



**United Way of
Collier and the Keys**

NEWS RELEASE

June 15, 2023

New Chapter for United Way of Collier and the Keys

NAPLES, Florida—Next week, a new chief executive officer (CEO) will lead the United Way of Collier and the Keys' important work to improve the financial condition of households who live and work in our communities.

Following a national search, **Tiffani Mensch** will become CEO after being selected from Knoxville, Tennessee, where she has a deep, trusted history of non-profit strategy, operations, finance, resource development, marketing, and communications. Previously, she served as Chief Philanthropy and Marketing Officer for United Way of Greater Knoxville, Executive Director of the Alliance for Better Nonprofits, Development Manager for the Knoxville Symphony Orchestra, and Coordinator of Annual Giving and Alumni Relations for the University of Tennessee's College of Education, Health, and Human Services. Mrs. Mensch led the planning and development of a \$25 million state grant to coordinate care for families with economic, social, and developmental vulnerabilities and elevate them beyond their circumstances to self-sufficiency. *"I am so excited to immerse myself in this community to understand all the facets that make up Collier and Monroe Counties,"* said Mrs. Mensch. *"I am going to put everything I have into this role and community so that we all will thrive together."*

After more than a decade leading the organization, **Steve Sanderson** made the decision that now is the appropriate time for him to step aside as CEO, explore new opportunities, and for United Way of Collier and the Keys to welcome in a new leader. *"I am extremely thankful for Steve's thoughtful work, vision, and innovation. The organization's impact expanded exponentially during his leadership and grew from a 3-person staff in antiquated offices to now a dynamic organization that has leveraged \$31.5 million in funding to the community. Moving forward, I am thrilled to have Tiffani on board to bring her wealth of experience to our communities."* explained Collier resident and **Board Chair Kathy Connelly**.

In 2020, United Way of Collier County and United Way of the Florida Keys merged to become United Way of Collier and the Keys. Both communities have tourism-centered economies, both are vulnerable to hurricanes, and both have significant needs for human services. *"I'm excited to welcome Tiffani to United Way of Collier and the Keys. We know there are significant challenges in our community, and I look forward to continuing to address these under her leadership,"* said Keys resident and **Board Vice-Chair Maria Jones**.

Throughout his 12 years as CEO, Mr. Sanderson expanded the United Way's fundraising and collective impact—through direct services and partner agencies—and guided the organization through two hurricanes, as well as the extraordinary challenges brought on by the coronavirus pandemic. He brought the housing issue to the forefront, in 2015, by hosting an event called the

Community Economic Development and Equitable Housing Development Forum. This effort attracted the attention of the Urban Land Institute, Collier County Government, and other major non-profits who are today helping to advance solutions.

Recognized nationally for reshaping the dialogue surrounding financial hardship, in 2016, Mr. Sanderson led the United Way of Collier and the Keys to become the first United Way in Florida to adopt the funding focus of ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) to assist the growing number of working families living paycheck to paycheck because of the high cost of living, childcare costs, and transportation challenges, among other factors. In 2018, Mr. Sanderson secured a multi-million-dollar funding partnership with the United Arab Emirates and later forged an organizational merger with United Way of the Florida Keys. Mr. Sanderson established United Way 2-1-1 in Collier County to make critical connections between individuals and families in need and the appropriate community-based organizations and government agencies. Additionally, this year, the organization opened a Disaster Assistance Center at Coastland Center, in Naples, to assist the recovery from Hurricane Ian. By increasing development capacity and raising millions of dollars for disaster relief, Mr. Sanderson leaves the organization in a much stronger position than when he started. *“If needed programs were not available following hurricanes, then we created them. If partnerships were non-existent, we established them. I’m proud of how we stretched dollars by allocating 89% directly into impact programs, and we built up our major reserve fund for disaster preparedness. I’m encouraged about the opportunity of taking on a new assignment and championing Tiffani as she takes the organization to an even higher level,”* Mr. Sanderson added.

The first day for Mrs. Mensch will be Monday, June 19, 2023, and Mr. Sanderson has agreed to remain available through the beginning of August to assist in the transition.

For additional information or to facilitate interviews, members of the media should contact Kathy Connelly at 239-348-5786.

About United Way of Collier and the Keys:

Our United Way has a singular goal: to improve the financial condition of households in Collier County and the Florida Keys. When crises hit, they affect us all, but the effects are amplified for those who are already barely getting by. Many of those who are struggling are the paycheck-to-paycheck workers who are critical to the quality of life that we enjoy. Our vision is that all individuals who live and work in Collier County and the Florida Keys have the resources and opportunities they require—not just to survive—but to thrive. Donors provide the resources for United Way of Collier and the Keys to work with thirty-seven partner agencies to support our goal. Additionally, donors support direct services such as the 2-1-1 helpline, individual disaster case management, income tax preparation assistance, homelessness prevention, FEMA application assistance, insurance deductible assistance, and more. In addition to donations from individuals, families, and private foundations, the United Way of Collier and the Keys has a robust workplace campaign program and is always looking for new partnerships to help our communities thrive.