



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**August 21, 2020**

### **CONTACT:**

Holly Miller, United Way of Midland County

[holly@unitedwaymidland.org](mailto:holly@unitedwaymidland.org)

Cell: 989-859-6652

## **Midland County Habitat for Humanity and United Way Partner Together for Home Revitalization Project to Help Flood Victims**

**MIDLAND, MICH.** – The combination of a national pandemic and a historic 500-year flood have left many people in Midland County struggling to put the pieces back together. As part of the recovery efforts, Midland County Habitat for Humanity (MCHFH) and United Way are working with the Long Term Disaster Recovery Group in an innovative way to prioritize and serve families impacted.

“Although we are not a funded partner of United Way of Midland County, our missions and visions are similar,” said Jennifer Chappel, President/CEO of Midland County Habitat for Humanity. “We continue to foster a relationship with UWMC and partner to help repair homes affected by the flood. Habitat’s decades of work illustrate that individuals and families thrive when they have safe and stable homes in a safe and stable community. Our vision is a community where everyone has a decent place to live and we are eager to partner with United Way and engage in repairing homes affected by the flood.”

The organizations will lead a style of neighborhood revitalization in which MCHFH and UWMC partner with local residents and engage local businesses, corporate partners, faith-based organizations and volunteer groups to rehabilitate and repair homes impacted by the 2020 flood. The goal is to engage volunteer groups this fall to serve up to 20 families to help make their homes livable. This is in addition and in collaboration with the efforts taking place through the Long Term Disaster Recovery Group. The fall will serve as the kick-off for a series of neighborhood revitalization work in coming months and years.

According to the data collected in the Midland County Damage Assessment Survey, over 2,400 households reported damage to their residence including 900 homes reporting major damage and 115 homes reported destroyed. Residential damages are estimated to be between \$100-150 million.

“Midland County Habitat for Humanity and United Way share a commitment to serve the vulnerable Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed (ALICE) and poverty populations, which have been

severely impacted by recent events,” said Holly Miller, president and CEO of United Way of Midland County. “There’s strength in numbers, and we are thrilled to collaborate to make a bigger impact. There’s no place like home and we want to restore a sense of safety and security that many local families have lost.”

This collaborative work will function as part of the Long Term Disaster Recovery Group. The team of Disaster Case Managers will work to identify families based on impact and Area Median Income (AMI), with a focus on families hard hit in the Sanford Area. However, help will be open to all in the Midland County Geographic Service Area (GSA).

United Way is providing base funding for the revitalization project through their Rise Together fund, along with leveraging their volunteer connections. Additional support will come through the Long Term Disaster Recovery Group. The Rise Together fund is a culmination of generous support from Family Foundations, corporations, small businesses and numerous individuals.

“We are pleased to partner with United Way of Midland County on raising dollars for the Rise Together fund,” shared Ruth Alden Doan, president of the Herbert H. and Grace A. Dow Foundation. “We recognize there are so many who are struggling in the wake of historic flooding and a national pandemic, and we are honored to offer hope. These partnerships demonstrate collaboration, coordination and the power of coming together.”

Midland County Habitat for Humanity has a long history of helping families find stability through safe and affordable housing. They will also leverage their extensive construction management experience, volunteer coordination, and funds raised to support the flood repair effort on this important project.

Lisa Gerstacker, President and Bill Schuette, Executive Vice President, of the Rollin M. Gerstacker Foundation commented that, “We are delighted that United Way of Midland County and Midland County Habitat for Humanity are teaming together to revitalize and repair homes in our community. We are pleased to be a contributor on this project. The United Way-MCHFH partnership is just another indicator that we will continue to rebuild and be stronger than ever.”

If you are a resident impacted by the flood and have not yet connected with a disaster case manager, please call (989) 374-8000. For future information on volunteering with the home repair efforts or to donate, go to [reliefmidland.org](http://reliefmidland.org)

###