Ivester Foundation awards Wellroot $300K for Hall County families facing emergencies - Gainesville Times

Wellroot Family Services, a Georgia nonprofit that provides foster care, counseling and housing assistance for children and families, has received a $300,000 grant to help Hall County families facing sudden financial emergencies.

The Melvin Douglas and Victoria Kay Ivester Foundation awarded the grant to establish the Ivester Foundation Stabilization Fund, which will provide emergency financial assistance to children, young adults and families receiving Wellroot services in Hall County.

The money is intended for expenses that may not be covered by traditional assistance programs, such as rent, utility bills, transportation costs or car repairs.

“Every family can face a moment when a single obstacle threatens to derail their future,” said Swinton Griffith, director of the Ivester Foundation. “A missed rent payment, a car repair, a utility bill, or another unexpected expense can create a fork in the road that leads either toward greater stability or deeper crisis.”

The fund will allow Wellroot to respond to those needs before a financial problem leads to eviction, housing instability or child welfare involvement, according to the organization.

“Many of the families we serve are working hard to build stable lives, but unexpected challenges can quickly place that progress at risk,” Wellroot President and CEO Allison Ashe said.

She said the funding could be used to prevent an eviction, keep utilities on or help a family maintain transportation to work.

The grant comes as Wellroot expands its presence in Hall County.

The organization recently opened its Gainesville Family Resiliency Center, which offers behavioral health counseling, foster and kinship care, parenting programs and legal advocacy aimed at helping families before problems escalate to possible involvement with the Georgia Division of Family and Children Services.

Wellroot also operates its Safety Net program, which provides housing and support services for people ages 18 to 24 experiencing homelessness in Hall, Dawson and Forsyth counties.

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