



the **immokalee**  
foundation

education. empowerment. hope.

# ANNUAL REPORT

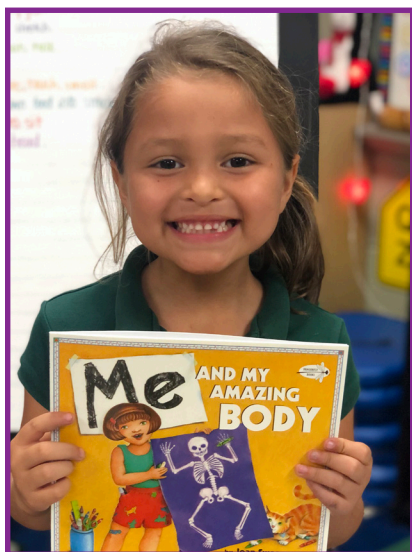
2018-2019





# Building Pathways to **Success** for the Children of Immokalee Since **1991**

## **1,433** Children served in **2018-2019**



### **IMMOKALEE READERS**

Program designed to build literacy skills for elementary age children who are reading below grade level by providing high school age tutors, supervised by professional teachers, to help enhance reading skills and build lasting friendships.

**119** Tutors

**844** Readers K-5

### **MIDDLE SCHOOL ACADEMY**

Students in the Middle School Academy program stay after school three times a week for career exploration, as well as additional reading, writing and math instruction.

**87** Students



PROGRAMS BASED ON

# Academics, Social Skills, Character



## TAKE STOCK IN CHILDREN

The Immokalee Foundation has been a Take Stock in Children program partner since 2001. Established in 1995 as a nonprofit organization, Take Stock in Children provides unique educational opportunities for deserving low-income students, many from minority families, to break the cycle of poverty through education.

**165** Students

## CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Career Development empowers students to imagine a different future for themselves — and to make the right decisions to achieve their dreams through career planning, advocacy and mentoring.

**98** Students

## POST-SECONDARY & CAREER SUCCESS

Post-Secondary & Career Success program helps students make the transition from high school to college and beyond. Readiness initiatives ensure high school graduates have the knowledge and skills needed to qualify for and succeed in their quests for education and training leading to a professional career.

**239** Students



# About The Immokalee Foundation

Since 1991, The Immokalee Foundation has been committed to improving the future of the children of Immokalee. The Immokalee Foundation was originally formed to raise awareness about the challenges the agricultural town of Immokalee faces every day and to gain financial support from the neighboring communities.

After more than 15 years of providing financial support to other organizations serving Immokalee's children, The Immokalee Foundation began to advance its role in the community and developed programs with measurable outcomes to address the many challenges. This fundamental shift helped The Immokalee Foundation to narrow its scope by gradually focusing on what the organization believed to be a critical part in the economic development of Immokalee: Education. What began as a grant-awarding organization has transformed into a fully operational not-for-profit, providing direct services and support to the children of Immokalee.

The one program that solidified The Immokalee Foundation's transition to the educational path was the partnership with the statewide program Take Stock in Children (TSIC), which provides mentorship and scholarship opportunities to motivated students. TSIC was the beginning of a whole new adventure—one that gave The Immokalee Foundation the opportunity to take a closer look at other potential educational programs needed for the children of Immokalee.

By 2009, the Foundation had successfully implemented numerous programs emphasizing education and other life skills that lead to economic independence for the children of Immokalee. The programs that The Immokalee Foundation provides include Immokalee Readers, Take Stock in Children, Middle School Academy, Career Development, and Post-Secondary & Career Success. Although the Foundation's programs originally provided help for approximately 300 children annually, the number has continued to dramatically increase. Today, The Immokalee Foundation is a direct service provider for approximately 1,400 students, thanks to the sincere and loyal support of people like you, our corporate sponsors, leadership and, our team. **Together, we can make a difference.**







## The Power of One

We frequently speak of The Immokalee Foundation's students in the collective, whether referencing our 100 percent high school graduation rate or the 91 percent who complete their post-secondary education programs.

On a daily basis, however, I am reminded of the individual stories of each student — their family situations and struggles, their study habits and successes, their areas of career interest, and the paths forward they each embark upon.

