

PRESS RELEASE/REQUEST FOR COVERAGE

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PATCH Program Concludes After Restoring 292 Households *Collaborative Effort Restored 292 Households After 2020 Derecho*

CEDAR RAPIDS, IA— August 10, 2020, is a day that many residents in Cedar Rapids and surrounding communities will never forget. On that day, a powerful derecho devastated the area, bringing record-breaking winds that damaged homes, displaced families, and tested the resilience of our community.

In the wake of the disaster, a collaborative response emerged – the Providing Assistance to Community Homeowners (PATCH) program. Formed by a coalition of community partners, PATCH provided critical home repair and financial assistance to those affected by the storm.

Through this effort, a total of \$3,442,000 was distributed to help homeowners recover. Funding was made possible through the support of the Greater Cedar Rapids Community Foundation, City of Cedar Rapids, Linn County, and United Way of East Central Iowa.

“We’re proud to be part of our community’s recovery,” said Karla Twedt-Ball, President and CEO at the Greater Cedar Rapids Community Foundation. “This collaboration among funders, corporations, government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and individual donors led to a meaningful program that supported those most affected by the derecho – particularly individuals and families with limited resources.”

“Our community has faced disasters before and understands the challenges that arise after significant events, such as the August 2020 Derecho. From our initial LAP-AID discussions about the damage and lessons learned from the 2008 flood, we realized that external assistance would take time, but our homeowners needed immediate help, said Linn County Community Assistance & Outreach Director Ashley Balius. “We are fortunate to live in a community built on trust and strong relationships, enabling us to act swiftly and develop an innovative and collaborative program like PATCH to get housing rehab assistance on the ground quickly.”

“While the Derecho was overwhelming, it also reinforced how resilient the people of Cedar Rapids are,” said Cedar Rapids City Manager Jeff Pomeranz. “The success of the PATCH program is a great illustration of that resilience. We are grateful to all our partner agencies who made this program possible.”

The PATCH program was a collaborative effort. Waypoint led the intake process; East Central Iowa Council of Governments (ECICOG) and the Housing Fund for Linn County handled program administration; and Matthew 25 managed construction. Additionally, the Neighborhood Finance Corporation assisted with the closing process and construction management.

“This program stepped up and gave our community hope when it was needed most,” said Kristin Roberts, President and CEO at United Way of East Central Iowa. “This program highlighted the power we have in coming together in times of crisis. It took many organizations to get our neighbors back in safe and stable housing.”

Over the course of nearly four years, PATCH served 292 households, helping the community fill gaps in repairing homes and ensuring individuals had access to a stable living environment.

For residents like Anna Kane, a mobile homeowner and PATCH recipient, the support made a profound difference in repairing her home. “After the derecho, the insurance company sent someone over, but they didn’t give me a lot of money,” she said. “And, most of it didn’t happen until a year after. I got so cold in my house that winter. PATCH truly made a difference.”

In addition to its impact, the program earned several awards including: the 2021 Housinglowa Innovation Award, 2023 Corridor Business Journal Non-Profit of the Year at their Connect for a Cause event, and a 2021 National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) Impact Award.

As the PATCH program comes to an end – its legacy remains – a testament to what’s possible when a community comes together in the face of adversity.

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About Providing Assistance to Community Homeowners

Providing Assistance to Community Homeowners was a collaborative program that was stood up, following the 2020 derecho. This program was a collaborative effort among numerous non-profits, government municipalities, and other organizations, which provided home repairs and assistance to individuals in need.