



United Way of Lee County Recommendations
to the Lee County Board of County Commissioners
for Nonprofit Human Services Grant Projects

June 21, 2022

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Project Background

In March 2021, the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) was signed into law. Lee County Government accepted \$149 million in Federal Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds to address the public health emergency and its economic impacts. The Lee County Board of County Commissioners (Board) designated \$17 million, to include program administration costs, for a Nonprofit Human Services Grant Program to expand or enhance direct human services to those who were negatively or disproportionately hurt by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Board, through a subrecipient agreement, partnered with United Way (UW) to administer the Grant Program. United Way was tasked to issue a Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA), review the project applicants and their projects for eligibility, guide a community-engaged proposal evaluation process, recommend eligible projects and funding amounts to the Board, administer the grantee subawards, and monitor project compliance and outcomes. This report provides the Board an update of this project. The report will summarize United Way’s NOFA and the nonprofit community’s responses. The report will outline the methodology used to evaluate the proposals. Most importantly, the report will provide United Way’s project and funding recommendations.

Project Summary

In response to the Nonprofit Human Services NOFA, United Way received 122 intents to present project proposals. Sixty-seven (67) nonprofit organizations presented seventy-four (74) eligible proposals with a total grant request of \$78,085,000. United Way and its seventy-plus volunteers evaluated the proposed projects and organizational risk. Their evaluations and scoring calculations resulted in the recommendation to fund sixty-two (62) nonprofit organizations with sixty-seven (67) projects. The table below summarizes the projects by categories. The full list of organizations, their projects and recommended funding amount are provided in the *Recommendations for Funding Nonprofit Human Services Projects* table herein. United Way recommends awarding \$15.9 million in projects at this time.

Table 1. Summary of Nonprofit Human Services by Project Category

Project Category	Recommended Awards	Percent of Total
Mental Health Services	\$3,269,000	20%
Healthcare Services	\$3,136,000	20%
Youth Services (Academic, Social, and Emotional)	\$3,097,000	19%
Homelessness Services	\$2,385,000	15%
Nonprofit Aide or Strong Healthy Communities	\$1,527,000	10%
Food Services	\$1,146,000	7%
Job Training and Employment Support	\$525,000	3%
Immigration Services	\$490,000	3%
Violence Prevention	\$400,000	3%
Grand Total	\$15,975,000	

Project Process and Timeline

United Way followed the *Nonprofit Human Service Grant Project Timeline* below.

Table 2. Nonprofit Human Service Grant Project Timeline

Date	Event
	ARPA Nonprofit Project Communication and Equity Planning
March 21, 2022	United Way Issued Notice of Funding Availability, NOFA posted, and applications opened
April 1, 2022	Deadline for questions regarding the NOFA
April 12, 2022	Responses to NOFA questions posted online
April 14, 2022	Grant project workshop and information session
April 21, 2022	Notice of Intent to Apply deadline and Risk Assessment deadline
April 29, 2022	Application Submission deadline
May 6, 2022	Application and Risk Assessment Submission Extended Deadline
May 19, 2022 to June 2, 2022	Projects Reviewed and Scored
June 21, 2022	Funding Recommendations to go before the Board of County Commissioners for approval
June 21, 2022	Notice of Conditional Selection or Non-Selection to all project applicants, pending approval by the Board of County Commissioners.
TBD	Award Grant
TBD	Monitor Subaward
TBD	Close Project

Community Engagement and Equity Focus

As required by ARPA, the Board specified that equity and community engagement should drive the strategy of identifying solutions that could respond to the broadest and most vulnerable who were impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, throughout the project United Way and the Board staff evaluated its equity and community engagement strategy.

United Way and the Board staff collaborated to develop a communication plan to help ensure that all eligible nonprofits were invited to participate to fund projects that address the needs of the communities and groups they serve. United Way issued a Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) using four main outlets. First, it was emailed to United Way partner network of agencies and through the Human Services Information Network of agencies. Second, United Way collaborated with Board Communication staff to provide press releases regarding funding availability to all Lee County media outlets. Third, the NOFA was promoted on the United Way social media channels and published online at unitedwaylee.org/arpa/. Fourth, a notice was published through the News-Press.