The siblings on the cover of this year's Annual Report are a terrific example of The Immokalee Foundation's impact at the individual level. The Garcia family's five children have followed differing paths, all made possible by the generosity of our donors and corporate partners.

The eldest, Joel, is a graduate of Florida Gulf Coast University and a professional engineer in a Naples firm; Eric is a senior in Cornell University's prestigious Hotel Administration program; Sandra is playing collegiate soccer at Ave Maria University while pursuing her dream of becoming a veterinarian; Aida, a high school senior, is following the Business Management Career Pathway and wants to become a CEO; and Diego (not pictured), a high school sophomore, already has a paid internship in the Construction Management pathway and wants to be a software engineer.

In lifting up each of these siblings, The Immokalee Foundation has made a lasting impact on their lives as individuals, as well as the entire family. Multiplied by the thousands of students impacted by the Foundation since our founding in 1991, we see clearly that the success of the collective begins with the Power of One.

Thank you for your ongoing support,

**Noemi Y. Perez**  
President and CEO

*The success of the collective begins with the Power of One.*

## The Investment of a Lifetime

I have the good fortune of serving The Immokalee Foundation alongside supporters who have been engaged since the organization's founding in 1991, as well as newer members of the Foundation's far-reaching network of philanthropic donors and business partners.

Through their leadership over the years, the evolution of this organization is nothing short of amazing. We have responded to the changing needs of the youth of Immokalee, shining light on their Pathways to Success through educational programs that lead to careers and financial independence.

The past two years have seen a groundbreaking shift in how we approach our efforts with these hard-working students. Through extensive research and exhaustive effort, a new curriculum has been created that focuses on Career Pathways, beginning in the sixth grade, that will help our students gain the education needed to meet the demands of the labor market in Southwest Florida.

When you invest in The Immokalee Foundation, you truly are making the investment of a lifetime. Thank you for your generous support.

With appreciation,

**Joyce Hagen**  
Board Member, Immediate Past Chair



# Looking Ahead



This year, The Immokalee Foundation is embarking on a bold new initiative – Career Pathways: Empowering Students to Succeed.

We are proud of the academic success of our students, in both high school and college. Yet we know that college is not the right answer for everyone, and that many good jobs do not require a college degree. That is why the Foundation

established the Heavy Equipment Service Technician program at iTECH nearly a decade ago as a well-paying alternative to college.

Over the next decade, our research reveals that the best-paying jobs being created in this region require technical skills. That is the focus of our new Career Pathways initiative, which builds on our proven approach to empowering students to succeed.

Career Pathways is equipping our students with the skills needed for in-demand professional jobs in Southwest Florida... in engineering and construction management, business management, education and human services, and health care.

In three important ways Career Pathways is breaking new ground in how we prepare students for these jobs of the future.

First, students get an early start in career exploration in middle school, learning about in-demand jobs, educational requirements

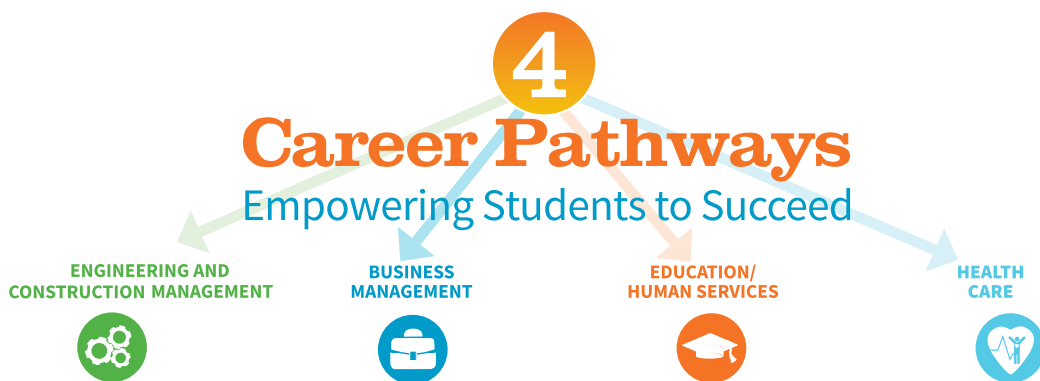
and salaries. Students take career interest and aptitude tests and develop a career plan for high school with the assistance of career counselors. Parents are involved throughout the process.

