

NEWS RELEASE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Photo caption:

Kristi Westbrook (left), CEO/General Manager at CTC and Karl Samp (center), Executive Director at the Brainerd Lakes Area Community Foundation are joined by Shawn Hansen (right), Executive Director at the Outreach Program of Brainerd Lakes in order to celebrate a grant that the Outreach Program has received, in order to provide meals to local food shelves.

\$15,000 Donation to BLACF Supports Food Insecurities

Brainerd, MN – The current crisis caused by COVID-19 has forced many public events and large gatherings to be canceled, postponed, or reformatted. CTC’s annual meeting is no exception.

The event, open to any CTC customer, is typically held at the Crow Wing County Fairgrounds in June, where it has had 500+ members in attendance. At their May 2020 board meeting, CTC’s Board of Directors agreed to hold the event virtually (online) via videoconference instead of in-person.

The Board of Directors also decided to donate \$15,000 to the Brainerd Lakes Area Community Foundation (BLACF) in order to support families and community members who are struggling to put food on their table during these uncertain times. This represents the money that would have been spent on the door prizes and meal served at CTC’s annual meeting. The donation will be used to support food insecurities through BLACF’s Response Fund.

An initial grant from the Response Fund has already been awarded to the Outreach Program of Brainerd Lakes, formerly Kids Against Hunger, so they can provide meals to local food shelves in CTC’s service area right away.

“We are delighted CTC has joined us in addressing the impact of COVID-19 on our neighbors, especially as it relates to hunger,” said Karl Samp, Executive Director at BLACF. “One of our

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roles is to connect resources and connecting CTC's gift with The Outreach Program's meal initiative is an honor for us at the Foundation as it will provide up to 45,000 meals."

In order to reach its full potential, CTC is challenging other businesses and community members to show their support in the form of matching funds with the goal of providing an additional \$15,000 to the Response Fund. In fact, the Roelofs Family Fund (managed by BLACF) has agreed to be the first matching donor.

"We know that many families and businesses are struggling right now," said Kristi Westbrook, CEO/General Manager at CTC. "If you're able, we encourage you to donate. Your generosity will directly impact your community and neighbors by providing a basic human need... food!"

Individuals and organizations that are interested in donating to the matching challenge or are in need of funding assistance should visit CommunityGiving.org/COVID-19, and select the BLA Response Fund, or contact ksamp@communitygiving.org.

BLACF attracts and administers charitable funds for the benefit of the Brainerd Lakes Area. Since 1998, BLACF has grown to over \$15 million in assets and awarded over \$5.6 million in grants to nonprofits. To learn more visit www.communitygiving.org.

CTC is a technology advisor and full-service telecommunications cooperative based in Brainerd, MN. Formed in 1952, CTC has grown into a complete communications provider offering telephone, high-speed internet, digital television, and IT services to businesses and individuals throughout central and northern Minnesota. For more information visit www.goctc.com.

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