- 72 percent increase in café vegetable sales over three years
- 220 percent increase in water sales from 2015 to 2018
- 39 percent increase in Blue Zones inspired meal sales over three years
- \$35,095 raised by NCH staff during 2020 Collier Heart Walk



THRIVE, DON'T SUFFER

For employees with the highest levels of well-being — those with the highest scores in the “thriving” category — the cost of lost productivity is only \$840 a year. Among the “suffering” employees — those with the lowest scores in the “thriving” category — the annual per person cost of lost productivity due to sick days is \$28,800.¹⁹



WELL-BEING SAVES EVERYONE MONEY



WHAT IS DISEASE BURDEN?

Disease burden cost is how much money a person spends due to disease, including high blood pressure, high cholesterol, heart disease, back pain, diabetes, depression/anxiety, and sleep apnea/insomnia.¹⁹



IT PAYS TO BE HAPPY

Respondents in the “thriving” category averaged \$4,929 per person annually in disease burden cost versus \$6,763 a year for respondents in the struggling and suffering categories. For an organization with 1,000 workers, thriving employees would cost their employers \$1.8 million less every year. Furthermore, the average annual new disease burden cost for people who are thriving is \$723, compared with \$1,488 for those who are struggling or suffering.¹⁹

SCHOOLS

Area schools get students moving and learning more.

Schools can shape healthy habits for life. Over the past 40 years, rates of obesity among children have soared. **Approximately 25 million children and adolescents (more than 33 percent) are now overweight or obese, or at the risk of becoming so.**²⁰ Physical activity and stretch breaks during the school day can improve grades, increase concentration, and raise math, reading, and writing test scores.²¹ Simple changes in lunchroom design can nudge students toward healthier choices.²²

Across Southwest Florida, 43 schools earned the designation Blue Zones Project Approved.

Schools implemented policies and introduced food options that encourage healthy eating on campus, integrated physical activity into the day, and incorporated other Blue Zones Project principles into the curriculum and campus space.

Impact of Healthier Schools

- **Village Oaks Elementary** students living in Farmworker Village walk to school together and are accompanied by staff on the walk

home. A safety bridge was built, painted, and beautified to encourage walking to and from school.

- Daily attendance went from 96.3% to 97.3% at **Tommie Barfield Elementary School** from the 2018/2019 school year to the 2019/2020 school year.
- Principal Christopher Marker and his team of staff and students have woven Blue Zones Project well-being best practices into **Lake Park Elementary's** school culture. In turn staff and students share learnings and practices with family and friends. Their student and staff wellness committee is prioritizing a school garden, incorporating healthy messaging into morning announcements and overall learning throughout the day, encouraging kindness, active play and providing healthier options in their lunch room.



WALKING HELPS KIDS

Children who walk to school are more alert and ready to learn, strengthen their social networks and develop lifetime fitness habits.^{23, 24}



BY THE NUMBERS

41 Collier County schools added school gardens and 47 implemented Smarter Lunchroom best practices.

Students at Blue Zones Project Approved schools in Southwest Florida get an average of 225 minutes more physical activity each week than students at other schools.

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OUR GOAL WITH BLUE ZONES PROJECT IS TO HAVE STUDENTS BECOME THEIR OWN ADVOCATES AND APPLY THIS TO THE REAL WORLD CONNECTIONS THAT THEY GO HOME TO, OR TRAVEL TO, AND COME BACK HAPPIER, HEALTHIER STUDENTS AT LAKE PARK.

JoAnn Vukobratovitch
Wellness Champion
Lake Park Elementary School &
Village Oaks Elementary School



Healthy Bodies, Healthy Minds at BCHS

Barron Collier High School leadership and students share a passion for purpose and well-being. As principal **Dr. Sean Kinsley** came from Pine Ridge Middle School, another Blue Zones Project Approved school, and French teacher **Dr. Juniace Etienne** volunteered as a Blue Zones Project Purpose Workshop facilitator, BCHS students and staff were eager to incorporate Blue Zones Project activities in their school.

Key Actions and Innovations

- Began integrating physical activity into daily lesson plans outside of physical education class to help students stay focused and energized. Additionally, CCPS provides training and professional development for teachers about ways to promote movement in the classroom.
- Participated in the CCPS Mental and

Emotional Health Education Modules, which allowed students and teachers to focus on mental health and expand communication between students and school counselors. Over a six-week period, experts led twice-weekly sessions focused on mindfulness and relaxation strategies, as well as other mental and emotional well-being topics.

- Planted and maintain a school garden, and added an indoor herb and vegetable garden thanks to a grant won by BCHS' biology staff. Learning to grow their own food gives students access to, and an appreciation for, fresh produce.
- Participated in Blue Zones Project's National Walking Day activities. National Walking Day encourages students from across the country to move naturally. BCHS took this one step further and provided Blue Zones Project t-shirts, raised money for local causes, and offered a healthy breakfast for all participants.

- Offered student and staff activities that relate to the Power 9, such as a walking club, healthy foods in the cafeteria, healthy vending options, and Purpose Workshops.

Because of this work, **nearly 1,700 BCHS students are going to school in an environment that better support their mental, physical, and social well-being.**





Students at Bonita Springs Charter School learned lessons from the centenarians who lived in the original blue zones regions. Their student yearbook committee built their yearbook theme around the Power 9 principles and here we see them honoring those lessons learned by dressing up as healthy centenarians!

Bonita Springs Charter School (BSCS) is an in-demand K-8 school in the fast-growing city of Bonita Springs. In addition to traditional classrooms, the school also features a media center, Zoomnasium multi-purpose room, art, music, STEM-Lab, Cambridge and Gifted and Talented classes, and science and sensory rooms. BSCS is committed to developing its students into balanced individuals who feel valued, empowered, and are provided academically challenging instruction that will prepare them to engage in and transform their local and global communities through student leadership opportunities. Because administrators have focused on the health and well-being of not only students, but staff as well, it's no wonder that steps were taken to become both a Blue Zones Project Approved school and worksite.

RESTAURANTS

Restaurant meals can weigh us down or lift us up.

The typical American entrée weighs in at 1,000 calories.²⁵ For the average adult, eating one meal away from home per week translates to gaining about two additional pounds a year. Evidence indicates people appreciate healthy changes. In a five-year study of sales at U.S. restaurant chains, those that increased their better-for-you/low-calorie servings saw a 5.5 percent increase in same-store sales, while those that did not suffered a 5.5 percent decrease.²⁶

Residents and visitors of Southwest Florida now have 63 Blue Zones Project Approved restaurants to choose from, and more than 420 Blue Zones-inspired dishes to enjoy.

