

United Way of Lee, Hendry, and Glades



United Way's Response to the Economic Crisis

Over the past months our community has faced severe economic challenges. As our United Way works to advance the common good for all in our community, we have been both responding to the current crisis and maintaining our commitment to those things we know are essential building blocks to a strong society.

As with all of our work, effective collaborations and our relationships with our United Way Partners have made all of this possible. Below is a summary of United Way's current strategies, collaborations and partnerships in response to the economic crisis:

Hunger Relief Fund

Partners: The News-Press and The Southwest Florida Community Foundation.

Purpose: To raise funds to supply food throughout the summer for families in need through:
Summer feeding program
Expanded access to food for local pantries
Expanded senior congregate meal program

Outcomes: \$405,000 for hunger relief in our community

School District Summer Feeding Program and Outreach

Partners: Hunger Relief Fund, Lee County School District, Community Cooperative Ministries Inc., Harry Chapin Food Bank, The Salvation Army, all United Way Houses, and United Way 211

Purpose: To ensure that families receive the help they need to get through the summer months from food to other resources through information and referral.

Outcomes: All school children received United Way 211 information before the end of school. Parents are making contact with United Way 211 through the phone and onsite visits by Information and Referral Specialist at the feeding site.

Hunger Task Force

Partners: 19 non-profit organizations throughout our community.

Purpose: To stop hunger in our community.

Outcomes: Administering a grant from the Southwest Florida Community Foundation in the amount of \$86,000 to address hunger.

Emergency Food and Shelter Program

Partners: FEMA

Purpose: To provide food, shelter, utility, rent, and mortgage assistance to the people in need in our community.

Outcomes: \$840,000 has been distributed to 22 Partners in Lee, Hendry, and Glades Counties to help people in need in our community.

Foreclosure Task Force

Partners: Consumer Credit Counseling, HEROCARE, Lee County Bar Association, and United Way 211.

Purpose: To help struggling people in our community keep their homes.

Outcomes: Over 300 people have been helped by the task force.

VITA

Partners: Consumer Credit Counseling, 5 United Way Houses, and United Way 211.

Purpose: To provide free tax preparation to ensure that hardworking families in our community take advantage of all applicable Earned Income and Child Tax Credits, leading to larger refunds and nearly immediate extra cash.

Outcomes: 165 tax returns were prepared and filed bringing in over \$261,000 for families in our community.

Team Rescue

Partners: Lehigh Community Services, Lehigh United Way House, United Way 211, and 18 other United Way Partners.

Purpose: To collaborate to bring additional resources to Lehigh residents.

Outcomes: Regular meetings of providers have increased in attendance and more resources are being leveraged for Lehigh residents.

Direct Assistance

Partners: Publix Charities, the Community Foundation of Southwest Florida's Good Samaritan Fund, CCMi, Cape Coral United Way House, United Way 211 and newly acquired partners LCEC and Lee Memorial Health System.

Purpose:

To help residents bridge the gap when all community resources have been exhausted and direct assistance criteria is met.

Outcomes:

Additional partnerships allow more residents to receive the help they need when they need it.

Siemer Initiative

Partners: Siemer Family, and other Partners to be Determined

Purpose: To build strong families through crisis prevention.

Outcomes: \$50,000 each year for 3 years to be used to help families in our community.