Second, in high school, students begin a deeper immersion in their career pathway of choice and build a resume of marketable skills. They acquire industry-recognized certifications and have paid internships. They also receive training in life skills such as financial literacy and employment readiness skills, along with college application support.

Third, Career Pathways provides students with flexible options for progressing in their careers after high school. They may go straight to work and pursue an advanced certification, or they may choose to earn a college degree. Either way, The Immokalee Foundation provides a scholarship as well as counseling support.

The key is that we walk alongside each Foundation student throughout career exploration and immersion and then provide them with post-secondary scholarships appropriate to reach their career goals. It is a life-changing journey to financial independence.

**Steve Pryor**  
Board Chair



## Preparation in Elementary School: Immokalee Readers

Our high school students learn valuable career skills as they become trained, paid tutors for struggling readers in all five of Immokalee's elementary schools.

## Career Exploration in Middle School

Middle school students explore a broad range of careers through six-week rotations focused on each of the four career pathways.

## Career Immersion in High School

Programming includes financial literacy, field trips, post-secondary preparation, industry-recognized certifications, paid internships, and networking and career readiness training tailored for each of the four career pathways.

## Post-Secondary Career Success Scholarships

Advocates monitor grades, review coursework, assist with scholarships and financial planning, and work with Foundation partners to connect students with internships and job opportunities.

