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**\*\*\* Media Release \*\*\***



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**United Way Receives Raymond James Grant  
to Improve Services for Homeless Community**

**JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA** – United Way of Northeast Florida received \$31,000 in funding for system upgrades to the Community Shared Database, an online database allowing current participating agencies serving the First Coast to access more than 3,800 resources and social services for the homeless population.

One of every six Northeast Florida children lives below the poverty line. These children frequently come from families in which parents are working, sometimes more than one job. But because wages are so low and the cost of living so high, many families don't earn enough to make ends meet. And their situations are so vulnerable; it only takes one circumstance, like an illness or a job loss, to force them from their homes and onto the streets.

The Community Shared Database is designed to:

- improve access to information about community resources and social services
- enable community resources to make information about their services widely available and easy to find
- enhance information sharing, referral, and collaboration among community agencies and resources

The Community Shared Database is unique and makes it possible for one agency to see what services a homeless individual received at another agency. The result is a

better understanding of the services needed and a more efficient use of scarce resources.

For the providers of these services, the Community Shared Database is a vital step in helping homeless families receive access to vital services.

The database includes information about both public and private, non-profit and for-profit resources, including agencies governmental programs, schools, businesses and more. Resources can be searched mapped by topic, key words, service area or zip code.

“The Raymond James funds are vital to upgrading the Community Shared Database system,” said Connie Hodges, President, United Way of Northeast Florida. “Their investment will allow our community to continue working together to ensure individuals and families receive the services they need.”

“Raymond James is committed to giving back and contributing to the success of our First Coast community,” said Linda Larkin Smith, Vice President, Investments, Raymond James & Associates, Inc. “Through Donor Advised Funds and the Raymond James Charitable Trust, we are able to invest and support organizations, like United Way of Northeast Florida, make an impact in the lives of children and families on the First Coast.”

United States Department of Housing and Urban Development funds have been secured as a match for the upgrade, which will begin this fall.

**United Way of Northeast Florida works to create real, long-lasting change in Northeast Florida by focusing on the building blocks for a good life. In partnership with volunteers, community organizations, and leaders, United Way is creating opportunities to improve life for people in Baker, Clay, Duval, Nassau and northern St. Johns counties. In addition, United Way leads United Way 2-1-1, a 24/7 information referral hotline; Life: Act 2, a proactive response to an exploding senior population; and Full Service Schools, a community approach to removing barriers to academic success. For more information, call 904-390-3200 or visit [www.liveunitednortheastflorida.org](http://www.liveunitednortheastflorida.org).**

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