

News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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United Way's Annual Stuff The Bus Goes Virtual

United Way of Hernando County's 14th School Supply Drive Adapts Amidst a Pandemic

Spring Hill, FL – (June 24, 2020) [United Way of Hernando County's 14th Annual Stuff the Bus](#) will be held virtually throughout the month of **July 2020**. Due to COVID-19, United Way has transitioned this community wide event to an online platform allowing donors the opportunity to still purchase school supplies for Hernando classrooms. Residents near and far will have the ability to shop for essential supplies online and purchase items such as pencils, glue sticks, paper, crayons, etc. The supplies will be delivered right to United Way of Hernando County. There is even an option to donate gift cards and United Way will do the shopping for you.

How Virtual Stuff the Bus works:

1. **Shop NOW through the end of July:** www.Roonga.com/StuffTheBusHernando
2. In August, United Way will receive a shipment of purchased items.
3. Based on the quantities received, each Hernando school will receive a personal delivery from United Way with appropriate supplies for grade levels.
4. When school begins, teachers will have the opportunity to safely stock up their classrooms!

"Now more than ever, local classrooms will need the community's help," said Angie B. Walasek, United Way of Hernando County's Executive Director. "Our United Way received over 150 teacher survey responses touching on safety precautions, volunteer abilities, and options for this anticipated event," Walasek explained when sharing the deliberation that took place when considering moving forward with an in-person event for the 14th year in a row or not. "Although some were still willing to participate there were many with concerns around social distancing at a store or someone not wearing a mask even out in the heat." Angie stated, "Every year, this weekend event stocks up close to 200 classrooms, usually resulting in over 8,000 lbs. in supplies collected and close to \$10,000 donated to purchase additional items to fulfill teacher Wish Lists. We believe our Stuff the Bus effort fills a gap by providing tools necessary for children who may come to school unprepared, classrooms who need additional supplies, and for teachers who have exhausted resources and their personal budget; we simply can't NOT have it. United Way is determined to still help our schools, so we made it even easier to participate at the click of a button. There is so much uncertainty surrounding this pandemic that we want to be prepared for when classrooms are back in session whether that be at the end of the summer or late fall."

United Way's mission is to mobilize resources and continue to support Hernando schools. The United Way office along with participating Hernando Publix and Walmart stores will have a drop box during the month of July to collect any supply donations for Stuff the Bus. As Hernando residents continue to practice their resilience with COVID-19, United Way commends supporters for their generosity with this initiative and hope to make the same level of impact virtually this year.

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United Way of Hernando County's Virtual Stuff the Bus event is now live!

Start shopping by visiting www.Roonga.com/StuffTheBusHernando or check out the United Way website at www.UnitedWayHernando.org/StuffTheBus to learn more about this education initiative.

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United Way of Hernando County, Inc.:

[United Way of Hernando County](http://www.unitedwayhernando.org) (UWHC) was established as a 501c3 organization in 1987, and since then has continuously focused on creating partnerships and mobilizing our community to seek sustainable solutions to some of the most pressing local needs. UWHC strategically allocates Community Investment Funds in Health, Education, & Financial Stability programs with proven results and local impact. UWHC works hard to balance the growing demand for basic services such as food, utilities, and rent assistance, with our ongoing commitment to tackling the underlying causes of complex issues. **United Way** partners with businesses and organizations that share our vision for improving lives through the power of collective impact and working together. Our support for long-term commitments are essential to addressing key social issues, such as helping children, youth, adults & elders, encouraging health and wellness, including physical and emotional care, promoting financial stability and self-sufficiency, and crisis intervention. For more information on how YOU can **LIVE UNITED**, visit www.unitedwayhernando.org.