

**Media Contact:**

Alissa Hudak, Communications & Engagement Manager

[Alissa.hudak@uwcollierkeys.org](mailto:Alissa.hudak@uwcollierkeys.org)

724-710-1199



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** July 30, 2024

**United Way of Collier and the Keys Continues to Support Local Food Pantries**

Florida Keys – United Way of Collier and the Keys (UWCK) is proud to announce its continued commitment to local food pantries, fulfilling promises made during the 2024 “Feed the Keys-Be Like Mike” initiative. This summer, UWCK has distributed additional funds to assist in feeding families, providing crucial support to those in need.

**A total of \$3,000 in extra funds has been allocated among seven local food pantries:**

Burton Memorial United Methodist Church, First Baptist Church Islamorada, Florida Keys Outreach Coalition, Keys Area Interdenominational Resources (KAIR), Keys Community Church of Big Pine Key, Metropolitan Community Church Key West, and S.O.S. Foundation.



Leah Stockton, UWCK Keys Area President, emphasized the significance of this initiative: "Supporting our local food pantries is vital to ensuring that no family in our community goes hungry. UWCK is dedicated to making a difference and providing essential resources to those in need."

During the third annual “Feed the Keys” in May 2024, an impressive 6,210 pounds of food were donated at three locations across the Upper, Middle, and Lower Keys.

"Feed the Keys" is the largest community-wide food drive in the area, focusing on increasing nutritious food supplies at local food pantries. With 43% of residents living paycheck-to-paycheck, this initiative is crucial in alleviating food insecurity. Held in memory of beloved Monroe County commissioner, restaurateur, and UWCK Local Advisory Board member "Mangrove Mike" Forster, the drive celebrates his dedication to supporting Keys residents.

This year, UWCK strategically moved "Feed the Keys" to May, rallying community support for Monroe County families and children who lack access to school-provided meals during the summer months.

**###**

*Pictured: Pastor Ernie Deloach, Kaye Deloach, UWCK President and CEO Tiffani Mensch, UWCK Philanthropy Coordinator Michelle Nevel, UWCK Local Advisory Board member Jordan Upchurch, and UWCK Keys Area President Leah Stockton.*

**About United Way of Collier and the Keys:**

United Way of Collier and the Keys (UWCK) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the education, health, and economic mobility of our neighbors in Collier and Monroe Counties. Through strategic partnerships and collaborative efforts, UWCK addresses critical social issues and works towards driving positive, sustainable change to build stronger, healthier, and more resilient communities.