# Statement of Activities

FISCAL YEAR 2018-2019



Lives impacted

**1,212**

kids from elementary  
to high school

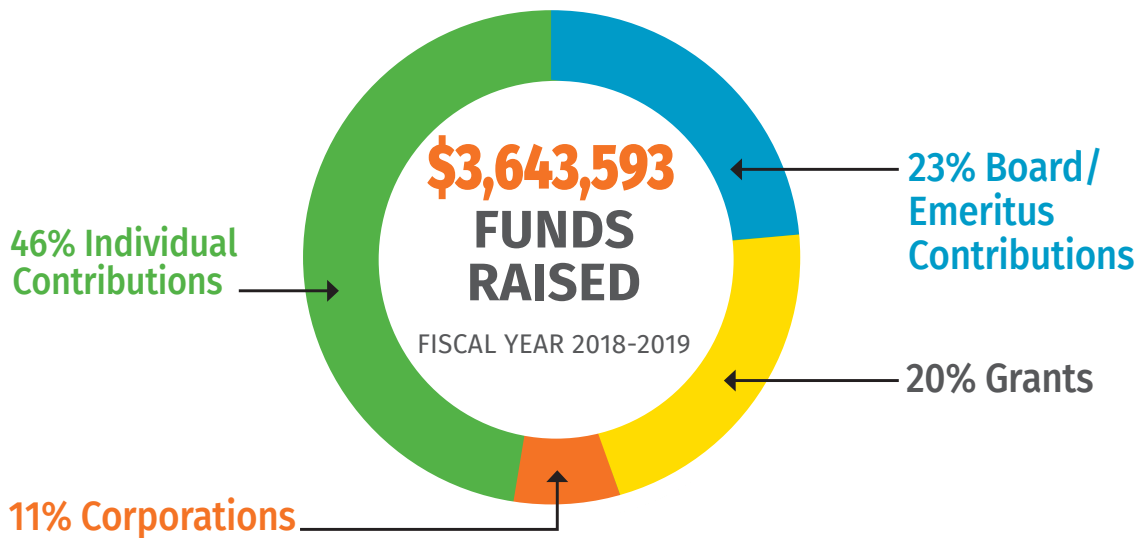
**221**

post-secondary students

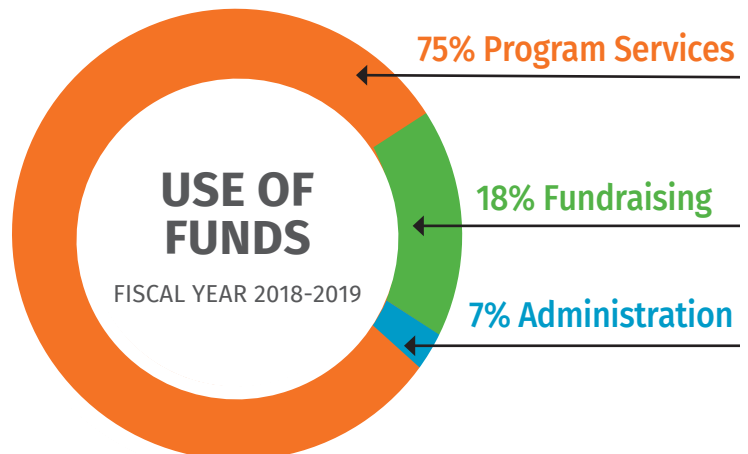


**248**

hours of early literacy  
intervention  
per child per  
school year



For the seventh year in a row,  
The Immokalee Foundation received  
the top nonprofit organization rating  
from GuideStar and Charity Navigator.



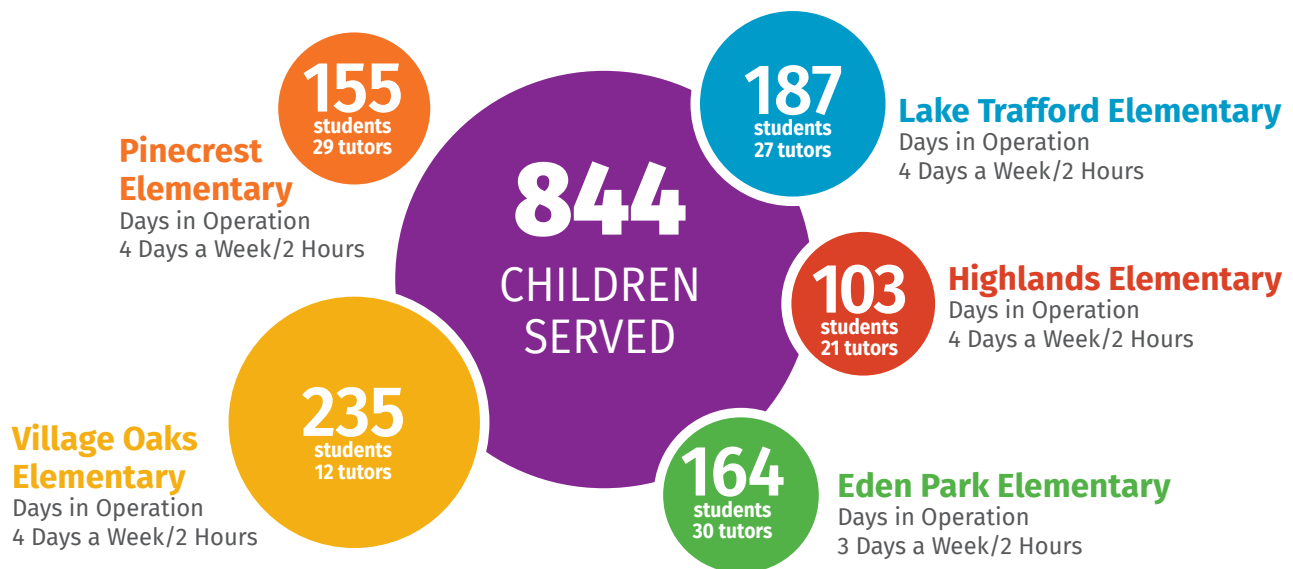
# Immokalee Readers

Elementary school students receive help from trained and paid high school-age tutors



The ability to read is a fundamental skill required to create a brighter future through education. Because many Immokalee students use other languages at home, the additional training in English at a young age is especially important.

“Tutoring for Immokalee Readers is the highlight of my day. I’m so proud of all the gains my students make each year.”  
~ Marilyn, 4th-year tutor.



