

ADVANCING EDUCATION INCOME AND HEALTH

For Immediate Release

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October 9, 2015

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UNITED WAY GIVE RIMES EARLY LEARNING AND LITERACY CENTER \$10,000

Leesburg, Florida – Today, United Way of Lake and Sumter Counties continues to invest in education through a contribution of \$10,000 to Rimes Early Learning and Literacy Center. In 2014-2015 alone, United Way gave \$322,353 to local nonprofits in Lake and Sumter Counties to support their education programs.

Rimes will use this contribution to expand their technology by purchasing 25 new laptops, headphones and a mobile storage/charging cart to support their literacy and STEM initiatives. “Our objective is to help all of our students increase their reading skills with the use of I-station, Renaissance Place (Accelerated Reader) and other web based programs,” said Mary Dickinson, Rimes’ Literacy Coach. “This will enable the student to increase their reading speed and comprehension.”

United Way identified early learning as a key priority to improve the quality of education in the community. Education is a cornerstone for success in school, work and life. Research shows how it also benefits the whole community: high school graduates have higher earning potential, contribute more to their local economies, are more engaged in their communities, and are more likely to raise kids who also graduate, and go on to higher education or work.

“Early childhood education remains among the smartest investments we can make in our young people’s long-term success,” said United Way of Lake and Sumter Counties Board Member and Incoming Chair, Diane Culpepper. “United Way is proud to build on its long-time focus on education with its partnership with Rimes.”

By providing students with the necessary resources they need to succeed they are better prepared for the future. “Our students feed into Fruitland Park, Beverly Shores and Leesburg Elementary as third graders, and we want to make sure they are ready to slide right into the curriculum,” said Stacey Roberts, Ed.D., the school’s administrator. “We are getting them ready for 21st century learning. We greatly appreciate the United Way for supporting us in this effort. They are a tremendous partner to Rimes and to the Lake County community.”

In addition to this contribution, United Way works with its community partners to deliver programs and services that target community needs and provide the essential building blocks for a good life: a quality education that leads to stable employment, sufficient income to support a family, sound mental and physical health and a solid safety net in times of crisis.

About United Way of Lake and Sumter Counties

Founded in 1965, United Way of Lake and Sumter Counties is a 501©3 whose mission is “*To improve the quality of life and build a stronger community by leveraging resources and united community partners to impact education, income and health.*” For more information about United Way, please visit www.unitedway.org. Follow us on Twitter and Instagram: @UnitedWayLS or Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/UnitedWayLakeSumter> and #LiveUnited.