



COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
OF COLLIER COUNTY
FOR GOOD. FOREVER.

Media Contact:
Cindi Withorn
239.649.5000 office | 239.370.2264 cell
cwithorn@cfcollier.org | www.cfcollier.org

For Immediate Release

Community Foundation of Collier County provides \$67,000 grant for trees for Minto U.S. Open Pickleball Championship at East Naples Community Park

Naples, FL (April 12, 2021) – The Community Foundation of Collier County (CFCC) has provided a \$67,930 grant that resulted in planting trees in partnership with Naples Botanical Garden to create a "Tropical Florida" experience at East Naples Park in advance of the 2021 Minto U.S. Open Pickleball Championship starting this Saturday, April 17.

The Minto U.S. Open Pickleball Championships have been held at Collier County's East Naples Community Park since 2016, attracting thousands of visitors and earning significant media coverage, including broadcast by CBS Sports Network. This year's event anticipates 2200 players and over 5000 spectators over the 7-day event scheduled for April 17-24.

The 7-12 foot Cocothrinax and Thrinax fan palms have created a tropical feel and sense of place for visitors and local citizens. They will also visually buffer parking areas and court fencing for the East Naples Community Park. Flowering trees planted on the property's edge add colorful tropical interest and do not interfere with the courts. This park located adjacent to Avalon School is an important recreational asset for East Naples residents and serves many low-income families living nearby.

This grant is part of a \$500,000 goal to plant trees in Collier County as part of CFCC's [Your passion. Your Collier Campaign](#) to address the challenges facing our community. Our local wildlife and delicate ecosystems are under threat from changing climate patterns and increasing numbers of natural disasters devastate beaches and destroy trees. Planting native trees in our community will help preserve the beauty of Collier County, improve air quality, provide shade, and support wildlife.

"Trees are a No. 1 issue in Florida," said CFCC President & CEO Eileen Connolly-Keesler. "People here during Hurricane Irma in 2017 saw how many we lost and how it continues to impact our environment. We will continue these tree projects in partnership with Naples Botanical Garden to spread throughout Collier and its municipalities."

Naples Botanical Garden President & CEO Donna McGinnis said, "Naples Botanical Garden is proud to be part of this project by the Community Foundation. These trees, specifically selected as ideal for their environment by our skilled horticulturists, will add to the beauty and biological diversity of Collier County for years to come."

All photos courtesy of Naples Botanical Garden available at:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/z4sv3iuiojb1fuc/AACTIGb4XnNA3OpLfd4xMqNua?dl=0>

About the Community Foundation of Collier County

The Community Foundation of Collier County, now in its 35th year, is a tax-exempt, public, charitable organization established in 1985 to increase and focus on local private philanthropy. Today, the Community Foundation of Collier County manages more than 750 funds, collaborates with hundreds of nonprofits, holds over \$260 million in assets and has distributed over \$200 million in grants to nonprofit organizations and community programs. The Community Foundation of Collier County is one of Florida's fastest-growing community foundations. For good. Forever. Learn more at cfcollier.org or call 239-649-5000.

About Naples Botanical Garden

Naples Botanical Garden is a 170-acre, world-class garden paradise that features plants from around the world. The Garden provides arts, culture, youth and adult education, conservation, wellness, and volunteer programs that contribute to the quality of life in Southwest Florida onsite and online at naplesgarden.org. The Garden's living collections are always growing and evolving, leaving our audiences with a deeper engagement with our curated gardens and Preserve. Hours of operation are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. with timed tickets required. Timed-entry tickets must be purchased in advance at naplesgarden.org. Regular admission is \$20 for adults, \$10 for children (4–14); Members and children 3 and under get in free.