



# United Food Bank and Services

## Annual Report 2023-24

*Providing a Hand Up and Not a Hand Out*

*Mission Statement: To provide assistance for those in need, moving them from a state of hunger and impoverishment to self-sufficiency, empowerment, and self-reliance.*

### Year in Review, and What a Year It's Been



Mary Heysek, President/CEO

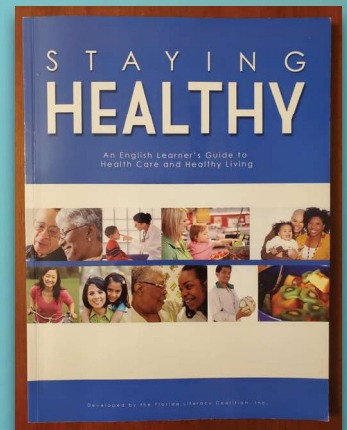
First and foremost, thank you to each and every one of you who has supported us through our capital campaign. While there are still some additional funds we need to raise to get us over the homestretch, so many of you have already helped us to make our dream a reality. We've been giving tours of our new building, on schedule to open in January, and some of the photographs of its construction phases are included on the following page. Our more than 400 volunteers, who have made do with wonderful temporary space, thanks to Hillsborough Community College, Plant City Campus, have noticed they are in tight quarters, with vastly different logistics that they have adapted to in the interim. They, staff, the board of directors, and I, are anxious to utilize our newly constructed space at 702 East Alsobrook Street in Plant City in the very near future. Not only this, we're excited for our clients to have larger, newer space to accommodate

more personalized one-on-one intakes, a demonstration kitchen, a training room, a computer lab room, and more cubic feet than we could ever imagine for donated food storage, both perishable and nonperishable food, that will help meet increasing community needs.

Last fiscal year, 2023-2024, we had nearly \$9 million in our budget for food, both perishable and nonperishable inventory. The food budget for this fiscal year, 2024-2025, is closer to \$15 million, because of forecasted increases in need, based on our expanding East Hillsborough service area that includes the ten communities of Plant City, Thonotosassa, Seffner, Dover, Historically Registered African American community of Bealsville, Brandon, Valrico, Lithia, Riverview, and Wimauma. You can imagine the anticipation of our warehouse crew, headed by Terrance Green, our Warehouse Manager, who has been with this agency for six years, to know that they have nearly doubled the cubic feet, with the ability to stack three pallets high instead of one, and they now have a loading dock that, since our move to the now demolished building in 2016, we made do without. Improved logistics, including design efficiencies and increased capacity, are only a Certificate of Occupancy away for us now.

*Continued on next page*

### *UFB Promotes Health Literacy & Healthy Food*



New F.E.E.D. program curriculum materials made possible by the Florida Literacy Coalition, Inc. See program details on page 2.



Fresh fruits and vegetables distributed to promote health



continued from page 1

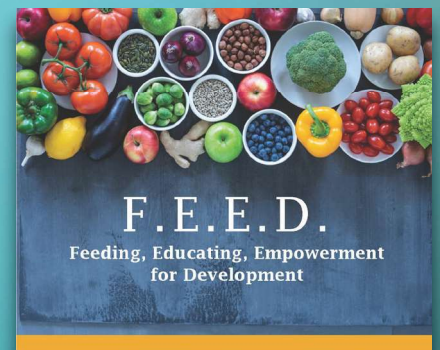
Come December, we will start to make our move back to 702 East Alsobrook Street and into the new building. For all clients and visitors who got used to seeing us on the HCC Plant City Campus off Cherry Street, those temporary signs will be coming down. We were fortunate to have that ideal location and such generous support from the college leadership and staff. We could not have made this transition, as smoothly as we have, without their help. We also have been gifted with the talented team of Dykstra Construction, a subsidiary of JF Petroleum Group, with Darry Dykstra as its President, and his father, Vern Dykstra, the original founder of Dykstra Construction, serving as the Project Superintendent. Besides Dykstra Construction, I want to acknowledge and thank the Building Committee, with Matt Buzza, as the



Vern Dykstra and Mary Heysek

Chair, and with Clay Keel, Bill McDaniel, Marsha Passmore, Dean Pfeffer, Dan Raulerson, William Thomas, and Dodie White as the members. The entire committee worked hard to get this new building constructed.