In these restaurants, patrons may find smaller portion and split-plate options, healthier offerings highlighted through signage and staff-customer interactions, expanded use of local produce, and more.

At **Old 41 Restaurant** in Bonita Springs, you can now order one of seven new Blue Zones inspired dishes off the menu, many of which include

produced sourced from local farmers within a 400-mile radius. And, customers at **Sunburst Cafe** in Naples can now enjoy a dog-friendly outdoor dining space that encourages more than just healthy eating.

Healthier options are delivering results at high-volume and mom-and-pop establishments alike.

Since partnering with Blue Zones Project in 2018, **Skillet's** across Southwest Florida has added 11 Blue Zones-inspired dishes and sold over 123,000 of these healthy meals to date. Over a 20-month period, **CJ's on the Bay** sold 43,000 healthy dishes, making up more than eight percent of total volume and just over six percent in total sales.

”

BECOMING BLUE ZONES
PROJECT APPROVED
WILL DEFINITELY
CREATE AN IMPACT
IN MY RESTAURANT.
WE SERVE FRESH,
FARM TO TABLE FOOD,
PRACTICE FOOD
SUSTAINABILITY, AND
PART OF OUR MISSION IS
TO BUILD AWARENESS
ON HEALTHY EATING,
ESPECIALLY AMONG THE
YOUNGER GENERATION
IN OUR COMMUNITY.

Asif Syed
Chef
21 Spices



”

BLUE ZONES PROJECT IS REPRESENTATIVE OF A NATION-WIDE EFFORT TO IMPROVE THE EATING HABITS OF AMERICANS, WHICH IS DESPERATELY NEEDED DUE TO AN EPIDEMIC OF OBESITY CAUSED BY MAKING THE WRONG FOOD CHOICES. SINCE WE NOW REALIZE THAT MANY CHRONIC ILLNESSES AND PREMATURE DEATHS ARE A DIRECT RESULT OF WHAT WE EAT, SKILLETS WANTS OUR CUSTOMERS TO KNOW THAT NUTRITIOUS, HEALTHY DINING CHOICES CAN BE FOUND ON OUR MENU.

Ross Edlund

Owner

Skillets



”

MANY OF OUR PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL VALUES ABOUT A HEALTHY BALANCED LIFESTYLE ALIGN WITH THE PROJECT. OUR RESTAURANT WAS DESIGNED TO BE A HEALTHIER ALTERNATIVE TO THE NORMAL GREASE-LADEN FOOD AVAILABLE AT MANY RESTAURANTS. WE SERVE NOTHING FRIED, A LOT OF VEGETABLES, AND OUR RULE IS THAT EVERYTHING HAS TO BE FLAVORFUL.

Ralph and Palma Desiano
Owners
Naples Flatbread

Naples Flatbread Satisfies Fans, Grows Healthy Sales

Naples Flatbread in Estero started the local flatbread craze back in 2009 with bold flavor combinations served on regular or cauliflower house-made crust and cooked in a fiery hearth oven. While flatbreads made them famous, they are so much more. The dynamic menu features gourmet baked pastas, signature entrees, paninis and wraps, salads and more. They also offer a variety of vegetarian and vegan options featuring some Blue Zones inspired dishes.

The restaurant has long been committed to offering healthier options for guests. Partnering with Blue Zones Project to implement further retail food best practices made Naples Flatbread the first eatery in Estero to join the regional project and achieve Blue Zones Project Approved restaurant designation.

To reach this goal, Naples Flatbread took the following steps:

- Added four new Blue Zones inspired dishes to the menu and highlighted them with a blue check mark
- Priced entrees with plant-based proteins

lower than entrees featuring meat

- Allowed customers to request any entrée be grilled, baked, or broiled rather than fried
- Began serving salad dressings and all condiments on the side
- No longer butter bread or buns before serving

Adding Blue Zones inspired dishes has boosted sales for the restaurant. **Since 2018, 11,793 plant-based dishes were sold across two locations. Overall, 2,027 plant-based protein dishes were sold in 2021**, with The Southwest Quinoa Bowl being one of the most popular meals added to the menu.

Owners Ralph and Palma Desiano hope that over time, healthier choices will continue to become the easier choice and operate with the philosophy that each incremental step can improve health and well-being.



GROCERY STORES

Local grocery stores promote healthy foods and cooking skills.

Grocery stores influence food decisions. The actions we take to determine what we eat begin at the store. **About 60 percent of the food we purchase is highly processed, fatty, salty, or sugary.**²⁷ Grocery store promotions and design layout can influence those choices for the better.

In the U.S., healthy eating could generate an estimated savings of \$114.5 billion per year through reduced medical costs, increased productivity, and decline in heart disease, cancer, stroke, diabetes, and osteoporotic hip fractures.²⁸

Americans visit the grocery store almost twice a week on average, and their food choices impact their health and productivity. The design of many grocery stores and the deals they promote often point people to unhealthy foods. Blue Zones Project Southwest Florida created awareness around these issues, and local grocers took steps to offer healthy food education opportunities to customers and made design, display, and promotional changes that nudge people toward produce, whole grains,

locally grown foods, and other healthy buys.

Key Food Supermarket in East Naples caters to a diverse population and has a mission to provide the community with products, services, and resources that satisfy, nourish, and delight. Since partnering with Blue Zones Project, the store has sponsored engagement days for staff and customers to learn about the Power 9 and offer health resources like Sharecare's RealAge. More than 50 local families took the Blue Zones pledge to improve their health and longevity thanks to awareness generated at Key Food Supermarket.

At **Summer Day Market and Café** on Marco Island, shoppers can learn more about Blue Zones Project at the Power 9 rack and find healthier food options with Blue Zones friendly signage. Owners **Michael and Angela Schulman** are passionate about health, and they strive to serve Marco Island in the best way possible—by making nutrient-rich foods attractive and available. Summer Day Market and Café has participated in various engagement events with Blue Zones Project, both on-site and in the community, to raise awareness and advertise the healthy choices available.



WHY IT MATTERS

Sixty percent of purchases are unplanned. Placing attractive produce or other healthy products at the front of the store, at the deli, or at the checkout area can encourage “impulse” purchase of these healthy items.²⁹



Family Grocery Keeps Up With Changing Times

Wynn's Market has been a Naples staple since it opened in 1938. The multi-generational family-owned store transitioned from traditional grocer to gourmet market in early 2000 and based on more than 80 years of sector experience, continue to evolve to maintain a thriving operation. The Wynns partnered with Blue Zones Project Southwest Florida not only to enhance their business, but to support their community's well-being. Their goals were simple and practical: increase customer counts and overall sales and provide community education on healthy eating and nutrition.

