

October 11, 2023

Iowa Newspaper Association  
Awards Committee, Better Newspapers Contest

Dear Awards Committee,

Newspapers are the backbone of our democracy and have played a major role in strengthening communities across our state and our country by reporting on the facts that hold us all accountable. In Northeast Iowa we have been fortunate to have a local newspaper that is dedicated to sharing stories accurately and fairly.

At the Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque, we have partnered with the Telegraph Herald to work together to share stories, facts and candid conversations to make our region a more welcoming place to call home. A perfect example of this collaboration is our Equity Assessment.

When the Telegraph Herald learned that we were embarking on an equity assessment they jumped on board and hosted a 10-month long series of panel conversations in our community covering topics like transportation, housing, arts and culture, health and wellness, education and neighborhood safety. These conversations were an entrée to deeper discussion in small group conversations across our community and allowed us to gather data to track progress, gaps and lived experiences.

As an employee-owned newspaper the Telegraph Herald understands the importance of participating in community betterment and taking care of its neighbors. The Telegraph Herald has been very intentional about its efforts to engage the community in necessary (but sometimes difficult) discussions about the future of the Dubuque region. Newspapers have a unique ability to reach a mass audience with in-depth storytelling, and we valued that partnership in addressing issues of diversity and inclusion.

Our programs and community forums would not have had the attendance numbers or visibility without the Telegraph Herald's involvement. The sponsors that the Telegraph Herald was able to bring to this project also raised the level of engagement we saw across a broad range of residents. Not only did we have strong in-person attendance, but the Telegraph Herald resources allowed us to live-stream programs and engage a wider range of people.

The future of the Dubuque region hinges upon our ability to connect with people across differences and ensure that everyone has the tools they need for success. The Telegraph Herald has been a key factor in keeping the community engaged in this essential work. Its strategic outreach around these topics will result in our community being more equitable and inclusive. We deeply appreciate the Telegraph Herald's partnership and dedication to this work.

Sincerely,



Nancy Van Milligen  
President & CEO