

## **Foundation For Dreams, Inc. Dream Oaks 2.0: A New Chapter**

At Foundation for Dreams, Inc., the mission is to celebrate the abilities and develop the strengths of children with special needs and chronic illnesses ages 7-17 in a camp environment. Foundations for Dreams' vision is for all individuals with special needs to have every opportunity to learn and grow, leading to more productive behaviors, meaningful relationships, and a more comprehensive profound skill set.

Dream Oaks Camp is the only year-round residential and day camp in southwest Florida for children with diagnoses, illnesses and conditions such as autism, spina bifida, cerebral palsy, developmental delays, Down syndrome, ADHS, and cancer. Foundation for Dreams' initiative, **Dream Oaks 2.0: A New Chapter**, will renovate the facilities to enrich experiences for over 700 children annually. The total initiative budget is \$110,000. The Impact100 SRQ grant will help redesign the administrative building by funding new flooring, closet systems, commercial kitchen equipment and light fixtures. The proposed initiative also includes bathroom, plumbing and water heater updates. The \$500 beyond the grant amount is committed.

Dream Oaks offers an inclusive, supportive camp environment tailored to the children's unique needs, providing specialized care and adaptive activities. The camp is relocating from the Boy Scout Camp to more expansive property that is owned by Manatee County at Rye Wilderness Trail. At this new location, the redesigned administrative building will facilitate coordination and support for Foundation for Dreams' programs. It will be ADA compliant for camper utilization and provide a space for fundraising, staff training and program coordination. The camp will also offer additional programming focusing on behavioral skills, social interaction, daily living activities, health and hygiene, and independence in the administration building.

Remodeling the facilities will enable Foundation for Dreams to increase the number of campers served from 700 to 850 yearly. Through partnerships with organizations such as Beyond the Spectrum, Parenting Matters, Johns Hopkins All Children's Hospital, Centerstone, and BUDS-Down Syndrome and more, Foundation for Dreams will be able to reach even more children and families in need.

Foundation for Dreams plans to sustain its initiative by seeking additional grants, launching a capital campaign, and holding annual fundraising events. With ongoing support from Manatee County government officials, the camp expects to utilize this location for at least 20 years.

The camp will offer respite for the families, allowing them to recharge while connecting with other families facing similar circumstances. The impact of Dream Oaks Camp extends beyond individual participants to create a ripple effect of positive change within families and the broader community, enhancing the quality of life for all involved.