

# Florida Keys LIVING UNITED THROUGH IRMA

*"Man never made any material  
as resilient as the human spirit."  
- Bernard Williams*

United  
Way



United Way of the Florida Keys

**STILL HURTING FROM IRMA?**  
Community Resource Guide Inside

**\$1.7 MILLION RAISED**  
100% Towards Keys Recovery

**Publix.**

**WELLS  
FARGO**



# RECOVERY & RESILIENCY.

LIVE UNITED



A volunteer helps with the Hurricane Irma recovery process.

RACHEL E. LIGON PHOTOGRAPHY

A full year has passed since Hurricane Irma made landfall in the Florida Keys, changing forever the lives of many who call this chain of islands ‘home.’ With a category 5 hurricane bearing down, many evacuated unsure what they might return to. Some were spared, but many were not as fortunate. Upon assuming the CEO position at United Way of the Florida Keys soon after the

storm, the aspect of serving the community was never more real. As others had done for me following Hurricane Wilma’s destruction in 2005, it was now time to give back and join in our community’s recovery. It has since become my primary mission to help my fellow Keys residents. It has been awe-inspiring to witness the community’s resiliency over the last year. Likewise, we extend our

deepest gratitude to people from around the world who donated to the Keys, through volunteerism, support and supplies. It was especially humbling to see the very people who needed help themselves pitching in to help others. The United Way of the Florida Keys is small yet strong, having transitioned from three to two full-time employees, post-Irma, along with ten deeply dedicated volunteer board members.

UWFK has never been as committed to doing everything we can to help our community as we have become since Irma. In the hours just after the storm, recognizing the significance of the storm’s destruction, the Hurricane Irma Disaster Relief Fund was established. To date, thanks to the overwhelming generosity of friends and supporters near and far, UWFK has raised over \$1.7 million; 100% of these funds are

earmarked solely for assisting the Keys recovery. More importantly than merely raising these funds was to get them quickly and efficiently back out into the community. Just days after the storm, we distributed gift cards and cleaning supplies door-to-door and provided immediate funding to our partner agencies. Recognizing the demand for emergency financial assistance, we established a direct case management program to fill gaps from other agencies, serving over 150 families.

However, the real heroes are UWFK’s 35 community nonprofit partner agencies who have been working tirelessly, many of them non-stop for weeks immediately following the storm making sure residents were fed, sheltered and cared for.

As you keep reading, you will find out more about their truly remarkable work throughout Monroe County. To date, over \$1.6 million of our relief fund has been disbursed, allowing these partner agencies to assist with critical needs such as utilities assistance, replacing damaged child safety items and providing nutritious food to displaced families. None of this would have occurred without the generous

donors that make our work possible. Support for the UWFK Hurricane Irma Relief fund has poured in from both around the world and through the United Way network. Though we are an independent, local nonprofit, UWFK has been in a unique position to benefit from the incredible support provided by the network’s unprecedented

and already marginalized pre-storm, and that number has grown since then. For more than 30 years, UWFK has supported the community through access to nutritious food, child development and safety net services, but since Irma we have expanded this support to meet the increased need. Families currently served by UWFK’s support are the very families who have lost so much this year. With so many already barely surviving financially, and faced with a struggling economy and storm-related expenses, it will take years for some families to overcome Irma’s setbacks. The need for United Way’s support remains. Recognizing that the community’s needs have largely shifted from clean up and reconstruction, UWFK is now committed to the full scope of recovery.

## Over \$1.7 million raised; 100% towards Keys Irma recovery.

We continue to hear heart-breaking stories of families who have lost everything and are starting completely over. There are many in our community who, for the first time in their lives, now need help themselves. As attention fades following any disaster, these struggles have become less widely publicized but are no less profound. Nearly half of Monroe County’s year-round residents were considered working poor



Leah Stockton prepares chicken for Metropolitan Community Church’s Cooking with Love program providing food for elderly Key West residents.

and, most importantly, stays local. With your investment, we all succeed when a child excels in school, a family achieves financial stability, and our neighbors have enough nutritious food to eat. As you will see in this publication, UWFK’s mission to fight for families in the Keys has become even more critical since Hurricane Irma. We are so grateful for the supporters, partners, and volunteers who make our work possible. Together we can continue to inspire hope and create a better, stronger Florida Keys community. That’s what it means to LIVE UNITED.

