

THE WARMTH CONNECTION

As the cold months approach, THAW is ready to help vulnerable residents and families. Access to utilities is essential year-round, but many people enter crises during the winter season. THAW is dedicated to raising critical funds to help the most vulnerable across the State to prevent families from navigating the harsh winter without properly functioning utilities. In this newsletter, read about one of THAW's clients, the 12th Annual Week of Warmth and Night of Warm Hearts Gala, the WDIV Gift of Warmth Telethon, meet THAW's new COO Krista Capp, and be inspired by THAW's Justice, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion efforts led by Chief Administrative Officer, Lila Asante-Appiah.

Learn how you can get involved to help drive THAW's powerful mission!

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

Faces of THAW: William's Story

William worked as a teacher and administrator in both the Detroit Public Schools and Dearborn Heights School Districts, as well as the University of Michigan. Always passionate about education, after college, he immediately began a career in teaching. William spent 40 years in education before retiring.

Now, on a fixed income, he recently found himself unable to pay a costly energy bill. William is just one of the many clients who come to THAW needing emergency and often one-time assistance.

William says that even though he's retired, he still works as an educator, "taking any opportunity to teach young people." However, his devoted service doesn't cover his utility bills, especially those accumulated over time.

For months, William had been trying to pay an exorbitant bill he acquired after his divorce. He contacted THAW and the team worked to address the bill. "I also had back rent and didn't request assistance with it, but THAW's Program Director pointed me in the direction of resources." William received utility relief assistance from THAW and then

was connected to the Covid Emergency Rental Assistance (CERA) partner program for additional help.

"I couldn't handle it on my own. This all relieved a lot of pressure for me. I'm retired. I have social security and a pension, but I still needed help. THAW relieved the pressure, and I didn't have to get into different energy programs that would still be hard for me to keep up with."

THAW serves children, the unemployed, underemployed, veterans, disabled and uniquely abled individuals, and seniors experiencing hardship year-round. 70% of the families THAW serves have at least one senior in the home, including retirees.

William says that "everybody needs a little help. I'm thankful to share my story to promote a human service organization that helps people in their time of need. Thank you again to THAW, and Program Director, Doncella. She recently became one of my favorite people on this Earth."

William says that kindness goes a long way. At THAW, so does dignity, empathy, compassion, and respect –



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

If you or someone you know needs help with utility bills, call 800-866-8429 or visit our new and improved website for additional resources at www.thawfund.org.

Staff Spotlight: THAW's CAO threads the needle toward Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI)

THAW's Chief Administrative Officer Lila Asante-Appiah was recently awarded a 2021 Salute to Diversity Business Leader Award by Corp! Magazine. We sat down with Lila to discuss her efforts to move the needle toward Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion.

What inspires you to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion?

My inspiration for working in the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion space go back to the early part of my career. As a young professional, I experienced instances where senior leaders made little effort to create work environments where my fellow staff members and I could thrive. What I observed throughout my earlier years shaped how I chose to lead my work teams and treat people who were part of the organization. I knew that I

had a responsibility to own my role and bring other junior employees along to be aware of the value they brought to the team. I've always been curious to learn what unique talents individuals bring to an organization, how to best get results through people, and most importantly, how leaders impact people that they have the benefit of leading and influencing. As the only female person of color on the leadership team, my lived experiences have served as a catalyst to champion and honor individuals' differences as well as embody diversity, equity, and inclusion practices. Establishing and modeling inclusive practices that increases belonging, recognizing intersectionality and how identities impact individual's daily lives.

And lastly, seeking out ways to strengthen access and opportunities for marginalized groups, and elevating



reconnected to power by way of energy and making sure we continue to build relationships with people and partners who will also champion this profound work.

Our goal is to raise \$1 million in utility assistance for those most at risk this winter. So many residents and families are challenged to pay their utility bills. Instead of enjoying warm and well-lit homes, they go to cold and sometimes dark homes and suffer because their funds are used to address other essential needs, like access to medicine and transportation. They come to THAW for help, and it is our responsibility to be there when they do. We are all part of this community, and we must use our power to ensure no one lacks the fundamental necessity of warmth this and every winter.

Your continued support is crucial to the success of our mission. Thank you for helping those in need and being a part of our greater Michigan community keeping each other healthy, safe, and warm.

Warm Regards,

Saunteel Jenkins
Chief Executive Officer
The Heat and Warmth Fund

CEO LETTER

Dear Friends,

The fall colors are always beautiful here in Michigan, but it means the Michigan winter is not far off. As the weather transitions to chillier temperatures,

families will need our help more than ever to keep their loved ones safe and warm.

THAW has been able to accomplish a lot in our 36 years of service. For 12 years, the Week of Warmth and Night of Warm Hearts Gala has raised funds for Michigan families to ensure they are warm in winter. This year we are partnering with DTE Energy again for the 2021 Week of Warmth to prepare for an entire Season of Need. The Week of Warmth is a series of activities and events designed to highlight the significant need of thousands of low-income and vulnerable Michiganders who struggle to pay utility bills and need our help.

Activities will include Hallelujah for Heat, Community Assistance Days, the Night of Warm Hearts Gala, and the Gift of Warmth Telethon with WDIV. The Week of Warmth raises awareness and critical funds to help Michiganders meet basic and essential needs. Reconnecting: People, Power, and Partners is this year's theme. At THAW, our team of champions is dedicated to helping people get

individuals whose voices have historically been silenced or ignored.