Wynn's Market began by designing a new merchandise reset of the beverage cold case, increasing water display by 57 percent and decreasing sugary drinks by 52 percent. They also added healthier options like green tea and flavored water, then strategically placed bottled water at front and center while shelving the sugar-laden drinks at the top or bottom of the case. **By 2018 their water sales had increased 105 percent and now represent 34 percent of the store's total beverage sales.**

Wynn's has always enjoyed a strong following for their prepared, grab-and-go lunch and dinner entrees. They added a few Blue Zones-inspired options and soon found the healthier entrees were so popular, they couldn't keep them in stock. Subsequently, Wynn's decided to feature an entire Blue Zones grab-and-go section, which has 25 different healthy meals for lunch or dinner. Wynn's has increased their plant slant offerings with more than a dozen fresh items like a Chipotle Burrito Bowl, a Vegan Rice Bowl, Butternut Squash Bisque Soup, Lentil Turmeric and Spinach Soup, and great sides like Garlic Roasted Brussels Sprouts.

The market also rearranged their cereal aisle by placing the healthiest choices lower for children

to see and relocated the sugar rich options to the top shelf. Additionally, a Blue Zones checkout lane was created, which features healthy impulse buys like fruit and nuts compared to typical snacks like candy and soda. Wynn's used the Nutrition Profile Index (NPI) ratings provided by the Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity to inform their work. Decisions were made with the aim of making healthy choices easier, but not limiting, for shoppers.



”

WITH LARGE CHAINS COMING TO DOMINANCE, THERE WEREN'T A LOT OF INDEPENDENT GROCERS LEFT, AND WE KNEW WE NEEDED TO CHANGE IF WE WANTED TO BE AROUND ANOTHER 60 YEARS. WE CHANGED OUR DECOR AND CONCENTRATED ON HEALTHIER FOOD ITEMS AND SPECIALTY BRANDS.

Tim Wynn
President
Wynn's Market



FAITH-BASED COMMUNITIES

Churches and other faith-based organizations can inspire healthy change.

Faith-based organizations create community and more. **People who belong to a place of worship and attend four times a month live 4-14 years longer than those who don't.**³⁰

According to a study published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, frequent attendance in religious services was associated with significantly lower risk of all-cause, cardiovascular, and cancer mortality among women.³¹ Church communities by definition foster connection among members and can influence other health habits, from volunteerism to healthy eating.

Thirty-nine faith-based organizations in Southwest Florida engaged their membership in Blue Zones Project activities and programs, with 21 adopting best practices to become Blue Zones Project Approved. These groups offered members resources and encouragement for making healthy choices, from cooking demonstrations and Walking Moais to Purpose Workshops and volunteer opportunities that

helped members use their gifts for the greater good.

More than 200 congregants at **Celebration Beach Church** in Naples attended a Blue Zones Project Live Longer, Better presentation and took the personal pledge to improve their well-being. Pastor Gene Scott also delivers an annual sermon focused on Blue Zones principles and champions the power of purpose.

Eighty percent of **Legacy Church's** members attended the organization's GPS Life Journey, which helps people determine their life purpose and complements the Power 9. Developed by Legacy Church Pastor Nolen Rollins, the GPS Life Journey is an 8-week class which meets 1.5 hours each week.

Leaders at **Mayflower Congregational United Church of Christ** and **St. Marks Episcopal Church** launched Walking Moais to help members form new connections and move naturally.



WHY IT MATTERS

Studies link attending religious services with greater longevity—a finding researchers have suggested may relate to values like respect, compassion, and gratitude, and to the benefits of having a network of social support and sense of purpose. According to a study published in PLOS One, regular religious service attendance was linked to reductions in the body's stress responses and even in mortality. In fact, worshipers were 55 percent less likely to die over the 18-year follow-up period than people who didn't frequent the temple, church, or mosque.³²



”

THE BLUE ZONES PROJECT IS A WONDERFUL WAY TO PROVIDE COMMUNITY. IT BRINGS PEOPLE TOGETHER FOR HEALTH AND WELL-BEING AND A SENSE OF BELONGING WHICH FITS RIGHT INTO WHAT A CHURCH IS AND DOES.

Reverend Alan Coe
Mayflower Congregational United
Church of Christ

Local Churches Make a Big Difference

Mayflower Congregational United Church of Christ and **Emmanuel Park Church** might look a bit different—the former holding services in a more traditional sanctuary setting, the latter hosting an outdoor worship congregation. But both share a mission and purpose of giving back to individuals and families in Southwest Florida.

In addition to hosting well-being and Blue Zones activities, offering healthy foods at meetings and events, and robust Walking Moai engagement, Mayflower Church has engaged even more of its members in community-oriented, socially involved, and purposeful programs. The church partnered with the **Grace Place Food Pantry** and committed to provide 500 pounds of food to the organization each month. Churchgoers bring food donations to weekly services in support of this goal. Mayflower Church also sponsors mission

work and charitable initiatives like purchasing bus passes for the women temporarily housed at the Shelter for Abused Women and Children through its offering collections and refreshment “tip” collection.

Emmanuel Park Church shares a goal of providing food and nourishment to its neighbors. In addition to offering weekly worship, the church has hosted a weekly food distribution program with Meals of Hope since August 2020. On average, 25 volunteers participate each week and food is distributed to approximately 420 local families. When they arrive for Wellness Wednesday, Blue Zones Project volunteers provide bags, inserts, and other information in both English and Spanish to include with the food families are receiving.

Faith organizations across Southwest Florida are helping their congregations and members belong to live long.



HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATIONS

Micro-communities across Southwest Florida come together and shine.

Socialization matters. The amount of time you spend socializing each day has a direct impact on your well-being, but it's getting harder to be connected in many places. Americans change jobs more than ever before, and working from home or in isolated conditions can limit socialization. A lack of connectedness leaves people vulnerable to depression, anxiety, and other anti-social behaviors.

Homeowners associations are in a unique position to provide increased social capital, social cohesion, and community involvement to residents.³³ Florida homeowners associations have a membership rate well above the national average, with roughly 48,500 HOAs in the state and nearly 45 percent of the state's population living in an HOA community.³⁴ **Forty-five homeowners associations in Southwest Florida took steps to become Blue Zones Project Approved organizations, and additional 33 HOAs are engaged with the project.**

Associations like **Worthington Country Club**, **Pelican Landing Association**, and **Ave Maria**

Master Association offered Purpose Workshops and formed Walking and Potluck Moais with residents. **Wildcat Run** and **Verona Walk** both increased healthy food options for dining and events, and created tobacco-free environments in their communities.

