

Rebuilding Together brings back Handyman Program with grant from KeyBank Foundation



Rita McPeck of KeyBank with Darcy McCourt at the Wappingers Falls branch.

Executive Director of Rebuilding Together Dutchess County Darcy McCourt accepts the \$25,000 award from KeyBank, hosted by KeyBank Executives and Representatives at the Wappingers Falls branch earlier this month.

-Courtesy photos

Rebuilding Together Dutchess County announced the return of its Handyman Program and that qualifying families and individuals may apply starting in 2023.

"We are delighted and honored that the KeyBank Foundation has made it possible to again provide this opportunity to our community," said Darcy McCourt, Executive Director at Rebuilding Together Dutchess County. A generous \$25,000 grant from the Foundation allows for the return of this much-needed program. "The program was on hold temporarily. We are excited to have the means to revive this support for our neighbors," she continued, referencing the ability to again address the challenges our neighbors are facing.

The Handyman Program is a service which provides timely small-scale repairs and safety and accessibility modifications. These repairs can include things such as installing grab bars, securing or adding additional handrails, improving lighting, minor accessibility modifica-

tions, and fire safety installations.

KeyBank Foundation's grant is made under Key's National Community Benefits Plan established in 2017, which has delivered more than \$18 billion in lending and investments across Key's national footprint supporting affordable housing and community development projects, home and small business lending in low- and moderate income communities, and philanthropic efforts targeted toward education, workforce development, and safe, vital neighborhoods.

"As a community-minded bank, KeyBank believes in doing our part to improve the lives of those in need in the communities we serve," said John Manginelli, KeyBank Market President. "Rebuilding Together Dutchess County is a great example of people helping people in our community and we are proud to be able to provide funding to help continue their work."

Members of the community are in great need, now more than ever. The Handyman

Program is of great assistance, especially to older adults who only need a few small repairs or modifications to prevent falls or to prevent small issues from becoming larger ones. Access to this no-cost service will enable people like Willi of Wappinger's Falls to remain safe in his own home with confidence.

Willi stated: "I was a carpenter years ago and was able to do some of the work that I so badly needed, but I haven't been able to do anything since I was in the hospital. I don't know what I would have done if I didn't get this help." He received several small repairs including fixing a slow-draining plumbing pipe, upgrading lighting fixtures in the bathroom and living room, and having a new basement handrail installed. "As we bring back the Handyman program, we look forward to

offering relief and peace-of-mind to more neighbors like Willi," said McCourt.

Neighbors who have been served by the local nonprofit all suggest that their fellow Dutchess County residents apply. Others we have served like Alice of Poughkeepsie commented that it was "an amazing experience" working with Rebuilding Together Dutchess County and felt the volunteers who performed the repairs on her home were friendly and warm. Candida, also of Poughkeepsie, said "I would recommend it highly because you took care of all my needs."

To request an application or ask questions, call the RTDC office at 845-454-7310. The application and further details will be available on the nonprofit's website in 2023: www.RTDutchess.org.

United Way announces new board members

United Way of the Dutchess-Orange Region welcomes three new Board Members. All three are accomplished professionals from the community.

- Marta Newkirk of Dutchess Community College is an Assistant Dean of Student Services. Her 22 years at Dutchess has involved varied responsibilities interacting with students, faculty, staff, community stakeholders, and members of the community. Marta holds a Master of Arts degree in Educational Psychology at Marist College, and a Master of Professional Studies in Humanistic Education from SUNY New Paltz; she currently serves on the Community Impact Committee.

- Mark Villanti has served as an educator for 40 years and a school superintendent for 17 years. He retired from Haldane CSD in 2013 after seven years and taught graduate

school for two years before being asked to serve as the superintendent for Spackenkill Union Free School District (for four years). He retired again in 2020. Dr. Villanti has served on the Board of the United Way of the Capital Region in the past, is currently UWDOR's 2022 Campaign Chair and serves on the Community Impact Committee.

- Matthew Cruz is a lifelong resident of Dutchess County, and has worked at DSL Financial Services for the past 15 years as an Accredited Investment Fiduciary. Matthew specializes in family wealth management and pensions consulting services for small to mid-size businesses. Matthew believes deeply in giving back to the community and continues to volunteer his time with many of the local nonprofits. Matthew was previously involved in Young Leaders United, and currently serves on the Finance Committee.

O'Neil to be sworn in as County Executive Jan. 3

The public is invited to William F.X. O'Neil's Oath of Office Ceremony as Dutchess County Executive on Tuesday, Jan. 3, at 5 p.m., at Calvary Chapel of the Hudson Valley, located at 36 Firemens Way, Poughkeepsie. RSVP online at www.dutchessny.gov/RSVP.

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- Letters appearing on the Viewpoints page are the views of the writers alone and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Southern Dutchess News.

NOTICE OF EARLY DEADLINES

Due to a holiday press schedule, the Jan. 4 issue will have an early deadline. The editorial deadline for the Jan. 4, 2023 paper is Thursday, Dec. 29, at noon. The ad deadline is Thursday, Dec. 29, at 5 p.m.
Email cshmidt@sutchessnews.com for more information.