*Leah Stockton*

Leah Stockton, President & CEO



After Hurricane Irma tore through our community, United Way of the Florida Keys, saw the hope and support from people around the world pour in. This, along with the resilient and selfless spirit of the people of Monroe County will truly help our community recover. This publication is dedicated to the real heroes of the Keys; those who have given their all for each other this year. Our community is forever changed but this new normal of finding a way forward and coming together to rebuild stronger will remain. This is how we LIVE UNITED. Do you have friends or neighbors who are demonstrating what it means to #LiveUnited in the Florida Keys? Tag us at @KeysUnitedWay to share their story!

Cover: Traditionally, the blowing of a conch shell symbolizes the closing of a day or journey. While our recovery is not over, Emily sounds a conch shell to celebrate the end of the first year since Hurricane Irma. Bella Vie Photography  
Design: Emily Pulis  
Photographers: Rachel E. Ligon Photography, Doug Finger Photography, Rob O’Neal, Ralph De Palma Photography, Bella Vie Photography

## “Raised in the Keys, Stays in the Keys”

100% of funds raised are used solely within the Florida Keys.

To learn how you can join UWFK in making a difference for working families throughout Monroe County as we all move beyond Hurricane Irma please contact us:  
United Way of the Florida Keys, PO Box 2143, Key West, FL 33045  
305-735-1929 | KeysUnitedWay.org | @KeysUnitedWay



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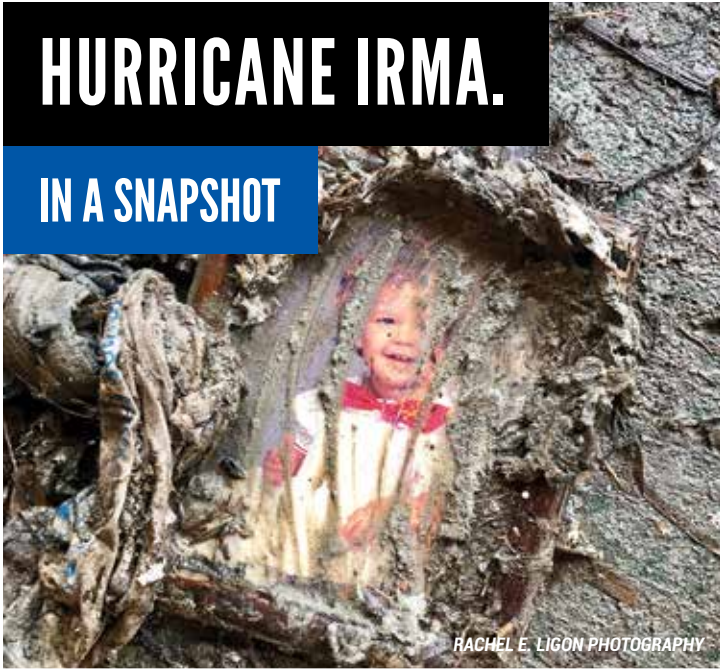


Mike Forster  
Director



Lynsey Saunders  
Director





On September 10, 2017, Hurricane Irma struck the Florida Keys, impacting all 75,000 residents in the 120 mile island chain—from Key West to Key Largo. The Category 4 storm, the strongest to impact the Keys since Hurricane Donna in 1960, devastated our area with winds reaching 130 mph and a maximum storm surge of 8 feet.

The eye crossed over Cudjoe Key at approximately 9AM that morning, inflicting the most damage on the Lower and Middle Keys where the “dirty” side of the storm churned for many hours. No area in the Keys was left untouched by Irma’s destruction. Even as far as 70 miles away at the Ocean Reef Club, where the Monroe County Emergency Operations Center had relocated, first responders had to dig out of the debris once conditions allowed.