Furthermore, United Way dedicated staff to the project to engage the nonprofit community. Applicants and the public were provided opportunities to meet with United Way ARPA staff and to submit questions regarding the NOFA. Questions and responses were made available to the public.

NOFA and Application Process

In March 2022, United Way launched the NOFA. Training material and sessions were provided including introduction to ARPA (fund overview and intended use of funds); a review of eligible categories and activities, a review of the application process, and the use of a logic model to provide a justification and rationale for project development and implementation.

United Way's application to respond to the NOFA was provided online. Nonprofit agencies interested in applying for ARPA funds completed a Letter of Intent. A risk assessment was also required of each applicant as part of the application process. The risk assessment enabled United Way to evaluate the agency's strengths, risk of noncompliance, and deficiencies for which they may have need for additional support. Applications were required wherein specific questions were asked related to the organizational mission, community and collaborative strategy, and the proposed project details including a logic model, outputs and outcome, and project budget.

Proposal Review Teams and Scoring

It is United Way's policy, priority, and practice to ensure equal opportunity for funding and to minimize bias in the selection process. After applications were received, United Way worked with Board staff to help determine organization and project activity eligibility. The County provided valuable technical support that helped ensure that the process and potential projects are federally compliant. United Way took a two-phase approach to reviewing and scoring proposals. First, United Way leveraged its long-established community volunteer reviewer teams and methods to evaluate the proposals. Over seventy volunteers trained and participated in scoring the proposals. The reviewers are community leaders who have participated in United Way Annual Fund Distribution process. Secondly, United Way assembled an internal Nonprofit Grant Project review team. These members are experienced United Way operational leaders who have a broad knowledge of the community's needs, nonprofits organizations' capacity, broad funding availability for the programs. Both teams, separately, scored the proposal using different criteria noted below. The two scores were averaged to produce an overall score.

All eligible applications that met organization and project eligibility thresholds were reviewed and scored separately by two teams. Non-eligible organizations and their proposals were not scored.

Review Process

The following process was established to ensure evaluations were consistent, nonbiased, and equitable.

- The Project Proposals and the risk assessments were reviewed by United Way staff for completeness.
- Project Proposals were reviewed by Lee County Performance Management staff to determine project eligibility.
- Eligible Project Proposals then moved forward into the Community Volunteer Reviewer Scoring process. Seventy plus (70+) volunteers were randomly grouped and assigned up to four Project Proposals for review. Those who had a conflicting interest recused themselves from scoring affected proposals. A conflicting interest may include being an employee, volunteer, or board member of an applicant agency or other partnering entity that would otherwise directly benefit from the proposed project.
- On May 19, 2022, evaluator training was held and was recorded for volunteers unable to attend.

Phase 1 Scoring Criteria

Proposals were reviewed in United Way's ANDAR software, which walked volunteers through the Project Proposal section by section and guided the scoring criteria for each section. The maximum score a Project Proposal could receive by a reviewer was 100. Each Proposal received scores in the following categories:

- Project Summary (Project Aim, Means and Outcome) (25 points)
- Project Processes and Activities (20 points)
- Outputs and Outcomes (25 points)
- Project Context (20 points)
- Project Budget (10 points)

Scores from each volunteer group were averaged to determine an overall proposal score for each Project Proposal. The scoring process was completed by May 26, 2022.

Phase 2 Scoring Criteria

United Way convened group of United Way leaders and staff to score the second phase. This scoring process included a group discussion based on the 6 criteria below. A proposal could receive a maximum of 100 points.

- Does the proposed Project serve a critical need for Lee County? (25 points)
- Is there a large impact projected by the proposed Project? (20 points)
- Is the Agency receiving funding through ARPA dollars for this same project area, a different area, or not at all? (20 points)
- Does the Agency have a strong philosophy of partnership and collaboration? (15 points)
- Is this proposed Project a duplication of services or efforts? (10 points)

- Does this Agency or proposed Project have a risk associated with it or an obvious challenge that makes the Project unlikely to achieve its desired results or compliance? (10 points)

The United Way Score and the Community Volunteer Score were averaged to determine a Final Score for each Project. These final scores determined the level of funding the Project Proposal would receive.

