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AFL-CIO Community Services and United Way Partnership

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COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS TO CONSTRUCT BARRIER-FREE ACCESS RAMP FOR NEWPORT FAMILY

NEWPORT, Mich. – On Friday & Saturday October 23 & 24, approximately 25 volunteers will donate their time and talent to build a barrier-free ramp at no cost for a Monroe County family in critical need of access to and from their home.

Construction will take place from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the family’s home in Newport.

The ramp is being built through a program called Project Ramp – a cooperative effort of unions, businesses and many public and private human care service organizations to provide barrier-free access to physically challenged individuals in the Monroe County area who cannot afford them.

Friday & Saturday’s construction is made possible by Organized Labor’s Community Services/Community Action Liaison Program, in partnership with United Way of Monroe County, Monroe County Community College’s construction management technology faculty and students, the Department of Human Services and many businesses and health and human services providers.

Project Ramp, which began in 1989, grew out of continuing concern in the community for the large population of senior citizens and physically challenged individuals living at or below the poverty level who continue to remain in their own homes.

“One of the most critical barriers to overcome for a person with a disability is the barrier to his or her home,” said Michael J. Smith, AFL-CIO Community Services Liaison. “For someone with mobility impairment, just one step can be an impossible barrier. A home can be a virtual prison if it is not

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designed for easy wheelchair access.”

“It is community collaboration such as this that helps to make Monroe County a better place to live and raise your family,” said Connie L. Carroll, executive director of the United Way of Monroe County.

Since 1989, more than 120 ramps have been built. The United Way of Monroe County, Michigan Department of Human Services, local units of government and various businesses throughout Monroe County shared in making the ramps available to those in need at no charge.

Project Ramp is a continuing annual project that will help to insure barrier free access to all who need it.