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Mayor

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Press Release

Mayor Gary R. McCarthy and City of Schenectady Recognize 400 Teenagers and Adults Providing Free Home Repairs to Senior Residents

SCHENECTADY - Mayor Gary R. McCarthy and other local officials visited 2229 Lenox Road, one of over sixty sites where Group Cares and the City are partnering to provide free home repairs to senior citizen home owners. Approximately 400 teenagers and adults are working to improve the homes of local senior residents throughout Schenectady.

“Seeing so many young people donating their time to help improve the homes and quality of life for Schenectady residents truly shows the power of community and the great potential for this next generation of leaders to make transformative change,” said Mayor Gary McCarthy. “We are thankful to Group Cares for partnering with Schenectady and to the other local organizations including the Schenectady City School District, Home Depot, and Bridge Christian Church who helped us make this camp possible.”

Group Cares is a non-profit volunteer home-repair organization headquartered in Loveland, Colorado. This summer, almost 25,000 young people and adults will participate in 36 Workcamps in communities across the United States.

At each Workcamp, teenagers and adults, all members of church youth groups, volunteer a week of their time to repair homes throughout the community. “This represents about 12,000 hours of volunteer labor, with a total economic impact to the community of over \$300,000,” said Mayor McCarthy.

“These really are remarkable young people,” said Jeff Thompson, of Group Cares. “Each one is actually paying for the privilege of working in your community. Workcamp registration fees are used to cover our costs for food, insurance, and building materials.”

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The Workcamp is being housed at Schenectady High School in partnership with the Schenectady City School District with Workcampers sleeping on classroom floors, eating in the cafeteria, and enjoying evening programs in the gymnasium. Group Cares reimburses all costs to the lodging facility.

The idea behind the Workcamps started in Colorado in 1977 when residents suffered from the Big Thompson River Flood in which hundreds of homes were damaged or destroyed, and over 140 people lost their lives. Church youth groups of many different denominations came from across the country the next summer to help.

Repairs offered through the Workcamp include interior and exterior painting, weatherization, porch and wheelchair ramp construction, and other work.

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