Funding Process

United Way received more than \$78 million in eligible funding requests from community agencies; only \$16.2 million was allocated for distribution. Because total requested funding greatly exceeded available funding, United Way chose to equitably adjust all potential funding values based on the following:

- Agencies submitted grant requests based on budgets presuming 2.5 years of funding. United Way divided each proposed Project’s total grant request by 2.5 to determine an adjusted 12-month average funding requests per proposed project. Regardless of this calculation, agencies will have the full 30 months to utilize the awarded funds.
- To ensure equitable distribution of funds, United Way limited award recommendations to no more than two projects per agency.
- Maximum funding per project was based on the Project Proposals’ Final Scores using tiers:

Table 3. Project Proposal Scoring-Funding Tiers

Score Range	Funding Maximum
100 - 96	\$900,000
95 - 87	\$400,000
86 - 76	\$225,000
75 - 70	\$100,000
69 - 0	No Funding

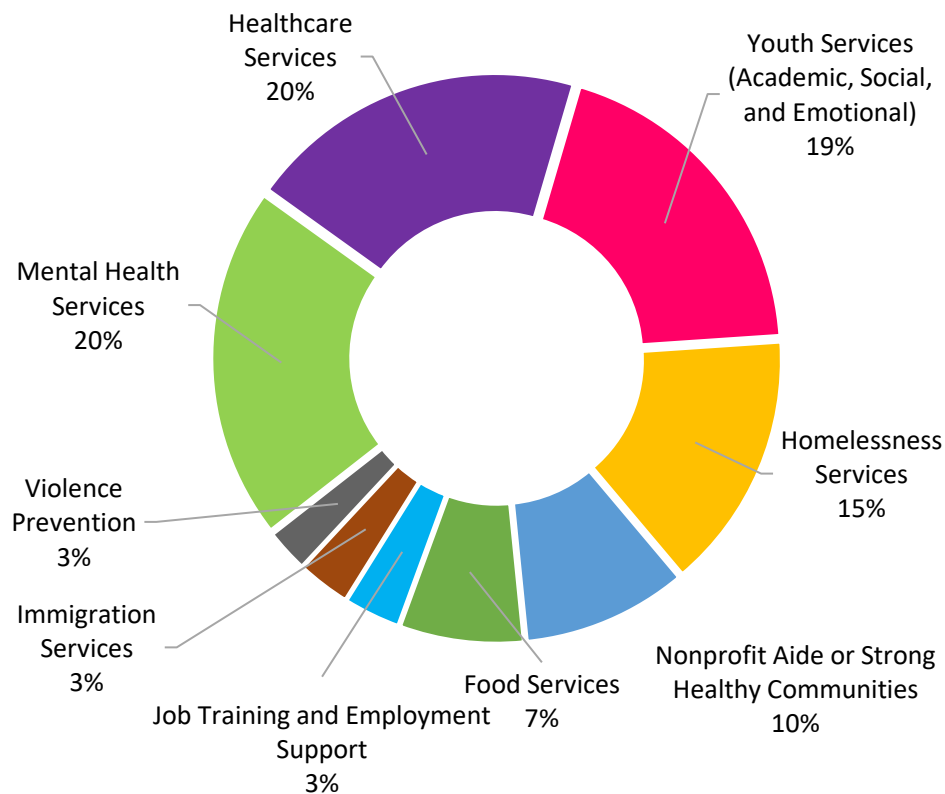
- United Way will reallocate any unused or declined funding within the approved projects and with the permission of the Lee County Board of County Commissioners.

Recommendations for Funding Nonprofit Human Services Projects

Table 4. Summary of Nonprofit Human Services by Project Category

Project Type Breakdown	Recommended Awards	Percent of Total
Mental Health Services	\$3,269,000	20%
Healthcare Services	\$3,136,000	20%
Youth Services (Academic, Social, and Emotional)	\$3,097,000	19%
Homelessness Services	\$2,385,000	15%
Nonprofit Aide or Strong Healthy Communities	\$1,527,000	10%
Food Services	\$1,146,000	7%
Job Training and Employment Support	\$525,000	3%
Immigration Services	\$490,000	3%
Violence Prevention	\$400,000	3%
Grand Total	\$15,975,000	

Project Funding Breakdown



Recommendations for Funding Nonprofit Human Services Projects Cont.'

