



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Groundbreaking for the First Tornado Survivors  
Pathway to Homeownership House**

**Monday, March 29, 2021 – 10:30 a.m.  
4189 Saylor Street – Dayton, Ohio (Harrison Township)**

Dayton, OH – March 26, 2021 – The Miami Valley Long Term Recovery Operations Group, in partnership with Montgomery County, Harrison Township, County Corp, The HomeOwnership Center of Greater Dayton, Sinclair Community College and numerous other partners will break ground Monday, March 29, 2021, at 10:30 a.m. on the first new construction home as part of the Tornado Survivors Pathway to Homeownership Project (Pathways Project). Attendees and members of the media will be expected to follow COVID-19 safety protocols including social distancing and masks.

The Pathways Project was developed to provide qualified tornado survivors, who are not currently homeowners, the opportunity to become homeowners. Interested applicants work with The HomeOwnership Center of Greater Dayton to become mortgage ready while skilled volunteer build teams construct or rehab homes on properties donated by the jurisdictions. This project is the result of collaborative efforts of the Miami Valley Long Term Recovery Operations Group, our local partners and national and local voluntary organizations active in disaster who are willing to serve as build teams.

Per Montgomery County Commission President Judy Dodge, “This Pathways Project is an excellent example of our communities working together in the face of tragedy. Montgomery County is proud to be one of the many organizations involved in helping tornado survivors become homeowners. With this home, and planned future builds, we will be setting several local families up for success.”

“The mission of Sinclair College has always been to identify the need and endeavor to meet it and this collaborative effort is that mission in action beginning with the Sinclair Board of Trustees investing \$750,000 toward funding recovery efforts of those impacted so greatly by the tornadoes,” said Dr. Steve Johnson, President & CEO – Sinclair Community College.

The students are excited to be involved. Josh Tinell, Sinclair Construction Management student said, “The Pathways Project has allowed me to not only put to practice the skills I’ve learned at Sinclair, but also give back to the community and to assist with the 2019 tornado recovery efforts.”

The first home constructed as part of the project will be located in Harrison Township, the community hardest hit by the 2019 Memorial Day tornadoes. This build, located at 4189 Saylor Street, will be led by Sinclair Community College’s Construction Technologies program faculty and will leverage the talents of Sinclair and Tech Prep students, as well as volunteer disaster reconstruction teams.

“This is an incredibly proud moment for Sinclair College as our students will not only learn vital hands-on skills, but they are also a valuable part of a tremendous collaborative effort to give back to individuals and families in this community,” said Charlie Setterfield, Chair – Sinclair Community College Built Environment.

According to Laura Mercer, Miami Valley Long Term Recovery Executive Director, “The Pathways Project leverages the talents of volunteer build teams and the expertise and resources of community organizations to transform vacant lots and structures into new homes that will enable qualified tornado survivors to become homeowners. This home is the first of many that will be built in Harrison Township, Trotwood and Old North Dayton and we are excited to continue to help these communities recover and thrive.”

Individuals, businesses, and organizations who are interested in supporting the Pathways Project can contribute financially to The Dayton Foundation’s Tornado Survivor Pathway to Homeownership fund (Fund #8561). Businesses and organizations that are interested in sponsoring a home or contributing materials or professional services should contact Laura Mercer at [Laura.Mercer@Sinclair.edu](mailto:Laura.Mercer@Sinclair.edu).

Individuals who still need help recovering from the tornadoes can call Catholic Social Services directly to be connected to a disaster case manager at 937-223-7217 ext. 1137. Tornado survivors who want to become homeowners and are interested in the Pathways Program can go to [HomeownershipDayton.org](http://HomeownershipDayton.org) to apply.

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*We ask that groundbreaking attendees and members of the media please follow COVID safety protocols including wearing mask and practice social distancing.*

#### **About the Miami Valley Long Term Recovery Operations Group**

*The MVLTROG is comprised of non-profit and faith-based organizations in partnership with local, state, and federal agencies working together to assist survivors of the May 27, 2019 Memorial Day Tornadoes. Our Mission is to provide coordinated long-term recovery management for individuals affected by the tornadoes who do not have adequate personal resources for basic needs as a result of the disaster. The MVLTROG has assisted more than 2000 families in their recovery journey. You can visit us online at [MVstrong.org](http://MVstrong.org).*