

United Way of Hernando County

Q1 Highlights - Partner Success Stories

2022-2023

Boys & Girls Club - MENTORING PROGRAM

In just one quarter, we watched a fifth-grade student grow immensely. He was a member of the Club's afterschool program for several years. However, after coming back from the COVID shutdown, staff noticed a difference in him. He was more agitated, complained about going to school and his attendance poor. Labels like "oppositional" were being used to describe him for the first time. During the Clubs homework help time, he refused to do his homework and often sat away from peers talking to no-one. The Unit Director referred him to the OJJDP mentoring program and he was matched with a mentor with a strong academic background and was trained in trauma-informed practices. He worked on the core issues of how his mom was using drugs again and his 16-year-old sister had started using. The student talked about how being home during the lockdown increased his anxiety and he was not sleeping well. The mentor helped him with coping skills and spoke to mom about concerns. Things are starting to improve with homework and his attendance at school and the Club are strong.

NAMI Hernando - EDUCATION PROGRAMS

A manager at a local business reached out to NAMI asking if we could do a presentation to her employees during the month of September for Suicide Awareness Month. Our team presented to the entire staff during their lunch hour which the company made special by ordering pizza and putting together goodie bags with resources inside. The employees were extremely receptive and engaged in the presentation and asked probing questions. After the presentation I sat with the employees and the manager and had lunch. The employees talked about their lives and asked more questions about suicide prevention and the signs. The manager shared that her son-in-law had recently died by suicide and the reason she wanted to have us out was that she wanted to get information and resources in front of everyone she loved as soon as possible in case they or someone they know were struggling.



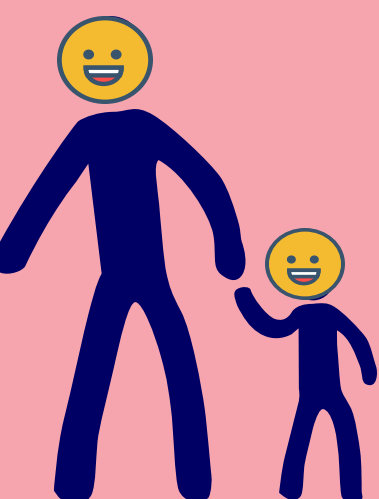
Lighthouse for the VIB - INDEPENDENT LIVING

Isobel is 85 years old. She moved recently to Hernando and lives with two of her daughters. When Isobel learned about the Lighthouse, she signed up right away and took the Independent Living Skill Program (IL). Before coming to the Lighthouse, Isobel was completely dependent on her children. They cooked and sliced her food, poured her beverages, and assisted her as she walked. On the first day of IL, she learned to pour independently and how to label items. After two classes, she began labeling things, including her own medicine. At times, Isobel struggled with telling her children that she can and will do things on her own. But when they saw how determined and capable she was becoming, they began to listen and they stopped being overprotective. Isobel's transformation was remarkable. In just seven classes, she went from being completely dependent to seeking more ways to be independent even with her vision loss. She now cuts, cooks, pours, labels, and so much more. Next, Isobel will take the Adjustment to Vision Loss Program.



For Each 1 Reach 1 - MENTORING PROGRAM

"Ms. I" is a young student who came to us with severe lack of social skills. Her first day arriving to our before and after school program, she clung to her mother as if she were never going to see her again. She refused to go in the recreation area with the other students and cried almost the entire time she spent with us. This behavior continued for weeks and with her constantly walking around with her head down and not speaking to us, we immediately made it our mission to show her that she was in a safe, fun environment that she could enjoy and express her wonderful personality. Over time, our youth staff has seen that "Ms. I" has transitioned into a social butterfly, hopping out of her mother's car with the most beautiful smile, greeting us with excitement and readiness. She has even managed to gain a great selection of friends that she looks forward to seeing. We are truly proud of "Ms. I" and are thankful to see proof that our mission of building better futures for our children continues to thrive.



St. Vincent de Paul - FOOD PANTRY

Hurricane IAN officially came ashore in southwest Florida on September 28, 2022 taking with it a heavy toll in human tragedy. The residents near Fort Meyers were particularly hard hit. In the days that followed, some evacuees found their way a few hundred miles north to find friends & relatives who might take them in while they got themselves even a very little bit more secure. In the first few days of October while we were thankful for being spared from the storm, one of our clients who were "food insecure" brought an old friend from Fort Meyers who could honestly call herself "everything insecure". She & her family had huddled in their bathroom through the brunt of the wind and rain, when they emerged, they found they had nothing left. So the family of four came to Spring Hill asking for help from a friend. That friend was able to take them in for enough time to help them rest a bit and collect what they had... but not enough food to get by. Grateful for the opportunity to help, we were able to send them all away with enough food to see them through for the week as make plans to restart their lives.



