

Press Release

Local Rotary Clubs Provide Grants to Three Community Projects

The Rotary Clubs of Gainesville Foundation will sponsor the expansion of the Emergency Food Pantry for the Gainesville Catholic Charities office, replace the existing playground with an exciting new structure for the Girls Place, Inc. and support the installation of a 50-foot flagpole and large United States of America flag at the Veterans Memorial Park in conjunction with the Alachua County Veteran's Memorial Committee.

Gainesville, FL, October 23, 2024: The Rotary Clubs of Gainesville Foundation Inc., at its October 17, 2024 Board of Directors meeting, reviewed 25 community grant applications requesting funds from the 2025 Rotary Wild Game Feast. The Board is proud to announce that the recipients of the 2025 Rotary Wild Game Feast grant will be three worthy local organizations: **Catholic Charities Bureau Inc. – Gainesville Regional Office, Girls Place, Inc., and Alachua County Veteran's Memorial Committee.** The 2025 Rotary Wild Game Feast will be held March 6, 2025.

"2025 marks our 40th year of this event and we are excited to be able to make a difference in three unique community areas of need through the 2025 Rotary Wild Game Feast. We are committing more than \$100,000 to these projects, continuing our legacy of supporting our local non-profit organizations to do good in the community. Selecting the recipients from 25 worthy grant applications was not an easy task, however our board felt Catholic Charities, Girls Place, and the Alachua County Veteran's Memorial Committee were organizations who impact our community in three distinct ways, and we liked the diversity of the projects." – Matthew Braddy, Feast Master 2025.

The Gainesville Regional Office of Catholic Charities maintains an Emergency Food Pantry, providing essential shelf-stable food to those facing food insecurities. Generous donations of food often necessitate refrigeration or freezer storage. Denise Fanning, Regional Director of Catholic Charities is thrilled to be part of the 2025 Rotary Wild Game Feast recipients and says, "the expansion of our infrastructure enhances the pantry's ability to assist a larger segment of the community in need, we can continue to be a reliable resource for individuals and families during times of hardship".

Benefiting over 350 girls a year, Girls Place is looking to renovate their playground to serve many more girls in the future with structures to encourage free play in the outdoors. Executive Director, Christi Arrington, said upon the news of the 2025 Rotary Wild Game Feast grant "without this generosity, our girls would have to wait to have a new playground, now we will have one in time for summer in 2025, thank you Rotary". Girls Place offers year-round programming for girls ages 5-14 in our community, empowering them to grow courageous, strong, and self-sufficient. This new play area will certainly support those goals.

The third project to be funded by the 2025 Rotary Wild Game Feast will be the installation of a 50-foot flagpole, with an appropriate large United States of America flag. Lieutenant Colonel Jason Robinson, current chair of the Alachua County Veteran's Memorial Committee, said of this project, "replacing the existing small flagpole will mean the flag will be visible from all parts of the Veteran's Memorial Park and bring joy to the hearts of veterans and their families when they visit the site". The Alachua County Veteran's Memorial Committee is committed to providing a Veteran's Memorial in honor of Alachua County Citizens who have died in service to the United States of America.

For more information on this and other projects funded by The Rotary Clubs of Gainesville Foundation, contact Rotarian Wesley Eubank, info@rotarygainesville.org.

ABOUT THE ROTARY CLUBS OF GAINESVILLE FOUNDATION

The Rotary Clubs of Gainesville Foundation (a registered 501(c)(3) charity) comprises of representatives from the four Rotary Clubs in Gainesville, Florida: the Rotary Club of Gainesville, the Rotary Club of Downtown Gainesville, the Rotary Club of Greater Gainesville, and the Rotary Club of Gainesville Sunrise. The Foundation formed in 1987 to manage the funds generated through the annual funding raising events held at Hatchet Creek (4841 NE 118th Drive, Gainesville, FL 32641-2732) as well as the funds generated through the Foundation Fryers catering organization. The first Rotary Project funded by the monies raised was the L.H Rogers Scholarship House, located at 2120 SW 16th Street, Gainesville, Florida 32601 and has to date raised over \$3.35 million for local Rotary projects, charities, and student scholarships.