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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Development Director Tours Weatherization Training Center in Dayton

Miami Valley Community Action Partnership (MVCAP) and the Corporation for Ohio Appalachian Development (COAD) proudly hosted Ohio Department of Development Director Lydia Mihalik for a tour of the Ohio Weatherization Training Center's Southwest Hub Tuesday, May 7.

The Department of Development administers federal funding for MVCAP and Community Action Agencies across the state. Director Mihalik's visit coincided with Community Action Month, celebrated each May, as well as the Community Action Network's 60th Anniversary. Additionally, May 6 through 10 is In Demand Jobs Week in the State of Ohio.

The Ohio Weatherization Training Center prepares students and adults for high-paying jobs that make a difference. Students learn how to evaluate a home's energy use, abate lead and other hazards, repair or replace furnaces and improve insulation. MVCAP operates a "prop house" inside which students can practice skills and techniques in a unique, hands-on environment.

"Weatherization services improve energy efficiency, indoor air quality and solve safety issues," said MVCAP President and CEO Erin Jeffries, MPA. "Clients report lower utility bills while enjoying their homes in greater comfort."

Since 2022, MVCAP and COAD have partnered to train crew members in how to weatherize homes throughout the state of Ohio. MVCAP's nine crews serve nine counties working on nearly 600 homes every year. Statewide, weatherization can lower energy bills by as much as 30 percent. For every dollar invested in weatherization, four dollars in benefits are realized, said COAD Executive Director Megan Riddlebarger.

"Weatherization training leads to a wide variety of career opportunities to fill jobs that are In Demand here in Ohio," Riddlebarger added. "We were pleased to welcome Director Mihalik to the training center to witness how COAD and MVCAP are working to make Ohio the "Heart of Opportunity."

Riddlebarger also emphasized that the OWTC works to remediate lead in Ohio homes by training workers in lead-safe methods and providing more resources for families to remove lead from their homes.

Mihalik described the training as a vital service for Ohioans.

“These projects not only improve someone’s quality of life, but they also take major steps in supporting economic and workforce development,” she said. “Your efforts are going to help build a safer and healthier future for all Ohioans.”

In addition to the tour, Mihalik heard from current students in the program as well as clients who have had their homes weatherized by MVCAP crews.

Rosalind Leininger of Huber Heights described her experience saying the crews were very respectful of her home. Since receiving a new furnace, she no longer needs to use a space heater to make part of her home more comfortable and she has seen a dramatic reduction in her utility bills.

Tim Maddox of Trotwood had his home insulated by a “very professional” crew, he said.

“A couple of nights when it was cold, my furnace didn’t run all night,” Maddox added. “I knew right then it was a savings.”

“Everybody I worked with was marvelous,” added Washington Township resident Malcolm Laurie, who’s heat pump broke down shortly after he applied for the program. “They explained everything. They were very, very professional. I can’t tell you how grateful I am.”

Jeffries also accepted a proclamation from City Commissioner Chris Shaw proclaiming May Community Action Month in the City of Dayton.

“This service is truly making a difference and an impact on the lives of people keeping their homes safe and energy efficient,” Shaw said.

MVCAP’s Home Weatherization Assistance Program is accepting applications for weatherization assistance. Income limits apply. Applications can be started by visiting www.miamivalleycap.org or calling 800-617-2673.

MVCAP is also hiring crew members. For more information, contact Housing Director Barry Strahorn at barry.strahorn@mvcap.com.

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