Impact of Healthier HOAs

- Nearly 800 **Bonita Bay Community Association** residents took the Blue Zones pledge to live healthier. The association offered plant-based cooking demonstrations, hosted health seminars and new well-being events like chair yoga, tai chi, and dance classes to support resident well-being.
- Leaders at **Foxfire Country Club** incorporated a sustainable model of well-being by including residents, employees, and restaurant staff in their community wellness planning. This resulted in a unique synergistic approach to incorporating Blue Zones Project initiatives throughout their culture.
- By hosting four major giving campaigns each year, **TwinEagles** helps cultivate the right outlook. Over a quarter of residents participated in their last walk benefiting the Lustgarten Pancreatic Cancer Research Foundation.



THE TRIFECTA

The Arlington of Naples was the first organization in Southwest Florida to achieve three Blue Zones Project designations:

Blue Zones Project
Approved Worksite

Blue Zones Project
Approved HOA

Blue Zones Project
Approved Faith-Based
Organization





TwinEagles Cares is a dedicated group of TwinEagles residents and members created to help others in the community identify opportunities to invest their time, talent, and gifts back into the Immokalee area. The group focuses its energy supporting schools and organizations that aid the elderly.

Stonebridge Country Club members find energy in discovering their purpose and building social connections.

Ideally located in North Naples, **Stonebridge Country Club** is a friendly and social community that revolves around activities and social events available to residents and members. The active community fosters strong connections and felt Blue Zones principles were in line with their mission.

Walking Moais are keeping more than 90 members connected and strengthening relationships. Each season, the HOA encourages natural movement by hosting its “Track Your Trek” and “Beat the GM” walking and weight loss challenges. In 2022, more than 51 individuals participated in the Track Your Trek challenge with their moai groups, logging 8.711 miles between January and March.

Key Actions and Innovations

- Installed additional bike racks to encourage more residents to use alternate active transportation.
- After initial positive feedback from its first on-site Purpose Workshop, Stonebridge Country Club offered an additional two workshops, providing the event both in person and online. Members have shared with Stonebridge Country Club’s general manager that the workshops have improved their quality of life.
- Healthy food options have been made available at events, in the member dining room, and the organization has added plant-slant options to employee menus.
- Popular among residents and members, Wine at Five social hours are hosted several times a year with more than 60 individuals on average attending each event.
- Stonebridge Country Club’s active volunteer wellness committee includes multiple events with a Blue Zones theme as part of its annual calendar.

”

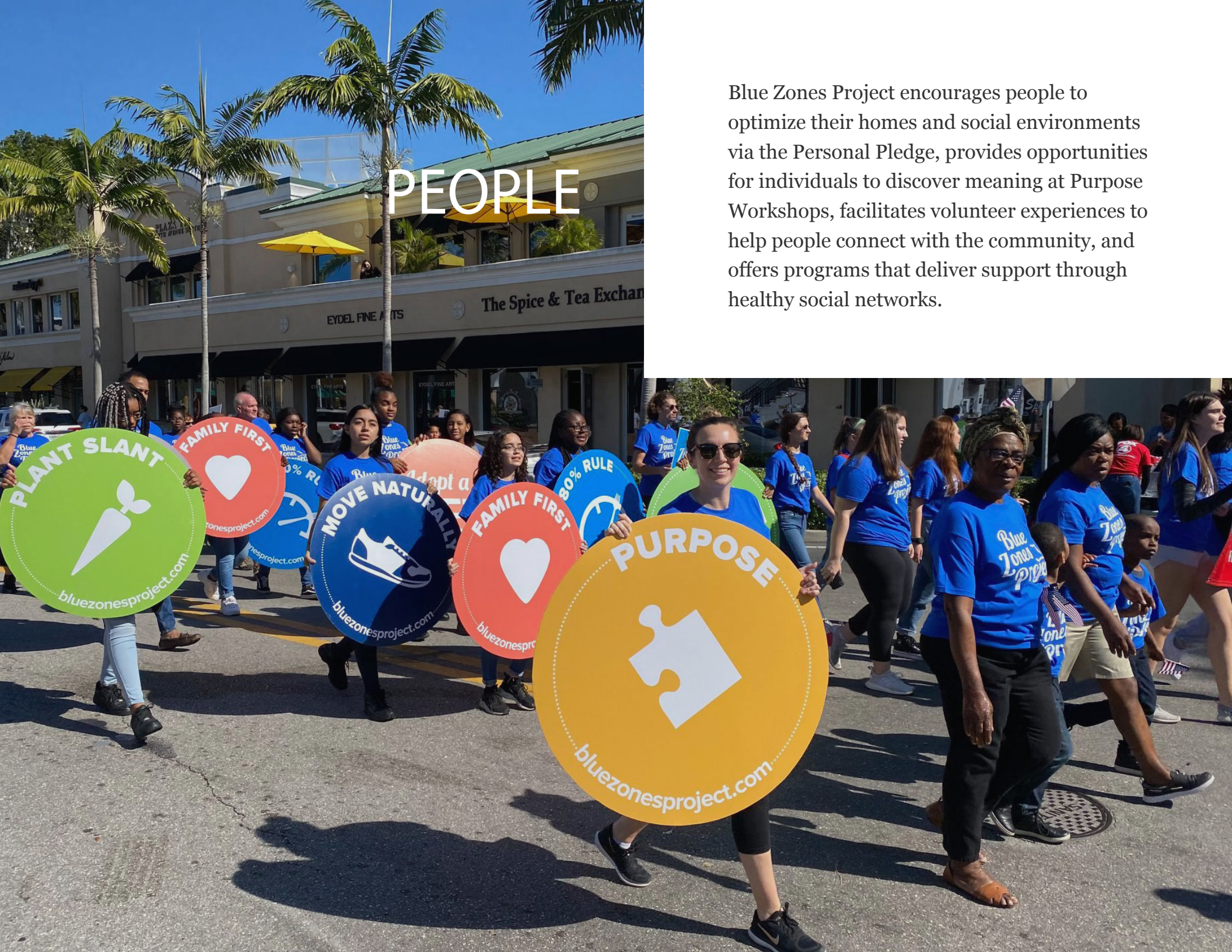
FOR OTHER HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATIONS AND COUNTRY CLUBS, I WOULD DEFINITELY RECOMMEND THE BLUE ZONES PROJECT. IT’S NOT JUST AN INSIGNIA YOU CAN PUT ON YOUR WEBSITES, IT REALLY DOES CHANGE THE FEEL OF THE COMMUNITY.

