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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

***United Way of North Central Florida's VITA program creates over \$4 million impact for North Central Florida***

GAINESVILLE, FL (July 8, 2019) — United Way of North Central Florida (UWNCFL)'s Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program had another record-breaking year, with a total community impact of \$4,110,913!

This year UWNCFL's VITA program filed 2,416 returns which refunded \$2,712,113 to the community and saved taxpayers \$659,568 in filing fees. Furthermore, through the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), taxpayers were refunded an additional \$739,232. Creating a total community impact of \$4,110,913.

The VITA program helps prepare tax returns for low- to moderate-income individuals, those with disabilities and those with limited English in our six-county service area of Alachua, Bradford, Dixie, Gilchrist, Levy and Union counties. The program has been with UWNCFL for 10 years and was a part of the East Gainesville Development nine years prior to that. Program volunteers secure refunds and credits these taxpayers are eligible for, such as EITC and the Child Tax Credit.

"We are ecstatic that so many community members have been able to utilize VITA's free tax preparation," said UWNCFL President & CEO Mona Gil de Gibaja. "This free service saves taxpayers an average of \$273 per return filed and the refunds are putting much-needed dollars back into the pockets of local individuals and families."

In February of this year, the latest ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) report revealed that 50% of Alachua County families are struggling to make ends meet. These are the families being helped directly by the VITA program.

All VITA volunteers are IRS-certified and trained to complete a variety of tax returns. The VITA program operates between January and April. Appointments can be made starting in January by dialing 2-1-1 or 352-332-4636.

For more information, please visit [www.unitedwayncfl.org/vita](http://www.unitedwayncfl.org/vita).

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***United Way of North Central Florida fights for the health, education and financial stability of every person in our community and has been a staple in North Central Florida 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 top priority is to create real social change that leads to better lives and healthier communities for North Central Florida.***

Special Thanks to Our Academy Sponsors



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