

DORM FURNITURE GETS A NEW LIFE AIDING AFGHAN REFUGEES

BY: PAIGE ALESCH, AREA I

When it came time to replace dorm furniture at Iowa School for the Deaf (ISD), Facilities Manager Scott Mauch saw an opportunity to be environmentally responsible and help others in the surrounding communities. In January of 2022 Paige Alesch, Iowa Waste Exchange Specialist in Area I was invited to tour the ISD dorms and form a plan with the school employees and movers to give the furniture a second chance. This furniture included solid wood twin bed frames, dressers, wardrobes, desks, and lounge furniture.



David Klitz and Trudy Patzner with Council Bluffs Habitat for Humanity ReStore load Iowa School for the Deaf dorm room furniture.

After Alesch contacted David Klitz, Habitat for Humanity of Council Bluffs ReStore Director and connected him with ISD, everything fell into place. With the help of ISD and ReStore staff, the first load of beds was moved out of storage on a freezing cold January day. Shortly after the move, Klitz connected with Restoring Dignity, an organization aiding 900 refugees entering the United States and learned of their need for twin bed frames. “Twin size beds are really needed so it was perfect timing, the mattresses were already secured; they just needed the frames,” said Klitz.

Remaining furniture will be sold by ReStore in Council Bluffs; and if space allows, the dressers, wardrobes and desks will be distributed to affiliate ReStores in the metro area for resale. Profit from those sales support programming in areas served by Habitat, offsetting administrative costs and helping more buyers become mortgage-eligible.

This endeavor brought together at least six community partners and will end with the furniture being distributed by the Refugee Empowerment Center.

For more information about the Iowa Waste Exchange, visit the program website [here](#).



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