

Horizon Bank Makes Game-Changing Donation to the United Way to Assist Local People to Stay in Their Homes

LAPORTE COUNTY, IN ---- Horizon Bank has made supporting individuals and families through COVID Relief efforts a priority during the pandemic. Building on previous gifts and services, the bank has just announced an additional \$30,000 gift to United Way of LaPorte County to extend the local Homelessness Prevention Program.

In October, local funders, including Duneland Health Council, Healthcare Foundation of La Porte, Unity Foundation of La Porte County, and United Way of LaPorte County, came together to address the most pressing community needs resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. Out of this partnership a pilot project took seed to help La Porte County residents stay in their homes or apartments by providing matching funds to three of the larger township trustee offices (Center, Michigan, and Coolspring) for rent, mortgage, and utilities assistance. The pilot project was developed to test the effectiveness of providing a “last dollar” funding match. “Last dollar” funding guarantees that government and other funding resources have been accessed first, before drawing upon our locally raised COVID relief dollars in an effort to stretch them as far as possible. United Way of LaPorte County has taken the lead funding role thus far in this endeavor.

After three months, the group of funders and trustees determined that the pilot was a success. Over \$30,000 of the trustees’ assistance was matched by United Way, extending the trustees’ ability to serve more people in need and avoid potential homelessness. “Preventing this type of crisis is not only more cost-effective for everyone involved, it is also the more humane approach from a caring community. Our two local shelters are often at or close to capacity, and when they are full, people facing homelessness must choose between staying in their cars, on the street, or in motels, if they can afford the weekly rate. Our local funders are committed to the safety and stability of our community and appreciate the support that has been shown from Horizon Bank and others as we navigate the difficulties of a global pandemic,” said Kris Pate executive director of United Way of LaPorte County.

“As we continue working to end homelessness in LaPorte County, it’s important that we’re building the right programs and funding the right resources to assist LaPorte County residents in staying in safe, permanent housing,” said Craig Dwight, Chairman and CEO. “This is a wonderful program designed by the local United Way and Unity Foundation to assist people in need to stay in their homes and to survive the protracted impact that this pandemic has had on their lives,” continued Dwight.

The group of funders made the decision in January to transition the pilot to a fully implemented Homelessness Prevention Program and to invite other La Porte County trustees to participate in this matching reimbursement program if they begin running out of funds to provide housing and utility assistance. Any La Porte County trustee can now request to be a part of the match program by contacting info@unitedwaylpc.org.

United Way was hopeful that their funds raised to support homelessness prevention would last into early summer. According to Pate, “Having Horizon Bank step in at this point with such a sizable and generous donation is a game-changer for us and will allow us to extend the program for several more months.”

If others in the community would like to contribute to the Homelessness Prevention Fund, please visit www.unitedwaylpc.org/give and select Homelessness Prevention Program from the drop-down menu when asked where to direct your donation, and your gift will be directed to this initiative.

About Horizon Bank

Horizon Bancorp is a locally owned, independent, commercial bank holding company serving Indiana and Michigan through its commercial banking subsidiary Horizon Bank. Horizon also offers mortgage-banking services throughout the Midwest. Horizon Bancorp may be reached online at www.horizonbank.com. Its common stock is traded on the NASDAQ Global Select Market under the symbol HBNC.