



**Press Release**  
**For Immediate Release**

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**SUPPORT FOR TORNADO SURVIVORS CONTINUES**

Pensacola, Fla. – May 12, 2016

Though residents impacted by February tornados have benefited from volunteer labor and support that has resulted in patched roofs, legal aid or financial assistance, many months of hard work remain ahead.

United Way of Escambia County's Board of Directors has awarded additional recovery funding to five nonprofits who will provide survivors with long-term recovery assistance. The total funding released during this round was \$102,569. Nonprofit agencies that were awarded funding include: Alabama West FL Conference UMC FL Recovery – \$20,000, BRACE – \$49,581, Legal Services of North Florida – \$5,488, St. Vincent de Paul – \$3,000, and United Ministries – \$24,500.

United Way has invested \$243,625 in funding to support tornado recovery. Each organization that received funding has signed a contract by which they agree to provide weekly and quarterly reports on how the funds are used to support survivors. Round three will be announced once the final \$122,160 in additional pledges are received.

With initial funds of \$141,000 nonprofits partners were able to:

- Provide 137 people with in-kind goods and gift cards through United Way store.
- Provide over 109 people and several agency partners with \$15,000 in food that United Way collected or funded Manna to distribute.
- Help 171 people who called 2-1-1 connect to resources and their top need of housing. Additionally, provided \$3,106 in financial assistance to cover insurance deductibles and deposits.
- Assist 56 people through United Ministries outreach that resulted in \$9,857 in rent, mortgage and utility assistance.
- Assist 16 clients with \$5,183 of legal assistance provided by Legal Services of North Florida.
- Provide \$1,687 in supplies and support through St. Vincent DePaul.
- Assist 111 people with \$22,857 in financial support provided by the American Red Cross.
- Assist 15 homeowners with reconnects to the electrical grid and significant electrical repairs costing BRACE \$7,283.
- Provide \$3,000 in vouchers for families to select clothing and household items at Goodwill.
- Provide \$6,077 in gift cards that helped offset costs incurred by survivors.

In addition to the support survivors receive from local nonprofits, they can ease some of their immediate burden through return visits to the United Way of Escambia County's "store." Thanks to our community's generosity, tornado survivors may shop for new items that remain available. The store is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Located at 1301 W. Government Street in Pensacola,

items at the store include water, soap, toiletries, diapers, dental hygiene products and much more. The total value of all collected in-kind items from our caring community is \$69,232.

The impact this free store creates in people's lives is invaluable. Caroline, a survivor of the Pensacola-area tornado, returned to United Way's store for her third visit. When part of her roof ripped off during the tornado, many of her belongings were lost due to water damage. She came to United Way to get the items she needed most and left feeling a strong connection to the community that has helped her recover. Caroline says, "This is an excellent way for those affected by the tornados to get the supplies they need. When I think about it, it's kind of a blessing because even though my house is gone, people have helped me get back on my feet. I've been able to start over because of our generous community."

To shop at United Way's store, tornado survivors must register their address with 211 Northwest Florida by dialing 2-1-1 on their phone. Survivors may also dial 2-1-1 to get connected to community resources that may meet their recovery needs.

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