



For Immediate Release
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UMRC & Porter Hills Foundations Raise Over \$1 Million for COVID-19 Emergency Fund

Dollars Raised Assist UMRC & Porter Hills ‘Healthcare Heroes’ with Emergency Needs During Pandemic

Chelsea, MI/Grand Rapids, MI, June 16, 2020 – The UMRC Foundation and Porter Hills Foundation are proud to announce the success of their COVID-19 Emergency Fund in support of direct care team members at UMRC & Porter Hills. Together, the foundations have raised over \$1 million, \$767,000 of which has already been dispersed to help address the emergency needs of frontline team members shore to shore.

“As the COVID-19 pandemic began, UMRC & Porter Hills knew the strain this would put on our dedicated ‘Healthcare Heroes’ and their families,” said Wendy Brightman, President of the UMRC Foundation and Porter Hills Foundation. “With children out of school, spouses without work, older family members to care for – we wanted to do all we could to help our 740 direct care team members and honor the sacrifices they are making to provide extraordinary care for the older adults and families we serve at UMRC & Porter Hills. Our foundation teams set out immediately, on March 16, to launch the COVID-19 Emergency Fund campaign.”

The UMRC Foundation and Porter Hills Foundation created a multi-faceted campaign, including written appeals, e-mail, and phone and video calls to individual donors as well as grant writing to local agencies and foundations.

Two anonymous matching grants of \$250,000 each were key in launching this initiative, said Brightman. “We are blessed to have such generous donors who believe in and support the excellent care and services our frontline team members provide every day to older adults. The matching aspect of their gifts encouraged others to give as well. In just three months, we have received 564 generous gifts, totaling \$1,092,044. Twenty-five percent of these were from donors who made their first gift ever to this campaign. Each gift will serve the region the donor intended.”

The COVID-19 Emergency Fund has made an immediate and positive impact for frontline team members of UMRC & Porter Hills, covering such needs as childcare, mortgage and rent bills, utilities, food and essentials, personal protective equipment (PPE), appreciation stipends, and much more. In addition, this fund provides a “self-care” allowance for care team members working with residents with COVID-19, covering hotel stays and meals so they would not have to worry about



bringing the virus home to their families. It also provided \$1,000 for each direct care team member who tested positive for COVID-19.

For one assisted living caregiver who is studying to become a nurse and who has contracted the virus, the COVID-19 Emergency Fund has been a Godsend. “Thanks to this fund, my rent bill was covered, giving me one less thing to worry about. I can never say ‘thank you’ enough.”

“Our frontline team members have felt the emotional and financial strain of COVID-19,” said Brightman. “Still, their vocational calling leads them toward the danger of this virus in order to care for older adults who have been the most susceptible to the illness. We are honored to be able to provide this support for our Healthcare Heroes.”

For more ways to support the UMRC Foundation and Porter Hills Foundation, including the Emergency Aid and Staff Scholarship Funds for team members, contact Wendy Brightman at 734.433.1000 ext. 7502 or 616.577.2297.

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*Building on a foundation of 114 years of service, **United Methodist Retirement Communities (UMRC)** is a faith-based, nonprofit organization that promotes the wellness, dignity and independence of older adults, by providing high quality, innovative and compassionate senior residential and supportive services. Celebrating 50 years, the mission of **Porter Hills** is to be trusted experts serving seniors with grace. Its vision is to be nationally recognized as an unparalleled leader and partner in senior services. In March 2019, UMRC & Porter Hills affiliated, under shared governance and leadership. Together, UMRC & Porter Hills represent the second largest nonprofit senior living organization in Michigan. With a tradition of exceptional quality and a commitment to cutting-edge care, these faith-based organizations and their affiliates combine to serve more than 6,700 older adults each year, from 24 locations and service lines, across 22 counties in Michigan’s lower peninsula. umrc.com/734.433.1000 and porterhills.org/616.949.4975*

*The **UMRC Foundation** is the charitable arm for United Methodist Retirement Communities, with headquarters in Chelsea, Michigan. Since its inception in 1998, the UMRC Foundation has provided over \$18,500,000 through its Benevolent Care Fund to help UMRC residents remain in their homes when they outlive their resources. The mission of the UMRC Foundation is to promote the wellness, dignity, and independence of seniors by supporting UMRC residents, staff, and the communities UMRC serves. umrcfoundation.com/734.433.1000*

***Porter Hills Foundation** is the charitable arm for Porter Hills, with headquarters in Grand Rapids, Michigan. In 1995, the Porter Hills Foundation was officially established as a separate 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Its mission is to raise, invest, and monitor the funds that support Porter Hills in providing a continuum of high-quality communities and services. With a focus on the health and well-being of older adults, and education and retention of our outstanding staff team members, the Porter Hills Foundation’s four priority initiatives include: benevolent care, employee support services, capital improvements, and life enrichment for older adults. porterhills.org/foundation/616.577.2297*