

Pace Center for Girls Palm Beach Visits the Florida Capitol

Pace Palm Beach girls and staff members traveled to Tallahassee for a 2-day trip at the Florida Capitol

TALLAHASSEE, FL, UNITED STATES, February 23, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Pace Center for Girls Palm Beach](#) visited the Florida Capitol in Tallahassee for the annual Pace Day at the Capitol, where Pace girls enjoyed two days focused on leadership, advocacy, and civic engagement. Four Pace girls and three staff members participated in this year's event. The goal of this field trip was for Pace girls to learn more about the importance of advocacy and share the many ways Pace Palm Beach is creating a lasting impact on our future by empowering girls to reach their full potential.

Pace Palm Beach provides academic and behavioral support to middle and high school girls ages 11-17 across Palm Beach County. Pace offers a safe and supportive environment for more than 150 girls served annually in Palm Beach County. The girls and young women supported by Pace Palm Beach receive academic instruction and work closely with counselors and therapists trained in trauma-informed practices. They also receive life coaching to learn essential life skills, such as personal



Pace Palm Beach girls, Zion T., Yesinya E., Nicole R., Daryana G. in front of Florida Supreme Court



Pace girls with Anne Gerwig, Member of the Florida House of Representatives

hygiene, grocery shopping, and preparing for employment. These resources are made available to girls at no cost.

Throughout the two-day event, Pace girls engaged in policy discussions, advocacy training, and hands-on legislative experiences. Pace girls from the Palm Beach County campus in Palm Springs met with members of the Florida House and Senate, sharing their lived experiences and highlighting the impact of Pace in their lives and communities. For many, it was their first time speaking directly with policymakers and provided them with a meaningful opportunity to see how their voices can inform decisions that shape their futures.



Pace girls with Department of Juvenile Justice Secretary Matt Walsh

The highlight of the trip was exposing Pace girls to the political work that gets done in Tallahassee, the Women in Politics panel discussion, and hearing from Matt Walsh, Secretary of the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice. These experiences provided valuable insight into public service, leadership pathways, and the importance of civic engagement.

On the second day, Pace Palm Beach met with legislators, including:

- Lori Berman
- Kelly Skidmore
- Debra Tendrich
- Rob Long
- Anne Gerwig
- Tae Edmonds

During each meeting, Pace girls shared why they came to Pace Center for Girls and discussed the positive impact the program has had on their academic progress, confidence, and future goals. Pace Palm Beach leadership thanked each legislator for their time and ongoing support of programs that strengthen opportunities for girls and young women.

“Pace Day at the Capitol provides our girls with a powerful opportunity to build confidence and practice leadership in a real-world setting,” said Mindy Hanken, Executive Director of Pace Palm Beach. “We are incredibly proud of how our girls represented Palm Beach County and shared their stories with courage and maturity. I also want to thank each legislator for warmly welcoming us.”

Through its comprehensive services, Pace helps improve academic outcomes, strengthen healthy relationships, and foster long-term success for girls and their families. By creating a ripple effect of positive change, Pace strengthens the community by cultivating confident, educated, and engaged young women who are prepared to contribute meaningfully to society.

Since its founding in 1996, Pace Palm Beach has successfully grown its program and impact on girls and the local community. More than 3,048 girls in Palm Beach County have been served, with 9 out of 10 girls having experienced overall academic improvement and 8 out of 10 girls reporting improved healthy social relationships with peers and family members.

Enrollment is now open at Pace Palm Beach. To learn more about how Pace is finding the great in every girl, visit www.pacecenter.org.

Gianna Picard
Khanna Connections
+1 508-320-3183
[email us here](#)

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