

# MEDIA ALERT

Academy Prep Foundation  
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## **ACADEMY PREP FOUNDATION EARNS \$55,000 IN COMMUNITY INVESTMENT FUNDING FROM UNITED WAY SUNCOAST**

*The UWS award, part of a \$6.05 million investment in the community,  
will support the organization's Graduate Support Services in St. Petersburg and Tampa.*

**TAMPA** – Academy Prep Center graduates will continue to find guidance through high school and college thanks to a special support program and an infusion of funding from the United Way Suncoast.

The foundation arm of the school received two grants totaling \$55,000 from United Way Suncoast's Community Investment Fund to support its Graduate Support Services initiative for students in St. Petersburg and Tampa.

The program follows students through their high school and college careers, providing eight years of support and guidance for Academy graduates. The program helps students navigate the high school and college admissions process and engages students in college focused activities while offering a variety of academic prep services. The program has been proven successful with 99 percent of Academy Prep products graduating high school on time, 80 percent enrolling in college and 7 percent in the military.

"Thank you United Way Suncoast for supporting the Graduate Support Services programs at Academy Prep Center of St. Petersburg and Academy Prep Center of Tampa," said Academy Prep Foundation chief operating officer Lincoln J. Tamayo. "Your partnership will help us ensure that the underprivileged students and graduates we serve at Academy Prep have equal access to quality college prep programs as well as continued academic, emotional, and financial support throughout high school, college, and beyond.

"By achieving academic excellence and successfully launching into lifelong careers, Academy Prep's graduates are becoming community leaders and privileged in their own right. It's partnerships like this between United Way and Academy Prep that make us all hopeful for our community's future."

Academy Prep Center's lasting community impact aligns with United Way's priorities. As households continue to grapple with the financial fallout of the pandemic and parents strive to navigate a challenging educational year, United Way Suncoast has stepped up with a \$6.05 million boost to 77 area nonprofits for the 2022 fiscal year.

UWS continues its 97-year mission of lifting up the community by sustaining its focus on four priority areas: early learning, youth success, financial stability and asset development. The investment extends to all five counties in UWS' region – DeSoto, Hillsborough, Manatee, Pinellas and Sarasota – and underscores the organization's long-time commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion.

"We are proud to support high-impact programs that will do so much good across our region," said United Way Suncoast CEO Jessica Muroff. "As we look to emerge from the pandemic and strengthen our commitment to diversity, equality, and inclusion with a new strategic vision, it's never been more important to advocate for our community. Through our partnerships and expertise, we will continue to create bold solutions to our biggest challenges – uplifting lives and achieving equity for generations to come."

For the second consecutive year, the organization convened a group of dedicated volunteers who conducted a thoughtful and thorough job in choosing the nonprofits. The allocation, an increase of more than \$400,000 from the 2020 allocation, will impact nearly 150,000 people in UWS' five-county region. UWS also raised and distributed \$1.9 million for pandemic relief over a six-week period in 2020.

Each grant will fund specific programs that support the interconnected priority areas and help ALICE (Asset, Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) families who stand just one unexpected expense from enduring hardship.

### **About Academy Prep Center Foundation**

Academy Prep Centers of Education are private, non-profit middle schools serving low-income students in grades 5-8. In our Tampa Bay community, many remarkable young people dream of a real opportunity for success and fulfillment. These children are talented, creative, and have the will to transform their lives – lives that will in turn transform our community. However, these students live in some of the more impoverished areas of Tampa Bay. Academy Prep's vision is to be the premier Tampa Bay urban middle school which prepares hundreds of economically disadvantaged students to achieve academic success and become community leaders.

### **About United Way Suncoast**

United Way Suncoast severs the constraints that prevent families from thriving. We dismantle the barriers to human prosperity, uniting our community along the way. When we provide pathways to early learning, financial stability and youth success, we lift up families as they cultivate a future beyond circumstantial constraints. We provide choices. We provide opportunities. We create space for families to grow without limitations, elevating communities by building a future with equity for all. We are proud to serve the people of DeSoto, Hillsborough, Manatee, Pinellas and Sarasota counties by operating and funding services and programs to help our community have the Freedom To Rise.

**### END OF RELEASE ###**