The Great Transfer of Wealth

Become part of the transformative power of endowing Collier County’s future and sustaining its dedicated charities.

Baby boomers make up the wealthiest generation in American history, and they are passing down that wealth to their children and grandchildren during the next 25 years. How much? A staggering $68 trillion in homes, businesses, and investments.

This remarkable intergenerational phenomenon is playing out in communities across the nation. In Collier County, $34.8 billion is expected to change hands over the next ten years. These sums may be mind-boggling, but the Collier Community Foundation (CCF) is starting a conversation with the community to raise awareness about the transfer of wealth and the importance of including a philanthropic element in estate plans. CCF President/CEO Eileen Connolly-Keesler and her team are urging seasonal and full-time residents to allocate 3 percent of their estate to the foundation to establish a $1 billion endowment to help sustain the community’s social safety net in perpetuity.

“One billion sounds scary, but 3 percent doesn’t,” said Rob Bulloch, a partner and fourth-generation estate planner at Bulloch Taylor PLLC in Naples.

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Many community foundations in the United States have $1 billion in endowments. Collier County—where the current household net worth is $302 billion—certainly has the same capacity to build this endowment to meet significant local needs. "There is literally unlimited charitable capacity here," he said.

**Why the Collier Community Foundation?**

CCF addresses issues as they arise without bureaucratic red tape. CCF often helps fill in local gaps where the government lacks funding by supporting projects such as partnering with other organizations on a local workforce housing development. CCF has repeatedly pivoted to disaster relief by activating the Collier Comes Together emergency fund for hurricanes Irma and Ian, wildfires, red tide, and the Covid-19 pandemic. Unrestricted funds allow CCF "to adjust in real time for needs in the community," Bulloch said.

In Collier County, the government sets aside only 5.6 percent of its annual budget for human services. "Even if the county budget were larger, we know how to serve the community better than anyone because we are in touch with local needs and can act quickly to distribute funds where they are needed most," said Connolly-Keesler.

There are several tax-advantaged strategies for donating to charity during one's lifetime, such as a qualified charitable distribution from a retirement account, making charitable giving a win-win for the donor and the organization they support. "Increasingly clients are eager to see the direct impact of their donations during their lifetime and not wait until they are gone to do so," said Bulloch.

No matter your walk in life, estate plans are essential in life and death for everyone. They ensure your assets are distributed according to your wishes and are protected from probate. They are crucial if you become incapacitated and can no longer handle your financial affairs. They are also a wealth-preservation strategy. Uncle Sam levies a 40 percent estate tax. "What goes to CCF escapes taxes during your lifetime and when you die," Bulloch explained.

CCF is also encouraging wealth and estate advisors to have this conversation with their clients. A BOA/Merrill Lynch HNW Philanthropy study showed that 90 percent of high-net-worth households expect their advisor to bring up charitable giving. Yet, only 10 percent of advisors bring up the topic.

At CCF, a permanent endowment will grow through investments. CCF also provides expert oversight of funding and grantmaking. We keep our finger on the community’s pulse by studying local needs and demographics each year and tracking nonprofits’ effectiveness through grant and program impact fulfillment.

Donors want to support causes they care about. But sometimes, organizations close their doors or change their policies. With a CCF fund, the money is redirected to a similar program or nonprofit that aligns with the donor's original intentions, so there are no surprises. "We provide the oversight to spend donors’ dollars the way they want them spent according to their estate plan," said Connolly-Keesler.

Call the Collier Community Foundation at 239.649.5000 to learn more.
On Thursday, March 30, more than 3,800 individuals in Collier, Lee, Charlotte, Hendry, and Glades counties participated in On the Table® SWFL discussions about issues, trends, concerns, and hopes for their communities. On the Table® is a conversation-based initiative used widely by community foundations nationally and internationally. For the first time, the Charlotte Community Foundation, Collaboratory, and Collier Community Foundation partnered together to host this regional effort.

Following the conversations held around the table in small and large group settings, participants ranging in age from 14 to 87 completed surveys to share their perspectives and identify the most significant areas of need. In addition to creating much-needed community connections following the pandemic and Hurricane Ian, a goal of On the Table® SWFL is to create a better community for all.

