

Subject: Our Regional Response to COVID-19

Date: Friday, March 13, 2020 at 3:59:41 PM Eastern Daylight Time

From: CFNCR Marketing <marketing@thecommunityfoundation.org>

To:



Dear _____,

As a community foundation, a central part of our mission is to meet the critical needs of our community. Throughout our history, we have played an important leadership role in galvanizing local philanthropy and coordinating our community's response to economic crises and other disasters.

We have been closely monitoring the rapidly evolving situation with COVID-19 and we are working with our community partners on emergency preparedness and response efforts. Below is some information about our regional emergency response efforts, measures we are taking to protect our staff and stakeholders, and how the cancellation of our Celebration of Philanthropy was leveraged towards providing meals to marginalized community members.

Regional Response to COVID-19 Outbreak

The Community Foundation is leading an effort with our peers in philanthropy to coordinate our community's response to protecting public health and assisting those affected by the coronavirus and its impact on our local economy. The economic implications of the virus are already being felt and could be staggering to our region.

The Community Foundation has opened and provided initial funding for the COVID-19 Emergency Response Fund to collect donations that can help with supplies and emergency preparedness activities. Through this fund, we are focused on addressing food insecurity, lost wages, small business and gig economy relief, expanding access to medical services, and meeting the unique needs of people experiencing homelessness, among other needs.

You can join us in this effort to ensure our region is prepared to meet the evolving needs and challenges associated with this outbreak. Your contribution will help us support and assist our nonprofit partners providing supplies and direct services to affected communities, especially low-income communities, hourly wage workers, people of color, and seniors who may be disproportionately impacted.

[Donate Now](#)

If you would like to make a contribution to this effort, please [click here](#) or you can make a

grant recommendation in [Donor Central](#). If you have any questions, please contact [Angela Willingham](#).

Protecting Our Staff and Stakeholders

To do our part to prevent the spread of this disease and protect the health and safety of our staff and stakeholders, we have made the decision to close The Community Foundation's main and local offices. All staff will telework for the next two weeks, while we continue to assess the evolving situation. We made this decision in alignment with state of emergency declarations in DC and Maryland, and broader school closures announced this week.

During this time, we will do our best to maintain regular business functions with minimal disruptions to services and support for our donors and nonprofit partners. It may take us a little longer to respond to requests as we adjust to a fully remote work situation. We appreciate your patience and support as we work through this arrangement.

What can you expect?

- **How to reach Community Foundation staff:** All office phone lines will be forwarded to staff at their remote offices, and email will continue to be monitored regularly. If you need to speak with someone at The Community Foundation, you can find our contact information [here](#) or please use the main line at 202-955-5890 or donorservices@thecommunityfoundation.org.
- **Meetings and events:** All events, in-person meetings, and other external meetings hosted at The Community Foundation's offices have been suspended for the next two weeks, until we can reassess the situation. Our staff will determine whether meetings or other engagements can be modified to video or conference calls, postponed, or cancelled.
- **Making gifts to your fund:** We will continue to accept and process all forms of gift payments. If you are planning to mail a check, we encourage you to consider other ways to give, including [online gifts](#) or stock or wire transfer. You will find our gift transmission instructions [here](#).
- **Recommending grants from your fund:** Make sure you are set up with access to [Donor Central](#), our online donor portal and fund management tool. [See the attached tool guide for instructions](#). Our grants review and due diligence process will continue as normal, however we do anticipate there may be delays of at least a couple days as we update our processes and systems for remote work. If you don't have access to Donor Central, please [complete the grant request form](#) and send it via email to: grantrecommendations@thecommunityfoundation.org. We ask you to please hold any faxes until we return to the office full time.
- **Grants processing:** We have made a concerted effort to move all grantees and vendor payments to ACH, which is a faster and more secure form of payment. This step is even more critical right now. We will aim to move all grantees to ACH payment in case there are any disruptions to mail services. This might mean that grants could take longer to process, depending on the responsiveness of grantees.

Cancelled Event Helps Families in Need

Earlier this week, we made the difficult decision to cancel the 2020 Celebration of Philanthropy. Despite the event cancellation, we took proactive measures to turn a

disappointing situation into something that positively benefits our community. The food and florals for the event were donated to United Communities Against Poverty to provide 500 meals to individuals and families in Prince George's County whose quality of life has been negatively impacted by poverty, unemployment, or homelessness. We also compensated all workers, volunteers, and [nonprofit performers](#) who were relying on this event as a source of income to ensure that our cancellation did not create negative financial impacts for them. Our story was featured yesterday as part of WJLA's (the local ABC7 affiliate) coverage of local coronavirus response efforts. [Check out the story here.](#)



Our staff participated in a delivery of 500 meals to feed residents of United Communities Against Poverty's facility in Prince George's County, MD. We received a tour of UCAP's food pantry, which was supported by our Resilience Fund during the federal government shutdown, and we filmed an interview for ABC7 news.

Together, We Can Make a Difference

Your continued support and partnership are crucial to ensuring a safe, vibrant, and thriving community for all. I hope you will consider a donation to the [COVID-19 Emergency Response Fund](#).

Your contribution will make a huge difference for service industry workers who may lose out on wages, small-business owners who are losing customers, nonprofits that have to cancel fundraising and other public events, people who may be quarantined and in need of assistance, seniors who need help obtaining food and supplies, and our neighbors experiencing homelessness who need shelter and medical services.

Together, we can address the challenges ahead of us. Thank you for your support.



Sincerely,
Tonia

Tonia Wellons
Interim President & CEO
Greater Washington Community Foundation

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