Another accomplishment of the food bank, apart from giving this community and all stakeholders a new building in the middle of Plant City's Community Reinvestment Area (CRA), is the submission and subsequent grant award made by the Children's Board of Hillsborough County for \$287,696 to fund a little over a year of the newly launched Feeding, Educating, Empowerment for Development (F.E.E.D.) program. The program allows participants to learn how food, health, and education work together to strengthen children and families. Participants in the program receive health literacy education, using curriculum provided by the Florida Literacy Coalition, Inc., and they receive other health and educational tools, including nutritional food supplies, children's books, and a Publix gift card. A collaboration came together to help with F.E.E.D., including Lakeland Regional Health Physician Group, Plant City; Publix; Bruton Memorial Library in Plant City; the Florida Literacy Coalition, Inc.; and Healthy Start Coalition of Hillsborough County. We will work with 580 adult family members and children as well as partnering with Lincoln Elementary Magnet IB World School and Trapnell Elementary School, both Title I schools in Plant City, to interface with their social workers in program referrals, given this food bank's existing partnership with these two schools and 15 others to address food insecurity.



Mary Heysek, President/CEO



Pictured left to right in front of our new building in progress: Lt. Matthew Lawson, Plant City Police; Amy Carpenter, Aide to Rep. McClure; Rep. Lawrence McClure, Florida House; Angelica Lombrana, COO of UFB; Sen. Danny Burgess, Florida Senate; Mary Heysek, President/CEO of UFB; Jeremy Rhodes, Marsha Passmore, Rev. Dean Pfeffer, Bruce Sperry, and Phil Waldron, UFB Board Members; Dodie White, UFB Board Chair; Jason Jones, Vice-Mayor of Plant City (behind Dodie); Kathleen Kilton and Nate Kilton, Mayor of Plant City; Christine Miller, Hillsborough County Commissioner District 4; Darry Dykstra, President, Dykstra Construction; Dan Raulerson, UFB Board Treasurer; Kim Simon, Aide to Senator Burgess

*Thank you to the following vendors who have made in-kind donations to our new building campaign: Consolidated Electrical Distributors, Inc., Dykstra Construction (a subsidiary of JF Petroleum Group), ELT Landscape, Gordon Food Service, Keel Farms, Turner's Tree Farm, and Wetherington Tractor Services, Inc.*

## New Building Update

The new building is nearing completion with an anticipated move-in date set for January 2025. There have been so many supporters to the capital campaign that we would run out of space in this report to list each and every one. Yet, the new building will have a donor wall, something brand new to this agency, giving thanks to supporters of \$2,500 and above to the campaign, as well as including recognition in various rooms, sections, and capital items that have been named after their respective contributors. We are grateful to Florida Senator Danny Burgess and Florida Representative Lawrence McClure for helping make a \$2 million grant from the State of Florida possible, as presented on August 8th. Dykstra Construction is the general contractor for the project and anticipates furniture will be in place, and the parking lot grading should be completed in early October. Landscaping should be completed in mid-October, and completion of all construction by year end.

## Feeding Our Legacy

With financial support from Mosaic and the Community Foundation of Tampa Bay, among others, this program provides intakes to determine individual needs and personalized monthly food delivery to vulnerable, low-income seniors at the following two Plant City locations: the Historic African American Bealsville community and the HUD Section 202 Plant City Towers. Two health screenings were conducted by BayCare at each of these locations in FY 2023-24, and United Food Bank and Services supplied blood pressure monitors and first aid kits to all program participants. A total of 320 senior households received services in the last fiscal year. Pictured below right are Legacy Coordinators Geri Marshall and Rosemary Bonner.



## Feeding Our Future

This nonprofit assists students, from kindergarten to 12th grade and those enrolled in Hillsborough Community College (HCC) Plant City campus, with food assistance, school supplies, and hygiene products. The food bank coordinates with the social workers at 17 schools in Plant City and the surrounding area to make sure that food bags are made and available for on-site distribution to children identified with food insecurity at the K-12 schools. HCC students are advised to come to the food bank directly and need only to show their student ID to receive services. The number of weekend bags distributed to K-12 schools in FY 2023-24 (22,660) nearly doubled from what was handed out the previous year (10,074). A total of 7,521 summer and holiday break bags were distributed in FY 2023-24 and another 427 bags of food were provided to HCC college students in this same fiscal year.



