

BLUE ZONES

“The way you think, the way you behave, the way you eat, can influence your life by 30 to 50 years” ~ Deepak Chopra

Blue Zones Project organizations are a force multiplier for well-being



Cohesive teamwork helps increase the probability of success in these challenging times. SUBMITTED

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In military science, a force multiplier refers to a factor or a combination of factors that gives personnel or weapons the ability to accomplish greater feats than without it.

Whether it's cohesive teamwork, increasing numbers of troops, or use of better equipment on the battlefield, these factors have helped military commanders increase the probability of success.

Unfortunately, these days we find ourselves fighting our own battle on two fronts when it comes to well-being: the fast pandemic of COVID-19 and the slow pandemic of obesity and chronic disease. It is important now more than ever to gather the troops for well-being and use the force multiplier effect.

Fortunately, Blue Zones Project partners and organizations have been teaming up to accomplish even more for our community.

David Longfield Smith, retail food lead, and Joe Stoner, schools and youth coordinator at Blue Zones Project, recently worked with Bonita Charter School, Jason's Deli, and Naples Flatbread to combine efforts in making well-being a greater success.

A Blue Zones Project Approved Worksite and School, Bonita Springs Charter has been implementing well-being best practices that include greater physical activity and healthier eating for more than 1,300 students in K-8, and 126 faculty and

staff. They recently took it a step further to connect with Blue Zones Project Restaurants, Jason's Deli and Naples Flatbread Kitchen & Bar to supply and deliver meals for staff on a weekly basis that include their healthy and delicious Blue Zones inspired menu items.

Whether it's a Zucchini Grillini or Spinach & Veggie sandwich from Jason's Deli, or a Hummus Wrap or Spicy Quinoa Taco from Naples Flatbread Kitchen & Bar, school staff has plenty of healthy options to choose from.

"This not only further encourages healthier eating among staff at Bonita Charter School, it also brings additional business to restaurants already making a positive impact on community well-being," Longfield Smith said.

"It's all about making healthy choices easier, and combining efforts makes the effect on well-being more profound."

The force multiplier effect has also been shown with the combined well-being efforts of Emmanuel Communities Inc., and Meals of Hope, both Blue Zones Project Non-Profit Organizations. Each Wednesday from 3-5 p.m. at Emmanuel Community Park, Meals of Hope works with Emmanuel's volunteers to distribute fresh produce items, frozen meats, and dairy to feed those in need.

"The opportunity for Emmanuel Communities to partner with Meals of Hope in the delivery of healthy meals is very exciting to us, especially as we are both Blue Zones Project nonprofits," said Howard Isaacson, CEO at Emmanuel Communities Inc.

"We are committed to do all

we can to serve the community and to help our neighbors thrive, and helping to distribute food to the hungry is just one of the many ways we are engaged to serve others."

Pastor Will Kittinger of Emmanuel Lutheran Church added that "Emmanuel has partnered with Meals of Hope to not just meet the need to address hunger in our area, but to offer many other healthy options for life that reflect who we are."

The impact of like-minded organizations working together has helped make their efforts possible with the huge increase of families served since the beginning of the pandemic according to Meals of Hope President and CEO Steve Popper.

"We cannot serve 3,000 families each week without the wonderful partnerships of various organizations like Emmanuel Communities," he said.

For more information or to volunteer with Emmanuel Communities and Meals of Hope for their distribution, visit Naples-emmanuel.org/volunteer. You can also help support and find a full list of food pantry locations by visiting MealsofHope.org.

"Alone we can do so little. Together we can do so much." ~ Helen Keller

*Brought to Southwest Florida by NCH Healthcare System, in collaboration with Sharecare, Inc. and Blue Zones, LLC, Blue Zones Project is a vital part of Southwest Florida's well-being improvement initiative that encourages changes in the community that lead to healthier options. For more information about Blue Zones Project Southwest Florida, visit [\[ida.bluezonesproject.com\]\(http://ida.bluezonesproject.com\).](http://southwestflor-</i></p>
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Online Power Nine activity of the week

Blue Zones Project Southwest Florida wants to know how you are living the Power 9, a set of shared principles followed by the longest-lived people.

Each week, we will have a specific Power 9 activity for you to try and share with us.

This week's Power 9 activity is Right Tribe.

The world's longest-lived people chose—or were born into—social circles that supported healthy behaviors, Okinawans created "moais" — groups of five friends that committed to each other for life. Research from the Framingham Studies shows that smoking, obesity, happiness, and even loneliness are contagious. So the social networks of long-lived people have favorably shaped their health behavior.

Tell us about your right tribe. How has teaming up with them made an even bigger impact in your own life, your family, or community. Have you engaged in volunteer opportunities together or supported a greater cause?

Share your story with us by commenting or by tagging us on Facebook @Blue Zones Project — Southwest Florida, or you can email us at bluezonesprojectswfl@sharecare.com to be entered in our prize drawing for a gift card from one of our Blue Zones Project Approved Restaurants.

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