

THE WARMTH CONNECTION

Winter has arrived here in Michigan. THAW is here to help the most vulnerable residents and families. Access to utilities is essential all year, but many families enter a time of crisis during the winter season.

In this newsletter, read about one of THAW's clients, meet a THAW team member, recap the 12th Annual Week of Warmth and Night of Warm Hearts, learn about the success of the WDIV Gift of Warmth Telethon, get energized by our Power Forward Emerging Leaders Council and save the date for our 2022 events. Learn how to help keep Michigan families warm this winter and help achieve THAW's mission!

THAW GEARS UP TO SUPPORT VULNERABLE FAMILIES THROUGH MICHIGAN'S COLD MONTHS

Faces of THAW: Will Underwood

Will Underwood, a veteran, received aid last winter from THAW's Energy Efficiency Assistance program for a hot water tank and a furnace in his home on Detroit's east side. Even through hardship, he has continued to show gratitude for the work that THAW has done. "I just want to keep helping and doing. I hope others do the same. I want to pay it forward. It's a life thing. Life. It means a whole lot," says Will.

Will found assistance and joy from THAW team member, Ms. Morris, in his time of need. Ms. Morris encouraged him to keep going and motivated him to give back to others. "THAW is like the mother you never had or like the entity to protect you and give you home. THAW is a maker of homes," says Will.

THAW serves children, the unemployed, underemployed, veterans, disabled and uniquely abled individuals, and seniors experiencing hardship. In addition, 70% of families THAW serves have at least one child or senior in the home.

Will wants to encourage others to give back to their community. At THAW, dignity, empathy, compassion, and



respect are the guiding principles to stabilizing and empowering Michigan families, keeping them healthy, safe and warm.

Learn more at thawfund.org on how

to get involved in helping others like Will receive needed assistance. If you or someone you know needs help with utility bills, call 800-866-8429 or visit our website for additional resources at www.thawfund.org.

Staff Spotlight: Latrell Johnson

Latrell Johnson has worked with THAW for the past 14 months as a caseworker, assisting clients in finding additional supportive services to meet their household needs. She previously worked for Community Living Services, working with various at-risk populations as a service coordinator. A native Detroit, she has always held a passion for helping others and providing service to the community.

The winter season is here, causing an increase in calls and cases for everyone at THAW. "With the cold, there is an influx of services that people need. So, right now, things are extremely busy, especially this time of the year," says Latrell. THAW believes every family in Michigan should have access to affordable utilities, energy-efficient homes, and viable job opportunities.

Even though she describes her whole journey at THAW as rewarding, one story resonated with her from the past year. She recalls helping a mother who had just had a baby three months before. Having a baby is hard enough, but her baby was recovering from having a heart transplant. The mother called Latrell after her electricity had been turned off, and she was desperately worried about her son, who was still on

life-saving machines that helped him breathe. Latrell got to work instantly to get their electricity restored immediately.

This client is always on Latrell's mind, and reminds her why she does this work, even when it is challenging. She works at THAW to ensure more moms and families have access to essential services.

This past year, the pandemic has presented additional challenges that Latrell has taken head-on. For example, Latrell says, "You can hear the person on the line. They have COVID when I'm trying to conduct the intake interview, and they are struggling to breathe or coughing, or they're taking care of a loved one that has COVID." THAW wants to prevent the need

for people to fight COVID, and worry about lack of heat or electricity at the same time.

Taking care of yourself is crucial to continue working in her field. She has a dog, Samuel Johnson, a little Havanese puppy that occupies her time when home. Latrell is a hardworking, dedicated, and passionate team member who constantly uses her time to move THAW's mission forward to stabilize and empower Michigan families.



CEO LETTER

Dear Friends,

Chilly temperatures have arrived here in Michigan. Unfortunately, as usual, temperatures will only drop more as we push further into winter. That is where

THAW steps in to help the most at-risk populations get assistance with utility payments.

As we all know, winters in Michigan can be brutal, leaving many families with rising energy costs that often force them to make difficult choices. With the support we have received this year, many families won't have to choose between feeding their families and heating their homes. We are so thankful for all those that have come together over this difficult year to support us here at THAW. We have raised critical funds for at-risk populations through events such as the 12th Annual Night of Warm Hearts Gala. Thank you all so much.

The next exciting event we have is coming up on February 4, the WWJ Winter Survival Radiothon. We look forward to

working with our generous long-term partners at WWJ to raise awareness and critical funds for Michigan families. It looks like we'll be virtual again this year.

