**Contact:** Jake Byers

**Title:** VP of Marketing and Communications

**Phone:** 319-243-1364 *office* 319-830-9086 *cell*

**Email:** jbyers@cfneia.org

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

**Community Foundation of Northeast Iowa awards $300,000 in grants at Celebration of Community event**

November 8, 2024 – Over 200 people attended the Community Foundation of Northeast Iowa’s (CFNEIA) Celebration of Community event on Friday, November 8, at the Diamond Event Center in Cedar Falls. The organization announced $300,000 in grants to three organizations including: the Northeast Iowa Food Bank, The Surf Ballroom, and the Waterloo Economic Mobility Hub (WEMH).

“This event is a celebration of what happens when people work together to make our communities vibrant places,” said Kaye Englin, CFNEIA president and CEO. “The Community Foundation is only able to impact communities because of the generosity and partnerships of people and organizations who believe in creating opportunities for everyone to thrive by working together in incredible ways.”

The Northeast Iowa Food Bank received a $100,000 CFNEIA grant and matching $100,000 grant from the Gary and Becky Bertch Family Fund. This grant is going toward their capacity building campaign, From Hunger to Hope: Building a Secure Tomorrow. The project will expand meal distribution and more than double the current freezer and cooler capacity. Ultimately, the campaign will assist in meeting a 234% increase in pantry visits and ensure long-term sustainability.

"It's hard to put into words just how much the support of the Community Foundation of Northeast Iowa means to the Northeast Iowa Food Bank. Their partnership strengthens our mission to serve those facing food insecurity, and we are sincerely appreciative.” said Barbara Prather, Executive Director of the Northeast Iowa Food Bank. “In northeast Iowa, more than 40,000 people don’t know where their next meal will come from. Together, with the Foundation and our community of supporters, we’re making a meaningful impact. Thank you to CFNEIA for continuously standing with us in the fight against hunger."

The Surf Ballroom in Clear Lake received a $50,000 grant for their Destination Surf Campaign. This campaign will connect two of Clear Lake’s most treasured assets, the lake itself and the Surf Ballroom, creating a unique experience for residents and visitors. This enhancement will bridge the historic Surf Ballroom, the new Music Enrichment and Immersive Museum, the Farmer’s Market, a future bowling alley and boutique hotel, and restaurants to the lakefront, providing a lasting boost to the regional economy.

The Waterloo Economic Mobility Hub (WEMH) received a $50,000 starter grant for them to move their mission forward. WEMH is a collaboration of public/private stakeholders and non-profit organizations with an aligned vision of fostering a holistic economic ecosystem for wealth building. The vision is to serve as a hub of equity and access, particularly for communities who have historically received limited resources and economic investment. This new community resource center will be located in the former Wells Fago Bank in downtown Waterloo.

“These organizations are leaders in impacting our communities and the people they serve and we are honored to be part of their work,” said Englin. “We are grateful to be a local funder and to have the ability to make this kind of positive change. The grants awarded at our celebration are one way we carry out our commitment to enrich communities.”

Since 1956, CFNEIA has granted over $140 million to organizations across its 20-county region and holds assets totaling over $171 million. To learn more about the Community Foundation of Northeast Iowa and its impact go to www.cfneia.org.

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The Community Foundation of Northeast Iowa helps inspired people make the impact they envision for their community, invests in nonprofits improving our quality of life and provides leadership on key community issues to make Iowa communities stronger, more equitable places. Since 1956, the organization has been “here for good,” as a catalyst for positive change. Today, CFNEIA’s mission is carried out in 20 Iowa counties to meet local needs and fulfill a vision of creating a vibrant region of thriving people. For more information, contact 319-287-9106 or visit [www.cfneia.org](http://www.cfneia.org). CFNEIA is confirmed in compliance with National Standards for U.S. community foundations.

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

Food Bank – Grant.jpg: CFNEIA President and CEO, Kaye Englin, stands with representatives from the Northeast Iowa Food Bank. This organization received a $200,000 grant for their capacity building campaign.

WEMH – Grant.jpg: CFNEIA President and CEO, Kaye Englin, stands with community leaders and stakeholders supporting the Waterloo Economic Mobility Hub. They received a $50,000 grant on Friday, November 8th.

Surf Ballroom – Grant.jpg: Representatives from the Surf Ballroom and Clear Lake stand with Kaye Englin, CFNEIA President and CEO. They received a $50,000 grant for their Destination Surf Campaign.