Of the 20 possible social issues to rank in the survey, all five counties selected the same top ten issues. While issues differed slightly in ranking across counties, preliminary assessments indicated the following as the top five for Collier:

1. Housing and homelessness
2. Mental health and substance abuse
3. Healthcare access and cost
4. Well-paying jobs and economic development
5. Public transportation and traffic

“These are significant and complicated issues that cannot be solved quickly,” said Meredith Nassif, CCF Director of Philanthropic Services. “Addressing these issues will require many people at the table—from businesses, nonprofits, government, to faith-based organizations and many others. At the end of the day, these sessions brought people together to problem solve and celebrate our community.” Preliminary results are available at onthetableswfl.com/results.

CCF will continue to dive into the data from On the Table® SWFL sessions to better understand what it means and how to address gaps. This information and input from planned listening groups will be incorporated into the Collier County Community Needs Assessment. The 2023 Collier County Community Needs Assessment report, supported and funded by the Richard M. Schulze Family Foundation and the CCF, will be completed this fall.
Generous donors from around Collier County were joined by supporters from around the world on Feb. 15-16 to raise more than $3.3 million for 37 local nonprofits during the ninth annual Give Where You Live Collier.

The 24-hour fundraising event highlights the mission and collective impact of nonprofits in and around Collier County, whose work has been especially vital since Hurricane Ian struck the region last September. The giving day website, www.givewhereyoulivecollier.org, and a corresponding social media blitz brought worldwide attention to Collier’s nonprofit community, who received donations from as far as Canada and Vietnam.

“We weren’t sure how much we would raise this year since our donors have been so incredibly generous with Hurricane Ian relief donations,” said Eileen Connolly-Keesler, President and CEO of the Collier Community Foundation, which had already granted more than $4.3 million for relief and recovery efforts. “We are so pleased with the results and are proud of the efforts of our nonprofits, our board and staff, and especially the donors who helped make this event a success in another tough year.”

In a series of brief interviews broadcasted to Facebook Live on the giving day, nonprofit leaders repeatedly praised the extraordinary generosity of the people of Collier County, even in the wake of tragedy.

“I’ve traveled the world—not necessarily by choice, being...
a military officer—and I have seen what devastation looks like in a lot of different areas of this world,” said Jamie Ulmer, President and CEO of Healthcare Network. “But what this community does for its people, and how they take care of them, and take it personal, in ensuring that they can provide funding in different areas - I’ve never, ever seen in any other community or any other parts of the world. It’s just amazing.”

Healthcare Network is among the foundational members of Give Where You Live Collier—one of many nonprofits that have participated every year since the day was founded in 2015. This year, the organization raised $41,555 from 121 donors.

“When we first started (the giving day) eight years ago, we weren’t really sure where it was going to go, and if it was just a one-time event; but (the nonprofits) have really counted on it, and counted on that match, to help them get through their year,” Connolly-Keesler said.

Every donation during the 24-hour giving period — either online, or offline — goes further thanks to a proportionally distributed matching pool of $500,000. The Richard M. Schulze Family Foundation, which has supported Give Where You Live Collier all nine years, provides $400,000 of that match pool, as well as $50,000 worth of prizes. The Collier Community Foundation, in addition to organizing and hosting the event, provides a $100,000 match.

“The enthusiasm of the day is over the top,” said Mary Beth Geier, Florida Director of the Richard M. Schulze Family Foundation. “By offering (this prize pool), every agency, at these different moments, have a chance to get this big influx of money to their efforts.”

Among the prize winners was Friends of Rookery Bay, which supports education, conservation and research at the 110,000-acre Rookery Bay Research Reserve. The organization gathered support from 96 unique donors, earning them the $5,000 ‘Go-Getter Prize.’

“… To be selected is special for us, to open the doors to people that have never heard about The Friends of Rookery Bay — just getting the word out, that we exist and we’re an important component to the community is priceless,” said Executive Director Athan Barkoukis. “I’m really excited for the new friends that we’re going to make today.”

The YMCA of Collier County had the most unique donors during the day, raising $160,046 from 185 donors. The top fundraising organization on the day was Baker Senior Center Naples, with $538,642 from 83 donors. Complete leaderboards, a list of prize winners and more information about the giving day are available at www.givewhereyoulivecollier.org. Replays of the Facebook Live broadcasts featuring many of the nonprofits are available at www.facebook.com/colliercfl/videos.
Several seniors living in Moorhead Manor on Bayshore Drive in Naples will soon be celebrating the arrival of their new homes. In a collaborative partnership between the Collier Community Foundation (CCF) and the Baker Senior Center Naples (BSCN), an innovative program to replace the homes of five year-round homeowners will provide relief from the months of frustration and uncertainty of being displaced from their homes.