## Veteran Spotlight



Rick Banda is no stranger to this food bank. He has been volunteering here for more than eight years. He represents a cherished part of our community, not just as one of our many devoted, volunteers, but as an individual to be honored for his service to our country, a member of the United States Marine Corps (USMC), with a total of 24 years in service, prior to his retirement in 1991. There have been 5,413 military personnel, including retired and active duty, who have come to the food bank in fiscal year 2024. Mr. Banda is a member of this food bank, and also contributes two days per week volunteering. He turned 74 in August, and holds a Business Management and Marketing degree that he received in the Marine Corps. While military service had its challenges, he knows it made him a better person. He believes the USMC taught him a lot of self-discipline and good values, like his belief in treating people the way you would want to be treated. He is an optimist, and believes help is there if you want it. A 2023 Military Family Advisory Network report indicates that 20 percent of military and veteran families, and 25 percent of active duty families, experience food insecurity, compared to 12.5 percent of U.S. households.

## Volunteer Spotlight

To Betty Roney, a volunteer at this Organization since 2004, United Food Bank and Services is family. Ms. Roney is 80 years young, and finds her main socialization happens at the food bank or her church. She volunteers at this nonprofit on Mondays and Thursdays of each week, and she is also a client. After retiring, her income was significantly lower. Ms. Roney is exceptionally meticulous about her organization of the product that comes in and helps create efficiencies in the storage and dispensing of perishable and nonperishable items. She attributes this to her first job in assembly line work at Proctor & Gamble. She believes her volunteerism is just what you do. Somewhere along the line, God taught her that giving is powerful and it builds her up, and, when He taps her on the shoulder, she believes she ought to listen and do it. She believes selecting volunteerism should be in an area that excites someone.



Jasmine Perez and Elizabeth Quiroz representing United Food Bank at HCC Back to School Week, a part of the Feeding Our Future Program

## Save the Date: Food for All "Saddle Up for A Cause"

★ Saturday, February 1, 2025 ★ 6:00 PM - 9:00 PM ★ Big Red Barn, Plant City ★

## Fill a Bowl, Feed a Soul

An annual event for the food bank since 2010, the 2023 Empty Bowls fundraiser on November 11, chaired by Silvia Dodson, continued the tradition of gathering our community together to increase awareness about hunger and to create a positive, fun day of activities, entertainment, and soup, all benefiting our hunger programs.

- Key Sponsors: Driscoll's and TD Bank
- 250 community members attended
- 26 different types of soup offered by over 20 business, civic organizations, and churches
- A community bowl, where clay is added by event attendees and then completed by Lesli Platt, is raffled off each year (previous community bowl is pictured top center)
- 9 local artists glazed bowls for the live auction (see top left and top right photos)
- 24 area Hillsborough County school students made bowls as parting gifts for attendees
- Janet Tombros, 3D chalk artist, created several designs (bottom photo), as did students who learned the craft at an October "Learn to Street Paint" workshop taught by Janet
- Ace Jackson & The Jump Kings, Larry King, and Plant City Community Chorale provided entertainment
- \$40,125 raised in sponsorships, live auction, and raffle



**Empty Bowls Team:**  
Judy Collins, Silvia Dodson, Barbara Franques, Betty Goodwine, Mary Heysek, Dawn Hyatt, Angelica Lombrana, Betty Medina, Jane Morgan, Lesli Platt, Jeremy Rhodes, Sherry Scheitler, Leigh Scott, Phil Waldron, Ryan Whitaker

# In Gratitude for Our 2023-24 Partners

(Individual Donors Recognized and Honored Separately)

Amscot	Optimist Club
Arts Council of Plant City	Patterson Companies
CareerSource	Plant City Elks Lodge 1727
Cherrington Foundation	Plant City Lions Club
Children's Board of Hillsborough County	Plant City Optimist Club
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints	Plant City Rotary Club
Community Foundation Tampa Bay	Publix Super Markets Charities
DeBartolo Family Foundation	QGS
Driscoll's Charitable Fund	Rays Baseball Foundation
Epic Affect	Regions Bank
Frank E. Duckwall Foundation	Mary & Bob Sierra Family Foundation
Plant City Elks Lodge	The Mabel & Ellsworth Simmons Foundation
Emergency Food and Shelter Program	Sprouts Health Communities Foundation
Feeding Tampa Bay	Star Distribution Systems
Florida Blue	Stellar MLS
Florida Strawberry Festival	Sudler Foundation
Gordon Food Service	Suncoast Credit Union
Gail Handel Family Foundation	Sweet Life Farms
Hillsborough County Government	Tampa Bay Network to End Hunger
Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office	TD Bank
Jarrett Scott Ford	TECO
Junior League of Tampa	United Way Suncoast
Francis & Gertrude Levett Foundation	Unity in the Community
The Mosaic Company	Walmart
No Kid Hungry	Wawa
	Winn Dixie
	Wish Farms