**96%**

Elementary  
Students Making  
Academic Gains



**119**

High School  
Tutors



**3.36**

Tutors  
Average GPA



**775**

Community Service  
Hours Completed  
by Tutors



# Middle School Academy

Middle school students – sixth through eighth grade – receive additional education in leadership, as well as reading, writing, and math instruction, which empowers these youth to imagine a different future for themselves – and to make the right decisions to achieve their dreams.

**This program guides students through a step-by-step discovery process toward their education and career goals. Students participate in:**

- Career panels with professionals in various fields
- Civic engagement trip to Washington, D.C.
- Time management and study skills workshops
- Six-week summer program on Career Exploration and Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM).



“My favorite part of Middle School Academy is learning about career plans after high school and the fun activities we do that represent these future career pathways.”

~ Emili, 8th-grader

**87**

Number of  
Students Served

**3.33**

Average GPA

**98%**

Attendance

**96**

Days  
in Program

# Career Development

Our program guides students through a step-by-step discovery process through their education and career goals. Students participate in:

- Career panels with professionals in various fields
- Job shadowing, internships, and apprenticeships
- Group and individual mentoring
- Resume workshops
- Business etiquette and networking experience

**453**

Community Service Hours  
Completed by Students

**100%**

Graduation  
Rate



## Take Stock In Children

Since 2001, The Immokalee Foundation's Take Stock in Children program has awarded more than \$1 million in scholarships.

**100% of our students graduate from high school**  
*Compared with 87% in Florida overall*

**100% of our graduates are placed**  
*in post-secondary education at universities, colleges  
or technical programs*

**91% of our post-secondary students graduate**  
*Compared to 40% in the Florida College System*

**3.46**

Average GPA

**1,143**

Community  
Service Hours

**165**

Students in program

# Post-Secondary & Career Success

Immokalee's Post-Secondary & Career Success program provides readiness initiatives to ensure high school graduates have the knowledge and skills needed to qualify for and succeed in their quests for education and training leading to a professional career.

**91%**

Graduation  
Rate

**33**

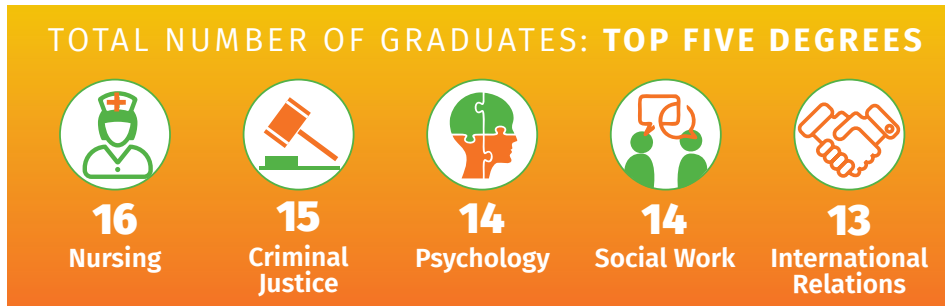
completed a  
degree path

**219**

on track to  
complete a  
degree path

**199**

completed a degree  
path over life of  
program



## Emmanuel Vega Arreola

Emmanuel learned through his involvement with The Immokalee Foundation that “with determination and passion, one can accomplish great things.”

Vega participated in the Career Development program during his junior year, exploring opportunities through career-focused workshops and field trips. The Foundation's support continued as Vega entered college; staff provided assistance setting up his individual academic plan, navigating the complexities of financial aid, and developing important life skills such as financial responsibility, time management, and good study habits.

“Even when I moved to Florida International University in Miami, I continued to feel supported in my career path and always had someone to talk to at the Foundation,” Vega said.



Working with the Post-Secondary & Career Success team, Vega joined the 91 percent of Immokalee Foundation students to graduate, becoming one of 199 students who have completed a degree path since the program started.

Today, Vega is working in Thailand as a Peace Corps Youth Development Volunteer. “I carry the same passion for education that the Foundation inspires in all of its youth,” Vega said.



# Heavy Equipment Service Technician

The Heavy Equipment Service Technician (HEST) program at iTECH, supported by The Immokalee Foundation, provides a two-year post-secondary option that appeals to students who may not choose the college path.

