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Pace Center for Girls, Lee County announces honorees of the 2019 Grande Dames Tea

*March 26 event to recognize Linda Brown, Doris Colgate and Mary
Fischer*

FORT MYERS, Fla., (Jan. 24, 2019) – Pace Center for Girls, Lee County has announced Linda Brown, Doris Colgate and Mary Fischer as the honorees of its 2019 Grande Dames Tea. The three women will be recognized for their roles in business, community and philanthropy at Pace’s annual Grande Dames Tea celebration on Tuesday, March 26.

“Linda, Doris and Mary have made significant impacts in Southwest Florida through their decades of philanthropic service and success in business,” said Meg M. Geltner, executive director at Pace Center for Girls, Lee County. “Celebrating the wisdom of time, the Grande Dames Tea event provides a unique opportunity for honorees to share insight from their individual life journeys, passing their knowledge along to future generations as we come together to honor the female spirit.”

- Brown, 76, is known for her lifetime of service to her country, medical field and Southwest Florida community. With decades of experience as an advanced registered nurse practitioner and health care provider, Brown is also a veteran of the U.S. Navy Reserve Nurse Corps, where she served for 12 years as a naval officer. She moved to Southwest Florida in 1991 and soon recognized a need for the nursing community to be better represented within the health care field, which led to her election to the Lee Memorial Health System’s (now Lee Health) Board of Directors in 2000. She had the rewarding opportunity to serve as a voice for her fellow nurses for 12 years, four of

which were spent as board chair and three also spent on the American Hospital Association's regional committee. Today, she serves on the board for Lee Community Healthcare and regularly volunteers at St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Golisano Children's Hospital and provides pet therapy at Hope Hospice through its PACE program. She is a mother of three children – Diana, Heather and Zander – and a grandmother.

- Colgate, 77, is the co-owner, chief executive officer and president of Offshore Sailing School, recognized as a trailblazer in the sailing industry and an ardent supporter of the Southwest Florida community. Colgate and her husband, Steve, moved to Southwest Florida in 1988, and today, the Colgates are considered “celebrities” in the sailing world, the proud leaders of more than 150,000 sailing school graduates. She has earned numerous accolades for her leadership in sailing, is the founder of the National Women's Sailing Association, the AdventureSail mentorship program for at-risk girls, and the Women's Sailing Foundation, a not-for-profit organization dedicated to enhancing the lives of women and girls through education and access to the sport of sailing. Colgate has served on multiple boards and committees within the sailing industry, and is an active member of the Southwest Florida community, serving on the board for Florida Repertory Theatre, regularly hosting fundraising sailing regattas, donating sailing opportunities and providing monetary support for a number of organizations and causes.
- Fischer, 76, is a well-known name in Southwest Florida, recently re-elected to her third term as a district representative for the Lee County School Board. Recognized for her devotion to service and education, Fischer moved to Cape Coral in 1977 and soon began her teaching career in Lee County, where she was a school counselor, teacher and prevention specialist. A passionate advocate in her support of local children's causes, she also served as a certified family mediator for the Florida Supreme Court, a national certified trainer for BullySafe, program director for Guardian ad Litem Foundation, 20th Judicial Circuit, and a medical social worker for the Lee Memorial Health System (now Lee Health). Fischer has served on many boards and committees through her role as the Lee County School Board liaison, in addition to her personal support of Pace Center for Girls and Lee County Coalition for a Drug-Free Southwest Florida, and serving as a lector at St. Katharine Drexel Church. She is a mother of four, with eight grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

The 11th annual Grande Dames Tea event will be held from 1 to 3 p.m. on Tuesday, March 26 at Broadway Palm Dinner Theatre, 1380 Colonial Boulevard in Fort Myers. Ticket sales begin Feb. 1, with admission at \$60 per person and \$500 for tables of eight. Proceeds from the event benefit Pace and its strength-based, gender-specific programs that guide Pace girls in finding their voice and achieving their potential.

To purchase tickets, or to learn more about sponsorship opportunities, visit www.pacecenter.org/locations/lee or call 239-425-2366.

About Pace Center for Girls, Lee County

Since 2007, Pace Center for Girls, Lee County has been providing girls and young women an opportunity for a better future through education, counseling, training and advocacy. The gender-specific, strength-based program is one of 22 Centers throughout Florida, and is known throughout the nation as a best practices model for diverting girls from the juvenile justice system. Pace is a registered not-for-profit organization that relies on the support of individuals, businesses, civic/community organizations and churches in Lee County in order to serve girls and their families. Since its inception, Pace Center for Girls, Lee County has served more than 650 at-promise girls and young women, believing each one deserves an opportunity to find her voice, achieve her potential and celebrate a life defined by responsibility, dignity, serenity and grace. For more information on Pace Center for Girls, Lee County, call 239-425-2366 or visit www.pacecenter.org/locations/lee.

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