



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**DOWNLOAD LINK: [PHOTOS, LOGO](#) (Photo Credit: Tony Zollo)**

**[VIDEO: INTERVIEWS, B-ROLL](#)**

## **Guadalupe Center announces campaign to expand ‘life-changing’ programs for Immokalee students**

NAPLES, Fla. (Feb. 24, 2020) – Guadalupe Center has announced a capital and operational campaign to provide more students in Immokalee with opportunities to use education as a springboard to a brighter future.

“Guadalupe Center: 2020 & Beyond” is raising money to construct new educational centers, hire additional staff and expand academic programs. The announcement was made during a ribbon-cutting ceremony on Feb. 6 at the Monaghan Family Early Childhood Education Campus, which will open later this spring and serve an additional 64 students ages 6 weeks to 3 years old in Guadalupe Center’s nationally accredited Early Childhood Education Program.

As the Monaghan campus prepares to open, Guadalupe Center also announced a generous \$5 million matching gift from Rose-Marie and Eijk van Otterloo to support “2020 & Beyond” as well as a donation of 9.5 acres from Barron Collier Companies that will serve as the future home of the van Otterloo Family Campus for Learning. That facility, to be constructed with funds raised during the campaign, will accommodate another 154 early learning students when it opens in 2021, as well as students in Guadalupe Center’s college-preparatory Tutor Corps Program that will be based at Brynne & Bob Coletti Hall.

Once complete, the two new centers will grow Guadalupe Center’s Early Childhood Education Program from 307 children to 525 students. Additionally, the campaign will allow the After-school Tutoring & Summer Enrichment Program and the Tutor Corps Program to expand. Combined, enrollment in the three programs will rise from about 1,300 students to more than 1,800.

“This campaign isn’t just about hitting a fundraising target or constructing new buildings,” said Dawn Montecalvo, president of Guadalupe Center. “It’s about creating more possibilities for the students of

Immokalee and helping future generations of students overcome the risks associated with living in an impoverished community like Immokalee.”

Guadalupe Center’s “2020 & Beyond” is dedicated to partnering with philanthropic-minded individuals and organizations that share a passion for enhancing educational opportunities as a means of overcoming poverty. Among the first to step forward were Helene and Rich Monaghan, who provided the leadership gift to begin this new chapter with the opening of the Monaghan Family Early Childhood Campus.

“You don’t do something like this unless you have total confidence in the organization you’re working with, and we have that with Guadalupe Center,” Rich Monaghan said.

The “2020 & Beyond” campaign focuses on early childhood education so that students can develop a strong social, emotional and academic foundation before entering kindergarten. The campaign also aims to fund operating expenses for the new centers’ first year as well as establish an endowment fund.

In Immokalee, 43.4% of residents live in poverty and only 39.3% of adults have high school diplomas. Guadalupe Center’s mission is to break the cycle of poverty through education for the children of Immokalee, and research studies point to a high-quality early childhood education as a key factor.

“This is a monumental day for the families of Immokalee,” said Campaign Chairwoman Linda Yost. “Parents understand that a strong early childhood education helps build a foundation for future success, but Immokalee lacks an adequate number of affordable, high-quality programs. These new campuses will help satisfy some of that demand and prepare children for success in elementary school and beyond.”

Of the estimated 5,000 Collier County children under the age of 5 who live in poverty, just 1,000 are enrolled in a high-quality pre-school program. Guadalupe Center’s Early Childhood Education Program operates at capacity and has a waiting list of more than 500 students.

To contribute to Guadalupe Center’s “2020 & Beyond” campaign, please visit [GuadalupeCenter.org/how-to-give](https://GuadalupeCenter.org/how-to-give) or call 239-657-7711.

### **About Guadalupe Center**

[Guadalupe Center](https://GuadalupeCenter.org) is a purpose-driven, nonprofit organization with proven results in creating endless possibilities for the students of Immokalee through education and fostering personal and academic success that leads to economic independence. With a focus on breaking the cycle of poverty through education,

Guadalupe Center is proud of the children's accomplishments: 95% meet or exceed kindergarten readiness measures, 100% of Tutor Corps high school seniors graduate high school and are accepted into college, and more than 94% graduate with a post-secondary degree.

- END -

**Media Contacts:**

Holly Boldrin, APR, CPRC, Priority Marketing, [Holly@PriorityMarketing.com](mailto:Holly@PriorityMarketing.com), 239-267-2638 or 239-887-9335 (cell)

Dave Breitenstein, Priority Marketing, [Dave@PriorityMarketing.com](mailto:Dave@PriorityMarketing.com), 239-267-2638 or 239-317-5424 (cell)