Tim Jones
General Manager
Stonebridge Country Club



PEOPLE

Blue Zones Project encourages people to optimize their homes and social environments via the Personal Pledge, provides opportunities for individuals to discover meaning at Purpose Workshops, facilitates volunteer experiences to help people connect with the community, and offers programs that deliver support through healthy social networks.



Strong Social Connections Help Residents Move More, Eat Better, Connect, and Downshift

Our connections to friends, family, and those around us are very powerful. They can shape our lives in more ways than we realize.

Research shows that even your friends' friends' friends—people you don't even know—can affect your health, happiness, and behaviors.³⁵

People of all ages, cultures, and backgrounds in Southwest Florida have come together to create positive change in their communities through Blue Zones Project. From the program launch in 2015 to community certification in 2022:

275,000

individuals involved in the project.

1,240

residents donated their time, skills, and passions toward volunteer opportunities tracked as part of Blue Zones Project.

4,962

residents participated in Purpose Workshops to rediscover and apply their gifts in their daily lives.

4,948

people met up with a Moai for connecting to walk or eat healthier together.

7,803

combined individuals attended a plant-based cooking class or gardening demonstration in person or viewed demonstrations online during the COVID-19 pandemic.



WHAT'S A MOAI?

Moai is a concept from Okinawa, Japan, that roughly means coming together for a common purpose. When you find your Moai, you find your personal board of directors — a committed group of individuals supporting each other and working collectively to improve well-being, for life.



THE RESULTS ARE IN

Measures from the Sharecare Community Well-Being Index reveal the impact:

- Physical activity is up 20.1 percent since 2015 (the number of people who report exercising 30+ minutes, 3+ days/week)
- Health risks like high blood pressure and high cholesterol have decreased by 57.9 percent and 73.1 percent respectively
- More residents—26.8 percent more—report “thriving” in their life evaluation, and 7.5 percent more residents say they like what they do every day

PEOPLE

The world's longest-lived people in blue zones areas have always understood the power of social connectedness. In Okinawa, "Moais"—groups of about five people who commit to each other for life—provide social connection, emotional, and sometimes financial support in times of need. Moai members have the stress-shedding security of knowing there is always someone there for them.

Spending time with people who positively influence one another is crucial. In Southwest Florida, we embrace the power of social connections to bring citizens together through groups, clubs, and community organizations.

Move more. Over 400 Walking Moais were created throughout the community, building long-lasting friendships while exploring our community on foot.

Eat better. Cooking classes and demonstrations brought individuals together to learn to cook new plant-based dishes. **Over 7,800 Southwest Florida residents attended a plant-based cooking or gardening demonstration.**

Connect and have the right outlook. Blue zones centenarians also put an emphasis on connecting with their reason for being. Whether

through family, career, or community, living with purpose pays off. Blue Zones researchers have found that people who have a clear sense of purpose in life tend to live about seven years longer than those who don't.³

Through volunteering, Purpose Workshops, and Purpose Moais, Blue Zones Project Southwest Florida encourages individuals to discover their innate gifts. We help our community members match their passions and commitment to volunteer opportunities that deepen their sense of purpose.

More than 4,962 people sought to discover their gifts at a Purpose Workshop and put their skills to work by giving back to Southwest Florida through volunteer work. **With more than 12,500 hours donated, over 1,240 volunteers in Southwest Florida have generated \$374,375.00 in value for the community.**³⁶

Today, **78.9 percent of Southwest Florida residents report they are thriving in life, compared to just 62.2 percent in 2015.**



Moais Make Healthy Neighborhood Connections

Neighborhoods and homeowners associations across Southwest Florida embraced the idea of Moais: gathering and supporting each other in ways that raise well-being for all.

Members of the **Mayflower Walking Moai** have been meeting and walking regularly for more than four years. Through the group—which included five members during its launch and now has more than 40 participants during peak season—new friends and neighbors have been able to build stronger social networks while staying active. Janice Cressman stepped into a leadership role for the moai and has kept weekly meetings consistent since the group was formed, even during the COVID-19 pandemic. Each week, walkers visit a different Collier County Park, making the group an avenue for exploration, allowing area residents to get to know the regional park system better.

The Mayflower Moai also reached out to the **Naples Botanical Garden**—a recognized Blue Zones Project organization—to grant

them access for a free monthly visit in exchange for wearing Blue Zones Project t-shirts during their walk. You can find this group enjoying each other's company, as well as the enchanting sights and sounds of the botanical garden, as they stroll through the grounds.

In addition to walking together each week, the group also participated as a Potluck Moai and regularly volunteers together for Grace Place. They help in the classrooms on Fridays supporting English as a second language students and in Grace Place's food pantries, providing food collected at Mayflower Church. Members also volunteer at the Shelter for Women and Children—providing personal baskets for women in need—and do construction work for Habitat for Humanity.



Above: Mayflower Moai members pause on a walk together

”

I THINK THERE ARE SO MANY BENEFITS. IT REMINDS ME OF HOW WE FEEL WHEN WE HELP SOMEONE, WE ARE THERE FOR EACH OTHER, WE BELONG TO THIS GROUP [THAT IS] BIGGER THAN OURSELVES.

Janice Cressman
Volunteer and Mayflower Moai leader



Plant-Based Cooking Catches Fire

Eating together makes a big difference. Obesity is associated with significantly increased risk of more than 20 chronic diseases and health conditions that cause devastating consequences and increased mortality.

Adolescents who eat dinner with their families are 15 percent less likely to become obese.³⁷

A report by the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse points out that teens who eat dinner with their families more than three times a week are less likely to do poorly in school.³⁸

Plant-based cooking demonstrations attracted interest from Southwest Floridians of all ages and skill levels, providing the opportunity to learn how to prepare fresh, healthy, and delicious meals with plant-based ingredients.

A growing demand among locals for healthier fare, combined with the dedication of creative chefs and culinary teachers passionate about sharing healthier options sparked and fueled the success of this program, which translated seamlessly online during the pandemic.

Cooking demonstration volunteer **Juliana Saitta Grazioso** lent her time and talents to Blue Zones Project by conducting healthy cooking classes, inspired by her youth spent in Vittoria, Sicily and raised on a Mediterranean diet. Before retiring from teaching, Juliana and her husband—who was a medical doctor—created a commercial demo kitchen at his medical facility where they taught patients how to prepare plant-forward recipes based on the Mediterranean diet she grew up on. Her passion for cooking and teaching soon carried on virtually when her classes were recorded and made available as a well-being activity for the local community to sign up and view as part of Blue Zones Project. The prerecorded classes proved invaluable during the pandemic when many were confined to their

homes and looking to prepare healthy meals. Between social media and virtual event registrations, **Juliana's cooking demonstrations have been viewed more than 7,000 times.**

Attendees of Juliana's cooking demonstrations learn to make simple, healthy, delicious, and economical meals—making it easier for them to try at home with loved ones. She continues to lead in-person demonstrations at **Unity Church**.