In the days leading up to Irma’s devastating landfall, Keys residents watched carefully as the then Category 5 storm wreaked havoc through the Caribbean. As it became evident the Keys were well within the storm’s path, tourists were evacuated, and residents prepared. By the morning of Sept. 8, two days before impact, the usually busy Overseas Highway was deserted - a sign of just how serious Keys residents were taking Irma.

Upon impact, Hurricane Irma tore off roofs, eroded roadways and flooded homes throughout all 100-plus miles of our island chain. All water and electricity services from Islamorada to Key West ceased and, with few exceptions, phone and internet

services were non-existent in the days immediately following. As winds subsided and the storm surge ebbed, a devastating loss of residential, business and infrastructure damage was revealed.

According to the Federal Emergency Management Association (FEMA) and the National Hurricane Center, most residential and business properties in the Florida Keys sustained some damage while Monroe County reported over 1,700 homes were damaged so substantially that they will have to be completely rebuilt. This has left a significant portion of our population homeless, jobless or both.

Residents of more than 2,900 Monroe County households who had uninhabitable primary residences and encountered difficulty finding a place to rent stayed in hotels at FEMA’s expense. At the request of the State, the program lasted for six months and was extended five times.

As of May 10, 2018, Monroe County homeowners, renters and businesses had received more than \$428 million in federal funding to help them recover from Hurricane Irma, according to information provided by FEMA. On July 12, 140 families remained in FEMA temporary trailers or direct-lease properties. While our community has made substantial progress in the last year, there remains work yet to be done here in the Keys.

Devastation from a storm the size and strength of Hurricane Irma is not something you recover from in weeks or months. Irma’s impact on local housing, the economy and our island residents will be an ongoing challenge but by remaining united, we continue to overcome those obstacles.

So it happened; the “big one” has come and tested the resiliency of Florida Keys residents. With local perseverance and generous outside support, our community has begun the rebuilding process and will continue until the work is done.

For more information on emergency alerts, hurricane preparedness, volunteering and much more, go to **MonroeCountyEM.com**.

*“Our non-profits played a critical role in helping our community recover after Hurricane Irma. From providing assistance directly to individuals impacted by the storm to partnering with other agencies to deliver much needed services and supplies, organizations like the United Way of the Florida Keys have gone above and beyond to help those who need it most.”*  
- Representative Holly Raschein, Florida District 120



Responding to the immediate crisis, within one week of Hurricane Irma, United Way of the Florida Keys awarded \$5,000 each to 8 previously vetted, established local non-profit partners who were already on the ground serving Keys residents. This was quickly followed with additional financial support to more agencies meeting the most urgent and basic needs of food, clothing/household items and shelter.

As generous donations began to flood in from around the world, UWFK implemented a strategic process supporting those nonprofit agencies truly making a difference. 100% of Irma Relief funds continue to go directly into the community. The \$1.6 million disbursed (as of August 2018) by UWFK has already changed lives throughout Monroe County. The additional \$100,000 being allocated for long-term needs, will expend the \$1.7 million raised so far for hurricane rebuilding and recovery.

To date the United Way of the Florida Keys is proud to have partnered with 35 nonprofits providing disaster relief and recovery in the Keys (see sidebar). As recovery efforts evolve, UWFK has shifted from providing immediate relief to assisting in rebuilding.

In May 2018, UWFK voted to triple the funding provided through our Community Investment process, to nearly \$500,000. The partner agencies

supported assist with free medical care, child care scholarships, backpacks of food sent home, and much more. **If you’re still in need of recovery assistance, please see page 10.**

While disaster relief is outside of UWFK’s stated mission, assisting our community at its’ time of greatest need is always our goal. In addition to support through our partners, UWFK’s latest funding will support these additional long-term recovery efforts:

- **Direct Case Management:** Florida Keys Outreach Coalition’s Quick Assist Program (Lower and Upper Keys) and Keys Area Interdenominational Resource’s Shelter Needs Program (Middle Keys) continue to provide financial assistance for clients with storm-related losses.
- **Florida Keys Community Land Trust:** Building Keys Cottages, energy efficient and resilient homes in Big Pine Key.
- **Monroe County Long-Term Recovery Group:** Addressing the damage created by Hurricane Irma and how to better prepare for future disasters.
- **Legal Services of Greater Miami (Legal Services):** Helping Hurricane Irma victims navigate the legal challenges following the disaster.

