

# THE WARMTH CONNECTION

## Faces of THAW



Photo credit: Fox 2 News

*"I got so much more than heat, and I thank God."*

- Ms. Laura McCrory

This winter, The Heat and Warmth Fund (THAW) worked with Ms. McCrory. She is a 90-year-old widow and had been without heat or hot water for over two years.

She was using her oven and dangerous space heaters to attempt to heat her home. Right before the holidays, her social worker and a local news station reached out to THAW for help. We stepped in with assistance for her gas, electricity and water bills. Then, we called on our network.

In just a few days, we mobilized a team of partners and volunteers to fix the faulty electricity, address her water-damaged basement, and install a new hot water tank and boiler.

Thanks to the work of social worker Kehly Matthews, Advanced Design Restoration, Cregger Plumbing & Sewer Service, IBEW Local 58, and Local Fox 2 News she spent the new year in a safe and warm home.

Watch her story at [bit.ly/mccroryfox2](http://bit.ly/mccroryfox2).

## THAW Meets with Congress to #SaveLIHEAP Funding for 2019



THAW Development Director Stacy Ziarko (4th from left) and Communications Manager Nishaat Killeen (2nd from right) with other Michigan energy assistance providers and Representative Debbie Dingell Pat (4th from right).

On March 13, staff from THAW traveled to Washington D.C. to meet with Michigan's representatives and senators and ask them to save, sustain, and better fund the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP).

The annual advocacy event, LIHEAP Action Day, is organized by the National Energy and Utility Affordability Coalition (NEUAC), of which THAW is a member.

It brings together nonprofits, social service agencies and utility companies from across the country to educate our leaders on this critical program and ask for their support.

THAW met with Senator Gary Peters's office and twelve congressional offices to ask for their commitment to #SaveLIHEAP in 2019.





# CEO LETTER

The worst of this Michigan winter is finally behind us. We have seen our share of deep snow, frigid temperatures and biting winds.

For many of us, shoveling snow or driving to work in inclement weather was the worst part of our day.

For many in Michigan, the worst part was coming home to the reality of sleeping in a house without heat. To stay warm, families often resort to unsafe methods, such as kerosene or space heaters. Ms. McCrory, whom you just met on the front page, was someone who faced that reality.

Deloris Cortez, THAW's Case Manager, worked around the clock to restore Ms. McCrory's house to a safe home. She now calls Deloris her angel. She said "I prayed for heat, and He sent me you. Now because of THAW my house feels like home again." It is an honor to be part of an organization that makes such a difference.

Now that the snow is gone, we're all looking forward to warm, sunny days and spring showers.

But for many of our neighbors, securing basic necessities is still a struggle. I know this because, even as temperatures slowly rise, we've seen 100+ walk-ins a day.

On several days in March, our call center has received over 3,000 calls, and the number of applications for assistance continues to rise. Thousands of Michiganders still need relief.

You can make a difference for families in need. Please support our efforts to educate our leaders about their role in addressing the need, and to keep precious babies, grandparents and all in between healthy, safe, and warm throughout the year.

Warm regards,

*Saunteel Jenkins*

Saunteel Jenkins  
Chief Executive Officer,  
The Heat and Warmth Fund



# 15th Annual WWJ Winter Survival Radiothon Raises \$1.4 Million for The Heat and Warmth Fund

Thanks to the generosity of WWJ Newsradio 950 listeners and local businesses, The Heat and Warmth Fund raised over \$1.4 million dollars during the 15th Annual WWJ Winter Survival Radiothon.

As over a foot of snow fell in the Metro Detroit area on Friday, February 9, thousands of listeners called in and donated to keep families across the state healthy, safe and warm in their homes during this cold Michigan winter.

Volunteers from Deloitte, ITC Holdings Corp., Kroger, Barton Malow, DivDat, AKA, SEEL, Aristeo Construction, Consumers Energy, Lou LaRiche Chevrolet, Strategic Staffing Solutions, and DTE Energy braved the winter storm to take calls from our generous donors.

The Heat and Warmth Fund thanks WWJ Newsradio 950 and DTE Energy for the 15 years of partnership that has raised over \$20 million.



## SPONSORS



AKA, Barton Malow, Consumers Energy, Deloitte, DivDat, Dunkin Donuts, Family Heating Cooling & Energy, Faurecia North America, Feelgood Tap, Ferndale Electric, Gordon Chevrolet,\* HealthQuest Management, ITC Holdings Corp.,\* Jersey Mike's Ferndale, Kroger, Lou LaRiche Chevrolet, Mastercraft Heating, Cooling, and Plumbing, Miller Canfield, and, SEEL

\* Thank you to our 15-year sponsors!



Top, WWJ host and anchor Charlie Langton talks to FOX 2 News during the Radiothon.

Middle, two volunteers from Barton Malow at the phone bank.

Bottom, Development Director Stacy Ziarko, center, holds the final check for over \$1.4 million dollars with staff from WWJ Newsradio 950, DTE Energy, Deloitte, sponsors and volunteers.

## LIHEAP Funding Update

### LIHEAP provides critical support

The **Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)** is a federal program that provides utility assistance to vulnerable families across the country.



The Heat and Warmth Fund relies on LIHEAP to provide **critical support to thousands of Michigan families every year.**

### LIHEAP is in danger, again.

Just as they did for 2018, the current administration's budget **proposes to completely eliminate LIHEAP funding for 2019.** We're asking for your help to #SaveLIHEAP, because #LIHEAPSavesLives.

### How you can #SaveLIHEAP



Learn more about the LIHEAP and THAW at **thawfund.org**.



Sign up for emails from THAW at **thawfund.org/newsletters** to get the latest LIHEAP developments.



Use the form at **thawfund.org/save-liheap** to call or write your representative in the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate.



Educate your network by sharing **#LIHEAPSavesLives** and following **@THAWFUND** on social media.



# In the Field: Customer Assistance Days



THAW's Deloris Cortez (left) speaking to a customer at a recent CAD.

During our Customers Assistance Days (CADs), THAW staff provide service to our customers in their communities. CADs are held at community centers, schools and faith-based organizations to remove transportation barriers and reach families close to where they live.

We also invite community partners to offer other services, such as financial services, health care and employment services, to name a few.

On April 25, THAW will host a CAD at Detroit's iconic Eastern Market in Shed 5! This large event will include an expanded list of partners and presentations.

For a current schedule of CADs, go to [thawfund.org/events](http://thawfund.org/events).

## Ways to Support



Visit **thawfund.org** to donate online.



Call **(313) 963-2656** to donate by phone.



Mail your gift to:  
The Heat and Warmth Fund  
Department Number 77650  
P.O. Box 77000  
Detroit, MI 48277-9901



We welcome your gift of appreciated stock. Please ask your broker to transfer the stock to The Heat and Warmth Fund's account with Charles Schwab.  
Or call **(313) 963-2656**.

Follow us online:



@THAWFUND | [thawfund.org](http://thawfund.org)

## Upcoming Event



THAW Board member Rick Ayers and wife Ruth of St. Clair County, Michigan at the 2017 Night of Warm Hearts in Detroit.

Friday, November 9, 2018  
**Night of Warm Hearts**  
Save the date!

## THAW Leadership

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**Matthew Phillips**  
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