



Riverbend Family Ministries Is Ecstatic Over Large Rebuild Illinois Shovel Ready Sites Grant

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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WOOD RIVER - Riverbend Family Ministries (RFM) was recently awarded a massive Rebuild Illinois Shovel Ready Sites Grant.

Riverbend Family Ministries Executive Director Tammy Isakarous could not be more thankful than what she is now after her organization was selected as one of Governor J. B. Pritzker's \$11 million Rebuild Illinois Shovel Ready grants.

Riverbend Family Ministries will receive \$494,000 which will help it provide more space for each organization it presently works with, and increase opportunities for training and education. Riverbend Family Ministries is moving from its present building to the old TR's Building in Wood River from its present location. The move will provide 24,000-square-feet of space, compared to the previous 7,000 square feet.

Iskarous was very honored to be one of 11 new development projects throughout the state selected by the governor. These investments will unlock over \$50 million in total investment in the state - creating 800-plus jobs and unlocking long-term economic growth and community benefit for years to come. Projects include enhancements for transit hubs, community centers, affordable housing, business training centers, and more.

“We want to thank Governor Pritzker and the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) for believing in the work that RFM continues to accomplish in Madison County,” Iskarous said. “With this grant, RFM will provide more space for each organization, and further opportunities for training and education. RFM will be able to serve and strengthen more individuals, youth, children, and families affected by trauma. RFM will also add additional services and programs to our team of already incredible organizations.”

Iskarous added: “Not only will the expansion help strengthen families and the organizations that are housed here, but this money will also be such an economic boost to the Riverbend area as well as all of Madison County, by putting over 100 people to work at prevailing wages. Again, many thanks to the Governor and the DCEO for the opportunity to provide economic growth and community benefit for years to come.”

"Our vision at Riverbend Family Ministries is to provide resources for smaller non-profit organizations to work together under one roof, providing families and individuals the tools they need to be self-sufficient," she added. "We concentrate our collaborative, holistic efforts on children, youth and families who've experienced trauma, most often due to violence, addiction, poverty and homelessness."

RFM opened its doors in August 2007 downtown Wood River at 131 East Ferguson Avenue. About a year later, they held their grand opening and ribbon cutting to celebrate the completion of their construction.

“We’re excited about the opportunity that we have been given to invest in the future of families of this community,” said Iskarous. “We call everyone that walks into our doors family. We do that because a family is always there for you, in good times, and bad without judgement. We are more than honored to serve the people of this area.”

Riverbend Family Ministries has a goal to raise \$550,000 to go with the \$494,000 state grant for the expansion project. The group has made significant progress on the goal in recent months, Iskaroussaid.

“I am blessed to be surrounded by good people,” she said. “Riverbend Family Ministries has changed the trajectory of people lives every day.”

For more info:

<https://wsilv.com/2021/02/25/gov-pritzker-announces-11-million-in-rebuild-illinois-capital-grants/>