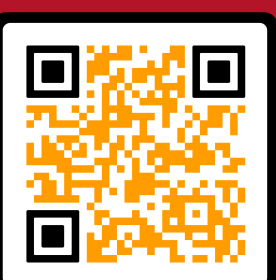
United Way
of Hernando



UnitedWayHernando.org

[Facebook.com/UWHC4030](https://www.facebook.com/UWHC4030)

[@UnitedWayHernando](https://www.instagram.com/UnitedWayHernando)



Supported Programs

United Way of Hernando County

Q1 Emergency Assistance

2022-2023

RIDE UNITED: Food Accessibility for Ukrainian Families

Three separate families, all refugees from the Ukraine, were being housed together in one home in Hernando County. The adults were all waiting for work permits, and had no income whatsoever. There was one vehicle for all 13 family members. They did not have car seats for the younger children and gas was too expensive to drive the distance to the food pantry. United Way was contacted by their case worker and they were enrolled in the RIDE UNITED - United Way's Last Mile Delivery program. Through this generous partnership with St. Vincent de Paul's Food Pantry and DoorDash, they were able to have groceries delivered to their doorstep. "They were so impressed how caring our community is, especially during such a difficult time," stated their caseworker. "This is a wonderful program!" she said.



Transportation To & From Interview

A local resident had been experiencing barrier after barrier after no longer having access to reliable transportation. She was fortunate enough to be hired at a new distribution center in Hernando, however a final interview at their Temple Terrace facility was required for necessary pre-hire paperwork purposes and drug test. With this being during working hours, family and friends were unable to help. After being referred to United Way and completing an unmet needs assessment, it was apparent how critical it was for her to make this appointment for her to obtain this employment opportunity. Similar to Uber Health, United Way successfully ordered and tracked a scheduled ride to and from her interview. Our client was beyond grateful for the service and compassion during this transitional period. **Please note, unique requests are evaluated on a case-by-case basis and are not guaranteed.*

Gas For Medical Appointments vs. Having Electric

A single mother diagnosed with cancer was scheduled for chemotherapy five times a week, at a medical facility 60 miles from her home. She was spending upwards of \$200 monthly on gas alone, just to make it to these appointments. In addition, the side effects of the medication were causing her to lose hours at work, leaving her unable to pay her electric bill. United Way was able to keep her power on and prevented it from being disconnected, giving her peace of mind during this stressful time. Additional transportation options and resources were explored for her thanks to our UW Critical Knowledge Experts and outreach efforts.



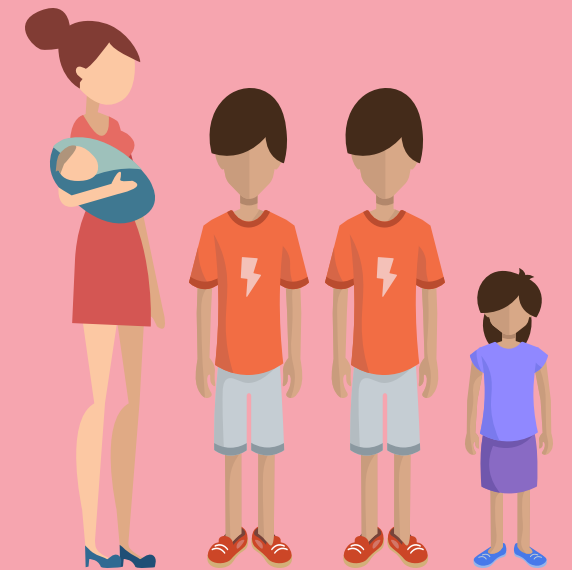
Grandmother in Need of Help & Hope

United Way was contacted by our partners one afternoon regarding a grandmother who was in their store, trying to find a way to pay for groceries and baby care items. The young grandchildren, both 4 years and 5 months old, had been dropped off unexpectedly by their parents, who were not well enough to care for them properly. The 5-month-old was on a special soy formula, and grandma could not afford all of these sudden expenses. United Way was able to locate several cans of this formula and also diapers, wipes, baby clothes, and assorted food items. The grandmother had no childcare and was forced to abruptly leave her job. The electric in the house was also due to be disconnected the very next day. United Way was able to assist quickly, preventing any disconnection from occurring, as well as connect her to Early Head Start resources and local employment opportunities – to help focus on long-term sustainability. Through our RIDE UNITED program with DoorDash, United Way was also able to schedule this family free food deliveries. "This is so wonderful! I can't believe it!" cried the grandmother leaving the United Way office with resources, new friends, and hope.



Determined Single Mother Receives Shut Off

A single mother of 4, including teenage twins, found herself in need of help. She was experiencing a decline in hours and shift cancelations with her previous employer and had been looking for more stable opportunities. She began her first night shift at a new job, only to come home to no water. Her utilities were shut off. The mother felt shuffled leading up to this transition, and she hadn't received the collection notices due to an old contact number being on file at the utilities department. After verifying employment, and with water being a necessity for this family of 5, United Way expedited this case, gladly assisting with getting her water turned back the following afternoon.



UnitedWayHernando.org
[Facebook.com/UWHC4030](https://www.facebook.com/UWHC4030)
[Instagram: @UnitedWayHernando](https://www.instagram.com/UnitedWayHernando)



Supported Programs