

Press Release

## **POWER rolls out new program funded by Sustainable Reserve Fund grant**

March 6, 2020

POWER is now offering more financial assistance than ever, thanks to a new grant from Oberlin's Sustainable Reserve Fund. "The biggest thing that stops people from making their homes more efficient is money," reports Energy Advocate Greg Jones. "Now we can help address that problem for all Oberlin residents."

Founded in 2009, POWER is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization whose mission is to increase the energy efficiency of homes in Oberlin, Ohio, with a particular focus on serving the low-income community.

Currently, homeowners who are below 150% of the Federal Poverty Level are eligible for Warm Choice, a program that covers 100% of the cost of insulating and weatherizing the home. Many homeowners fall above this cut-off yet still struggle financially, Jones said.

POWER's new Home Efficiency Grants provide financial assistance to *all* Oberlin residents using a sliding scale based on income. Everyone qualifies for some financial assistance, from 25% of the costs not covered by existing efficiency programs, up to 100% of the cost. There is no application or additional paperwork required. Any Oberlin resident, including renters, are eligible.

Created by a ballot initiative passed in 2017, the Sustainable Reserve Fund seeks to fund programs that contribute to one or more parts of the City's Climate Action Plan, and also balance the environmental, social and economic interests of the community.

"Our first external proposal for the Sustainable Reserve Fund was from POWER," Oberlin's Sustainability Coordinator Linda Arbogast said. "I am thrilled to fund POWER to continue the work of home weatherization in Oberlin. The primary objective of these funds is to implement our Climate Action Plan in ways that support the entire community. POWER works in homes throughout our community and now has funds to support weatherization work for families who couldn't have afforded to get the work done."

Energy efficiency provides long term environmental benefits by reducing the use of natural gas, and by reducing the electricity grid's peak load, when dirty market energy is purchased to meet demand. Energy efficiency also provides economic benefits: efficiency upgrades create jobs, and homeowners enjoy lowered energy bills for as long as they remain in their home. Finally, energy efficient homes are healthier and more comfortable.

All Oberlin residents, including those who rent, are eligible for POWER's free services and the new Home Efficiency Grants. Greg Jones, Oberlin's Energy Advocate, can be reached at 440 935 0995 to schedule a free walk-through of any home.