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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **RAPPAHANNOCK UNITED WAY ANNOUNCES \$1.5 MILLION INVESTED IN THE COMMUNITY**

August 1, 2017 – Fredericksburg, VA – Cynthia White is retired, but still works part-time in order to make ends meet.

The retired Fredericksburg resident doesn't drive and relies on the FREE Tax Preparation & Financial Coaching program funded by Rappahannock United Way.

"I retired in 2015 and get Social Security, which is not very much," said White, who has been able to get her taxes prepared for free through this program for the past five years. "This service is important. I always thank Rappahannock United Way for being here for us – for those who can't afford to have their taxes done."

In an effort to help more people like Cynthia in our community, Rappahannock United Way is investing \$1,550,445 through a variety of investment strategies again this year. Funding to local community programs for the 2017-18 funding year can be allocated through donor directed designations, Community Impact, and Capacity Building grants.

"By funding vital programs, we're giving people the resources they need to be strong, stable and independent," said Janel Donohue, President of Rappahannock United Way. "When people choose to give to Rappahannock United Way, they're helping individuals and families right here in Fredericksburg, Spotsylvania, Stafford, Caroline and King George."

Programs such as the FREE Tax Preparation and Financial Coaching service offered by Rappahannock United Way helped thousands last year alone.

In fact, 2,080 people had their taxes prepared for free and 719 people received free financial coaching this past tax season. Those individuals put a total of \$115,000 into savings accounts. All of these financial practices are helping hard-working households gain financial stability.

“The programs we’re funding this year will truly make a difference in so many lives in our community,” said Donohue, who noted that many people often need more than one program or service to get back on their feet and gain stability. “Helping people become financially stable, live healthier and have access to a good education that leads to high school graduation and a steady employment is what we’re all about. When you support Rappahannock United Way, you’re allowing us to fund programs in all of these areas which is key for so many who want to help themselves and succeed in life.”

For the local programs receiving Community Impact and Capacity Building Grants this year, more than 50 community volunteers were recruited and trained to evaluate the programs which focus on helping local residents achieve their potential through Education, Financial Stability and Healthy Living.

“The process ensures that Rappahannock United Way is transparent in our grant making decisions,” said Kathryn Palmer, Community Impact Manager at Rappahannock United Way. “This Citizen Review process gives donors a voice in funding decisions, which means that donations to Rappahannock United Way have the impact that our donors want to see.”

To help more people in our community like Cynthia, donate to Rappahannock United Way! Visit <https://www.rappahannockunitedway.org/donate/>

### **About Rappahannock United Way**

Founded in 1939, Rappahannock United Way is a local nonprofit serving Fredericksburg, Spotsylvania, Stafford, King George and Caroline. Rappahannock United Way’s vision is a community where individuals and families achieve their potential through Education, Financial Stability and Healthy Living. Together, we can create opportunities for a better tomorrow. That’s what it means to LIVE UNITED.



((CUTLINE)) Cynthia White, retired Fredericksburg resident, relies on a Rappahannock United Way funded program to get her taxes prepared at no charge. Rappahannock United Way depends on donations from individuals and community partners to fund these types of programs each year.

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