Dear Neighbor,

We know you are being inundated with messages in response to the COVID-19 crisis. We want you to know that United Way of Indian River County is operating as best we can to maintain business as usual. Community needs don’t disappear in times like these. Due to the impact of COVID-19, our community has an ever growing population in need that will find themselves under-resourced.

We know that 51 percent of Indian River County residents live below poverty or are considered ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed). This means these families will be critically affected as businesses close and ALICE is forced to make difficult decisions.

Additionally, our funded partners capacity to serve a growing demand for services will need support. United Way and our partners are working to identify critical needs and resource gaps and the best approach to respond in appropriate ways.

Our highest priority is the health and well-being of our community, team members, and all who visit United Way of Indian River County.

Our United Way Center remains open for small group meetings and activities. However, for the peace of mind and safety of our guests and team members, we have enhanced our housekeeping protocols and increased the availability of hand sanitizers and disinfecting wipes.

Knowing the importance of maintaining the financial stability of our neighbors, we cautiously continue to provide free tax preparation through our VITA program. In an effort to get struggling families their tax returns in a timely manner.

With the availability of virtual access to meetings, we have decided we will be instituting a completely electronic Citizens Review Process this year. All meetings will be conducted virtually or via phone conference and volunteer panelists will be required to have a computer with speakers and an internet connection. If you find yourself with some free time, we welcome your virtual involvement to help decide the investments our United Way will make!
In light of the national emergency brought on by the current coronavirus pandemic, as well as in response to the delay to the start of Minor League Baseball’s 2020 Championship Season, the United Way of Indian River County has elected not to host the annual Jackie Robinson Celebration Game at the Jackie Robinson Training Complex on April 15th. Since the game is part of the St. Lucie Mets’ home game schedule, the game would be played independent of the United Way at the Mets’ Clover Park in Port St. Lucie should the Minor League Baseball season resume by April 15th.

We invite members of our community to reach out and call 2-1-1, if they need help. For the most up-to-date information, please visit our website, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at [cdc.gov](http://cdc.gov), or the Florida Department of Health at [floridahealth.gov](http://floridahealth.gov).

We know we will get through this as a more connected and caring society. This is a great time for us to be a community even though we are less communal. Help the elderly with errands, check on your friends who must go to work and need child care, simply check on your neighbors about their mental health in this time of uncertainty. Support your local businesses hit hard by loss of revenue, be patient with retail workers. We can find ways to embrace, love and help each other through this by giving what we can. Thank you for all your support and let us know how we can help you as we all navigate this uncertain moment together.

With Kind Regards from the United Way Leadership Team,

Michael Kint
Chief Executive Officer

Meredith Egan
Chief Operating Officer