What policies or efforts does THAW promote that align with increasing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion?

THAW exhibits a commitment to JEDI practices throughout our Board of Directors, and organizational policies, partnerships, and protocols in the areas of Human Resources, Program offerings and service delivery, Outreach, Fund Development, and Finance practices. Our approach to JEDI is purposeful, beginning with our goal to hire a diverse staff germane to all diversity categories. Our diversity goals also extend to funding streams and program offerings to meet the needs of a wide range of residents throughout the state. In offering our programs and services to the community, we have established various service delivery methods - phone, website, email, remote (via web-

conferencing tools) and in-person (currently suspended during the pandemic) - to ensure our customers can access a range of relevant resources and services.

Why is diversity, equity, and inclusion important in the workplace?

It is becoming increasingly difficult for nonprofit organizations to deliver on their missions. Diversity and inclusion practices, when done well, can lead to garnering new perspectives and ways of being, higher-performing teams, and greater creativity by leveraging the thoughts and ideas from all staff, including those who have often not been heard, or worse, those who have been intentionally excluded from conversations. Operating through a JEDI lens isn't just the right thing to do. When consistently incorporated, it can enable an organization to increase its overall impact.

Save the Date for THAW's Fall Events

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

DTE's 12th Annual Hallelujah for Heat

Location: Fellowship Chapel, 7707 W. Outer Drive, Detroit, MI 48235

THAW's annual Week of Warmth kicks off with the 12th Hallelujah for Heat gospel concert sponsored by DTE. This **free** community event featuring a live performance by world-renowned Gospel recording artist Kirk Franklin is Saturday, October 23, from 7:00-9:00 p.m.

12th Annual Week of Warmth + Night of Warm Hearts Gala November 1-5, 2021

**Location: MGM Grand Detroit
1777 3rd Avenue Detroit, MI 48226**

THAW each year kicks off the season of need (November 1 – March 31) by partnering with DTE Energy for the Week of Warmth and the Night of Warm Hearts Gala. Presenting Sponsor DTE, as well as dozens of other corporate and individual sponsors, come together to support community outreach and education.

The week culminates with THAW's signature fundraising event of the year, the Night of Warm Hearts Gala (November 5). The event includes dinner, dancing, a silent and live auction, and a program to share THAW's mission with attendees.

This year's theme is Reconnecting: People, Power, and Partners and celebrates the distinguished awardees:

- Rory Gamble, Past President, International Union - United Auto Workers
- Dr. Laurence H. Baker, DO
- The Max M. and Marjorie S. Fisher Foundation

Support the event by making a gift at thawfund.org/week-of-warmth

The Night of Warm Hearts will be a hybrid event. THAW has protocols in place, such as reduced capacity to enhance the health and safety of the attendee experience. More information regarding event COVID protocols can be found at www.thawfund.org/week-of-warmth.

WDIV Giving Tuesday Gift of Warmth Telethon November 30, 2021

Giving Tuesday is a global day of giving designed to promote an influx of philanthropy, citizen engagement, and support for communities and nonprofits worldwide. This year, WDIV Local 4 is again partnering with THAW to introduce you to families that THAW supports and underscore the need for utility assistance funding, particularly as the effects of the pandemic linger.

Corporate sponsors and partners sponsor an "hour" of the Telethon and donate matching and challenge gifts.

For more information visit, <https://tinyurl.com/2uyeu6m2>. Call 1-800-866-8429 to make a gift!

WWJ Winter Survival Radiothon February 4, 2022 • 5 am – 7 pm

Join us as we continue raising funds for utility assistance. Visit www.thawfund.org/news-events for more information!



New look, same site!

THAW is dedicated to providing relief and resources in a convenient and accessible way. THAW has launched a new and improved website thanks to our friends at Identity PR. Visit the new site at the same address, www.thawfund.org, and:

- Apply for assistance
- Search for community resources
- Donate to support energy assistance programs
- Stay up to date with the latest THAW news, announcements, and events
- Learn more about THAW's history, mission, impact, and services, and browse moving stories and videos
- Get tools to become a champion for utility relief and share online

Your feedback is appreciated. If you have insight or thoughts on improving the site, send a note to marketing@thawfund.org.

THAW names Krista Capp Chief Operating Officer

THAW's Chief Executive Officer Saunteel Jenkins named Krista Capp the nonprofit organization's Chief Operating Officer (COO). Before accepting the COO role, Capp was Senior Vice President of Property Management for Beanstalk Real Estate Solutions. Capp has over 25 years of executive experience in business and real estate management and development. She led much of this work while serving as the president of the Board of Directors for THAW.



"I have always been impressed with THAW's work," says Capp. "THAW serves the community with dignity, empathy, compassion, and respect. I look forward to supporting our ongoing efforts to provide the basic needs of heat, water, and electricity to those in need."

THAW looks forward to all the ways Krista will contribute to the organization's success and growth.

THAW Leadership

LEADERSHIP TEAM

Saunteel Jenkins

Chief Executive Officer

Lila Asante-Appiah

Chief Administrative Officer

Krista Capp

Chief Operations Officer

Michelle Cooper

Vice President of Finance

Liz Klos

Vice President of Development

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President**Tanya R. Hill**

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Slalom Consulting

Mark Winter

Identity PR

Ways to Support



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](https://www.amazon.com) and selecting "The Heat and Warmth Fund." Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase to THAW.



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