




**To:** Members, Board of Directors  
**From:**  Eric Williams, Ed.D., CEO & President  
**Date:** September 17, 2025  
**Subject:** Confidential Board Update

### Notes

Great news! Nancy Mireles, our new Chief Development Officer, is scheduled to start on October 13, 2025. Nancy, a Certified Nonprofit Professional (CNP), is a mission-driven nonprofit executive with two decades of leadership experience in development, fundraising, and community engagement. She currently serves as Senior Director of Development at United Cerebral Palsy (UCP) of Central Florida, which operates inclusive charter schools and provides therapy and support services to children and young adults with special needs. She oversees \$2 million in annual fundraising and supports a \$3–5 million capital campaign. Previously, she spent fifteen years with the Boy Scouts of America in Central Florida, advancing into senior development leadership and directing multi-county fundraising, endowment growth, and major gift strategies.

During her interviews, Nancy demonstrated a thorough understanding of development work and both development team members and the program directors spoke with enthusiasm about her strong interpersonal skills, leadership approach, and emphasis on collaboration among development team members and program team members. Reference feedback describes her as an inspiring and strategic leader who builds strong donor and staff relationships, empowers her teams, and consistently delivers successful fundraising outcomes. Community partners highlight her authenticity, trustworthiness, and skill in turning volunteers into long-term donors, while former supervisors affirm that she is highly organized, collaborative, and carries a motivating presence, someone they “would hire again in a minute.” Her longevity with organizations (15 years with Boy Scouts of America and 5 years with United Cerebral Palsy) reflects her commitment and loyalty.

Nancy is an accomplished mid-career executive with a strong record of fundraising and leadership. She brings a strong record of cultivating donors, leading collaborative teams, and a clear trajectory of continued professional growth.

### Emails and Other Documents

1. *Development Team Board Update*; email from Sydney Fahrenbruch; September 2, 2025; pps.3-4
2. *Board Update: Student Programs*; email from Kristin Carolan; August 28, 2025; p.5

3. *Board Update – Educator Programs*; email from Marilyn Daniels; August 18, 2025; p.7

### Communication

1. 9/3 – Naples Daily News – Golden Apple Full Page Ad; p.8
2. 9/10 – Naples Daily News – Golden Apple Half Page Ad; p.9

### Key Dates

1. Board of Directors Meeting – September 23, 2025, 3:30 p.m.
2. Teachers of Distinction Kickoff Reception – October 20, 2025, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.;  
The Naples Grande
3. Finance Committee Meeting – November 5, 2025, 2 p.m.
4. Executive Committee Meeting – November 11, 2025; 3:30 p.m.
5. Board of Directors Meeting – November 18, 2025, 3:30 p.m.
6. Night for Champions Gala – February 21, 2026, 6 p.m. to 11 p.m.; The Ritz-Carlton, Naples  
Luminary Circle Luncheon – Thursday, November 20th, 2025, 11am; Ritz-Carlton Beach Resort
7. Night for Champions Gala – February 21, 2026, 6 p.m. to 11 p.m.; The Ritz-Carlton, Naples
8. Golden Apple Celebration of Teachers – April 17, 2026; the Hyatt Regency, Coconut Point

## Eric Williams

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**From:** Rebekah Telfer  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 16, 2025 3:38 PM  
**To:** Eric Williams  
**Subject:** Development Team Update

Below are the Development Team's updates from our last report.

### Events (Wyatt Blatt, Director of Special Events)

#### Night for Champions Gala

- Sponsorship Updates
  - Suncoast Credit Union will be returning as a \$25,000 Graduate Sponsor
  - The Save The Date list and designs have been sent to the printer to be mailed out

#### Golden Apple Celebration of Teachers

- The official date for the dinner will be Friday, April 17th, 2026, at the Hyatt Regency at Coconut Point Resort and Spa

#### Luminary Circle Luncheon

- Mailing
  - The Invitation list and designs have been sent to the printer and will be delivered to the CFL offices where Wyatt will mail them out.

