Warm Hearts, Warm Homes

Winter weather is upon us, temperatures are dropping, and heating costs are climbing. Unfortunately, this winter will likely be an especially expensive one for all of us. Help our neighbors stay safe and warm with a donation to CommUnity’s Basic Needs program.

Basic Needs provides housing and utility assistance for hundreds of Johnson County families each year, preventing evictions and shut-offs of critical utilities like water, gas, and electricity. This winter, MidAmerican Energy, the natural gas supplier for Johnson County, expects a historic rise in natural gas prices. Along with increasing prices at the pump and inflated grocery bills, it will be difficult for many of our neighbors to make ends meet.

In the last six months, we’ve seen an astonishing increase in requests for housing and utility assistance. Johnson County residents are eligible to receive housing and utility assistance twice each calendar year. With support from the Consultation of Religious Communities, we’ve increased the average assist size to $150 per household.

With the coldest months of the year still ahead of us, we’ve already distributed our entire budget. We need your help to answer the call when our neighbors come to us with no options left.

While utility companies won’t issue shut-offs during the coldest midwest months, the bills will continue to pile up, resulting in hundreds of dollars due come spring. Your support gives our neighbors peace of mind heading into the darker days of winter.

To make a donation to the Basic Needs program, visit builtbycommunity.org/donate

Eligible individuals may call 319-351-0128 Monday through Friday between the hours of 9:30 am and 4:30 pm to receive assistance through the Basic Needs program.
Special Thanks to our Donor Organizations

The following organizations made a financial donation in FY2021, but were not included in our Annual Report due to a reporting error.

Thank you for supporting our mission!

ACT, Inc.
Adamantine Spine Moving
AFSCME Local 183 Labor Union
All Nations Baptist Church
Amana Farms Partnership
Benita Caldwell DDS
Build To Suit
CBI Bank & Trust
Coralville Ornament Collectors Club
Diane J. Baumbach, LISW, PC
Dillon’s Furrow Food Club
East Union Mennonite Women
Faith United Church of Christ
Farmers & Merchants Savings Bank
Fern Investments
First Christian Church
Floodwater Comedy Festival
Foster Appliance
Girl Scout Troop 2003
Hawkeye Harley-Davidson
Hawkeye Title & Settlement Services
Heritage Christian School
Hi Point Early Bird Golf League
Iowa City Ambulatory Surgical Center
Iowa City Noon Kiwanis Club
Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services
IT Solutions
Legacy Point Retirement Community
Lineage Logistics
Mechanical Service, Inc.
MidWestOne Bank
Modus Engineering
Norman Borlaug Elementary PTO
Old Capital Kiwanis Club
Pleasant Valley Golf Course and Properties
Pugh Hagan Phram PLC
Raymond James
Regina Elementary School
Scheels
Solon United Methodist Church
St. Wenceslaus Church
Stanley Consultants Charitable Foundation
The Burch, LLC
Stutsman’s Inc.
Toyota of Iowa City
University of Iowa Hospitals & Clinics Child Neurology
Urban Acres Real Estate
Wig & Pen Pizza Pub

CommUnity has been an essential resource to our community and a valued UI partner for many years. Having dedicated service for University of Iowa students in partnership with CommUnity is a tremendous benefit and will help fill a critical need on our campus.

- Angie Reams, PhD
University of Iowa Associate Vice President & Dean of Students

Coping with Suicide Loss Support Group

Kitch joined the Coping with Suicide Loss Support Group 16 years ago, shortly after her son died by suicide. Reflecting on her time with the group, she said “My doctor knew me well enough when I told him about joining the group to caution me against taking leadership. I have been a co-facilitator for about 6 years.” Loni, the group’s other co-facilitator joined almost 20 years ago, “I was in complete shock and denial that this had really happened to me, that my husband had ended his life. But I was also afraid my friends would get tired of hearing me talk about my grief and turn away. I needed to find another outlet, other people who would listen. I was glad I went.”

Throughout their time in the group, the two have grieved with and supported many of our neighbors whose lives have been touched by suicide. “Studies show that someone who loses someone significant to them to a suicide becomes more vulnerable to consider suicide themselves. Groups like this can be part of stemming the growing tide of suicides,” said Kitch.

If you have not experienced a loss by suicide, but want to support those who have, Kitch says the most important thing to do is to “Listen, and then listen again each time the story needs to be told. Do not judge how a person is processing their own grief or how long it seems to be taking for them to feel like themselves again.” She emphasizes that “Everyone does grief their own way.”

To those who may be on the fence about attending the Coping with Suicide Loss Support Group, Loni said “They can come anytime and just listen… Listening to others describe their loss can help them feel they are not the only one.” Loni continued, “The biggest challenge I feel as a group leader is always wishing there was more I could do to alleviate the pain of the catastrophic loss - wishing I had the right words of wisdom that would help others. But it takes time.”

If you or a loved one has been touched by suicide, please consider attending a meeting at the GuideLink Center (300 Southgate Ave, Iowa City) held on the first Thursday of each month from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m.

To learn more about the support group, visit builtbycommunity.org/suicideloss.

University of Iowa & CommUnity

CommUnity Crisis Services and Food Bank is proud to now partner with the University of Iowa to provide a dedicated 24-hour mental health support line for university students! Support is available via phone, text, or chat for any UI students all day, every day.

To learn more about the mental health line, visit mentalhealth.uiowa.edu/ui-support-and-crisis-line.

Listen, and then listen again each time the story needs to be told.
Upcoming Events

FEBRUARY
Spread the Love
Month-long peanut butter and jelly drive.

MARCH
Pancake Breakfast
March 5 - Join us for breakfast on the first Saturday in March.

APRIL
CommUnity Baby Shower
Month-long baby product drive.
Hunger Banquet
April 21 - The Hunger Banquet is designed to immerse participants in the reality of food insecurity.

MAY
End the Cycle - Period Poverty Drive
Month-long menstrual hygiene product drive.

Thank you!
For voting CommUnity as the Best Place to Volunteer & Best Nonprofit for Community Access

BECOME A VOLUNTEER AT BUILTBYCOMMUNITY.ORG/VOLUNTEER