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Lucas County CARES Act Funding Supports Internet Access For Low Income Families

Toledo, Ohio, January 21, 2021— In 2020, the Board of Lucas County Commissioners made CARES Act (Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security) funding available to local organizations to cover the cost of expenditures incurred due to the unprecedented COVID-19 public health emergency.

Lucas Metropolitan Housing received a generous grant of \$297,787 to support enhanced cleaning, modifications to community rooms and internet connectivity for our residents and programs. Participants included the residents at Collingwood Green and Parqwood Apartments.

"During the pandemic, internet access has become a top priority for all – whether to continue education, obtain telehealth services, seek employment or meet other needs. LMH used the grant funds to obtain internet hotspots for homes with school age children and families. Priority was granted to families who have been unable to obtain a hotspot through the educational systems," stated President and CEO, Joaquin Cintron Vega.

The distribution was carried out through LMH's Information Technology and Resident Services Departments. During the distribution process, LMH representatives connected with residents and helped some set up their hotspots. What follows are some of the most memorable quotes heard from residents:

"This really came just in time! I have four kids doing online school and my other internet source was terminated."

"My grandkids are finally going to be able to stay over on school days!"

"This hotspot will help me continue my education and make things better for my family."

LMH remains grateful for the partnership with the Board of Lucas County Commissioners and for their support of this important initiative. Commissioner Pete Gerken, when referring to the grant stated, "During this time of crisis, the ability to have access to the internet is critical for families and individuals in our community, especially those with limited resources and support. The digital divide between those who can easily access the internet and those who can't became even more glaringly clear in the pandemic as schools went online and businesses and social agencies closed or reduced operations. Internet access through Wi-Fi hotspots will help families and individuals with a wide range of activities, from schoolwork to job searching to paying bills."

About Lucas Metropolitan Housing

Established in 1933, Lucas Metropolitan Housing (LMH) continues to provide affordable housing to adults, seniors and children in its Public Housing, Housing Choice Voucher, Mixed-Income and Market Rate housing units. LMH also provides a myriad of programs and opportunities designed to improve the total quality of life for our residents, with the ultimate goal of achieving self-sufficiency. The programs and services are the results of successful collaborations with numerous community partners.

Our current housing portfolio consists of 2,633 Public Housing units; 4,657 Housing Choice Vouchers; 322 Low-Income Housing Tax Credit units; 198 Market Rate units and 107 Homeownership Properties. There are approximately 17,500 people who reside in LMH properties. Lucas Metropolitan Housing partners with ALL people and organizations willing to exchange ideas and efforts to enhance Toledo, Lucas County and the world.

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