### Digital Fundraising and Marketing/Communication (Sydney Fahrenbruch, Director of Digital Fundraising & Operations)

- Our social media, email, and print communication the last few weeks have focused heavily on promoting Golden Apple Community Nominations. As of the nomination closing date (9/15/2025) we received over 4,700 submissions. We attained over 13,000 active users on the nomination page on the website.
- We have also been heavily promoting our community bookfair event with Barnes & Noble, which took place on Friday September 12th. We had representatives from the Development team at a table in the store from 2-5pm, along with volunteers from the Alumni Council, and Student Programs staff to share information. A portion of sales from the store will go to us, as well as any online sales that use our unique promo code. We should hear the amount raised soon.

### Annual Giving and Grants (Rebekah Telfer)

- Grants Awarded for FY26
  - Suncoast Credit Union Foundation – awarded \$220,000 to support:
    - \$45,000 Golden Apple Event Sponsorship
    - \$30,000 Golden Apple Program Support
    - \$25,000 Night for Champions Event Sponsorship
    - \$80,000 Take Stock in Children Program Support
    - \$5,000 Take Stock in Children Induction Event Sponsorship
    - \$35,000 Classroom Grants Program Support
- Grants Submitted for FY26
  - Arthrex, Inc. – submitted \$100,000 request to support Student Programs
- September Grants in Progress
  - Regions Bank
  - Jingled Elves
  - BMO
  - Cornelia T. Bailey
- Impact Report 2025

- First full draft proof was sent by Elephant Creative on 9/15, this will be reviewed internally for edits and changes
- I'm writing the solicitation letter that will be included with all Impact Reports that are mailed to donors
- Endowment Reports 2025
  - I'm working with Danielle to send out FY25 reports to each of our endowment fund holders

### **Major Gifts (Danielle Viens-Payne)**

- Worked with Wyatt to send out the Luminary Circle Luncheon invites with handwritten notes to all
- Working with Mary to implement new wealth screening/donor prospect software
- Next Alumni Council meeting October 16
- Alumni Council working on planning a December alumni social
- Three alumni volunteered at the Barnes & Noble community event 9/12
- Exploring potential hosts for 2-3 parlor meetings in the Spring
- Continuously personalizing major gift stewardship plans for each donor
- Mid-point check-ins six months post-gift, offering donors tailored updates on student and educator success
- Providing annual reports on endowment funds to appropriate donors
- Cultivating prospective end of year gifts (Q1 and Q2) and setting up donor calls (individuals/family foundations, corporate)
- Completed written overall major gift stewardship plan for CFL
- Developed operational budget for development team (minus events)

### **Development Operations (Mary Polli)**

- Pulled mailing lists for the Impact Report mailing

### **Rebekah Telfer**

*Director of Annual Giving*

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Office: (239) 643.4755

3606 Enterprise Avenue, Suite 150 Naples, Florida 34104



**To serve as a catalyst for educational success by investing in Collier's students and educators.**

## Eric Williams

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**From:** Kristin Carolan  
**Sent:** Monday, September 15, 2025 9:11 AM  
**To:** Eric Williams  
**Subject:** Board Update: Student Programs

The first week of September kicked off with our Juniors here for lab. The topic was “How to Have a Successful Year.” We also held the first Zoom Mentor Learning Session of the school year. We had 25 in attendance and recorded the session to email out to all the mentors afterwards. We discussed general program rules for students and mentors, while also talking through different scenarios and how a mentor should handle these types of situations. The next Zoom session will be on October 23rd and Kimberly Dickerson from Collier County Schools will be answering common questions Guidance Counselors hear. This is the first time we have had Collier County Schools partner with us for a Mentor Learning Session. We are excited to have this collaboration. September 8th was the first Career Explorations of the year. The careers were Business, Finance, and Veterinary. This was an optional event for students in all grades. On September 9th and 10th Florida Gulf Coast University and Florida Southwestern State College came in to work with our Seniors on completing their applications. Both schools waived their application fees and FSW gave out instant decisions. 82% of our students now have these applications done.