Thank you for helping us prevent families from choosing between heating and eating this winter. It has not been an easy year for many families. But your assistance has helped INSERT # FAMILIES stay safe and warm this winter.

Through your continued support of compassion, respect, and innovation, we can make Michigan a warm, healthy, and safe place for all.

Please join us in our mission to keep Michigan families safe this winter season. Donate today.

Warm Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Saunteel Jenkins". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Saunteel Jenkins
Chief Executive Officer
The Heat and Warmth Fund

Night of Warm Hearts Recap

Reconnecting: People, Power, and Partners
Night of Warm Hearts Gala: November 5, 2021
MGM Grand Detroit

The Heat and Warmth Fund (THAW) is grateful to its sponsors, partners, and event attendees for coming together to raise \$460,000 for the Week of Warmth.

Many thanks to Presenting Sponsor DTE Energy and the Gold, Silver, Bronze and Table Sponsors for their generosity and dedication to making a difference as The Week of Warmth kicks off the Season of Need. These critical funds will provide utility assistance to Michigan families this winter and beyond.

Please visit thawfund.org/week-of-warmth for a full list of sponsors and to view event photos.



THAW CEO Saunteel Jenkins, and Lieutenant Governor of Michigan, Garlin Gilchrist II



THAW CEO Saunteel Jenkins and THAW Board President, Tanya Hill

Save the Date for THAW's Upcoming 2022 Events

Visit thawfund.org/news-events for the latest on THAW's upcoming events.

WWJ Winter Survival Radiothon

February 4, 2022 – 5 am – 7 pm

Join us as we continue raising funds for utility assistance. THAW is partnering again with WWJ to raise awareness and gain support for utility assistance funding, particularly in this cold winter season.

Swing with Bling Ladies Golf Outing

June 17, 2022

SEMCO Golf Outing

August 19, 2022

Solitude Links Golf Course, Kimball, MI



Doug Bitonti Stewart and Sonya Hickey from the Max M. and Marjorie S. Fisher Foundation, recipient of the Power Force Award, and THAW President Tanya Hill



Detroit Academy of Arts and Sciences Choir



THAW CEO Saunteel Jenkins, Warm Hearts Award Winner Laurence H. Baker, DO and THAW President Tanya Hill



Master of Ceremonies Andrew Humphrey, WDIV-TV Local 4 Meteorologist

Community Assistance Day



In-person Community Assistance Day on November 3 at Tindal Recreation Center in Detroit.

Power Forward Group Marks First Year Anniversary

THAW is honored to have the inaugural cohort of Power Forward Emerging Leaders Council members serving with passion, innovation, and dedication to helping THAW drive its mission.

During their first year, the cohort created a mission statement to help lead their organization forward:

THAW's Power Forward Emerging Leaders Council informs, inspires, and engages diverse young professionals in meaningful acts of service and philanthropic initiatives. They leverage THAW's mission to stabilize and empower Michigan families, keeping them healthy, safe, and warm while providing equitable energy security.

The leaders also created a vision statement to guide their work:

We are building a future that engages the next generation of leaders dedicated to providing energy equity to all Michigan community members.

The Power Forward Emerging Leaders Council members raised more than \$3,500 for THAW to continue to support Michigan families this past quarter. They hope to continue their fundraising efforts in 2022 as they approach a \$20,000 goal next year. If you are interested in learning more about the Power Forward Emerging Leaders Council or joining their efforts, reach out to Claudia Bazzi at cbazzi@umich.edu.

WDIV Gift of Warmth Telethon Recap

On Tuesday, November 30, WDIV Local 4 hosted THAW's annual Gift of Warmth Giving Tuesday Telethon. Giving Tuesday, which follows Cyber Monday, is a global day of giving designed to promote an influx of philanthropy, citizen engagement, and support for communities and nonprofits worldwide.

DTE Energy generously matched donations dollar for dollar up to \$50,000. Additional significant supporters include Tubby's Sub Shops, the Robert and Caren Vondell Foundation, the Aaron and Carolyn Frankel Foundation, and Corby Energy Services.

A heartfelt thank you to all donors who helped THAW raise a record \$185,000 to keep families healthy, safe, and warm this winter!

THAW Leadership

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Lila Asante-Appiah

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Visit <https://thawfund.org/donate/donate-online/> to donate online.



Call (313) 963-2681 to donate by phone.



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



THAW welcomes gifts of securities, life insurance policies and planned estate gifts. Contact Liz Klos at (313) 348-3108.

Support The Heat and Warmth Fund by shopping at smile. amazon.com and selecting "The Heat and Warmth Fund." Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase to THAW.



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