A complete list of UWFK’s hurricane relief efforts can be found at **KeysUnitedWay.org/hurricane-irma-relief-0**.

**RECOVERY - AT A GLANCE**

In the first nine months following Irma, United Way of the Florida Keys community impact by the numbers:

Under Age 18

43% of Clients

Rent & Mortgage Assistance

\$189,000

Utility Bills Paid

3,655

Houses Mucked Out or Debris Removal

800

Meals Provided

7,080

Hours of Childcare Provided:

7,980

Basic Needs Assistance

7,635 Residents

Emotional & Mental Health Services

\$90,000

NONPROFIT PARTNER AGENCIES

- A Positive Step of Monroe County
- Bahama Village Music Program
- Big Pine Academy
- Boys & Girls Club of the Keys Area
- Burton Memorial Church
- Catholic Charities
- Coral Isles Church
- DOLPHINS to stop domestic violence
- Domestic Abuse Shelter
- FL Keys AHEC
- Florida Keys Children's Shelter
- FL Keys Community Land Trust
- Florida Keys Healthy Start Coalition
- Florida Keys Outreach Coalition
- Good Health Clinic
- Grace Jones Community Center
- Guidance Care Center
- Habitat for Humanity Key West & Lower Keys
- Habitat for Humanity Middle Keys
- Independence Cay
- KAIR
- Kids Come First
- Kreative Kids
- Legal Services of Greater Miami, Inc.
- Long Term Recovery Group
- Marathon Lutheran School
- Marathon Rec Center
- MARC
- Metropolitan Community Church
- Samuel's House
- Sister Season Fund
- Star of the Sea Outreach Mission
- The Hammock House
- Wesley House
- Womankind





**FLORIDA KEYS COMMUNITY LAND TRUST**

Rebuilding the Keys post-Irma took place in many forms. For some, it was simply a matter of repairs and considerable clean-up. Unfortunately, for many on Big Pine Key, one of the hardest hit areas, it was a case of starting over.

This is where The Florida Keys Community Land Trust (FKCLT), a 501(c)(3) organization committed to providing affordable housing for working families of the Florida Keys, stepped forward to construct the first Keys Cottages.

In April 2018, the Monroe County Board of Commissioners unanimously approved a request from the FKCLT to purchase four lots at \$99,999 each to further offset construction costs for four code compliant, deed restricted affordable workforce rental homes.

Grants from the United Way of the Florida Keys, the Community Foundation of the Florida Keys

and the Ocean Reef Community Foundation totaling \$90,000 made the first of these Keys Cottage possible. The house will be offered as an affordable rental to a family whose home was

### The FKCLT, is committed to bringing affordable workforce housing to the Florida Keys.

destroyed due to Irma and whose household earned less than 80–120% of the area median income of Monroe County.

The FKCLT, working closely with the Florida Housing Coalition, is committed to bringing workforce housing to the Keys.

To creatively craft a solution, Monroe County will lease back the parcels to the FKCLT for a period of 99 years. Restrictions in the lease allow units to be

subleased only to households deriving a minimum of 70% of their household income from gainful employment in Monroe County. Monthly rent, not including utilities, shall not exceed 30-40% of income. This ensures the housing will remain workforce in nature—and in reality.

**GOOD HEALTH CLINIC**

One of Hurricane Irma's largest casualties in the Middle Keys was the dramatic damage to Fishermen's Hospital.

Out of the rubble, stepped Good Health Clinic. With its primary location in Tavernier led by Executive Director Kate Banick, Good Health Clinic stepped up to serve Marathon with low-cost, nearly comprehensive healthcare to low-income adult and child residents who are unable to afford health insurance and access health care.