The Moorhead Manor neighborhood of manufactured homes is located in a low-lying area and was hit especially hard by Hurricane Ian’s surge and flood waters.

In addition to receiving the 2-bedroom, 2-bath units, each homeowner will receive furniture and appliances as part of the funding provided through CCF’s Collier Comes Together Hurricane Ian Fund.

“I am so excited,” said Marie Powell, one of the Moorhead Manor residents receiving a new home. “I had a place to go. I stayed with my daughter, who doesn’t live far away. Not all of my neighbors were as fortunate.”

Tearfully, she continued, “Just after the hurricane, we were all in survival mode. We tried salvaging what we could. I had lived there for 24 years. It was so emotional—so devastating—for me and for my grandchildren.”

Julie Fox and Charles Jacob found housing in Cape Coral when displaced from their ‘unlivable’ 49-year-old home. “We’re 80 years old and just can’t do the cleanup work like we did following hurricanes Wilma and Irma,” said Fox. “Our friends still live in Moorhead. We miss being there and want to stay connected.”

They had two feet of sewage water inside their home and could only salvage a few upper cabinets. “You watch the news and see floods in other parts of the country,” said Jacob. “When it happens to you, your perspective really changes.”

Powell said Penny Taylor, BSCN Disaster Response Coordinator, contacted her regarding the home replacement program. She said everything happened so quickly.

She and others in the neighborhood met with Taylor, Dr. Jaclynn Faffer, BSCN President, and Eileen Connolly-Keesler, CCF President/CEO. Taylor’s position as a case manager for the home replacement project was funded with a grant from the CCF to the Baker Senior Center.

Taylor’s public service experiences give her tools to help remove roadblocks and keep the project moving forward. “I appreciate the opportunity to develop this program to bring new homes to these individuals. My heart goes out to them. Some are terribly alone. We have U.S. Veterans, single women, couples, men and women still working and others retired. At first, all they could do was panic. It is such a natural reaction. Now, we are able to bring some stability—some hope.”

Fox and Jacob belong to BSCN, where they learned about and applied for the home replacement program. After Taylor talked to them and several of their neighbors at Moorhead Manor, they completed the application and were thrilled to be selected to participate. “Our family suggested we simply get out of here and move to Indiana to be near them,” said Fox. “We made it clear that we had no interest in permanently moving from our Naples home and friends. This program is making it all
possible for us to soon return to our community."

Taylor, Connolly-Keesler, and Faffer have been in constant communication, with many moving parts and decisions to be made and many unforeseen challenges emerging. "A clear process and documentation of each step is critical to the success of this initiative and serves as a guide for future programs," said Taylor. "Fairness and integrity are critical. With donated money, it only heightens the importance of accountability."

Eligible residents completed applications for the home replacement program, and selections were announced quickly. Each resident was required to purchase flood and home insurance. For some, FEMA has been funding some of those expenses for several years.

The damaged homes have been removed from the lots, and each site was scraped and prepared for new utilities, including electrical and water. To ensure that the properties will be above the flood level to minimize future storm damage, cinder blocks or stilts will be used to raise each home at least 5 feet, depending on the zone. Furniture and appliances have been selected and purchased and now sit in storage, waiting for delivery of the units being built (manufactured) by LeeCorp in Fort Myers.

Fox and Jacob say they are in good spirits while awaiting delivery date updates about their new home. “In Cape Coral, we still see people suffering... but we are very blessed. Very thankful," said Fox.

“First, we lived with the heartbeat, then the unknown, then the stressful replacement process, but there is such relief in knowing that we will be able to live here again,” said Powell. “They have been so helpful. They are there for us. Penny has been so upfront, transparent, keeping us informed. We can’t express our thanks enough.”

As the first few families settle into their new homes, CCF will seek additional funding to help other families. "We know there are many more neighborhoods and homes that received significant damage, or are located in low areas susceptible to dangerous flooding," said Connolly-Keesler. "We will continue our work to make our community more resilient, whether storms, floods or pandemics."

