



Appalachia Rises Telethon to Raise Funds for Flood Relief

Nine organizations unite to assist after historic flood. Donate now at AppalachiaRises.org.

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IMAGE/VIDEO GALLERY: Photos/video courtesy WKYT-27 available [here](#)

MARCH 5, 2021 — MOREHEAD, KY — With Kentucky's Appalachian counties in distress following historic floods, more than a half-dozen organizations have united to form a large-scale fundraising effort anchored by a 7 p.m. Monday telethon to be broadcast by CBS affiliates [WKYT](#) in Lexington and [WYMT](#) in Hazard.

Within hours of rainfall beginning to slow on March 1, more than a dozen counties had already declared states of emergency. Representing more than 175,000 Appalachians, the counties were soon joined by far more, as the dramatic need became clear as flood waters wiped out entire communities through Kentucky. Residual effects, including mudslides and infrastructure collapse, have left many residents uprooted and, in some cases, homeless with essential businesses also closed due to damage. Compounding the difficulties, the unemployment rates in several affected counties are among Kentucky's highest. Evacuations across the state have also driven thousands to overcrowded and underfunded shelters, while hospitals treat flood-related injuries alongside the ongoing pandemic.

Launched by Morehead-based AgTech leader AppHarvest, the [Appalachia Rises](#) initiative has brought together more than a half-dozen organizations, including the Foundation for Appalachian Kentucky, Appalachian Impact Fund, Appalachians for Appalachia, Blue Grass Community Foundation, WKYT, WYMT and New Frontier Outfitters. To donate to the flood relief fund, visit <https://appalachiaries.org> with all proceeds being distributed by the Foundation for Appalachian Kentucky and Blue Grass Community Foundation. Funds will be targeted to individuals needing emergency relief, farmers and small businesses.

Building up to Monday's 7 p.m. telethon, which will feature musical performances and inspirational addresses by notable Kentuckians, Appalachia Rises will be staging a number of community outreach initiatives.

Supporting comments

Foundation for Appalachian Kentucky Executive Director Gerry Roll: "The Foundation for Appalachian Kentucky is the only nationally accredited community foundation located in and exclusively serving Eastern Kentucky. Dollars raised with our partners at the Appalachia Rises Fund will be used to help with immediate long-term recovery. The Foundation for Appalachian Kentucky has already begun making emergency relief grants to individuals in crisis and are gearing up to make grants to small family farmers and small, local businesses with relief efforts that will continue throughout the year. We understand that recovery takes time

and different forms of support. We live here and work here. And we will be here for our communities once the flood waters subside.”

Blue Grass Community Foundation President/CEO Lisa Adkins: “There is nothing more important at a time like this than helping our neighbors in need. Blue Grass Community Foundation is committed to working collaboratively to ensure that those most impacted by the devastating floods receive support, and we are pleased to commit \$10,000 to the flood relief efforts.”

Donors Joe Craft and Ambassador Kelly Craft: “We, as Kentuckians, are no stranger to challenges. This past year has tested us all. We witnessed tragedies, yet we persevered with heroic acts of kindness. Kentuckians have proven to be strong and our communities are home to extraordinary solidarity and resilience. Joe and I are confident Kentuckians will rise to this challenge. We are grateful for the commitment and support from fellow Kentuckians, AppHarvest, Foundation for Appalachian Kentucky and the Blue Grass Community Foundation.”

WKYT Vice President & General Manager Jeff Anderson: “After seeing the images showing the severe impact the people in Eastern Kentucky are facing, we felt the need to step in and help raise money to assist those in need.”

AppHarvest Founder & CEO Jonathan Webb: “Eastern Kentucky is defined by faith and grit. Our region is home to the hardest working people who have long powered America, and they consistently rise to meet every challenge and move every obstacle created. Seeing how quickly people have banded together to help is a constant reminder why Appalachia is a region unlike any other.”

New Frontier Outfitters Founders Jared and Joshua Ravenscraft: “We started New Frontier Outfitters in 2017 because people think of the West as America’s frontier, but we know firsthand that the rolling hills of Appalachia are one of America’s most beautiful and well-preserved areas. To see the damage in recent days is heartbreaking and inspired us to launch the Appalachia Rises clothing line to support our friends and neighbors in need.”