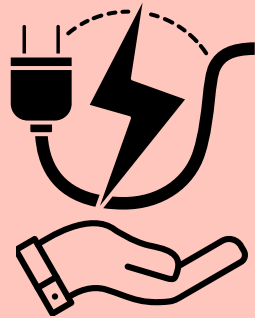




Q4 EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE



“Partnerships make the impossible possible”



Our partners over at Housing & Supportive Services referred a dedicated daycare provider who was facing a critical issue in her home. Though she has been approved for home repair funding, the assistance won't be available until August. In the mean time, she is left to deal with electrical shortages due to faulty outlets that not only caused her to have to replace numerous appliances, but also poses a serious safety concern in the space where she cares for young children. Because of the shortages, the air conditioner failed and she was only able to provide one window unit to cool one bedroom. This for a large family like hers, was inadequate. Understanding the urgency of the situation, support was provided to help address her immediate electrical needs. This not only ensured a safer environment for the children in her care, but also allowed her to continue providing vital services to working families in the community. Her story highlights how timely intervention and community collaboration can make a lasting impact on both individuals and those they serve.

“Limitations are real, but so is determination”

A single woman living with a disability—legally blind and facing the urgent need for surgery to preserve her remaining vision. Despite the challenges, she's continued to manage her limited income with care. Recently, her rent was increased, making it nearly impossible to keep up with both housing costs and expenses. These significant changes left her with no ability to save for the surgery she desperately needs. Filled with determination, she contacted United Way for support and resources. Understanding the urgency of her situation, United Way reached out to partners over at the Lighthouse for the Visually Impaired and Blind and secured funding to help cover the cost of the surgery. With this support, she can now focus on her health and essential needs, showing the strength of resilience and the impact of a caring community.



“Some heroes wear capes. Others answer to Grandma”



A devoted grandmother had stepped into the role of primary caregiver for her 3-year-old grandson. He was scheduled for two critical surgeries, requiring multiple long-distance trips for specialized medical care. The added costs of tolls and gas for the trips to and from the hospital created a financial strain on her fixed income. She sought help for her past due utilities bill and United Way was there to ease her mind by covering their electric bill and avoid a shut off. She was also connected with Florida Master Money Mentors to learn how to make her fixed income accommodate both of them. Now, this grandmother can focus on what matters most: her grandson's health and recovery.

“Communication is not a luxury—it's a necessity”

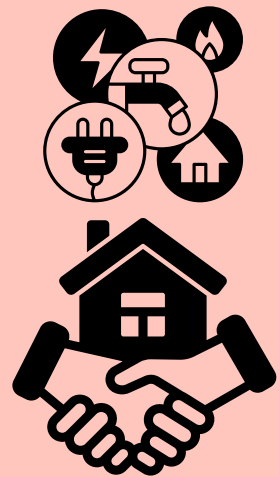
A mother of nine, found herself navigating the painful process of separation amid a domestic violence situation. Her husband remains responsible for the household's mortgage and major bills, but refused to cover her phone bill, a crucial line for communication between her and her children. She fell behind and faced disconnection. With a small window to pay, her situation became urgent. She knew she needed help, but didn't know where to start. United Way of Hernando County was there to offer support, which allowed her to keep her phone on without any interruptions enabling her to stay in touch, access legal aid, and protect her family. United Way also connected her with the proper resources for victims of domestic violence. She now works with the Dawn Center, backed by advocacy and community partners. Her story highlights survivor strength and the need for accessible resources during crisis.



United Way of Hernando County 2024-2025

Q4 Highlights - Partner Success Stories

MID FLORIDA HOMELESS COALITION



“Joan, a single mother of four, including her nieces for whom she has legal custody, had her work hours cut because of the 2024 hurricanes. Due to her loss of income, Joan fell too far behind on rent and was unable to maintain her housing and resulted in her family becoming homeless. Joan was able to obtain a full-time job, complete an application for a new rental, and was approved for housing that she could afford as a single mom with one income, but did not have enough saved to turn on on her electric and water for this newly found home for her and her kids. Because of funding provided through United Way of Hernando County’s Community Investment Grant, Mid Florida Homeless Coalition was able to assist Joan and her children in paying her past due water bill, the additional utilities deposit required to move in, and the electric deposit payment. This support allowed Joan to pay the landlord all of the move-in costs needed for her new housing. Thanks to this partnership this struggling single mother and her family were able to move from homelessness to sustainable housing.”

DIVERSION & WRAPAROUND HOMELESS SERVICES

NAMI HERNANDO

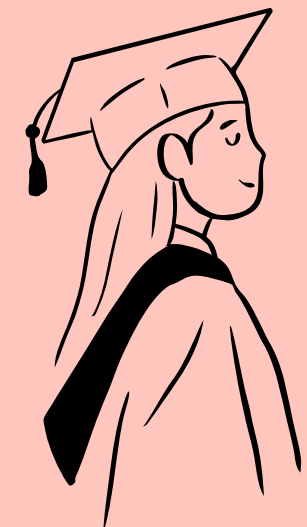
EDUCATION PROGRAMS

“When Catherine first walked through the doors of the Recovery Community Center, she was quiet, withdrawn, and unsure if help was possible. Struggling with both mental health challenges and a history of substance misuse, she had recently been released from jail and was experiencing homelessness. With the support of her Certified Recovery Peer Specialist, Catherine began attending support groups, enrolled in WRAP (Wellness Recovery Action Plan), and was connected to housing resources and a trauma-informed therapist. Through consistent peer support and encouragement, she started volunteering at the center, sharing her story to inspire others. Today, Catherine is stably housed, employed part-time, and studying to become a CRPS herself. She credits the program with not just helping her recover—but giving her purpose. “My peer specialist didn’t judge me. They listened, supported me, and helped me believe in myself again.” – Catherine”



EARLY LEARNING COALITION

EARLY CHILDHOOD CREDENTIALING PROGRAM



“Angela Hernandez” spent over two decades working in early childhood education, but without a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential, her opportunities for advancement were limited. “I always wanted to earn my CDA, but as a working mom, the cost and time felt impossible,” Angela said.” That changed when she learned about a tuition-free CDA program offered through her local Early Learning Coalition. The opportunity provided coursework, mentoring, and support at no cost, making her long-held goal finally achievable. Returning to study after 20 years wasn’t easy. Angela balanced coursework, full-time teaching, and family life. But with a flexible schedule and her mentor’s encouragement, she persevered. “The program didn’t just help me earn the requirements for a CDA, it made me a better teacher,” Angela explains. “I learned new strategies for supporting children’s development and building strong relationships with families.” Earning her CDA will open doors for a new role and higher pay at her center, but Angela says the biggest reward was setting an example for her own children. “I showed them it’s never too late to chase your goals,” she says. “Education can change your life at any age.”