UWFK was proud to provide a \$50,000 grant, which allowed Good Health Clinic to open

the new 2-day per week satellite office in Marathon and helped cover the cost of a medical provider, a patient care coordinator, rent, and associated supplies for the first year.

Their primary care and access to medications in this new clinic, along with access to specialists and diagnostic testing, is serving an important need post-Irma.

Due to their extensive volunteer medical provider network, partnership with Baptist Health South Florida



and access to multiple medications programs, nearly comprehensive medical care will now be available in the Middle Keys through the clinic.

**STAR OF THE SEA FOUNDATION**

The Star of the Sea Foundation (SOS) is the largest hunger-relief organization in Monroe County, serving not only the 10,000 unique clients who walk through their pantry doors each year, but also providing food to 30 social service agencies that serve children, senior citizens,

veterans, and low-income families throughout the Keys. SOS operates a client-choice food pantry in Stock Island and Key Largo, as well as a new, large-scale Community Kitchen used to serve low-income children at childcare centers, after school programs, and summer camps.

With UWFK's support and SOS's leadership of Director Thomas Callahan and Board President Doria Goodrich, school-aged children will have access to nutritious food in this critical time.

Since Monroe County is considered rural, with geographic hurdles for food distribution, the work of SOS has never been more important. The Star of the Sea Foundation distributes over 2 million pounds of food annually.

With income generally failing to meet families' most immediate needs, food is sometimes where sacrifices are made. At the same time, both hunger and poor nutrition threatens many residents due not to a lack of calories, but rather a lack of nutrition.

For long-term recovery, United Way of the Florida Keys was honored to provide an additional \$35,000 grant to help purchase a new lift-gate truck that will deliver critical food and supplies Keys-wide. With SOS trucks on the road 365 days per year, the support of UWFK allows Star of the Sea to pick up enough food to meet the increased demand of our most vulnerable local residents.

**GUIDANCE CARE**

Housing instability has been slowly emerging as a stronger predictor of suicide than income, employment, or education. After Irma significantly damaged housing in the Florida Keys, assessing the mental health of residents experiencing housing instability became more important than ever. Recognizing this, United Way of the Florida Keys is partnering with the Guidance Care Center to provide mental health support services for

people struggling emotionally in the aftermath of Hurricane Irma. The goal is to assist individuals in their recovery and ensure their long-term emotional health.

Guidance/Care Center, Inc., who provides mental health and substance abuse services throughout the Florida Keys, is using this funding to focus on individual, outpatient mental health therapy sessions at all 3 of their sites in Monroe County for uninsured or under-insured clients. These sessions can help address coping skills, PTSD or depression that have been exacerbated by the storm.

Since the state of Florida provides only a finite amount of funding for adult mental health services, this is especially critical to reach the increased number of residents seeking mental health services post-Irma.

To learn more about the outstanding efforts of UWFK's partner agencies, please visit **KeysUnitedWay.org**.

### ONE DAY AT KAIR

A look at what KAIR (Keys Area Interdenominational Resources) does in a typical day.

- Helped get an ID for a person seeking employment.
- Filled out an application for a client who needed treatment at the Good Health Clinic.
- Paid for a client's prescriptions.
- Paid for a motel for two women and their granddaughter who were living in their car, and sought other housing options for them.
- Interviewed applicants seeking rental assistance.
- Purchased a car battery for a woman leaving the Keys to accept a job on the mainland.
- Gave out food to 45 clients with 94 total family members.
- Paid first, last, and security for 2 families moving into rentals—because Irma destroyed their homes.