- Moorhead Manor resident Marie Powell

TOP: Marie Powell is interviewed in her severely damaged home after Hurricane Ian.
BOTTOM: The kitchen in one of the new homes that a CCF grant is providing through a collaboration with Baker Senior Center.
As an active community leader, including president of the NAACP Collier County, Vincent Keeys has found himself amid important and historical initiatives. Still, nothing compares to addressing the immediate devastation, recovery, and ongoing rebuilding of the historically Black River Park neighborhood following Hurricane Ian.

For the first time in 100 years, the area adjacent to the Gordon River was underwater for days. Residents were traumatized, essentially losing everything in their homes.

“One of the residents reached out to me,” said Keeys. “He said, ‘we need you to come.’ No one knew what to do. But, when you see a neighborhood in need, you jump into action.”

Keeys and others set up a satellite location in the community. They began mobilizing organizations that could provide temporary homes, cleaning supplies, hot food, and moral support to the area residents.

“Vincent Keeys was instrumental in helping to coordinate the response, recovery and repairs in River Park,” said Eileen Connolly-Keesler, President/CEO of the Collier Community Foundation (CCF). “I don’t know what that community would have done without him. Vincent brought the needs forward, and the CCF reached out to our generous donors to secure financial assistance for the hard hit community.”

“We owe so much to the Collier Community Foundation,” said Keeys. “They were beyond amazing! Eileen was right there. She didn’t hesitate. She said, ‘let’s get this done.’ We received our first disaster relief check on the Sunday following the storm.”

Over the next few weeks, CCF collected and distributed additional funds to the NAACP to purchase gloves, supplies, hand tools, hot meals, and water for the often overlooked and underserved community.

Everyone stepped to the plate for this tight-knit community. The Collier County Sheriff’s Department and Naples Police and Fire Departments brought ice, and trucks promptly showed up to remove debris. Healthcare organizations brought tetanus shots, wellness checkups, and mental health services.

Keeys said he became particularly emotional as he watched people take their damaged household items and personal belongings to the curbs, throwing away possessions and memories from generations of families.
Because of generous donors, CCF was also there to help Moorhead Manor, Everglades City, and other areas devastated by the storm for full-time residents living in owner-occupied homes.

- Eileen Connolly-Keesler
  CCF President/CEO

After the initial recovery and clean-up efforts, CCF quickly responded to a need for new appliances. “Once the dry wall and plastering work was underway, Vincent came to me with a request to help replace the appliances destroyed by Hurricane Ian,” said Connolly-Keesler. “Salt water ruined the appliances in every home. Residents needed new ones. A generous donor gave a matching grant of $137,000 so CCF would have enough funding to replace all appliances in the household. Because of generous donors, CCF was also there to help Moorhead Manor, Everglades City, and other areas devastated by the storm for full-time residents living in owner-occupied homes.”

Through the Collier Comes Together Fund and private donations, CCF “came through like champions” to help River Park residents secure new refrigerators, stoves, and washers and dryers, according to Keeys.

Keeys is grateful that there was no loss of life from Hurricane Ian in River Park, and he believes that should be a primary goal of a long-range disaster and crisis plan to prepare and protect the next generation. Living in a flood zone, residents must make difficult decisions about rebuilding and building up. That will take time.

In the meantime, residents of River Park need ongoing support to rebuild their physical lives and mental health services to recover from the emotional and psychological trauma they’ve experienced. Keeys is committed to joining them in their journey, with support from the Community Foundation and other community partners.
When the Collier Community Foundation (CCF) granted $15,000 to NCH Healthcare late last summer for a new choking rescue device, LifeVac, little did they realize how quickly this device would prove critical in resuscitating a local restaurant-goer. In development for ten years, LifeVac has been responsible for saving hundreds of lives worldwide, including one man in a Naples steakhouse in February 2023, who had fallen unconscious after choking. The attentive restaurant manager learned firsthand how easy it is to save a choking victim’s life — just place, push, and pull.

Thanks to the CCF grant, LifeVac devices have been distributed to local EMTs, restaurants, hotels, schools, and businesses, increasing the chance to intervene when someone is in danger—even before an ambulance arrives.

NCH CEO & President Paul Hiltz read an article about the choking rescue device and asked his team to learn more. After receiving a few of the devices from the inventor and owner, Mike Plunkett, they tested them on a mannequin in the NCH Simulation Lab. The results were impressive.

