

Blue Zones

“Begin by answering this question in a single, memorable sentence: Why do you get up in the morning?”
 – Dan Buettner, “The Blue Zones: 9 Lessons for Living Longer From the People Who’ve Lived the Longest”

Look for the helpers



The Immokalee Foundation distributed 68 laptops to Immokalee Foundation students. SPECIAL TO THE FORT MYERS NEWS-PRESS

Sebastien Saitta Special to Naples Daily News
 USA TODAY NETWORK - Florida

Mr. Rogers said it best. “When I was a boy and I would see scary things in the news, my mother would say to me, ‘Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping.’ To this day, especially in times of disaster, I remember my mother’s words and I am always comforted by realizing that there are still so many helpers — so many caring people in this world.”

In times of crisis and uncertainty, it’s easy to get caught up in fear from watching the news or scrolling through social media. While staying informed is necessary during these times, for the sake of our emotional, mental and physical well-being, the need to take Mr. Rogers’ words into account and look for glimmers of kindness and good deeds is greater than ever.

Here are just a few of many Southwest Florida organizations and Blue Zones Project Southwest Florida partners who are stepping up and doing amazing things to help others:

Essential workers on the front lines: Whether it’s our healthcare workers, grocery stores, first responders, pharmacy staff, or other essential workers, these heroes deserve our recognition and deepest gratitude as they are working night and day to combat this pandemic.

Thank you for all that you do.

Benison Center in Immokalee: In a call to help with a shortage of supplies at our healthcare facilities, The Benison Center of Immokalee donated nearly 4,000 protective gowns and about 400 masks to NCH.

The Naples Players: The Naples Players made 300 face masks for nurses and doctors at NCH using costume scraps from previous productions.

They are also offering free digital online events for well-being that include “Improv for Anxiety” online classes for both adults and teens and yoga classes. Visit naples-players.org/off-stage/special-events/ for more information.

Brighter Bites: Brighter Bites, which distributes fresh produce to students and families through a network of schools, distributed 12 different fresh produce items in Blue Zones Project reusable bags to more than 500 families in Immokalee.

This was done in partnership with *Harry Chapin Food Bank*, *Southern Specialties*, *Freedom Fresh*, *B&W Quality Growers*, *Collier County Public Schools* and *Benison Center*.

Collier County Public Schools: Collier County Public Schools has been offering free “grab-and-go” style meals for all children age 18 and under at various locations during school closure.

Students are able to pick up two meals (breakfast and lunch OR lunch and next day’s breakfast). For more information and a list of pick up locations, visit <https://bit.ly/2QDFiXV>.

Guadalupe Center: The Guadalupe center provided hot meals to families whose children go to the Guadalupe center. The center also provided meals at different locations for families who are served by the Pathways Early Education Center of Immokalee

and the Redlands Christian Migrant Association.

The Immokalee Foundation: The Immokalee Foundation distributed 68 laptops to Immokalee Foundation students to enable them to continue their education from home.

Delasol Community: Delasol HOA has been making masks for local nursing homes and hospice centers. They are also partnering with local farmers to have them deliver fresh produce directly to people’s houses and are partnering with local restaurants to do family meal deliveries and provide food for people that are homebound.

Boys and Girls Club of Collier County: Boys & Girls Club of Collier County at the Bolch Campus in Immokalee has been distributing learning supplies and serving drive-thru style lunch to children under 18 or to parents of school aged children at home.

Max Flex Fitness: Exercise is a great way to maintain well-being and release tension and stress especially in times of crisis and uncertainty. Nino Maggadino at Max Flex Fitness has been offering free, at-home fitness instruction on Facebook through April including HIIT training classes, kids fitness, strength training, Strong by Zumba, Zumba, senior fitness, yoga, and spinning. Visit their Facebook page @fitnesscoachino for more information.

If you are looking for ways to help these partner organizations and others in our community, visit <http://bluezonesproject.hs-sites.com/southwestflorida/helping-hand-opportunities>. It’s indeed a beautiful day in the neighborhood.