

VASARI CARES GIVES \$73,000 TO EIGHT CHARITIES



LACES OF LOVE received \$20,000 from Vasari Cares. Founded in 2005, Laces of Love has provided new sneakers for nearly 300,000 children in Lee and Collier Counties. The recipients, in grades Pre-K to 12, all qualify for free or reduced-price lunches at their schools, and, in many cases, this is the first pair of new shoes the child has ever worn. Dedicated volunteers collect, tag and distribute the shoes, partnering with 125 area public schools as well as with several social service agencies. This grant will provide approximately 400 new pairs of sneakers. With last year's grant, Vasari Cares has given them \$30,000.



\$15,000 was awarded to **WARRIOR HOMES OF COLLIER**. Warrior Homes focuses efforts and resources on veterans who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. Since 2020, Warrior Homes has opened six homes to veterans and their families.

Depending upon their individual needs, the following services are offered: Transitional housing for those with substance abuse and/or mental health concerns. Long-term housing, primarily for seniors, who pay rent depending upon their income. "Rapid" housing for veterans who temporarily need a place to stay while transitioning between housing situations. Emergency assistance with healthcare and daily living expenses, so veterans can continue to pay their rent, which in turn helps them maintain their health and safety. Case managers who understand the special needs of veterans. Scholarships for veterans or their family members to help them prepare for an independent future. This brings the total donations to them by Vasari Cares to \$27,000.



NEW HORIZONS was given \$12,000. With another grant in 2024, this organization has received a total of \$24,000 from Vasari Cares.

Started in 2002, New Horizons provides after school and summer programming at 10 club sites in Lee and Collier Counties. They provide tutoring and mentoring along with life lessons and encouragement to help children achieve success. Volunteer tutors/mentors, including a number of Vasari Members, contributed thousands of hours, working directly with nearly 600 K-12 economically disadvantaged children.

New Horizons wants to see all students grow into successful members of our community and graduate from high school with a plan for the future. Summer camps for K-5 children focus on reading to mitigate the “summer regression” that many children experience when school is not in session. Camps for 6-12th graders enhance leadership skills. 11-12th graders also receive personalized help applying to and preparing for college and vocational-technical programs. In the last two reported years, 100% of the seniors enrolled in New Horizons graduated from high school.

If you would like to explore volunteering opportunities, go to <https://newhorizonsofswfl.org/become-a-volunteer/>.



\$12,000 has been awarded to the **FLORIDA LIONS EYE CLINIC IN BONITA SPRINGS**. This organization provides a wide range of quality eye care services and medical treatments free of charge to qualified patients in underserved areas. This grant will help pay for a part-time ophthalmologist and eye surgeries. They have received several grants from Vasari Cares starting in 2021. This grant brings total donations to \$24,450.




A grant of \$5,000 was awarded to the [HARRY CHAPIN FOOD BANK](#). Harry Chapin Food Bank feeds a quarter of a million people each month in their five-county footprint. They serve Charlotte, Collier, Glades, Hendry and Lee counties. In addition, Vasari Members have contributed 240 hours of volunteer time since April 2024. With grants in 2019 and 2020, a total of \$27,000 has been given to this organization.



[CAFÉ OF LIFE](#), a new recipient, received \$5,000. This organization operates in our backyard in Bonita Springs. The Café's mission is more than meeting basic needs. Their goal is to enrich lives and provide empowerment. Everyone deserves the opportunity to build a better life. They strive to empower the community's poor to lift themselves out of poverty, and not just poverty of money. They address the poverty of self-esteem, hope, opportunity, and freedom.



The **MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA**, another new recipient, received \$3,000. They advocate for retirement benefits including medical insurance; foster fraternal relations among retired, active and former members of the uniformed services and their National Guard or Reserve components; protect the rights and interests of active duty, retired, Reserve and National Guard personnel of the uniformed services and their dependents and survivors; foster fraternal relations with the public; provide useful services for members and their dependents and survivors.

	<p>\$1,000 was given to TRI-COUNTY CHALLENGER BASEBALL, yet another new recipient. The Challenger Division of Little League® Baseball was founded in 1989 and is Little League’s adaptive baseball program for individuals with physical and mental handicaps, ages four through adult. Tri-County Challenger Baseball began in 2003. Each year they have around 150 kids from Lee, Collier, and Hendry Counties playing on Saturday mornings from January through April. Challenger Little League® provides the opportunity for disabled girls and boys to participate in the organized game of baseball. These children get to do something that “non-disabled kids” take for granted ... being part of a social event in an accepting place.</p>
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