



PRESS RELEASE

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Contact: Jason Dodson
Chief of Staff for Summit County Executive Ilene Shapiro
330-643-2075
jdodson@summitoh.net

County Council and County Executive Ilene Shapiro, along with FirstEnergy Foundation and the Greater Akron Chamber Step Up for Stand Down

Today, County Executive Ilene Shapiro and President of the FirstEnergy Foundation, Dee Lowery presented two checks totaling \$20,000 to Dan Moore, Event Coordinator of The Laura Williams Dunlop Memorial Stand Down for Homeless and Displaced Veterans of Summit County. The donations are part of a partnership called, **Step Up for Stand Down**, which was created when our local Stand Down found themselves in great need of donations for their September 13, 2016 event.

“Over 400 Veterans attend The Laura Williams Dunlop Memorial Stand Down each year,” said County Executive Ilene Shapiro. “We owe each Veteran our sincere thanks and gratitude, so this year I am very proud that we as a community could **Step Up for Stand Down.**”

Stand Down is a full day of community and grassroots intervention that assist our homeless and displaced Veterans in preparing for the winter months by supplying them with warm clothing, sleeping bags, gloves, hats and shoes. The Veterans also receive medical testing, legal counseling and food cards. There will be counselors available to work with Veterans on earned benefits and available services.

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In the past, the United States Department of Defense has supplied our Stand Down with surplus items. But this year, a fire destroyed a New Jersey warehouse that housed over \$700,000 worth of donations that were being sent out to assist local agencies such as Stand Down.

“FirstEnergy has been recognized for its military hiring practices, and we employ veterans across our service areas,” said Dee Lowery, President of the FirstEnergy Foundation. “Stand Down is a grass-roots effort that provides services and items to homeless and in-need veterans to help them get through the winter months, and I can think of fewer causes we’re more proud to support.”

At the press conference, which was held at the Veterans Service Commission on Waterloo Road in Akron, Councilwoman Liz Walters announced a newly set up GoFundMe account for anyone in the community to make a donation as small as \$1 to join in the **Step Up for Stand Down** effort. The web address is www.gofundme.com/summitstanddown. Councilwoman Walters encouraged everyone to donate to those who fought for our freedom and our safety.

“These men and women fought for us and our freedom, join me in showing we care about them and are grateful for their incredible service to our Country,” Councilwoman Walters said. “They protected us and now we have the opportunity to show them we care and are thankful for their service.”

Rick Rebadow, Executive Vice President of the Greater Akron Chamber pledged to reach out to all Greater Akron Chamber members and challenged them to join **Step Up for Stand Down** by making a donation of goods or money.

“The Greater Akron Chamber is proud to be part of the Stand Down event,” said Rebadow. “We are strong supporters of all Veterans and are here to help.”

The Laura Williams Dunlop Memorial Stand Down for Homeless and Displaced Veterans of Summit County will be held on Tuesday, September 13 from 8:30 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. at the Firestone VFW Post 3383 located at 690 Waterloo Road in Akron.

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