### IMMEDIATE RELIEF

Within the first month following Irma, UWFK was able to provide funding towards:

<b>Housing/Utilities</b> \$45,000	<b>Transportation</b> \$4,100	<b>Client Evacuation</b> \$5,000
<b>Repairs</b> \$13,000	<b>Medical</b> \$10,200	<b>Children's Supplies</b> \$6,000
<b>Food</b> \$6,700	<b>Misc Needs/Toiletries</b> \$11,200	<b>Replace Household Items</b> \$1,500
<b>Storage of Donations</b> \$8,800	<b>Childcare Facility Items</b> \$5,000	<b>Total Funding</b> \$116,500





Hurricane Irma was a devastating, life-changing event for many of us in the Keys. As Board Chair for United Way of the Florida Keys (UWFK), I am humbled to be a part of the amazing recovery effort still taking place in the community and am proud of UWFK’s role and dedication to helping Monroe County. We have been and will remain committed to helping working families get back in their homes and their lives back on the path to normalcy. UWFK’s ability to leverage tremendous resources to benefit partner organizations and citizens on a local level is what makes our organization so unique.

Thanks to the overwhelming generosity of friends and supporters near and far, UWFK’s hurricane relief efforts have or will directly aid the community and continue to help with recovery.

More than \$1 million of this fund has been raised by United Way Worldwide, United Way of Miami-Dade, and other United Ways around the world for our recovery work in the Keys.

While our United Way of the

Florida Keys is a local 501(c)(3) dedicated to serving our community, being part of this global network has given us access to funds our community wouldn’t otherwise have. Through it all, our “what is raised in the Keys, stays in the Keys” motto remains unchanged. All of this support is solely for helping Keys residents recover.

The United Way is often the

**We remain committed to helping working families get back in their homes and their lives back on the path to normalcy.**

organization people seek out when they want to support relief work. By giving to UWFK, supporters know they are donating to a local nonprofit with a previously established, internationally recognized network. Money for our relief

fund has come from around the world, from a displaced Harvey resident still living in a Texas shelter who gave \$5, to corporate partners like Publix, Wells Fargo, Comcast and Florida Blue who are investing in the area they serve every day.

We remain grateful for our generous donors who have made possible the work we are accomplishing with UWFK’s hurricane relief fund. They have enabled us to more than double the number of hardworking nonprofit agencies UWFK supports.

The dedication and perseverance of UWFK’s partner agencies has been nothing short of remarkable. Even while many were facing damage to their own homes or facilities, they have stepped up to serve others, beginning the day after the storm and continuing today.

These efforts have assisted thousands of Keys residents from our youngest- replacing damaged items at childcare facilities for children to once again thrive- to our oldest by assisting a senior citizen on a fixed income in replacing

**HURRICANE IRMA DISASTER RELIEF SUPPORTERS**

Thank you to these generous organizations, and all who donated to help the Florida Keys recover.



Christina Dennis

The James P. Verhalen Family Foundation



*Donations for UWFK hurricane relief came from generous supporters from all over the US, as well as Europe.*

her water heater after being without for 4 months. The work of getting hurricane donations into the hands of those who desperately need it will continue.

As we look to the future, UWFK is focused on continuing to serve people living and working in the Keys each and every day, responding to our community’s needs so that we may improve lives throughout Monroe County. While none of us want to consider another disaster such as this, should it happen, UWFK will be again ready to step up and serve. If you would like to support our efforts and invest in our work throughout the Keys community in the years to come, please

visit [KeysUnitedWay.org](http://KeysUnitedWay.org).

On behalf of United Way of the Florida Keys, THANK YOU to each one of our donors, supporters, volunteers and community partners. Together we will rebuild the Keys community. UWFK’s mission to fight for working families in the Keys will continue with your support.

With deepest gratitude,

Maria Jones, Board Chair

***Support hardworking Florida Keys families and give today at [KeysUnitedWay.org](http://KeysUnitedWay.org).***

*“As hurricanes and other natural disasters tear through communities, hope, optimism and support pour in from people, partners and United Ways to share their resilience and selfless spirit. You simply cannot comprehend the devastation unless you see for yourself how much support our communities need just to stabilize themselves. It’s difficult or often impossible to get back to the way things were. Lives and communities are forever changed, but also forever bonded. Clearly, to live better, we must LIVE UNITED.”*

- Tina McCrorey, Director U.S. Network Operations, United Way Worldwide



SOS distributes over 2 million pounds of food annually.

United Way of the Florida Keys’ work doesn’t stop or start with disaster relief. For more than 30 years, UWFK has been supporting strong working families in Monroe County through access to nutritious food; child development and education; and safety net services.