BY THE NUMBERS

1,000 CALORIES

in a typical American entree in a restaurant.²⁵

2 EXTRA POUNDS

gained a year by eating one meal away from home a week.²⁶



”

I AM GRATEFUL FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE MY LOVE FOR COOKING AND EATING HEALTHY WITH THE BLUE ZONES PROJECT COMMUNITY. MY HOPE IS THAT MY PASSION IS PASSED ON TO THOSE WHO SHARED IN THE EXPERIENCE AT THE COOKING DEMONSTRATIONS AND WILL IMPACT THE WAY PEOPLE EAT AND ENJOY HEALTHY FOOD!

Juliana Saitta Grazioso
Cooking Demonstration Volunteer



Volunteers Give Back to Community, Find New Friends

When **Alexandra Castro** and her two daughters moved to Ave Maria from Texas more than eight years ago, she knew she needed to find “her people” in her new place. With her closest friends more than 20 hours away and family back in Chile, Alexandra decided to engage in Blue Zones Project by joining a moai, attending a Purpose Workshop, and volunteering.

Because the Southwest Florida project covers a vast and diverse regional footprint, Spanish speaking volunteers are essential to the program’s success. Alexandra and her daughters are active volunteer participants in Blue Zones Project events with Hispanic attendees. Their support has been essential at annual events in and around Ave Maria and Immokalee, like the **United Way**’s signature “Build a Bike” event. Alexandra and her daughters staff the booth where families pick up their bikes providing translation support that creates a smooth, meaningful event for the recipients.

“Social work has always played a strong and significant role in my life as a teacher and as a person. That is one of the reasons I want my girls to continue being of help and serving others,” Alexandra said of her motivation to give back. She says her moai and volunteer events have provided the opportunity to make great friends and improve their personal health and well-being.



Above: Blue Zones Project volunteers at the United Way of Collier and Keys Build a Bike event

”

WE NEEDED TO FEEL PART OF SOMETHING STRONG AND VALUABLE, AND BLUE ZONES PROJECT HAS GIVEN US THAT SENSE OF FAMILY [AND] FRIENDS WHERE WE FEEL THAT WE BELONG AND FIT RIGHT IN. EVER SINCE THE FIRST DAY OF BLUE ZONES PROJECT AT THE NOVEMBER 2015 LAUNCH EVENT AT NORTH NAPLES PARK.

Alexandra Castro
Blue Zones Project Volunteer





FRIENDS ALWAYS SHARE

Friends provide more than good times, memories, and companionship — they also share health habits and other traits with one another. Did you know that if your friends are smokers, unhappy, or obese, you're more likely to adopt these same traits? You are twice as likely to be overweight if your three closest friends are overweight,³⁹ and inversely, you are 20 percent more likely to succeed at new behaviors if you do them with a buddy.⁴⁰



GOOD FRIENDS AND FAMILY MAKE EVERYTHING BETTER



DON'T GO AT IT ALONE

It's getting harder to be connected. In 2004, 25 percent of Americans felt they had no one to confide in. A lack of social connectedness leaves people vulnerable to depression, anxiety, and other anti-social behaviors.⁴¹ Social isolation and feelings of loneliness can increase the chance of premature death by 14 percent — nearly double the risk of premature death from obesity.⁴²



EAT TOGETHER BETTER

Adolescents who eat dinner with their family are 15 percent less likely to become obese. Additionally, a report by the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse points out that teens who eat dinner with their families more than three times a week are less likely to do poorly in school.³⁸



SOCIAL WELL-BEING

The amount of time you spend socializing each day has a direct impact on your well-being. To have a good day, a person needs around six hours of socializing. So, get socializing!⁴¹

CONCLUSION

WITH GRATITUDE

Blue Zones Project Southwest Florida is a testament to the effectiveness of collective impact. We have seen tremendous improvement in the health and well-being of our community and its residents over the past seven years.

The improvements we've seen would not have been possible without the passion and dedication of thousands of volunteers, hundreds of organizations, and our sponsor: NCH Healthcare System.

Thank you to every community leader, committee member, volunteer, ambassador, community partner, and organization for the countless hours invested, not just in the work of Blue Zones Project, but in making the communities of Naples, Immokalee, Ave Maria, Bonita Springs, Estero, Golden Gate, East Naples, and Marco Island healthier places to live, work, learn, and play.

Thank you for believing in the dream of a healthier community, and for putting your passions and resources to work. Because of you, Southwest Florida is experiencing tremendous well-being improvement.



SPONSORED
BY:



CONCLUSION

If there's one thing the story of Blue Zones Project Southwest Florida demonstrates, it's that many people and many organizations play an essential part in community success. Those recognized here contributed significant time, effort, and resources to the cause. Special thanks to these leaders—and applause to all who continue to help make Southwest Florida a healthier, happier community.

Steering Committee
(2015 - present)

Paul Hiltz (Chairman)	Marie Irwin	Kevin Rambosk
Jim Mahon	Kim Kossler	Mike Riley
Bill Barker	Rick LoCastro	Mayela Rosales
Bill Barnett	Jimmy Lynn	Steven Sanderson
Scott Burgess	Peter O'Flinn	John Sorey
Ryan Burroughs	Steven McIntosh	Sharon Treiser
Eileen Connolly-Keesler	Kamela Patton	Stephanie Vick
Michael Dalby	Julie Pedretti	Harold Weeks
Tiffany Esposito	Emily Ptaskek	Allen Weiss
Paul Hobacia	Amy Quaremba	Michael Wynn



NCH Officers & Trustees

Board Officers & Trustees

Kevin Beebe
Michael Wynn
Scott Lutgert
Davey Scoon
Jay Baker
Kerry Edwards
Alan Einhorn
Paul Hiltz
Bill Perez
Anne McNulty
Laurie Cowan Phillips
Janice Teal

Corporate Officers

Paul Hiltz
Janice Covelli-Rogers
Jim Mahon
Ilia Echevarria
Jonathan Kling
Matt Heinle
Kristin Mascotti
Gina Teegarden
Renee Thigpen
Rick Wyles

Special Thanks

Blue Zones Project Leadership Team
Blue Zones Project Immokalee Ave Maria Advisory Committee
Blue Zones Project Marco Advisory Committee
Blue Zones Project Community Engagement Committee
Blue Zones Project Worksite Alliance
Blue Zones Project HOA & FBO Alliance
Blue Zones Project Retail Food Committee
Blue Zones Project Policy Committees (Built Environment, Food, and Tobacco)

Community planners and elected officials who are implementing best practices to make our communities safer for pedestrians, cyclists, and cars

Champions who led the work in over 800 organizations that are making healthy choices easier for those they serve

Our many ambassadors who say “yes!” to well-being

CONGRATS, SOUTHWEST FLORIDA!

