



December 8, 2020

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Community First CU distributes \$20,000 in affordable housing grants, including Manitowoc County Habitat

Community First Credit Union has awarded \$20,000 in grants to four Northeastern Wisconsin nonprofits that offer affordable housing assistance to vulnerable populations hard hit by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The funding, made possible by a grant from the Federal Home Loan Bank of Chicago (FHLB), was distributed by Community First to these nonprofits who each received \$5,000:

- Manitowoc County Habitat for Humanity
- Greater Fox Cities Area Habitat for Humanity
- Green Bay Area Habitat for Humanity
- COTS, Inc. – Oshkosh women's shelter

"In the midst of COVID-19 as nonprofits face increased challenges, we are happy to provide these funds to help make a difference for individuals and families in the communities where our member-owners live and work," said Cathie Tierney, Community First President/CEO.

"We are grateful Community First chose Manitowoc County Habitat for Humanity for this grant that will help further our mission of offering safe and affordable housing for county residents," said Executive Director Jean Wakefield. The Habitat Resale Center in Manitowoc closed in March due to COVID-19 and did not re-open until this fall two days a week, but pick up of donations continued with a reduced crew of volunteers.

"When we went into stay-at-home, many people were trying to rehab their homes. So, what we did, if somebody called looking for something in particular, and they decided they wanted to see it, we did a no-contact exchange," Wakefield said. *"With reduced operations, we don't have as many customers coming in to the Resale Center, we don't have as many volunteers coming in and we don't have as many donations coming in, so the \$5,000 is a blessing."*

Community First offers banking, investment, financial education and insurance services to 144,000 member/owners in Northeastern and East Central Wisconsin. The financial cooperative has \$4.2 billion in assets, 558 employees and operates 26 full-service branches along with non-traditional branches in retirement communities and the Wisconsin Veterans Home at King, Wis.

PROPOSED CUTLINE FOR ATTACHED PHOTO (also shown below):

Affordable Housing Boost

Community First Credit Union's Cathy Mutschler, VP Community Relations, (middle left) recently presented Manitowoc County Habitat for Humanity officials with a \$5,000 grant to assist affordable housing opportunities. Shown (left to right) are: Board member Andy Kefalonitis, Cathy Mutschler (CFCU), Executive Director Jean Wakefield, and board member Fran Valitchka.

