



## **Clewiston Youth Center Re-Opens after Renovation Made Possible Through Generous Support from U.S. Sugar**

**Clewiston, FL** – This morning, the Clewiston Sugar Festival Committee recognized our local “healthcare heroes” at the annual honoree breakfast, which was held this year at the recently renovated Clewiston Youth Center. Over the past year, the youth center was given a complete overhaul with the help of City of Clewiston staff and generous support from U.S. Sugar.

“We are incredibly grateful to U.S. Sugar for providing the resources to modernize this facility, which will provide our children with a safe and fun place to come to and learn,” said Clewiston Mayor Kristine Petersen, who is also a teacher at Clewiston High School. “U.S. Sugar is an incredible community partner that has always been willing to step up in a big way when we need help in making significant improvements to our community.”

“For more than a year, this project has been a true ‘labor of love’ for the people of U.S. Sugar, who are proud to call Clewiston our home,” said Brannan Thomas, U.S. Sugar’s Community Relations Manager. “By investing in facilities that benefit our youth, we are investing in our community’s future.”

First opened in 1961, the Charles E. Wetherald Youth Center was originally donated by U.S. Sugar and named in honor of their former CEO. The youth center has been a destination for Clewiston’s youth to learn, play and spend time after school and during the summer months. The City of Clewiston plans to hire a new youth director to help facilitate activities for children in Clewiston and also provide local students a comfortable place to learn, do homework, and participate in fun activities year-round. In addition to supporting the cost of the renovation, U.S. Sugar also provided funding for a new Apple computer lab, iPads, televisions, a 3D printer and furniture. To complete the project, the company also provided updated kitchen appliances and equipment for the youth center’s meeting space.

The youth center will be open on weekdays and during summer months, and the meeting space is available for reservation by calling (863) 983-1484.

This Saturday at the Clewiston Sugar Festival, the youth center will be home to the festival’s “Sweet Taste” baking contest and also the site of a demonstration of a one-of-a-kind cake display from youth celebrity baking chef Keaton Ashton from Sugar City, Idaho. For more information, please visit [www.clewistonsugarfestival.com](http://www.clewistonsugarfestival.com).

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Pictured (back row from left to right:) Mayor Kristine Petersen, U.S. Sugar Executive Vice President Ken McDuffie, U.S. Sugar Chief Financial Officer Elaine Wood, U.S. Sugar Community Relations Manager Brannan Thomas, City Commissioner Mali Gardner, City Manager Randy Martin and U.S. Sugar Director of Corporate Communications Ryan Duffy.

(Front row left to right): Hendry County School Board Member Stephanie Busin, U.S. Sugar Senior Director of Corporate Communications and Public Affairs Judy Sanchez, City Commissioner Hillary Hyslope, Sugar Festival Committee Chair Julia duPlooy and Hendry County Commissioner Ramon Iglesias.