



Working together to end homelessness

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Roof Above announces \$500,000 gift from Duke Energy Foundation to help expand supportive housing for people experiencing chronic homelessness

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (July 13, 2020) – Roof Above, Charlotte’s leading provider of services for people experiencing homelessness, is thrilled to announce a \$500,000 gift from the Duke Energy Foundation to foster the development of supportive housing for people who have been chronically homeless for a year or longer.

The gift will go toward Roof Above’s efforts to replicate the success of Moore Place, its 120-unit apartment community that provides housing and on-site services to address issues that can hamper residents’ ability to keep housing. Moore Place has a retention rate of more than 85% and has dramatically decreased the usage and cost of emergency room medical treatment for those who become residents.

“We know permanent housing with on-site supportive services can end chronic homelessness, and we are so grateful for Duke Energy Foundation’s investment in this proven strategy,” said Roof Above CEO Liz Clasen-Kelly. “This gift will not only will help our most vulnerable citizens but also will benefit our larger community.”

The Duke Energy Foundation hopes its investment will prompt other donors to rally around the development of supportive housing with additional funding. In appreciation, Roof Above will name learning labs for Duke Energy at its emergency shelter under construction on Statesville Avenue and at its next supportive housing project.

“This work would be impossible without philanthropists and corporate partners like Duke Energy who are willing to take on what we believe is one of Charlotte’s most pressing issues,” Clasen-Kelly said.

“Providing support for chronic homelessness is an important part of powering the vitality of our communities,” said Duke Energy’s North Carolina President Stephen De May. “We want to be part of solutions to help create equal access opportunities for our local community.”

Rising rents and decreasing availability of affordable housing has fueled a housing crisis and increased homelessness across Charlotte-Mecklenburg. An estimated 545 people are currently experiencing chronic homelessness, meaning they have been without a home for a year or longer and also have a disabling condition that makes it difficult to access and retain housing. Street homelessness has also become more visible during the ongoing coronavirus pandemic and has been particularly illuminated by an encampment of more than 100 tents near uptown Charlotte.

Roof Above was formed through the 2019 merger of Urban Ministry Center and Men’s Shelter of Charlotte, two nonprofit organizations that worked for decades to combat homelessness in Charlotte. The combined agency operates a day services center, two year-round shelters with more than 350 beds, and the community-based winter shelter “Room in the Inn.” Beyond homeless services, Roof Above

provides more than 400 units of supportive housing through Moore Place and dozens of landlords with apartments throughout Charlotte, as well as a treatment program for substance use disorders.

For information, please visit our legacy websites at UrbanMinistryCenter.org and MensShelterofCharlotte.org until our new Roof Above website is introduced in the coming months.

The Duke Energy Foundation provides philanthropic support to meet the needs of communities where Duke Energy customers live and work. The foundation contributes more than \$30 million annually in charitable gifts and is funded by Duke Energy shareholder dollars. More information about the foundation and its Powerful Communities program can be found at duke-energy.com/foundation.

Interviews:

Representatives of Roof Above and Duke Energy will be available for media interviews as follows:

- Stephen De May, Duke Energy North Carolina President, and Shawn Heath, the Duke Energy Foundation President, will be available for virtual interviews on **Tuesday, July 14th from 9 am – 10 am**. Please contact [Shawna Berger](mailto:Shawna.Berger@duke-energy.com), shawna.berger@duke-energy.com or 800.559.3853 to schedule virtual interviews.
- Liz Clasen-Kelly, Roof Above CEO and a current tenant of permanent supportive housing will be available for in-person interviews at Moore Place 2435 Lucena Street on **Tuesday, July 14th from 9:30 am – 10:30 am**.

Media Contacts:

For Roof Above: Randall Hitt, RHitt@RoofAbove.org, 704.618.1329

For the Duke Energy Foundation, [Shawna Berger](mailto:Shawna.Berger@duke-energy.com), shawna.berger@duke-energy.com, 800.559.3853
