



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**SUNCOAST CREDIT UNION SUPPORTS MENTAL HEALTH AND HUNGER  
WITH \$550,000 DONATION**

TAMPA, Fla. (December 16, 2020) –Suncoast Credit Union, Florida’s largest credit union, will donate \$550,000 to hunger and mental health organizations throughout Florida who have seen increased needs due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Food organizations across Florida have been severely impacted by COVID-19. Organizations that will benefit from this round of funding include Meals of Hopes, United Food Bank of Plant City and the Harry Chapin Food Bank, all three of which have seen a 50% increase in demand this year. The credit union will donate \$385,000 to food organizations to combat the needs.

These funds will allow the organizations to purchase food, help reduce operational costs, support in-school programs such as hot breakfast and lunches, weekend meals, and fill emergency food pantries.

Often overlooked, mental health has been significantly impacted by COVID-19, and Suncoast is pleased to contribute \$165,000 to 11 National Alliance on Mental Illness affiliates throughout Florida.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, COVID-19 can lead to fear, anxiety, and feeling overwhelmed. Social distancing can make people feel isolated and lonely, adding to the problem.

“COVID-19 has had serious implications on mental health throughout our nation, with research showing impact on individuals and relationships. We feel a moral obligation to support this serious issue,” said Suncoast Credit Union President & CEO Kevin Johnson. “This year has brought real struggles, challenges, and loss for so many, and we are committed to lifting our communities up and providing support for those who need it.”

NAMI affiliates throughout Florida have seen an increase in requests for all services and resources – for individuals, families, businesses and community partners. NAMI Pasco has received 4x the number of calls and 10x more emails this year compared to 2019.

A poll conducted by the Kaiser Family Foundation in mid-July revealed that 53% of adults in the United States reported their mental health has been negatively impacted due to worry and stress over COVID-19. This is significantly higher than the 32% reported in March.

This donation is the second of its kind this year for Suncoast, following their \$1 million donation to hunger, healthcare, and education organizations for COVID-19 relief efforts in May 2020.

In 1990, Suncoast Credit Union founded the Suncoast Credit Union Foundation, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization established to benefit sick children and their families and to support educational initiatives. The foundation is a vehicle for Suncoast to support the communities served and assist residents who live there. Since its inception, the Foundation has raised and donated over \$30 million to help provide a better future for the children of the communities Suncoast serves. In 2020, the foundation has given \$3.2 million.

### ***About Suncoast Credit Union***

*Suncoast Credit Union is the largest credit union in the state of Florida, the ninth largest in the United States based on membership, and the 10th largest in the United States based on its \$12.4 billion in assets. Chartered in 1934 as Hillsborough County Teachers Credit Union, Suncoast Credit Union currently operates 74 full-service branches and serves more than 913,000 members in the following 39 Florida counties: Alachua, Brevard, Broward, Charlotte, Citrus, Clay, Collier, DeSoto, Dixie, Duval, Gilchrist, Glades, Hardee, Hendry, Hernando, Highlands, Hillsborough, Indian River, Lake, Lee, Leon, Levy, Manatee, Marion, Martin, Miami-Dade, Monroe, Orange, Osceola, Palm Beach, Pasco, Pinellas, Polk, Sarasota, Seminole, St. Johns, St. Lucie, Sumter and Volusia. Since its founding in 1990, the Suncoast Credit Union Foundation has raised and donated more than \$30 million to organizations and initiatives that support the health, education and emotional well-being of children in the communities that the credit union serves. For more information, visit: [suncoastcreditunion.com](http://suncoastcreditunion.com) or follow us on social media at:*

*[facebook.com/SuncoastCreditUnion](https://facebook.com/SuncoastCreditUnion), [linkedin.com/company/suncoastcreditunion](https://linkedin.com/company/suncoastcreditunion), [twitter.com/SuncoastCU](https://twitter.com/SuncoastCU) or [instagram.com/suncoastcreditunion](https://instagram.com/suncoastcreditunion).*



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**Breakdown of Funds – HUNGER:**

**Meals of Hope – Collier – \$50,000**

- Families served has increased by 50% (1,400 families pre-COVID, currently over 3,700 families served)
- 93% of all donations go to food
- Provide hot breakfast and lunch to children at Naples & Marco YMCA's

**Meals on Wheels Plus of Manatee – \$50,000**

- Home-delivery meal program has seen a 52% increase since COVID-19

**United Food Bank of Plant City – Hillsborough – \$50,000**

- Increased need from 4,500 families (pre-COVID) to 10,000
- Increased need in backpack program

**Harry Chapin Food Bank – Charlotte, Collier, Glades, Hendry, Lee – \$50,000**

- Increased need from 700 food kids (pre-COVID) to 7,000
- Increase in food cost by \$213,000 a week

**Feeding Tampa Bay – \$50,000**

- Increased need

**Metropolitan Ministries – Hillsborough, Pasco, Pinellas, Polk – \$50,000**

- Increased need

**Tri-County Food Bank – Dixie, Gilchrist, Levy – \$25,000**

- Helps 75 families each month
- Have emergency food pantry
- Referrals from local domestic violence shelter have significantly increased

**Food4Kids – Alachua, Levy – \$20,000**

- Partners with schools to identify at risk children
- Distributes backpacks weekly
- Feeds 250 children every weekend

**The Spring of Tampa Bay – \$20,000**

- Calls and outreach support services have significantly increased
- #1 need is food
- Rapid Rehousing program has doubled in size, from serving 20 families to 40

**CASA & Sunrise – Pasco & Pinellas – \$20,000**

- Calls and outreach support services have significantly increased
- #1 need is food

**HUNGER total: \$385,000**

**Breakdown of Funds – MENTAL HEALTH:****NAMI Collier – \$20,000**

- Increased requests for all services
- Challenged with meeting demand for training and support materials

**NAMI Hernando – \$20,000**

- Requests for support have increased by 50%
- Businesses and community partners requests have significantly increased

**NAMI Hillsborough – \$20,000**

- Increased requests for all services
- Challenged with meeting demand for training and support materials

**NAMI Lee, Charlotte, Hendry – \$20,000**

- Increased requests for all services
- Challenged with meeting demand for training and support materials

**NAMI Pasco – \$20,000**

- Phone calls have increased 4x since pre-COVID
- Emails have increased 10x since pre-COVID
- Challenged with meeting demand for training and support materials

**NAMI Pinellas – \$15,000**

- Increased requests for all services
- Challenged with meeting demand for training and support materials

**NAMI Polk – \$15,000**

- Increased requests for all services
- Challenged with meeting demand for training and support materials

**NAMI Sarasota, Manatee – \$15,000**

- Increased requests for all services
- Challenged with meeting demand for training and support materials

**NAMI Gainesville – \$10,000**

- Increased requests for all services
- Challenged with meeting demand for training and support materials

**NAMI Citrus – \$5,000**

- Increased requests for all services
- Challenged with meeting demand for training and support materials

**NAMI Marion, Lake, Sumter – \$5,000**

- Increased requests for all services
- Challenged with meeting demand for training and support materials

**MENTAL HEALTH total: \$165,000**