

FALL 2024

TEAM UP

NEWSLETTER

1400 27th Street, Vero Beach, FL 32960 | upirc.org | (772) 770-2665

A Word From Indian River Community Foundation President & CEO JEFF PICKERING

As Indian River Community Foundation's (IRCF) President and CEO, I have the privilege of leading an organization that serves as a trusted philanthropic advisor to some of our community's most generous donors. When the topic of economic opportunity comes up, the conversation usually turns to examples where philanthropy might help to alleviate the greatest amount of human suffering by supporting charities that lift people out of poverty. Using data from community research and information from our online community needs database, Indian River Indicators, IRCF informs our generous clients about the facts related to poverty in our community.

Many are unaware that half of our residents live either in poverty or one paycheck away from it, and that three-fourths of these households are made up of single mothers with children. And while some perceive poor choices or risky behaviors as the tipping point that pushes some of these families into despair, we help our clients to understand that **most can attribute poverty to a combination of factors including limited access to medical and behavioral health care, inadequate education, low wages, and housing costs that are simply too high.**



JEFF PICKERING

When asked to recommend causes that serve vulnerable individuals and families living in Indian River County, we suggest United Against Poverty (UP). Together with our clients, the IRCF has awarded more than \$2 million to UP to operate proven programs like STEP. This employment training program assists participants to overcome barriers to employment and to secure and remain in living wage jobs. UP was founded with the idea of providing people in need of an economic opportunity a hand-up, not a handout. By all accounts, **UP has delivered superior returns on the philanthropic investments our community has made in its mission and programs**, and I believe its prospects for continued success are looking UP!

Indian River County (IRC) Statistics... Did You Know?

IRC
IS THE 2ND MOST EXPENSIVE HOUSING MARKET IN THE U.S.**

48%
OF IRC RESIDENTS CANNOT AFFORD BASIC NECESSITIES *

SINCE 2020, HOUSEHOLD FOOD BUDGETS HAVE INCREASED **65%** *

\$572/mo
IS AFFORDABLE RENT FOR A MINIMUM WAGE WORKER IN FL**

A MINIMUM WAGE EMPLOYEE NEEDS TO WORK **100** HRS/WEEK TO AFFORD RENT**

\$1,867/mo
IS THE CURRENT AVERAGE RENT FOR A 1 BDRM APARTMENT IN IRC **

* United Way ALICE Report
** National Low Income Housing Coalition
*** Habitat for Humanity

EXCITING EVENTS ON THE HORIZON

Join the largest 5K on the Treasure Coast for its 17th Year!

VERO BEACH | 7:30AM | THANKSGIVING MORNING

REGISTER TODAY

17TH ANNUAL
VERO BEACH TRADITION
TROT AGAINST
POVERTY
5K
SINCE 2008

BENEFITING

UPR
INDIAN RIVER COUNTY

TrotAgainstPoverty.org

The Valentine Ball

Oak Harbor Club
Saturday, February 8, 2025

6:00pm-10:00pm

Cocktail Reception
Dinner & Dancing
Silent & Live Auctions

RSVP by January 26, 2024

\$250 per person
Black Tie Optional

UNDER ONE ROOF

In response to the devastating impact of Hurricane Milton, United Against Poverty raised our hand to be the location for the county's Multi-Agency Resource Center (MARC). The MARC is a temporary location where families impacted by the storm can find all the resources needed, under one roof. The UP Center's MARC welcomed 15 organizations, and **supported over 1,800 households** over the course of five days.



Meredith Egan, President & CEO, United Way of IRC

"United Way is proud of our work in partnership with United Against Poverty to stand up the MARC in record time, ensuring families had access to emergency housing and basic needs and then connecting them with vital resources to help rebuild homes and lives."

Matt Tanner, Executive Director, United Against Poverty

"When our supporters, board and staff successfully launched the new UP Center four years ago, it was with the vision and intent of it being the home for non-profits, here for whatever our community needed. From guiding thousands of families through a pandemic to helping thousands get back on their feet following a natural disaster, there is simply no other organization positioned to respond like we do in a crisis."



MARC PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

- FEMA
- American Red Cross
- United Way of IRC
- Salvation Army or IRC
- Mental Health Collaborative of IRC
- IRC Human Services
- Veterans Council of IRC
- Catholic Charities
- IRC Habitat for Humanity
- Senior Resource Association
- Treasure Coast Homeless Services
- Economic Opportunities Council
- Substance Awareness Center
- United Cajun Navy FL
- Amazon



CRISIS STABILIZATION 2024 IMPACT



1,450 Families served

9,917 Services provided



1,226 Hygiene packages distributed in partnership with Indian River Hospital District



263 Individuals helped to obtain ID/birth certificates



66 Families moved into permanent housing, to combat homelessness

BUILDING FUTURES CELEBRATING STEP & BUILD UP ACHIEVEMENTS



Beverly Watts
STEP Graduate
Security Guard at Weiser Security Services

"Stay focused, be encouraged and go make a difference in the lives of others."



Larry Drouillard
Build UP Graduate
Mobile Hydraulic Technician at Pirtek

"Build UP taught me to always trust yourself and take chances in life. You never know where it will take you."

50
STEP GRADUATES
ELEVATED OUT OF
POVERTY

ROI
\$3 RETURNED TO
OUR LOCAL
ECONOMY FOR
EVERY \$1
DONATED

86
ADULTS
EMPLOYED IN 2024
ON PACE FOR
100 ADULTS
EMPLOYED!



**2024 STEP GRADUATE
COMBINED EARNINGS**
\$2.7 MILLION
THE LARGEST IN OUR
PROGRAMS HISTORY

WE NEED YOU MORE THAN EVER

While we are incredibly proud of the work we did to support our community following Hurricane Milton, the reality is our organization sustained over \$300,000 in damages and lost revenue as a result of the storm. Our roof sustained severe damage, we lost a 14-foot truck and were forced to close to the public for five days while we were without power. This resulted in the loss of thousands of dollars of frozen and refrigerated product. We ask that you please consider a gift to our Hurricane Milton Recovery efforts so that we can continue to keep our focus where it's needed most, lifting the lives of our neighbors in need.



TO DONATE, MAIL A CHECK TO UNITED AGAINST POVERTY,
1400 27TH ST, VERO BEACH, FL 32960
OR ONLINE AT UPIRC.ORG/DONATE



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