On the 9th, Tracy Jones went out to Everglades School to discuss the 8th grade Take Stock in Children application and conducted some of her one on ones for students there since we know transportation can be an issue for those students and families. Yuliana Lara spent the day at Cypress Palm Middle School sharing about the 8th grade Take Stock application to staff, students, and families. She is currently offering work sessions to help any family that needs assistance in completing the application. Seven families attended on September 11th.

The next two weeks we have 9th and 10th graders attending workshops here at Champions. College Night is the 15th at Golden Gate High School; we will be having a table to discuss our programs, and we have been encouraging all our students to attend.

### **Kristin Carolan**

Sr. Director of Student Programs  
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Naples, FL 34104

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## Eric Williams

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**From:** Marilyn Daniels  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 17, 2025 8:19 AM  
**To:** Eric Williams  
**Subject:** Educator Board Updates

### CFL Educator Programs Board Update 9.15.25

#### **Classroom Grants Cycle Overview (2025-2026)**

Classroom Grant requests have officially closed! We are working on grant reports and preparing for the selection committee to score. We held two virtual training sessions for committee members, recorded a tutorial to share, and shared resources. Both sessions had high attendance, and we have doubled our committee size this year! Huge thanks to Nicole Luque, she has been vital in communicating and training volunteers. We have also confirmed our Prize Patrol Delivery date with CCPS, more to come!

#### **Golden Apple Teacher Recognition Program (2025-2026)**

*Thank-A-Teacher* nominations are due this week and we have over 4,000 digital submissions! Thank you to Mary Polli and Natalia Harding for their tremendous help entering the cards we've received into our digital form!! In our collaboration with CCPS, Eric and Marilyn have updated the Golden Apple Program Overview and the Teacher of Distinction application. Golden Apple will continue the focus on highlighting educator's best practices, with a goal of determining one Teacher of Distinction from each school.

Award Components for Teachers of Distinction and Golden Apple:

- \$500 honorarium in the year in which named a Teacher of Distinction
- Each Golden Apple recipient will receive:
  - \$5,000 honorarium in the year in which they are named a GA recipient. This is in addition to the TOD honorarium.
  - Eligible to receive a \$500 honorarium in each of three consecutive years, starting in the year immediately after they are recognized as a Golden Apple recipient.
  - To earn this honorarium, the Golden Apple recipient must participate in at least three Champions For Learning events , i.e. a classroom observation (each lesson counts as one of the events); a parlor event (a development event held in a donor's home for other donors or prospective donors-each parlor even counts as one of the events); Night For Champions.

**We continue to collaborate with our CFL staff and CCPS on next steps:**

- Thank-A-Teacher nomination results → communication with principals
- FPL STEM Grant – providing PL to new teachers in science K-8, planning with Becky Tefler and K-12 science team at CCPS

We appreciate our stakeholders' continued support of Educator Programs!



## Thank A Teacher!

### Nominate a Collier County Educator for the 2025-2026 Golden Apple Award



The **Golden Apple Program** honors educators for the tremendous impact they are making for our students and the teaching profession.

The Education Foundation of Collier County - Champions For Learning awards a Golden Apple award to Collier County educators who are **nominated and selected by the community**.

Any parent, student, colleague, or community member can nominate a Collier County educator for the **36th annual Golden Apple Award**. Take this opportunity to **thank a teacher** who is making a difference in the community!



#### How to Nominate:

Visit [www.championsforlearning.org/nominate](http://www.championsforlearning.org/nominate) or scan the QR code to submit your nomination.

Prefer to Submit by Hand?

You may return a printed nomination form to  
Your Child's School or Champions For Learning's office:  
3606 Enterprise Ave, Suite 150 Naples, FL 34104



**Nominations are Due by September 15, 2025**

Questions? Contact Champions For Learning

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