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IndependenceFirst and United Way of Greater Milwaukee & Waukesha County Partner to Provide Volunteer Opportunity to Local Professionals

Milwaukee, WI – IndependenceFirst, Milwaukee's FIRST resource when people have questions regarding access and disability, recently partnered with United Way of Greater Milwaukee & Waukesha County to obtain volunteers for improving the landscape at its Milwaukee Idea Home.

The Milwaukee Idea Home is a collaborative project providing an innovative prototype supporting the need for accessible, affordable, and energy-efficient housing in Milwaukee. The goal of the home is to demonstrate a living environment where individuals with disabilities can develop the necessary skills to live independently. Built in 2003, the home was intentionally designed to maximize accessibility in a small living space. It incorporates easily adaptable accessibility features for demonstration and testing purposes at a reasonable cost.

“This unique resource exposes our consumers to the possibilities of living more independently,” said Ana Kleppin, Volunteer Manager at IndependenceFirst. “As with any home, it requires upkeep that can be difficult to maintain and receiving support from volunteers and local businesses is a huge help.”

United Way provided a total of 21 volunteers comprised of United Way staff members and members of LINC (Lead, Impact, Network, Change), a group created by United Way to help engage young professionals between the ages of 22 and 30 who are passionate about elevating their community, connections and their social calendar. The volunteers worked side by side for three hours pulling weeds, trimming bushes, planting flowers and mulching.

"It's important for me to be able to make a local impact, especially being a Milwaukee transplant. Working with LINC on the Idea House was a great opportunity for me to connect with the community," said Paige Piggott, LINC volunteer.

About United Way of Greater Milwaukee & Waukesha County: United Way of Greater Milwaukee & Waukesha County improves our community by mobilizing people and resources to drive strategic impact in Education, Income and Health – the building blocks for a good quality of life. Learn more at: <http://www.unitedwayGMWC.org>

About IndependenceFirst: Metro Milwaukee's FIRST nonprofit resource when people have questions regarding access and disability. We offer over 20 programs and services for people with disabilities of all kinds, in all age groups. Over 50 percent of internal staff, management and board members have disabilities themselves. www.independencefirst.org



Before – Front View of Milwaukee Idea Home



After – Front View of Milwaukee Idea Home



Before – Side View of Milwaukee Idea Home



After – Side View of Milwaukee Idea Home



Volunteers from LINC (Lead, Impact, Network, Change) worked together at IndependenceFirst's Milwaukee Idea Home on Saturday, August 1, 2015.

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