

May 3, 2024

Leadership Pensacola Class of 2024 Takes a 'LeaP Outside' Supporting Valerie's House and Grieving Children

The Leadership Pensacola Class of 2024 is excited to unveil its impactful class project, "LeaP Outside with Valerie's House," at Family Day on Saturday, May 4th. The event, which takes place from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm, will showcase LeaP's project which transformed the outdoor spaces at Valerie's House, a nonprofit organization devoted to supporting grieving children ages 5-18 and their families. Food and drinks will be served, and tours of the project area and house will be provided.

Valerie's House has been a pillar of strength for those navigating the challenging journey of grief, offering solace and support to children in their most vulnerable moments. Recognizing the vital role outdoor spaces play in the healing process, the Leadership Pensacola Class of 2024 upgraded and revitalized the backyard area of Valerie's House.

The project, aptly named LeaP Outside, creates an inviting and healing environment for children to find comfort. With a vision to foster both physical and emotional well-being, the class revitalized the outdoor area with the installation of an astroturf lawn and easy-to-maintain flower beds, featuring captivating art mural sections, culminating in a safe, communal space ideal for group activities. Valerie's House hopes their reimagined backyard will allow for additional locations to host group nights as well as outdoor activities to celebrate milestones and further cultivate connections.

"We believe in the power of nature and the positive impact it can have on the healing process. LeaP Outside is not just a project; it's a commitment to providing a sanctuary where these resilient children can find solace, connect with others, and embark on their journey towards healing," stated Mark Vanderhaden, spokesperson for the Leadership Pensacola Class of 2024. A special acknowledgment goes to our presenting sponsor, PenAir Credit Union, as well as our key supporters: Lowe's, Cat Country 98.7, News Radio 92.3, Baskerville-Donovan, Florida Power & Light, Hanto +Clark General Contractors, Zarzaur Law P.A., Cox Communications, and many others whose generous support made this initiative possible.

To learn more about LeaP Outside with Valerie's House and how you can get involved, please visit www.leapclassproject.org or email The Greater Pensacola Chamber at leap@pensacolachamber.com.

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About Leadership Pensacola:

Leadership Pensacola is a prestigious program of the Greater Pensacola Chamber that brings together emerging leaders from diverse backgrounds, fostering their growth through education, collaboration, and community engagement. The Leadership Pensacola Class of 2024 is proud to contribute to the betterment of our community through the LeaP Outside project in partnership with Valerie's House.

About Valerie's House:



www.leapoutsidepensacola.org



850-457-4999



leap@pensacolachamber.com

Valerie's House was founded in January 2016 in Fort Myers, Florida, and has grown to help more than 3,000 children and their families across the state at locations in Fort Myers, Naples, Port Charlotte, and its newest location in Pensacola. The organization is named after Valerie Melvin, a Ft. Myers wife and mother of two who died in 1987 in a car accident. For more information, visit www.valerishouse.org.



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