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Climate Action Alliance of the Valley (CAAV), a local volunteer-run nonprofit focused on climate action and education, has received a Community Giving grant of \$35,000 from Clean Virginia. Clean Virginia is an independent advocacy organization promoting clean energy and community control over energy policy. This grant will allow CAAV to continue an innovative partnership with Community Housing Partners (CHP), Shenandoah Valley Faith & Climate, 50x25 Harrisonburg, and Harrisonburg Unitarian Universalist (HUU) that promotes awareness of funding opportunities for weatherization and energy efficiency.

The partnership began with initial seed money from HUU, which had funds left over after installing solar panels in 2022 and wanted to put that money towards energy efficiency in the Harrisonburg/Rockingham community. CHP Energy Solutions is the designated Weatherization Assistance Program provider for Rockingham, Harrisonburg, and over 40 Virginia localities. CHP connects qualified homeowners and renters to programs funded by federal and state governments, as well as from area utilities like Harrisonburg Electric Commission, to reduce household energy burdens and lower residential greenhouse gas emissions.

In January of 2023, CAAV, CHP, and other partners assembled local community leaders in two roundtables to better understand the barriers preventing local low- and middle-income households from applying for these free services. HUU then provided Comité Salvadoreño Paisanos Unidos (COSPU), a pro-immigrant nonprofit in Harrisonburg that empowers local families and runs the annual Hispanic Festival, with a grant of \$3,500 to build organizational capacity to promote these weatherization opportunities within the local immigrant community.

CAAV intends to distribute the \$35,000 to local organizations working with populations struggling with high energy bills in under-insulated homes and with outdated gas-powered appliances. With support from CAAV and materials through CHP, these funds will enable selected organizations to promote government-funded and utility-sponsored weatherization and energy efficiency programs and provide support to community members with the application process.

For more information about CAAV, CHP, or Clean Virginia, see:

<https://climateactionallianceofthevalley.org/>

<https://www.communityhousingpartners.org/>

<https://www.cleanvirginia.org/>

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