The focus on helping the 46% of year-round Monroe County working families who are considered “Asset-Limited, Income Constrained, Employed” (ALICE) strengthens our community. These are people who work hard to make ends meet, but struggle to do so because Monroe County’s cost of living is 61% higher than the national average and is the highest in Florida.

UWFK supports over 30,000 Keys residents each year through funding to vetted local nonprofits and direct programming. In addition to most partner agencies now

providing Hurricane Irma relief, they also continue their work assisting with free or reduced-fee childcare, low cost healthcare, emergency financial assistance, domestic abuse prevention, after school activities, delivery of nutritious meals and groceries, support groups for new parents, and much more.

Complementing the services provided by our partner agencies, UWFK directly serves the community through:

- VITA - Volunteer Income Tax Assistance
- Stuff the Bus school supply drive
- Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library - providing monthly free books to children
- Community Resource Guide
- Success by Six - Subsidized childcare scholarships

As our community moves forward, there are more residents who will need our services/programs, and we remain steadfast in meeting those needs.

**BEYOND THE STORM**

In 2017-2018, UWFK supported working families throughout Monroe County:

**Nutritious Meals for Families**  
**83,831**

**Bags of Groceries**  
**24,607**

**Quality Childcare with an Educational Component**  
**11,212 Times**

**ALICE\* (Working Poor)**  
**70% of Clients**

**Free Monthly Books for Children**  
**756**

**School Supplies Distributed to over 8,000 Students**  
**\$35,698**

\*ALICE = Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed





Children at the Boys & Girls Club's summer camp painted a large canvas of their feelings about Hurricane Irma, helping them to process their emotions while creating something lasting. The artwork will hang in their new facility once it is rebuilt.



& after school music lessons for low income children in the Lower Keys, 305-504-7664.

**BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF THE KEYS AREA**, after school care, 305-296-2258.

**FLORIDA KEYS COMMUNITY LAND TRUST**, building affordable rental housing in Big Pine, 772-231-7532.

**METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH KEY WEST**, meals and grocery delivery to elderly Key West residents, 305-294-8912.

**WESLEY HOUSE FAMILY SERVICES**, meals and a weekly backpack of food for children at the Inez Martin Child Development Center in Key West, 305-809-5000.



RALPH DE PALMA

**MIDDLE KEYS**

**GRACE JONES COMMUNITY CENTER**, childcare for children of working parents in the Marathon area, 305-743-6064.

**INDEPENDENCE CAY**, transitional shelter; hot meals and shower & laundry facilities, 305-743-4582.

**KEYS AREA INTERDENOMINATIONAL RESOURCES**, food pantry; housing assistance; case management direct services, 305-743-4582.

**MARATHON RECREATION CENTER**, after-school and summer care for children of working parents, 305-743-4164.

**ST COLUMBA EPISCOPAL CHURCH**, free after-school program for children & youth at The Hammock House, 305-743-6412.

**UPPER KEYS**

**BURTON MEMORIAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**, daycare with scholarships available; food pantry and hot dinners once a week and on holidays, 305-852-2581.

**GOOD HEALTH CLINIC**, free primary care and advanced medical care to low income residents, Middle & Upper Keys, 305-853-1788.

*For additional services in the Keys, please refer to the Community Resource Guide, at [KeysUnitedWay.org/uwfk-community-resource-guide-2017](https://www.KeysUnitedWay.org/uwfk-community-resource-guide-2017), or call UWFK at 305-735-1929 for more details.*

*Visit [KeysUnitedWay.org](https://www.KeysUnitedWay.org) to join us in making a difference for working families as we all move beyond Hurricane Irma.*



# IN THE COMMUNITY.

## LIVE UNITED



Devastation was the most significant from Mile Markers 10 to 60.

ROB O'NEAL

In the weeks immediately following Hurricane Irma, the need for immediate, emergency financial assistance for families and individuals vastly outweighed the number of case workers and funds available within Monroe County.