A PROUD BLUE ZONES COMMUNITY

We did this together. By putting our personal and collective well-being first, we're making healthy choices easier, creating more economic opportunities, and ensuring a better quality of life for everyone. **Here's to making Southwest Florida one of the healthiest regions in the nation, where residents are living better, together.**



APPENDIX

Designated Organizations

Blue Zones Worksites

Arthrex
Artis-Naples
Ave Maria School of Law
Avow
Blue Zones Project SWFL
Bonita Springs Area Chamber of Commerce
Bonita Springs Charter Academy
Bonita Springs Elementary
Bonita Springs Middle Center for the Arts
Bonita Springs YMCA
Boys and Girls Club of Collier County - Immokalee
Bridging the Gap PT
CID Design Group
City of Marco Island
City of Naples
Collier County Government BCC
Community Health Partners
Condee Cooling
Countryside Golf and Country Club
David Lawrence Mental Health Center

District School Board of Collier County
Doctors Hearing/Health & Wealth Co.
Eagle Creek Golf and Country Club
Eden Park Elementary
Fiddler's Creek
FineMark National Bank and Trust - Bonita Springs
FineMark National Bank and Trust - Naples
Florida Blue - Estero
Florida Department of Health Collier County
Florida Southwestern State College - Collier Campus
Foot Solutions Estero
Fox Fire Country Club
Golden Gate Elementary
Golden Gate High School
Golden Terrace Elementary
Golf Club at Palmira
Grace Place for Children and Families
Greater Naples YMCA
Guadalupe Center
Gulfshore Concierge Medicine
Gulfshore Insurance
Healthcare Network of Southwest Florida
Herbert Cambridge Elementary
Hodges University

Immokalee Foundation
Immokalee Technical College
Immokalee Water and Sewer District
JW Marriott
Laverne Gaynor Elementary
London Bay Homes
Marco Island Charter Middle School
Marco Ocean Beach Resort
Markham Norton Mostellar Wright Co PA
Marriott Crystal Shores
Moorings Park
Naples Botanical Garden
Naples Coastal Animal Hospital
Naples Players
Naples Zoo
NCH Healthcare System
PBS Contractors
Raymond James
RCMA
Renaissance Center Club
RGB Internet Systems Inc.
Spectrum Concierge
The Arlington at Naples
The Club at Mediterra
The Commons Club at The Brooks
The Hertz Corporation

APPENDIX

The Salvation Army
The Shelter
Thomas Riley Artisans' Guild
Tommie Barfield Elementary
TommiVi at Bentley Village
Village Oaks Elementary
Wintrust Banking Center
Wyndemere Country Club
YMCA of South Collier
Youth Haven

Blue Zones Schools

Barron Collier High School
Bears Den Preschool
Big Cypress Elementary
Bonita Springs Charter School
Bonita Springs Elementary
Bonita Springs Middle School (for the Arts)
Calusa Park Elementary
Camp Discovery Child Care
CCPS Alternative Schools
Child's Path Immokalee
Child's Path Golden Gate High School
Child's Path Naples
Child's Path Santa Barbara
Corkscrew Elementary

Corkscrew Middle School
Eden Park Elementary
Florida Southwestern State College
Forza Childhood Development
Gaynor Early Learning Center
Golden Gate Elementary
Golden Terrace Elementary
Guadalupe Center ECE Program
Gulf Coast Charter Academy South
Gulfview Middle School
Herbert Cambridge Elementary
Immokalee Technical College
Lake Park Elementary
Lake Trafford Elementary
Laurel Oak Elementary
Lavern Gaynor Elementary
Lely Elementary
Lorenzo Walker Technical High School and College
Manatee Elementary
Marco Island Middle School Charter
Mike Davis Elementary
Naples High School
Naples Park Elementary
Naples Preschool of the Arts
North Naples Middle School

Osceola Elementary
Palmetto Elementary
Pathways Early Childhood Center
Pelican Marsh Elementary
Pine Ridge Middle School
Pinecrest Elementary
Poinciana Elementary
Sabal Palm Elementary
Saint Ann School
Saint Elizabeth Seton Catholic School
Sea Gate Elementary
Shadowlawn Elementary
Tommie Barfield Elementary
Veterans Memorial Elementary
Village Oaks Elementary
Vineyards Elementary
Waves of Wonder

Blue Zones Grocery Stores

Key Food Supermarket
Latino Meat & Produce
Legrand Caribbean Market
Mi Mercado
Summer Day Market and Café
Universal Supermarket
Wynn's Market