# Partners in Action



Above: Just a few of our volunteers lending a hand  
 Top: TECO Employees  
 Top: Plant City Marine Corps  
 Center: Alert Tire Service Owner  
 Center: Student Brayden Foos  
 Bottom: Burney Elementary Students  
 Bottom: Saputo Dairy Employees

# Corporate, Civic, and School Volunteers

Walgreens	Plant City High School Cheerleaders
Barton Malow	FFA
Enterprise Rent-A-Car	TECO
Driscoll's	HCC Students and Staff
U.S. Marine Corps	Florida Department of Health
Plant City	Marshall Middle School
Saputo	Plant City High School
Citizen's Bank	Durant High School
Pactiv Evergreen	Simmons Career Center
Plant City Women's Club	Strawberry Crest High School
Bank of Tampa	Tampa Sheds
Raulerson, Castillo	Plant City Optimist
Plant City Entertainment	South State Bank
Girl Scouts	
Courtney Paat State Farm Insurance	



Top Left: Representatives of the Florida Strawberry Festival present a \$60,550 donation from the proceeds of the Strawberry Ball to members of the UFB staff and board.  
 Top Right: Nancy Mense of Driscoll's receives United Food Bank's Community Enrichment Award, dated August 22, 2023, from UFB President/CEO Mary Heysek.  
 Left: Mary Heysek and United Food Bank volunteers receive a \$2,000 donation from Plant City Elks Lodge member George Domedion.

# Financial & Demographic Information

## CLIENT DEMOGRAPHICS

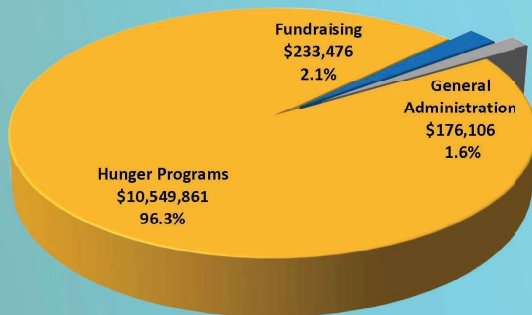
### Services by Geographic Area FY 2023-24:

Plant City (includes Bealsville).....	138,012
Dover .....	17,582
Valrico.....	5,861
Brandon .....	5,672
Seffner.....	9,642
Lithia .....	5,861
Thonotosassa.....	5,105
Riverview .....	1,134
Wimauma (newly added).....	189

### Client Demographics FY 2023-24:

White	76.18%	Female	46.2%
(including White Hispanic)		Male	53.8%
Black	19.46%	Children	33.5%
Asian	0.39%	Infant	11.0%
<u>Other</u>	<u>3.97%</u>	Adults	31.6%
Hispanic	36.0%	Elderly	23.9%

## UFB ANNUAL EXPENSES FOR FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2024



Total Expenses FY 6/30/24: \$10,959,443  
Annual audit conducted by Ramos & Floyd CPAs PLLC

## BY THE NUMBERS

United Food Bank serves Plant City, Dover, Bealsville, Thonotosassa, Seffner, Valrico, Brandon, and Riverview, an area with a combined total population of 335,995 with additional service to Lithia and Wimauma. (US Census 2020 and ACS 5-Year Survey 2018-2022)

Plant City		Hillsborough County	
Per Capita Income	\$29,466	Per Capita Income	\$39,509
↓Poverty w/children<5	20.0%	↓Poverty w/children<5	11.8%
↓Poverty F/head/child<5	41.5%	↓Poverty F/head/child<5	35.9%
Persons in Poverty	15.4%	Persons in Poverty	12.9%
White	65.5%	White	72.6%
Black	13.6%	Black	18.6%
Asian	1.7%	Asian	4.9%
Hispanic	33.4%	Hispanic	30.4%