The table below lists the recommended awards by category, organization, project and recommended award amount.

Table 5. Recommended Awards by category, organization, and project.

Organization	Project Name	Recommended Award
Food Services		
Harry Chapin Food Bank of Southwest Florida	Food Distributions	\$225,000
Hermanos Unidos	Speed Servin' Angels	\$100,000
Meals of Hope	Mobile Food Pantries	\$400,000
Midwest Food Bank	Family Food Boxes	\$400,000
St. Martin De Porres Outreach Community Ministry	SMDP Recovery: Food and Tutoring Service	\$21,000
		\$1,146,000
Healthcare Services		
Deaf & Hard of Hearing Center	Deaf & Hard of Hearing ARPA Response	\$100,000
Family Health Centers	Patient Enrollment, Re-enrollment Assistance	\$400,000
Family Initiative	Autism Continuum of Care	\$900,000
Florida Lions Eye Clinic	Free Eye Care Services to Prevent Blindness	\$95,000
IMPACT for Developmental Education	Early Intervention Services	\$199,000
Lighthouse of SWFL	Vision Rehabilitation & Support Services	\$232,000
Multiple Sclerosis Center	Multiple Sclerosis Neighborhood Community Centers	\$194,000
Premier Mobile Health Services	Health Improvement with Care	\$400,000
Project Dentists Care	Free Dental Care for Low-Income	\$57,000
Samaritan Health & Wellness Center	Integrated Primary Care Behavioral Health	\$260,000
Southwest Florida Free Pain Clinic	Suncoast Community for Pain Recovery	\$225,000
Sozo Wellness	MedLink Mobile Pharmacy Service	\$74,000
		\$3,136,000
Homelessness Services		
Catholic Charities Diocese of Venice	CCDOV Rapid Re-housing	\$400,000
Centerstone	Housing Outreach and Treatment (HOT) Team	\$400,000
Hearts & Homes for Veterans	Emergency Services	\$60,000
Salvation Army, The	Salvation Army Homeless Resource Day Center	\$400,000
St. Vincent de Paul CARES	Rapid Re-housing & Safer Emergency Housing	\$900,000
The Center for Progress & Excellence	The Empowerment Center	\$225,000
		\$2,385,000
Immigration Services		
Amigos Center	A New Practitioner for Amigos Center	\$90,000
Lee County Legal Aid	Lee County Legal Aid's Immigrant Advocacy	\$400,000
		\$490,000

Organization	Project Name	Recommended Award
Job Training and Employment Support		
Better Together	Better Families and Better Jobs	\$200,000
Dress for Success	Mobile Boutique and Career Center	\$100,000
Goodwill Industries	Opportunity Accelerator (OA)	\$225,000
		\$525,000
Mental Health Services		
AIDS Healthcare Foundation	AIDS Healthcare Foundation ARPA Health Service Project	\$104,000
Catholic Charities Diocese of Venice	Youth Counseling	\$240,000
Centerstone	Peer Care Coordination	\$225,000
Chrysallis Wellness Center	Chrysallis Community Mental Health Impact	\$400,000
Community Assisted and Supported Living (CASL)	Renaissance Manor of Lee County	\$400,000
Dubin Center, The	Creating a Dementia Informed Community	\$286,000
Hope Clubhouse of Southwest Florida	More Hope	\$400,000
Hope Healthcare	PACE Service Enhancement for Lee County	\$225,000
LARC	LARC Psychosocial Rehabilitation Program	\$141,000
Lee County Coalition for a Drug-Free SWFL	Opiate Prevention Through Proper Disposal	\$27,000
McGregor Clinic	Peer Overdose Prevention Initiative	\$81,000
National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) of Lee County	Lee County Crisis Intervention Team Expansion	\$60,000
Quality Life Center of Southwest Florida	Mental Health Program	\$400,000
Valerie's House	Valerie House Child Grief Support Services	\$280,000
		\$3,269,000
Nonprofit Aide or Strong Healthy Communities		
Cape Coral Animal Shelter	Have a Heart for Pets	\$60,000
Dr. Piper Center for Social Services	Expansion of the Senior Companion Program	\$196,000
Healthy Start Coalition	Healthy Start Diaper Bank	\$291,000
Hearts & Homes for Veterans	Busing for Veteran	\$65,000
Interfaith Charities of South Lee	Serving Our Community	\$136,000
Lee County Housing Development	Comprehensive Housing Counseling	\$225,000
Lee County Jewish Federation, The	The Friendly Visitor Program for Seniors	\$74,000
Pine Manor Improvement Association	Food Assistance Programs	\$136,000
Pine Manor Improvement Association	Strong Healthy Community Project	\$91,000
Providence Family Life Center	Center for Integrated Health & Wellness	\$100,000
Senior Friendship Centers	Senior Crisis Intervention Program	\$100,000
Special Equestrians	Special Equestrians Therapeutic Horsemanship Program	\$53,000
		\$1,527,000
Violence Prevention		
Abuse Counseling and Treatment (ACT)	Justice for Families	\$400,000
		\$400,000