## Julio Estrella

Julio Estrella describes The Immokalee Foundation's Heavy Equipment Service Technician program as "a life changer."

Like most students in Immokalee, Estrella was the first in his family to attend a post-secondary educational program. The two-year HEST program – a collaboration between The Immokalee Foundation and Immokalee Technical College – provided practical experience in engine operation, rebuilding diesel engines, hydraulic system testing, heavy equipment fleet maintenance, and rebuilding transmissions. He also learned specialized skills in electronics, including the use of manufacturers' diagnostic tools.

In addition to classroom instruction, HEST matches students with summer internships following their first year of training, followed by a second year of hands-on instruction. In 2015, Estrella joined the ranks of 99 HEST graduates – representing 92 percent of students who have participated in the program – who have gained financial independence through careers in the high-demand heavy equipment industry.



Estrella has been a mobile maintenance mechanic with Vulcan Materials since graduating from HEST. One hundred percent of HEST graduates are immediately placed into positions paying more than \$20 per hour.

HEST is yet another way that The Immokalee Foundation helps to create Career Pathways for the youth of Immokalee.

**92%**

Graduation Rate



**99**

Students  
in Program  
Since 2010  
Inception



**100%**

Employment



### Employers:

- Collier Paving & Concrete
- FL RingPower-Sarasota
- Tomahawk Construction
- US Sugar
- Waste Management

# Thank You, Volunteers and Mentors!

The Immokalee Foundation is fortunate to have the support of devoted volunteers and mentors. We truly appreciate their dedication and assistance throughout the year. Thank you so much for your incredible dedication.

Ana Abarca	Karen Fraser	Alvin Laich	Kimbely Rampmeyer
Jill Adamczyk	Dougall Fraser	David Long-Field Smith	Gail Reifsnnyder
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George Camp	Barbara Hawkes	Joan Moosally	Felicia Soto
Adriana Carranza	Han Heinsen	Boni Morales	Rich Spiwack
Ruby Castillo	Karen Hendricks	Dulce Morales	Leo Stec
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Tracy Duhaney	Richard Kent	Evelyn Predelus	Jaime Weisinger
Paul Durette	James Kerridge	Katherine Pryor	Dee Zednik
Albert Dzermejko	Margaret Keyes	Brenda Pulido Ayala	Joseph Zednik
Yeimi Espinoza	Dyan Konicek	Irene Quintenilla	
Jana Foraker	Beat Kramer	Jennifer Rajoppi	

## WHAT MAKES A MENTOR?

- Commitment of 45 minutes per week meeting a mentee in Immokalee or electronically/virtually
- Firm belief in the power of education
- Desire to make a difference in a child's life
- Complete application
- Attend new mentor orientation
- Support mentee based on student's individual academic success

## BECOME A MENTOR!

For more information, contact Ashley Gutierrez, Mentor Specialist, at (239) 657-2461 or [ashley.gutierrez@Immokaleefoundation.org](mailto:ashley.gutierrez@Immokaleefoundation.org).

# Ways to Give

The Immokalee Foundation could not continue its work to enrich the lives of Immokalee's most precious resource — its children and young adults — without your generosity and compassion. Please support our efforts to break barriers through education by contributing in any way you can.

## HERE'S HOW YOU CAN HELP:

- **Donate**
- **Mentor** a middle or high school student
- **Leave a Legacy**
- **Partner** with us through your organization or company
- **Volunteer** your time and talent as a speaker, chaperone or committee member



## See the Impact You Make!

Visit Us Today

Call today to schedule a personal tour of Immokalee and our programming facility.

**(239) 430-9122**



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Eric Morris and Edgar Garcia, BCB Homes, during The Immokalee Foundation's 2018 Charity Classic Celebration



The Immokalee Foundation graduates Jesus Velazco-Salazar and Julio Estrella (center) with Kent Shoemaker, CEO of Lipman Family Farms; Dr. Kamela Patton, Superintendent of Collier County Public Schools; and Don Huffner, Collier Enterprises CEO - present to Council of 100



Jennifer and Tony Fassino, CAT Vice-President of Building Construction Products at The Immokalee Foundation's 2018 Charity Classic Celebration

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