## FOOD COLLECTION & DISTRIBUTION

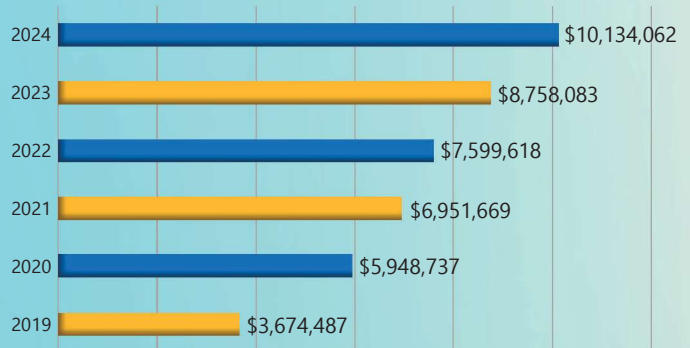
	FY 2023-24	FY 2022-23
Inbound Food in pounds:	3,199,946	2,707,488
Outbound Food in pounds:	3,387,113	2,765,392
Individuals Served:	42,795	32,177
Individual Services:	189,058	174,812
Family Services:	79,728	74,289



## VOLUNTEER SERVICES

In fiscal year 2023-2024, 446 volunteers provided 13,869 hours valued at \$438,399, at an hourly rate of \$31.61 for Florida, as determined by the Independent Sector.

## UFB FOOD DISTRIBUTED ANNUALLY FISCAL YEARS 2019-2024



Annual audit conducted by Ramos & Floyd CPAs PLLC



### 2023 Fall Food Drive

Each fall, area participating schools collect food for us to distribute to those in need. In 2023, 16 schools collected over 22,220 pounds of food.

Pictured in the top photo are the principals of each of the school winners for overall weight: Durant High School 4,835 lbs. (center); Strawberry Crest 3,503 lbs. (left); Walden Lake 2,119 lbs (right).



Pictured in the bottom photo is Ann Rushing, Principal of Lincoln Magnet Elementary, receiving UFB's Bethanne Pearce Innovation Award for increasing student participation in the food drive at Lincoln.

## Our New Program Educator



Deborah Foos joined United Food Bank and Services in July of 2024 to serve as the Program Educator for the newly launched Feeding, Educating, Empowerment for Development (F.E.E.D.), as funded generously by the Children's Board of Hillsborough County. Ms. Foos retired in 2018 from teaching at the Caprock Academy in Grand Junction, Colorado, where she taught Spanish curriculum to grades 3-12. She received her Bachelor of Arts in Spanish from Georgia Southern University. Ms. Foos began her mastery of Spanish in high school. Even more recently, she has continued to serve as a Certified Health Coach with Optavia, starting first in Marathon, Florida, to her current location in Plant City. She has assisted the State Attorney's Office with victim witness coordination and advocacy, while serving officially as a Victim Advocate for the state. She is no stranger to managing health issues as she works daily to keep her lupus

diagnosis under control. When first diagnosed, she lost her medical insurance and had to search for prescription assistance, with one prescribed medication costing \$5,000 a month. She is a true advocate for the F.E.E.D. program participants at United Food Bank, she has lived it. She has the education, career experience, and real life experience to share with the food bank clients.

## Specialized Pantries

Items of necessity—other than perishable or nonperishable food items—are distributed annually. Thanks to the Diaper Bank as supported by the Junior League of Tampa, the food bank distributed 48,800 diapers through its Diaper Pantry in FY2023-24; feminine care products through the UFB Pink Pantry, with 63 percent of all of the female clients using the Pink Pantry; and thanks to Dr. Arthur Herold, pet supplies are distributed through the Mary Mike Herold Pet Pantry, given that 69 percent of the clients are pet owners.



Diaper Pantry volunteers

## United Food Bank and Services

*Our vision is to stamp out hunger in East Hillsborough County and raise the standard of living for the truly needy, offering opportunities for self-improvement, education, job skills, and enhancing life for individuals and families; thus, affecting change for the community. These are our programs that help us realize our vision:*

**Feeding Our Community:** Provides a box of balanced food to clients twice a month via pick-up at the food bank.

**Feeding Our Future:** Provides food to school students during out-of-school times through Weekend Backpacks and Break Bags; College Hunger students receive food bags and hygiene items.

