

# UNITED WAY OF HERNANDO'S EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE SUCCESS STORY

## Meeting Basic Needs When It Matters Most

A household struggling to make ends meet reached out after exhausting much of their budget on unexpected expenses. Although direct funding assistance was unavailable, United Way provided food and personal hygiene products to help bridge the gap. The relief of knowing they could meet their family's immediate needs allowed them to focus on getting back on track. Through community support and compassionate care, we were able to provide hope and practical assistance during a challenging time.



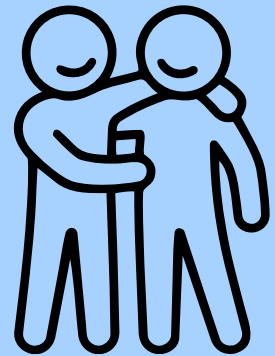
## Restoring Comfort After the Storm



A local household continues to recover from the 2024 hurricanes with ongoing support from United Way, beginning when their original home was destroyed and they were connected to resources to secure new housing. As their recovery progressed, we remained alongside the family, helping them rebuild stability by connecting them with donated furniture—including a brand-new mattress—and other essential household items. Through each step of the journey, from relocation to furnishing their new home, United Way has continued to provide support, ensuring the family has the resources needed to restore comfort, dignity, and hope as they rebuild their lives.

## More Than a Referral—A Listening Ear

One community member contacted United Way during an extremely emotional time. Going through a divorce and facing uncertainty about where they would live next, they felt overwhelmed and alone. While we were unable to provide direct financial assistance, our staff spent time listening, offering encouragement, and connecting them with local resources that could help address their housing concerns. Sometimes the most meaningful support starts with simply being there to listen when someone needs it most.



## A Fresh Start After Incarceration

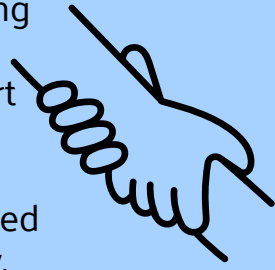


A Hernando resident recently released from jail reached out feeling uncertain about how to rebuild stability. United Way provided support by connecting them with local job listings that aligned with their skills and experience, while also referring them to mental health resources to help support their overall well-being during this transition. Through these connections, they were able to begin taking meaningful steps toward securing employment and rebuilding a foundation for a more stable future.

# UNITED WAY OF HERNANDO'S PARTNER AGENCY SUCCESS HIGHLIGHTS

## Dawn Center: Rebuilding Safety, Stability, and Independence

“Susan” contacted Dawn Center’s Crisis Helpline after years of isolation and controlling behavior in her relationship. After speaking with an advocate, she recognized her situation as unsafe and decided to enter the emergency shelter. She received support in rebuilding her independence, thru resume preparation, job application assistance, and rapid rehousing resources. As she gained employment, she was able to save her income and eventually purchase her first car. With ongoing support, Susan transitioned out of shelter and is now living independently with renewed confidence and stability.



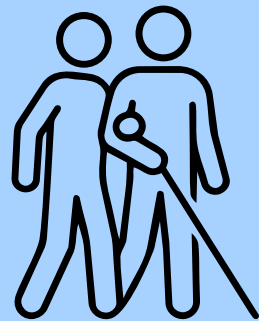
## Early Learning Coalition: Advancing Careers Through Accessible Education



M.H., a working mother with a busy schedule, enrolled in the CDA program through the Early Learning Coalition to advance her education and professional development. With flexible, online, tuition-free coursework and included materials, she was able to balance her responsibilities at home while continuing her growth as an educator. She shared that the program strengthened her skills, increased her confidence, and made higher education realistically accessible without transportation barriers. Through this opportunity, M.H. continues to grow in her career while better supporting the children and families she serves.

## Lighthouse for the Visually Impaired & Blind: Restoring Independence After Vision Loss

May, a 75-year-old widow, sought services after vision loss from macular degeneration began impacting her daily independence. She was no longer able to safely manage daily tasks such as reading mail, handling money, cooking, or navigating her home. Through LVIB, May participated in independent living skills, assistive technology instruction, and orientation and mobility services, including white cane training. With tools such as a CCTV device, tactile labeling systems, and mobility support, she regained her confidence. May reported restored independence and plans to continue additional training to further strengthen her skills.



## St. Vincent de Paul: Meeting Community Needs Through Food Support



From January thru March, St. Vincent de Paul provided food assistance to 5,456 families, impacting 16,303 individuals across Hernando County. In addition to emergency food distribution, 899 families with children also received fresh milk to support nutritional needs at home. Through consistent pantry services and community support, families were able to access essential food resources during a time of increased need.