An unprecedented crisis of this magnitude called for UWFK to adapt to better serve the community. We began our Hurricane Irma direct case management program in October 2017 and over the next six months, directly assisted over 150 families with urgent needs to help stabilize their lives and start back on the path to normalcy.

As the urgency subsided, UWFK transitioned its remaining case management

resources to two of our partner agencies already providing emergency and basic needs assistance as part of their year-

## UWFK directly assisted over 150 families with urgent needs to help stabilize their lives.

round mission. This transition to Florida Keys Outreach Coalition and Keys Area Interdenominational Resources extends UWFK's assistance to families struggling with hurricane-related expenses through June 2019.

Just one example is Colleen. She and her family live in Big Pine Key, one of the hardest hit areas. Her husband is in law enforcement and their family

has lived in and given back to the community for many years. Here is her story, in her words; "For days after Irma my husband was on call 24/7 with MCSO. We couldn't live at our house for 93 days, and were living in a hotel room with our teenage daughter. I would go to our house daily to try to do something, but there was nothing I could really do. My daughter and I helped

our neighbors. We took our \$1,600 FEMA check to buy food and supplies. We cooked on grills and drove around the Avenues feeding and bringing supplies to people who still had no electricity or place to live. My brother and friends came from Tampa with a U-Haul truck full of supplies; it looked like a yard sale."

In December, through UWFK's Hurricane Case Management Program we were able to provide Colleen's family with a \$1,000 Home Depot gift card to buy a portion of the supplies and materials they would need to make their home livable again.

When we checked in with Colleen last month, she said, "We're still living in a construction zone. No insurance yet: we've paid out of pocket for everything so far. Thank you so much for all you've done for us and our community!"

At UWFK, we continue to hear these heart-breaking stories nearly every day. Though time has passed since Irma's devastating impact, the sense of loss and the need for help remains just as great as it was a year ago for many families. Therefore, we remain committed to assisting Colleen's family and others however we can for the months and years to come as we continue to recover together.



*"This amazing gift will give us a chance to begin to replace items lost during the storm while we wait for our insurance to sort things out."*

- Colleen



The Miletis made and delivered thousands of sandwiches, and more.

Difficult situations can bring out the best in people and, following Irma's wrath, this proved true throughout the Florida Keys. A standout example of people who worked selflessly to help others are our Hurricane Heroes—Lisa and Geno Milette.

In May 2018, when four Marlin's baseball tickets were donated to UWFK by CenterState Bank, it was an opportunity to reward our local heroes. To solicit nominations, UWFK asked our Facebook friends who they thought had gone above and beyond and deserved a night out at a ballgame.

In just 3 days, our post received over 45 comments with the overwhelming majority sharing accolades about Lisa and Geno.

Working throughout the Keys, the Miletis immediately offered aid to their friends and neighbors after the storm. They fed hundreds, cleaned up debris, delivered furniture, offered a shoulder to cry on and a listening ear.

Sandra Waite wrote, "They have done so much more than anyone even knows about. They are the most loving and giving couple I know! Thank you, Lisa and Geno!"

To read what those touched by the Miletis said and about their trip to the Marlins game visit us on Facebook @KeysUnitedWay.



# Thank You Wells Fargo for Supporting the Florida Keys Community



# WELLS FARGO

In the aftermath of Hurricane Irma, Wells Fargo was here. In addition to setting up a mobile help center and busing in relief volunteers to Big Pine Key, the company donated \$10,000 to the United Way of the Florida Keys for hurricane recovery efforts — And their contributions aren't only made in times of crisis. Wells Fargo has and continues to be a trusted community partner and supporter of our local 501c3 United Way. Thank you Wells Fargo for your dedication to hurricane recovery in the Florida Keys and your ongoing generosity. You are a true example of all the good that can be done when we “Live United.”



“ Proudly serving the Keys for many years, we at Wells Fargo wanted to help this community recover after Irma. Through our many volunteers on the ground and our donation to United Way of the Florida Keys we knew our time and funds could and would really make a difference. ”

— Patrick Morris  
Community Affairs Officer

# LIVING UNITED.