**Feeding Our Legacy:** Provides food, services, referrals, and hygiene items to vulnerable seniors 65 and older.

**F.E.E.D.:** Health literacy classes for families with children ages 6-14, with a needs assessment at intake, community referrals and navigation, wellness tips, and food distribution.

**Diaper, Pink, & Pet Pantries:** Three separate pantries providing necessities such as diapers, feminine care products, and pet supplies.

**Direct Community Outreach:** Delivery of additional food boxes to 15 low-income residential communities.

**Holiday Meals:** Provides over 1,800 meals at Thanksgiving and Christmas.

**Outreach Services:** Financial and health classes such as Money Smart, Health Literacy, Diabetes Prevention, Couponing, Cooking on a Budget, and Growing Sustainability; seasonal flu shots; GED Prep Program Referrals; veterans' support; job search and placement; direct community outreach to low-income areas.

**In-House Work Experience Internships:** Hillsborough Community College and CareerSource.

**Partnerships:** Hillsborough Community College, Hillsborough County Public Schools, Florida Department of Health, Florida Blue, BayCare's South Florida Baptist Hospital, Lakeland Regional Health Physician Group Plant City, Feeding Tampa Bay, FEMA, grocery stores, private donors, foundations, and corporations.



Angelica Lombrana, Chief Operating Officer for United Food Bank



Goals for Food, a partnership between Mosaic and the Tampa Bay Lightning, benefits area food banks by collecting donated food and raising funds to distribute to our community's food banks. For the 2023-24 season, Mosaic donated \$163,000 for Lightning home-game goals and hat tricks, which was then distributed across 12 local food banks. UFB is grateful for the \$12,500 we received.



United Food Bank is a good steward of the donations we receive, maintaining a 4-star rating with Charity Navigator.





702 E. Alsobrook St.  
 Plant City, FL 33563  
 813-764-0625  
 www.ufbpc.org



**Upcoming Food Bank Events:**



**Saturday, November 9, 2024**

*Empty Bowls*, 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM  
 Willaford Railroad Museum



**Saturday, February 1, 2025**

*Food for All: Saddle Up For A Cause*  
 6:00 - 9:00 PM, The Big Red Barn



**UFB Board Chair’s Report**

We are excited at the prospect of moving into our new building, thanks to all who have made it possible, within the next two months. Our goal was to move into the building debt-free, and we are nearly there. Help and donations are still needed, but we have rounded the final stretch of the capital campaign, and we are now being expertly directed in a methodical sustainability fundraising process, as supported by a grant from Driscoll’s Charitable Fund. This will help assure that we have the resources and tools to sustain our growth in the new facility that is nearly complete and to directly respond to a great increase in community needs.

Awaiting a board meeting at the food bank one afternoon, I saw a construction worker pull up in his truck with tools and equipment packed in the bed, and in line to receive his portion of supplemental food from this organization. It would appear as though he came right from work. We’re seeing, in so many cases, such hard-working individuals who are just struggling to make ends meet and need a “hand up and not a

hand out.” God has blessed us to be in a position where we are able to assist those in need of help across the 10 communities we serve.

With this larger facility, nearly double the cubic feet of our previous building, at the same 702 East Alsobrook location, we will be able to expand inventory, staff, and clients served. We can do this thanks to the outpouring of support—no matter what size the contribution to our capital campaign, we relied on each and every gift, with a few more to come in as hoped, to complete it. On behalf of the Board of Directors, I thank Senator Burgess and Representative McClure for helping us secure a \$2 million Appropriation from the State of Florida, as received in 2024 toward the building. I have great appreciation for HCC Plant City for letting us lease space, shore up our temporary relocation plan, and have little-to-no interruptions in service, pending completion of the new building.

Lastly, given our modest staff size, I need to extend my heartfelt appreciation to our volunteers. Without them, we would not be where we are today.

*Dodie White*

**Board of Directors**

- Humam Alabsi, M.D.
- George Banning, Emeritus
- Matthew Buzza
- Silvia Dodson
- Clay Keel
- Bill McDaniel
- Marsha Passmore
- Rev. Dean Pfeffer
- Jon Poppell, Emeritus
- Daniel Raulerson
- Jeremy Rhodes
- Bruce Rodwell, Emeritus
- Bruce Sperry
- William Thomas, Sr.
- Phil Waldron
- Brian West, Emeritus
- Ryan Whitaker
- Dodie White

Officer and board member bio sketches available at [www.ufbpc.org](http://www.ufbpc.org)