

# INVESTMENT & PROGRAM OUTCOMES

## in DESOTO COUNTY



United Way Suncoast provides pathways to education and financial stability that give everyone in our community the freedom to rise. Our community impact strategy leads us to invest funds and resources into specific communities where our ALICE families live. By identifying zones of focus for our investments, we ensure that our partnerships are best positioned to maximize and multiply impact.

## COMMUNITY CONDITIONS

### ALICE in DeSoto County

**65% of community members in DeSoto county are ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed).**

These hard-working families reside above the poverty line but are forced to make tough financial choices, such as deciding between quality child care or paying the rent. These choices can have long term consequences not only for their families, but for all. From July 2022 – June 2023, UWS Strategic Community Partners served 1,921 people in DeSoto County; 93% of those served identify as ALICE.

### Dollars Invested

\$460,822 invested across all partnerships and initiatives, including three strategic community partners and the Quality Childcare Initiative.

## VOLUNTEER INCOME TAX ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (VITA)

<b>231</b> TAX RETURNS PREPARED	<b>\$74,382</b> SAVED IN TAX PREPARATION SERVICES
<b>\$314,386</b> RETURNED TO THE COMMUNITY	This year saw a 9% increase in the amount of dollars returned from our VITA Tax programs in DeSoto County.

## EARLY LEARNING

<b>715</b> PEOPLE	served by DeSoto Early Learning Strategic Community Partners, 93% ALICE.
<b>42</b> STUDENTS	received an increased amount of support for asthma, dental, vision and hearing issues.
<b>222</b> CHILDREN	served by our partners demonstrated age-appropriate communication, vocabulary and/or other early literacy skills or progress after one year.

## Number of Strategic Community Partners

25

### Focus Areas

Early Learning, VITA, Quality Childcare Initiative

### The State of Early Learning

**Florida Kindergarten Readiness (FLKRS):** In 2022, only 30% of kindergarten test-takers were “Ready for Kindergarten” in DeSoto County. Students who complete Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten are more likely to be prepared for kindergarten than those who do not.

**Florida Assessment of Student Thinking (FAST):** In DeSoto County, only 33% of students in United Way Suncoast Schools of Focus (West Elementary School, Memorial Elementary School, Nocatee Elementary School) are reading on or above grade level in 3rd grade.

### Volunteer Hours

23 volunteer hours were served in DeSoto County last year supporting the Quality Childcare Initiative and our 9/11 Day of Service.

## QUALITY CHILDCARE INITIATIVES

### IN COLLABORATION WITH THE EARLY LEARNING COALITION

<b>39</b> HOURS	of teacher professional development completed.
<b>138</b> CHILDREN	aged 0 to 5 who demonstrated progress in communication, vocabulary, and early literacy.
<b>1,509</b> BOOKS	age-appropriate books distributed to students to promote literacy.