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GCCF passes half-billion dollars in grants

Money has helped students, workers, homeless, more

STAFF REPORT

Jan 26, 2023



Gulf Coast Community Foundation.

PHOTO BY RONALD DUPONT JR.

VENICE — With the help of \$3 million donated for Hurricane Ian relief, Gulf Coast Community Foundation has now awarded more than \$500 million in grants since its creation in 1995.

More notably, more than \$400 million of the total has been disbursed since 2010, when the foundation celebrated having made its first \$100 million in grants, according to a news release.

“Together with our donors, in 12 short years we have quintupled our impact,” President and CEO Mark Pritchett said in the release.

The foundation was created with \$85 million from the sale of Venice Hospital to the Sisters of Bon Secours. It now includes almost 1,000 private donor funds in addition to its original endowment, the release states.

“Our donor families are dedicated to making this world a better place than when they found it,” Pritchett said in the release. “Not only are our donors giving today, but they are setting up endowments at Gulf Coast that will support good causes and their favorite charities in perpetuity.”

According to the release, among the beneficiaries of foundation grants over the years have been:

- The Legacy Trail, for which it funded the initial surveys and engineering to help realize the best path forward and whose expansion it has supported through grants and advocacy.
- The city of Venice, where more than \$1.5 million has been granted to Venice Area Beautification Inc., including \$400,000 in grants to support the Venice Urban Forest.
- Students, who are the beneficiaries of a five-year, \$18-million collaboration investment among GCCF, the Charles & Margery Barancik Foundation, the school district other donors to establish the STEMsmart and 21st Century Schools initiatives in over 300 Sarasota middle school classrooms.
- Employees and employers, who benefit from an investment of more than \$1.7 million in the regional CareerEdge workforce development program.
- The more than 50 nonprofit organizations providing post-storm assistance, and the people who received it.
- The recipients of more than \$10 million in pursue higher education.
- Individuals and families helped by more than \$6.3 million invested to reduce homelessness.
- Arts and cultural organizations that have received nearly \$5 million in unrestricted arts appreciation grants.
- The community at large, thanks to a partnership with the Charles & Margery Barancik Foundation that provided financial assistance to 60 organizations and invested \$7 million for COVID-19 relief.

To learn more, visit [GulfCoastCF.org](https://www.gulfcoastcf.org).

