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Rappahannock United Way Expands Ride United Program to Support Pandemic Recovery

Fredericksburg, VA. (Oct. 4, 2021) – Rappahannock United Way and the United Way of Greater Richmond & Petersburg have announced the expansion of its Ride United program, which originally launched in May as a resource for individuals to get to and from COVID-19 vaccination appointments.

Now, the program is expanding to offer a greater range of services to support pandemic recovery in the Greater Fredericksburg region beginning mid-October. The program and its expansion were made possible by a \$10,000 donation from the personal injury law firm of Allen, Allen, Allen & Allen.

The Ride United program seeks to reduce transportation barriers that prevent individuals from accessing healthcare, getting quality jobs, completing education programs, and more. Transportation has proven to be a key issue for many individuals seeking services to support pandemic recovery.

Ride United now offers round-trip, on-demand Lyft rides to connect community members to services that are critical to pandemic recovery, including education, employment, health care and more. Riders fill out a request form and, if eligible, are contacted via text message with next steps.

“Transportation continues to be a challenge for many across our region as we work our way out of the pandemic. Access to school, jobs and healthcare is especially important,” said James Taylor, president and CEO of United Way of Greater Richmond & Petersburg. “We saw an opportunity to expand the program to benefit more people in and beyond our region after our initial rollout in May and we’re grateful for the continued support of Allen & Allen in this expansion of services.”

“The Ride United program is a great addition to the many COVID-19 inspired resources that Rappahannock United Way has provided to our community during the pandemic.” said Sarah Walsh, Chief Impact Officer at Rappahannock United Way. “Having reliable and affordable transportation has been an ongoing challenge for many local households when trying to access healthcare services and work, so we are proud to join forces with our friends at the United Way of Greater Richmond & Petersburg, and Allen & Allen.”

For individuals interested in using the program, Ride United can be utilized for the following reasons:

Medical Trips*

- COVID-19 vaccine appointments
- Flu vaccine appointments
- Non-emergency medical appointments
- Pharmacy/prescription pick up
- Non-emergency hospital visit

(*Ride United may NOT be used for COVID-19 testing.)

Employment Trips

- Job interviews, job training and job fairs
- Pre-job requirement (drug test, finger printing, other required documentation)
- Work (one-time)

Public Benefits Trips

- Department of Social and Health Services
- Social Security Administration
- Rental assistance appointment
- Utility assistance appointment
- WIC appointment
- Tax preparation services
- Financial coaching
- Medicaid/CHIP benefits access
- Housing benefits access

School Success and Readiness

- School physicals
- Required school vaccination appointments
- Kindergarten registration
- Classroom meetings with teachers

Of the program expansion, Edward Allen, president of Allen & Allen said, “At Allen & Allen, we’re always looking for meaningful ways to make an impact across the community, and with offices in both Richmond and Fredericksburg, we’re excited to see the positive effect this program has on people looking to improve their lives.”

For more information about Ride United, please visit: <https://www.unitedway.org/our-impact/featured-programs/2-1-1/ride-united>

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About Rappahannock United Way

Celebrating over 80 years in our community, 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. Learn more at www.RappahannockUnitedWay.org

About the United Way of Greater Richmond & Petersburg

United Way of Greater Richmond & Petersburg empowers individuals and addresses systemic problems to provide everyone with a clear path to success. We do this by conducting research, funding programs and organizations, driving systems-level change and engaging with individuals in 11 localities across the region.

About 211

211 is a vital service leveraged by millions of people across North America. Every day, clients contact 211 to access free and confidential crisis and emergency counseling, disaster assistance, food, health care and insurance assistance, stable housing and utilities payment assistance, employment services, employment services, veteran services and childcare and family services. Last year, 211 responded to over 12 million requests for assistance across the United States. The service is available to over 95% of the U.S. population, including Puerto Rico and Washington, DC, and is available in most of Canada. Individuals in need or who are looking for information for someone else can call 211 from a cell phone or landline or visit www.211.org for more contact options.

About Lyft

Lyft was founded in 2011 and is one of the largest transportation networks in the United States and Canada. As the world shifts away from car ownership to transportation-as-a-service, Lyft is at the forefront of this massive societal change. Our transportation network brings together rideshares, bikes, scooters, car rentals and transit all in one app. We are singularly driven by our mission: to improve people's lives with the world's best transportation.

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