



For Immediate Release  
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## RAYS AND SUNCOAST CREDIT UNION PARTNER FOR 11TH SEASON OF READING WITH THE RAYS

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla.—This summer, the Rays and Suncoast Credit Union will host the 11th season of Reading with the Rays — Read Your Way to the Ballpark, an incentive-based reading program that encourages Pre-K to 12th grade students to avoid summer learning loss by reading for 24 hours during the summer months.

Participating libraries track students' progress and award prizes for reaching certain goals, including two free tickets to a Rays game. Reading with the Rays is made possible with the help of the *Tampa Bay Times* Newspaper in Education and public library systems in Hillsborough, Pinellas, Manatee, Citrus, Polk, Pasco, Hernando, Sarasota and Charlotte counties.

The program officially begins on Sunday, May 27, with the inclusion of the Reading with the Rays insert in the Sunday Edition of the *Tampa Bay Times*. Kids will be able to pick up their Reading with the Rays game card at a participating library to begin reading around the bases.

This year, Rays players and coaches will read books, discuss the importance of reading, ask trivia questions and hand out prizes at various participating schools and libraries as part of three Reading with the Rays visits.

"We believe that through reading, children are empowered in school and better prepared for life," said Executive Director of Suncoast Credit Union Foundation **Cindy Helton**. "This program encourages children to read and we hope to see thousands of hours logged this summer."

In 2017, the Reading with the Rays program inspired more than 40,000 children across nine area counties to spend more than 400,000 hours of their summers reading.

For more information about the program, visit [raysbaseball.com/reading](http://raysbaseball.com/reading).

### **Suncoast Credit Union**

Suncoast Credit Union is the largest credit union in the state of Florida, the ninth largest in the United States based on membership and the 12th largest in the United States based on its more than \$9.1 billion in assets. Chartered in 1934 as Hillsborough County Teachers Credit Union, Suncoast Credit Union currently operates 65 full-service branches and serves more than 760,000 members in the following Florida counties: Charlotte, Citrus, Collier, DeSoto, Dixie, Gilchrist, Glades, Hardee, Hendry, Hernando, Highlands, Hillsborough, Lee, Levy, Manatee, Marion, Pasco, Pinellas, Polk, Sarasota and Sumter. Since its founding in 1990, the Suncoast Credit Union Foundation has raised and donated more than \$22 million to organizations and initiatives that support the health, education and emotional well-being of children in the communities that the credit union serves. For more information, visit [suncoastcreditunion.com](http://suncoastcreditunion.com), [Facebook.com/SuncoastCreditUnion](https://www.facebook.com/SuncoastCreditUnion) or @SuncoastCU.

### **The Rays Baseball Foundation**

The Rays Baseball Foundation, a 501(c)(3) organization and the official charity of the Tampa Bay Rays, focuses on youth and educational programming in the Tampa Bay region that make a measurable difference in the community. Key contributors to the Foundation include Rays owners, players, corporate partners, fans and employees.

—RAYS—

*The Tampa Bay Rays mission is to energize the community through the magic of Rays baseball. The organization is committed to building a strong community bond through meaningful interactions and charitable donations, and has proudly represented Major League Baseball since 1998.*