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NEWS CLIPS

SOUTH CAROLINA-DR-4241

Thursday, February 04, 2016

United Way Triples Commitment to Midlands Flood Relief (WIS-TV)

By Allie Spillyards

[WIS-TV Columbia \(SC\)](#), February 3, 2016

COLUMBIA, SC (WIS) –

The United Way of the Midlands has announced an additional \$300,000 for the ReBuild Together Project.

ReBuild Together started in December with \$100,000 dispersed to partner agencies like Home Works of America, the St. Bernard Project, and the Michael J. Mungo Foundation.

Right now crews are working to complete the 12 projects the initial investment funded. St. Bernard met with the Henrys Wednesday to assess what repairs were needed after flood waters filled the crawl space beneath their home.

“We were watching the water come over the sidewalk, and the water was coming and coming and coming. I said, ‘Baby, we have to be ready to get up out of here,’ because it was looking pretty serious after the first big hard rain came through,” said Joseph Henry.

The water stopped before it reached their front door, and Henry says they initially thought they’d escaped damage. A few days later, it was a different story.

“We just kept getting scarier and scarier. We know that mold affects people and everything else, and we have our grands coming in. So I told my wife that even though they like to come spend the weekends, they can’t come some weekends... we have to keep them from touching it and smelling it as much as possible, because it can affect them too,” said Henry.

When FEMA aid wasn't enough for the repairs, Henry reached out to Habitat for Humanity, but the couple didn't qualify. Henry says he's disabled, forcing the couple to live on a fixed income, but he never gave up hope.

"Since I'm home, I said, 'Baby, I'm going to get on the phone and figure out what we have to do... if we have to move, or how we can get this taken care of. But since St. Bernard stepped in, we can't stop thanking them and the Lord,'" said Henry.

With its latest announcement, the United Way's hoping to help more people, like those in the Midlands, through local and national relief groups.

"The terrible thing is this is just a fraction. We've got about a million dollars. We've spent \$150,000 so far with what we did in December and a couple of other programs that we funded. But even with that median income group that we're looking for, it's going to be a drop in the bucket," said United Way of the Midlands CEO Mac Bennett.

The United Way's asking for agencies to apply for funding. It's looking for groups that are working with families that bring in 80 percent of the median income, which is about \$40,000. It wants the money to go to families that own homes and are looking to stay in their home for at least five years.

"We're looking for people who are committed to their neighborhoods and just want to repair their home, so they can stay," said Bennett.

The United Way anticipates releasing additional funds once the currently announced \$300,000 has been dispersed.

(click thumbnail to play)

[FEMA. on WIS - COL \(NBC\) - Columbia, SC](#)

02/03/2016 17:25:31

WIS News 10 Live at 5:00 (News)

... their walls and take over their floors for months. when FEMA funds weren't enough to help, the henry's reached out to habitat for humanity, but they didn't qualify. ...