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MEDIA ADVISORY

United Way of North Central Florida looking for donations for second annual United for the Holidays

GAINESVILLE, FL (Nov. 16, 2018) — United Way of North Central Florida is looking for toys, sponsors and volunteers for the second annual United for the Holidays toy drive. United for the Holidays is a holiday toy drive for children between 0 and 18 years old in Alachua County.

Based off last year's success, this year's goal is to serve at least 600 children.

"Last year, we started out expecting to help around 300 children," said Norinda Yancey, Director of Community Impact at United Way of North Central Florida. "But as the holiday season progressed, we ended up serving more than 600 children."

United Way is looking for volunteers to either donate new, unwrapped, nonviolent toys or donate their time to pack the toys, and sponsors to fund any purchases for infants and children between 9 and 18 years old.

This year, we are partnering with some of United Way's Community Impact Partner agencies, such as Catholic Charities, Child Advocacy Center, Family Promise of Gainesville, UF Healthy Families and others. We are also serving other community partners, such as a small afterschool group at the Northwood Villas Community Center, and students at Metcalfe, Rawlings and Terwilliger Elementary Schools, as well as Howard Bishop and Kanapaha Middle Schools.

"Since doubling the number of children served from the previous year, the need continues to grow for more sponsors, more volunteers and more agencies hosting toy drives and collection sites," said Yancey. "These toy recipients are for children in our community with the most need."

Toys can be taken to any of the three public collection sites at High Springs Masonic Lodge #137, UF Mover Guys and The Village at Gainesville. For more information, please contact Norinda Yancey at (352) 333-0844.

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United Way of North Central Florida has been a staple in the community since 1957. We serve a six-county area that includes Alachua, Bradford, Dixie, Gilchrist, Levy and Union counties. Since our inception, we have raised nearly \$100 million for the region. Our mission is to positively impact the education, health and financial stability of the people living in our region. Since 2011, we have consistently received four out of four stars from Charity Navigator for accountability and transparency. We have also been awarded a gold rating for GuideStar.

Special Thanks to Our Academy Sponsors



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