Thinking About

The words that have been circling around my mind the past few days include involvement, responsibility, presence, and community. There is no doubt our region values philanthropy. The Community Foundation of Sarasota County recently led the Giving Challenge, a one-day event inspiring generosity in our region.

In the 24 hours between noon on Day 1 and noon on Day 2, over $20,000 was raised to make Delivering Dreams a reality for our region. Through a generous spirit, The Patterson Foundation—the one day event raised more than $1.7 million. As I walked the halls, I saw the countless streets lined with Community Foundation of Sarasota County’s giving lounge, and amidst the hours of posts and tweets on social media, I thought of people making a difference. It felt lucky to be in a community as generous as the Suncoast Region.

The generosity in our community is something to be proud of. As we continue to see our community offer for Suncoast Campaign for Grade-Level Reading, and on our social and media platforms connected to this work, I am continuously impressed by the passion, resilience, involvement, and responsibility demonstrated by our region. Faith-based organizations, non-profits, community institutions, cultural institutions, school systems, arts foundations, businesses, citizens, and the media are all coming together to support our common goal, to ensure reading proficiency by the end of third grade for the students in our region.

It takes the whole community to provide the best environment for nurturing each individual. The Suncoast Campaign for Grade-Level Reading is committed to increasing school readiness, increasing school attendance, increasing summer learning opportunities, strengthening the bond of the children in our region, and encouraging broad community engagement. It will take the whole community standing together to create an encouraging atmosphere and maintain outstanding learning opportunities for all our children.

Moving the Needle

In honor of Attendance Awareness Month in September, the Suncoast Campaign for Grade-Level Reading is inviting an inaugural Attendance Awareness Poster Contest to promote good attendance habits, and help students and parents understand the going to school every day.

Children attending school in Manatee and Sarasota counties can participate by designing creative posters that illustrate the theme “Every Day Counts.” After selecting the best images provided by their teachers or other school staff, parents of students in our two counties should submit their posters online or in print to their schools. The contest is free to participate.

All posters should be submitted by 4:00 p.m. EDT on Wednesday, Sept. 30. All images will be posted on a website.

Once the website is set up, a 3-minute video featuring kids educating kids on the topic will be posted. This is an opportunity to widen the scope.

Attendance Facts:

• In the Manatee/Sarasota region, nearly 10,000 students are chronically absent.

• In some communities, chronic absence affects 1 in 10 children.

• Nationally, as many as 17 million students miss 50 percent or more of the school year (156 days), which costs students $15 billion in teacher time.

Learning & Sharing

Attention Awareness/Posters

As part of our attention awareness movement led by the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading partner Attendance Awareness, the Suncoast Campaign for Grade-Level Reading (CGLR) is excited to announce a contest that will reach out to both school districts and at-risk zones within Manatee and Sarasota counties and beyond for support. Understanding the importance of school attendance, all agreed, should be the focus of our collaboration. In partnership, Suncoast Campaigns for Grades Awareness Month.

We are proud to be a part of the region that sets an example for the rest of the nation. As we celebrate the success of our work, we are committed to taking action that will enable us to achieve our goals.

We thank the following governors for their continued support:

City of Bradenton
City of Manatee
City of Venice
City of Sarasota
City of North Port
City of Palmetto
City of Holmes Beach
City of Longboat Key

School Board of Manatee County
School Board of Sarasota County

City of South Venice
City of North Venice
City of Venice
City of Sarasota
City of Palmetto
City of North Port
City of Longboat Key
City of Holmes Beach
City of Bradenton

School Board of Manatee County
School Board of Sarasota County

City of Venice

Once you have your own, please post it on social media.

A Common Agenda to Change the Game

In a recent blog, Broncos head coach Vic Fangio, former Broncos head coach, President of the United Way of Manatee County, urges you, the Broncos community, to make a commitment to take action to increase that very vital number by making the best of the partnership between Manatee and Sarasota counties to promote good grades in the end of First grade.

Click here to read the full blog and see what action steps you can take today.

Founding Network Winners

Click here to read more.

Our thanks to you, the Foundation. Can I talk to you about this win?