



United Way of Lee, Hendry, and Glades

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – PHOTO AND LOGO ATTACHED

United Way of Lee, Hendry, and Glades honored with Public/Private Achievement Award at Governor’s Hurricane Conference

FORT MYERS, Fla. (June 4, 2024) - United Way of Lee, Hendry, and Glades has been honored with the 2024 Public/Private Achievement Award at the recent Governor’s Hurricane Conference held in West Palm Beach. The nonprofit was recognized for its outstanding efforts serving the Southwest Florida community during Hurricane Ian and its aftermath.

Prior to the hurricane’s direct hit on Southwest Florida, United Way 211 was activated by Lee County Emergency Management as the designated Emergency Information Hotline. Manned 24/7, United Way staff and volunteers fielded 25,209 calls from the time of activation until 10/31/22. These calls aided in directing people to evacuation routes and shelters beforehand, while providing comfort to others as they watched flood waters rise in their homes, then helping people with access to food, water and emergency supplies after the storm.

Among the many tasks undertaken by United Way immediately following the storm, the organization’s Community Impact and Volunteer Center Teams were mobilized and worked alongside the Lee County Emergency Operations Center to coordinate massive amounts of donated goods coming into the community, VOAD groups and spontaneous volunteers deploying to Lee County, and mass care: including the coordination of food, water, and supplies to the most vulnerable communities.

United Way supported local agencies and programs with funding and donations of goods and services. In partnership with Collaboratory, they established the SWFL Emergency Relief Fund which infused \$7 million into the community to support nonprofits and to assist families directly impacted by the storm for both short-term and long-term recovery.

“On behalf of all the United Way staff, our board and tireless volunteers, we appreciate being recognized with this award,” said United Way President and CEO Jeannine Joy. “This acknowledgment is a testament to the incredible dedication of our team, volunteers and partners who worked tirelessly to support our community during Hurricane Ian. Our collective efforts ensured that those affected received the help they needed to start to rebuild their lives.”

United Way facilitated relief and recovery efforts through in-kind donations, volunteer management, United Way 211 resource assistance, funding support, and other collaborative efforts:

- \$33,098,131 received in donated goods with \$24,714,226 worth of building/construction supplies, furniture, apparel, home goods, school supplies, etc. distributed to community partners and thousands of households. This number continues to climb.
- \$10.1 million impact in debris removal, muck and gut, repairs, rebuild, and points of distribution by over 17,000 volunteers with 317,599 volunteer hours tracked to date by the United Way Volunteer Center.
- \$2,945,768 in funding to 165 agencies and programs to help survivors and provide services and resources.
- \$969,345 in gift cards to thousands of survivors to help with repairs, immediate needs, and replacement of essentials.
- \$1,194,444 in direct assistance to survivors to help with temporary shelter, repairs, immediate needs, and replacement of essentials.

Caption for photo (left to right):

Gail Holton, Patrice Cunningham, Jeannine Joy, Madison Mitchell and Hannah Pelle

About United Way

In addition to raising funds for human service organizations in our community, United Way promotes partnerships and collaborations among agencies, helping them to work together focusing on issues that continue to improve lives. United Way's mission as a volunteer-driven organization is dedication to improving the quality of life for all people in our community. United Way of Lee, Hendry, and Glades was established in 1957 and over \$221 million has been raised and distributed since that time. For more information, please call 239-433-2000 or visit UnitedWayLee.org.

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