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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**EIGHT DAYS OF HOPE HELPED OVER 100 FAMILIES IN FORT MYERS REBUILD AFTER HURRICANE IAN**

Tupelo, MS – Eight Days of Hope (EDOH) gathered hundreds of volunteers between May 20-27 to love and serve the Harlem Heights community in Fort Myers, FL, and provided 102 families with free home repairs.

1,100 volunteers from 44 states and Canada came together, and in just eight days completed 16 roof repairs, 36 homes painted, in addition to carpentry, electrical work, window and cabinet installation, and other tasks, totaling \$2.3 million of work donated.

"The Harlem Heights community will forever have our hearts. Despite the circumstances they have lived in for the past year, they are unwavering in their hope and courage. It has been a joy to serve these families as they continue on their journey to recovery," said Stephen Tybor III, EDOH President and CEO.

EDOH partnered with The Heights Foundation, Builders Care, Summit Church, Adventures in Missions (AIM), Crisis Relief and Recovery (CRR), Trinity Commercial Group (TCG), and United Way. Together, with these local partners and volunteers from across the country, EDOH was able to assist 102 families with free assistance.

"We are grateful for the magnitude of support that Eight Days of Hope and their partners brought to Harlem Heights to help restore this community," said Kathryn Kelly, President and CEO of The Heights Foundation/The Heights Center. "Hurricane Ian damaged almost 90% of the homes in Harlem Heights, and eight months later, many families were still displaced. Eight Days of Hope not only repaired homes; their outreach let our community know they have not been forgotten."

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**About Eight Days of Hope**

Except for a small staff, Eight Days of Hope is an all-volunteer organization. We serve all people regardless of race, gender, religion, or ethnicity. Please visit [www.eightdaysofhope.com](http://www.eightdaysofhope.com) for more information, to provide financial support, or to volunteer.

**About the Heights Foundation and The Heights Center**

The Heights Foundation works to build self-sufficient families in the Harlem Heights neighborhood. Our mission is to support education and wellness, promote family and community development, and provide the benefits of enrichment and the arts. The Heights Center, supported by The Heights Foundation, is a place for Education, Opportunity, and Enrichment. Heights Early Learning serves more than 80 babies through 4 years old. The Heights Center serves 134 children in After School and Summer Camp. The Harlem Heights Community Charter School serves 180 children from kindergarten through fifth grade.

Harlem Heights was originally settled as a rural agricultural community. Approximately 780 children live in a mixture of single-family homes and multi-family apartments. Demographically, the population is approximately 70% Hispanic, 20% African-American, and 8% Caucasian. The poverty rate for children in Harlem Heights is more than twice the county average, with family income 40% below the county average. As a result, families cannot easily access family support services in downtown Fort Myers and benefit greatly from programs within the neighborhood.