



News Release

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HISTORIC BROADCAST RAISES OVER \$207,000 FOR DERECHO RELIEF

KCRG, KGAN and KWVL Team Up for Eastern Iowa United, a Fundraising Campaign For The United Way's Derecho Storm Assistance and Donations Fund



(CEDAR RAPIDS, IA) – Thursday night, August 27th, Cedar-Rapids-based broadcast TV stations KCRG and KGAN and Waterloo-based KWVL rallied for eastern Iowans hard-hit by the Aug 10th derecho storm.

Pulling together for a massive, live, local fundraising effort, the three stations worked cooperatively for over a week to bring “**Eastern Iowa United**” to life. They coordinated a day-long community fundraiser that helped United Way chapters dealing directly with the damage and recovery efforts related to the storms of August 10th that left massive swaths of crops destroyed and every city in its path reeling with major damage rivaling that of a major hurricane. KWVL Station Manager John Huff sums up the effort that highlights the classic Iowa ethos of *helping your neighbor in times of need*.

“Even though we are competitors, there was never one bit of disagreement or push back when planning this event. It felt like we were all ONE TV station working for the common good of those in need.”

KCRG’s VP and General Manager, Thom Pritz, was happy to fully back this initiative, stressing the focus remained on those suffering in our broadcast area.

“Knowing we raised \$207,000 to help so many in need today and for a long time to come, is why Local TV is so vital.” Pritz continued. “I’m also so very proud of KCRG’s parent company, Gray Television, who stepped up with an impressive \$25,000 donation to Eastern Iowa United and The Greater Cedar Rapids Community Foundation. “

As part of the donation Gray Television’s Chairman and CEO Hilton Howell Jr stated:

“On August 10th we watched in horror as the unprecedented derecho tore through Eastern Iowa and much of the Midwest. The storm, equal to a strong Category 3 hurricane, ripped through the community destroying homes, crops and businesses. With our donations today, we stand with our Gray family members and the entire Eastern Iowa community as you work to rebuild your lives.”

Highlighting the relationship formed between local TV broadcasters and viewers, KGAN General Manager, Glen Callanan, noted the power of working together creates an avenue for everyone to get involved and keeps eastern Iowa moving forward in its recovery.

“Thanks to all who contributed to this historic fundraising television event and even more thanks to our viewers and citizens who went into their pockets to help their neighbors. As Broadcasters we were proud to team together to help as much as we could with our community that has taken such a blow.”

Jim McKernan, Regional Vice President with Quincy Media added his praise to the combined effort and how it highlights a need for local television.” “We are grateful for the collaboration between Quincy Media, Gray Television and the Sinclair Broadcast Group to help Iowans in their true time of need as the result of the derecho.” “This is a prime example of the importance of local broadcasters to their communities,” he adds.

All funds raised will be distributed to the United Way of East Central Iowa, United Way of Johnson and Washington Counties, and the Cedar Valley United Way.

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On-air staff and technical crews from TV stations KCRG, KWWL and KGAN pause for a moment to commemorate an historic night of broadcasting. All three TV stations - in the same market, came together for a unique night of collaborative broadcasting to raise funds through and for the United Way. Massive areas of eastern Iowa, where these stations call home, were ravaged by a derecho on Aug 10th. A 45-minute storm with winds as high as 140mph left extraordinary damage in its wake.

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KCRG News Anchor, Nicole Agee (left); KWWL News Anchor, Ron Steele (center); and KGAN News Anchor, Mitch Fick (right), share a moment of levity together on the set of “Eastern Iowa United”. Competing TV stations KCRG, KGAN and KWWL rallied behind their home communities for a rare collaborative broadcast and day-long fundraising effort on Thursday, Aug 27th. They raised \$207,000 for United Way chapters helping eastern Iowa recover from a devastating storm on Aug 10th with winds as high as 140mph and lasting for 45 minutes.



One final pose for Eastern Iowa United by KCRG's Nicole Agee; KWWL's Ron Steele and KGAN's Mitch Fick. The trio of competitors were part of Thursday's historic, three-station simulcast of "Eastern Iowa United"; a joint fundraiser for the United Way chapters of eastern Iowa. Their broadcast area was heavily damaged by an Aug 10th derecho with 140mph winds that lasted for 45 minutes. There is extensive damage to cities, homes and agriculture stretching from the center of the state and east into Illinois. A 40-mile-tall path of destruction is so severe it can be seen from satellite images.