“Once we saw how well LifeVac works, we knew we had to find a way to make it available in our community. When we shared this with the Collier Community Foundation, they immediately jumped on board to help fund and distribute these devices,” said Jim Mahon, Ph.D., Senior Vice President at NCH.

“Providing grant funding for LifeVac was such an easy decision,” said CCF President/CEO Eileen Connolly-Keesler. “It offers an easy fix to an existing problem.”

To create greater awareness, CCF recently secured an additional supply of the LifeVac to distribute to nonprofit organizations throughout Collier County. The LifeVac unit retails for about $80; quantity or other discounts may be available. For those interested in learning more about the LifeVac choking rescue tool, visit their website: lifevac.net
For as long as she can remember, Katie Phillips, a Naples native, wanted to be a psychologist when she grew up and is now closer to achieving her dream of helping children diagnosed with autism. Her aunt, a psychologist, was her inspiration.

Phillips knew she needed financial help to go to college to study psychology so she could help those struggling with their mental health, but she was unsure where to start. She learned about scholarships available through the Collier Community Foundation (CCF) from her high school. She applied and was thrilled when she realized she successfully secured a scholarship. It changed her life.

The first step was to fill out the Collier Scholars Common Application, which will open again next fall on November 1, 2023, until February 6, 2024. By completing one online application, Katie was considered for more than 80 scholarship opportunities from CCF for students with a wide variety of ages, backgrounds, GPA’s, areas of study, technical schools, and levels of education.

Phillips was awarded two renewable scholarships, which launched her secondary education journey. Being raised in what she describes as a middle-class family, Katie appreciated the value of the scholarships to provide critical funding for fees, tuition, and books. “Without the scholarships, I would not have been able to pursue my

Why I Choose the Collier Community Foundation...

As a professional advisor and a local wealth management leader in our community, I have trust and confidence in the great work that Collier Community Foundation does. I know when I refer my clients to them, their charitable needs and goals are in great hands. The Collier Community Foundation can help you leave a legacy, make an impact and transform the community we love.

— Amy Hale
Regional President - Southeast BMO Wealth Management U.S.

You have the opportunity to ensure the future of our community for the next generations. Together we can help you invest in the community you love and support the causes you care about most.

Call us at Collier Community Foundation at 239-649-5000 to learn more.
education outside of Naples. I now live in Orlando, working on a degree in Clinical Psychology at the University of Central Florida," she said. "With this scholarship, I’ve become an independent and financially responsible adult, which has made me feel better about myself."

In addition to taking classes and becoming more knowledgeable about psychology and other subjects at UCF, Phillips feels she is growing as a person—gaining strengths and developing skills that make her stronger mentally and emotionally. She also believes that thanks to the CCF scholarship, pursuing her education in Orlando has given her more exposure to many more career choices than she would have had locally.

In addition to her full load of university classes, Phillips has already secured a paid internship-type role as a behavioral therapist. One of her newest clients is a local Orlando elementary school student. She finds it rewarding to help children with their socialization skills to improve academic performance.

When she graduates in May 2024, Phillips already knows she’ll pursue a master’s degree in Clinical Applied Behavioral Psychology. She wants to help children directly but has her heart set on participating in—or leading—research that will bring additional diagnostic and treatment tools to children, families, teachers, and other providers.

“To everyone who supports the Collier Community Foundation scholarship program, thank you!” said Phillips. “I appreciate you investing in the future of someone you don’t even know.”

DID YOU KNOW?

The first scholarship at CCF was established in 1991. CCF currently manages $9.5 million in scholarship assets, and administers 76 unique, named scholarship funds. CCF has distributed more than $11 million in scholarship grants since the program’s inception. In fiscal year 2022, 547 unique scholarship applicants generated more than 4,500 applications, and CCF disbursed more than $1.8 million in scholarships.

If you are interested in learning more about establishing a named scholarship fund, please contact:

Julie Van Tongeren
Vice President of Development
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TAKE ACTION

It’s estimated that $34.8 billion will change hands over the next 10 years in Collier County. If just 3 percent of that is transferred to the Collier Community Foundation, it could result in a $1 billion endowment that generates $50 million annually to address our community’s greatest needs — forever!

Call us to start the conversation at 239.649.5000