Organization	Project Name	Recommended Award
Youth Services (Academic, Social, and Emotional)		
Basic Learning Skills	EDUCATE! Being Smart is Great	\$166,000
Boys and Girls Clubs of Lee County	Park Meadow Boys & Girls Club	\$288,000
Children's Network of Southwest Florida	Help is on the Way	\$400,000
Earn to Learn	Earn to Learn FL	\$200,000
Health Planning Council	Pyramid Model for Development & Mental Health	\$404,000
I WILL Mentorship Foundation	I WILL Mentorship Foundation	\$150,000
Junior Achievement	Junior Achievement Summer and Afterschool Programs	\$120,000
New Horizons	Super Kids Club, Tice	\$204,000
Our Mother's Home of Southwest Florida	Transitional Group Home for Young Mothers	\$290,000
PACE Center for Girls	Girls Coordinating Council & Reach Program	\$250,000
Quality Life Center of Southwest Florida	Arts, Character and Education "ACE"	\$400,000
YMCA OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA (Fort Myers Branch)	YMCA Youth Success	\$225,000
		\$3,097,000
Total		\$15,975,000
	Risk Mitigation Contingency	\$226,080
	Grand Total	\$16,201,080

Eligible Not-funded Projects

Seven (7) project applications were not funded based on final application scoring which did not exceed 69 points.

Table 5
Eligible Not-funded Projects

Eligible Not-funded Projects	
Organization	Project Name
AMIkids Southwest Florida	AMIkids Workforce Pathways Program
Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Sun Coast	Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Sun Coast Project
Catholic Charities Diocese of Venice (Project 2)	African Caribbean American Catholic Center/Positive Youth Development
Hearts & Homes for Veterans (Project 2 of 3)	Peer Advocate
Hodges University	ARPA Funding for Access to Higher Education
Suncoast Neighborhood Taskforce	Suncoast Community Recovery Plan
I WILL Mentorship Foundation (Project 2)	I WILL Mentorship Foundation – <i>repeat of project 1</i>

Not-eligible Not-funded Projects

Nine (9) project proposals determined to be not-eligible for the NOFA because they primarily focused on delivering capital construction/renovation, the request amount did not equal the required minimum requirement, or project would not provide a direct service to beneficiaries.

Table 6
Not-eligible Not-funded Projects

Not-eligible Not-funded Projects	
Organization	Project Name
Affordable Homeownership Foundation	Single Room Occupancy Purchase and Build Project
Center for Independent Living	Ramps for Independence - Home Accessibility Modification and Rehabilitation Project
Habitat for Humanity of Lee County (2 Projects were submitted)	Building Together - New Home Construction Project
River North Properties	Hermosa North Fort Myers Senior Housing Facility - Development and Construction Project
St Peter Evangelical Lutheran Church	Pillowcase Dress Outreach and Totes of Grace Project
Sunrise Community of SWFL	Shelter to Thrive - Capital Restoration Project
SWFL Community Foundation	FutureMakers Coalition – Educational Advocacy and Support
Waters Edge Church	Water's Edge Church Community Service Funds – Church Facility Use and Marketing