APPENDIX

Blue Zones Restaurants

21 Spices

Bahia Bowls - Bonita Beach

Bahia Bowls - Estero

Baleen Naples

Body and Soul Cafe

BRK Pizza

Cafe Nutrients

CJ's on the Bay

Clean Juice

Coast at The Edgewater Beach Hotel

Coffee Bar 239

Cosmos Ristorante and Pizzeria

EE-TO-LEET-KE Grill - Seminole Casino
Hotel

fibree

FiFy's Caribbean Cuisine

First Watch Granada Shoppes

Foxfire Restaurant

Greek Gourmet

Island Walk Bar & Grill

iTown Cafe

Jason's Deli

Juicelation

Kareem's Lebanese Kitchen

K-Rico Mexican Grill

LaTavola

LuLu B's Diner

Mel's Diner Naples

Naples Flatbread - Mercato

Naples Flatbread - Miromar

Oakmont at The Vineyards

Old 41 Restaurant

Organically Twisted

Palladio Trattoria

Riverwalk at Tin City

Sakura Hawaiian Grill

Seaside Bar & Grill

Shula's Steak House

Skillets Bonita Springs

Skillets Founders Square

Skillets Lely

Skillets North Naples

Skillets Parkshore

Skillets Pavilion

Skillets The Strand

Skillets University Village

Smith House

Sodexo - NCH Baker Cafeteria

Sodexo - NCH North Cafeteria

Summer Day Cafe

Sunburst Cafe

Survey Cafe

Talis Park - Vyne House

The Boathouse on Naples Bay

The Bowl

The Bowl Central

The Bowl University Village

The Cafe

The Cafe at Bonita Beach

The Cider Press Cafe

The Club at The Strand

The Dock Restaurant

The Hotel Escalante and Veranda E

The Local

True Food Kitchen - Naples

Vanderbilt Country Club Restaurant

ZAZA

Blue Zones Faith-Based

C3 Church Naples

Celebration Community Beach Church

Christus Victor Lutheran Church

Church of Nazarene

Cornerstone United Methodist Church

Emmanuel Community Church

Emmanuel Lutheran Church

Jubilee Fellowship

APPENDIX

Legacy Church Estero
Mayflower Congregational UCC
Naples Community Church
Naples United Church of Christ
Rock of Refuge Church
Saint John the Evangelist Catholic Church
San Marco Catholic Church
St. Agnes Church
St. John's Episcopal Church
St. Mark's Episcopal Church
The Arlington
The Springs of Bonita Church
Unitarian Universalist
Unity of Naples
Wesley United Methodist Church

Blue Zones HOAs

Arbor Trace
Ave Maria Master Association
Bayfront
Bonita Lakes
Copperleaf
Countryside Golf and Country Club
Crystal Lake RV Resort
Delasol
Del Webb Naples Community

Diamond Oaks Village
Discovery Village
Fiddlers Creek
Foxfire Golf and Country Club
Glades Golf and Country Club
Greyhawk at Golf Club of the Everglades
IslandWalk HOA
Landmark Naples
Marbella Isles
Naples Heritage Golf and Country Club
Naples Lakes Country Club
Naples Reserve
Palmira Golf and Country Club
Pelican Landing
Pelican Marsh
Preserve at Corkscrew
Quail West Country Club
Riverwoods Plantation
Sapphire Lakes
Stonebridge
Tavira Condo at Bonita Bay
The Arlington of Naples
The Club at The Dunes
The Community of Bonita Bay
The Glenview at Pelican Bay
Tidewater by Del Webb

Traviso Bay
Twin Eagles
Vanderbilt Country Club
VeronaWalk
Village Green
Village Walk of Bonita Springs
Village Walk of Naples HOA
Wildcat Run Golf and Country Club
Windstar on Naples Bay
Worthington Country Club
Wyndemere Country Club

Other Organizations

A Plant Based Diet
ABN Law
Above Board Chamber
Artichoke and Company
Barre Fusion
Barrett Ross Ginsberg MD
Beautiful Health
Benison Center
Beyon Motion
BKS Yoga Studio LLC
Buff City Soap
BWIP Group LLC
C2 Communications

APPENDIX

Cafe of Life	Fairways Inn of Naples	Lean and Green Body LLC
Calusa Garden Club	Fit2Run	Let's Talk Dementia
Cancer Alliance of Naples	Florida Southwestern State College	Life in Naples
Central Auto Center	Fundamental Health Solutions	Lifestyle Beverages Distributors
Cheryl Korbel-DoTERRA	GAIN Growth and Improvement Never-ending	Literary Volunteers of Collier County
Children's Dentistry of Naples	Greater Marco Family YMCA	LiveWell Southwest Florida
Ciccarelli Advisory Services	Greater Naples Fire Rescue District	LivingWell Chiropractic
Circle C Farm	Greenmonkey Yoga	Local Roots LLC
City of Naples Fire Department	Guadalupe Center	Love in Hands Massage Therapy
Coldwell Banker Naples 5th Avenue	HBK CPAs and Consultants	Love Yoga Center
Cora Physical Therapy Naples	HELLP	Love Your Life with Suz
Cora Physical Therapy Golden Gate	Honor Yoga Naples	LoveINC of South Lee and North Collier Communities
Creative Business Coaches	Horizon Wellness - Hire a Daughter	M Room Company USA
Creative Connection	Iconic Journeys	Marco Island Area Association of Realtors
Cypress Cove Conservancy	I'm Simply Nutty - Food Vendor	Marco Island Noontime Rotary
Davidson Engineering	Including ALL Children	Marco Island Rotary Sunrise
Discovery Village at Naples	Island Coast Dentistry	Marsh Paddlers
Dr. Svetlana Kogan	It Starts With You Wellness	Max Flex Fitness
E. Sue Huff & Associates	Joyful Yoga and Ayurvedic Spa	MaxxCard
Edible - Bonita Springs	Jubilee Fellowship of Naples	Meals of Hope
Edible Arrangements Naples	Just Breathe LLC	NAMI of Collier County
Emmanuel Community Park	Kaj Gallery	Naples Abundant Health Chiropractic
Escape Hatch 2 Wellness	Kava Culture Kava Bar	Naples Art Association
Estero Body Boot Camp	Kingdom Mobilization	Naples Culinary Walks
Estero Chamber of Commerce	Lancit Digital Media	Naples Family Fitness Center
EXP Realty Kelly Spriggs		

APPENDIX

Naples Fit Body Boot Camp	Regions Private Wealth	The Waterside Shops
Naples Green Scene	Rejuvenate Active Recovery Centers	Think Outside the Diamond
Naples Historical Society	Right at Home	Tidewater FirstService Residential
Naples Interagency Council	Rotary Club of Immokalee	Tiger's Den Salon Aveda
Naples Park Central Hotel	Sage Events LLC	United Way of Collier County
Naples Personal Training	Sagewood Institute	US Open Pickleball Academy
Natural Wines Naples	SCORE Naples	Vineyards Country Club
Neighborhood Organics	Senior Housing Solutions	Wellness Design Group
New Balance Naples	Shangri-La Springs	Woman of the 239
New Horizons of Southwest Florida	Siena Wealth Advisory Group	YMCA
Oils are a Gift	Smart Choices Healthcare	
O'Leary Publishing	Snead Eye Group	
Our Daily Bread Food Pantry	Southern Tropics Pickleball	
Our Yoga Place	Spark Health Technologies	
PACE Center for Girls	Spriggs Yacht Consulting	
Pan Florida Challenge	STARability Foundation	
Paradise Boat Cycle	Strand Sisters	
Patient Best	Sunshine State Podiatry	
Pickleball for All	SWF UTK Alumni Chapter	
Plan B Connections	SWFL Real Producer	
Powerful You	Swimtastic Swim Schools	
Preferred Travel of Naples	Synergy Elite Medical	
Project Evolve	The Greater Naples Chamber of Commerce	
Purely You Spa	The Hotel Escalante and Veranda E	
Purple Panda Wellness	The Moorings Inc.	
Purple Spoon Culinary	The Spice and Tea Exchange of Naples	

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APPENDIX

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