

# PRESS RELEASE

50 Valley Street, Providence, RI 02909-2459  
(401) 444.0600 | fax (401) 444.0635  
www.LIVEUNITEDri.org



*Contact: Michael J. Cerio | [Michael@CerioCommunications.com](mailto:Michael@CerioCommunications.com) | (401) 743-8269*

## **United Way Sends \$600,000 in ‘Rhode Island Recovers’ Grants to 41 Local Organizations to Support Continuity of Services**

*Unrestricted funding supports general operating expenses to help nonprofits stay afloat*

**Providence, R.I.** (August 20, 2020) Through a new funding program established to support nonprofits’ ability to continue their services to Rhode Islanders amid the COVID-19 crisis, United Way of Rhode Island (UWRI) has sent \$600,000 in ‘*Rhode Island Recovers*’ grants to [41 local organizations](#).

Grants range from \$5,000 to a maximum of \$25,000 and are earmarked for general operating support. The funds were awarded to nonprofits for their work in the areas of housing, workforce development, financial stability, and expanded learning, and prioritized efforts that benefit communities of color. The grants cover the time period of July 1 to December 31, 2020.

Among the organizations to receive funding is Man Up, which was awarded \$15,000. The minority-run nonprofit provides a range of unique workforce development and educational opportunities to adult men of color while addressing the social, financial and legal barriers that often hold them back. With the funding, Man Up was able to bring back two of its case managers to again operate at full strength.

“Our case managers are the backbone of our organization. We have young men who completed a 26 week oil/heat technician training program, passed their state oil burner license exam, and were ready to begin work when everything was shuttered,” said Rhonda Price, CEO and Founder of Man Up. “With businesses opening back up, there are jobs out there and it’s our case managers helping them get the work they were trained for. These are men who have worked hard to turn their lives around and we’re helping them create a sustainable future through career track training and employment.”

In making \$600,000 available, UWRI’s ‘*Rhode Island Recovers*’ grant program is the largest in the state to issue a request for proposals in which one-hundred percent of an award may be used for unrestricted operating funds. In total, UWRI received 160 applications totaling more than \$3.5 million in requests.

“This is trust-based philanthropy, where our goal as an organization was to ensure that smaller, and often younger, nonprofits could continue to function and maintain the services they provide to those most at-risk,” said Cortney Nicolato, UWRI’s President and CEO. “While our current environment has encouraged us to continue to look differently at how we do things, our shift to more equity-focused grantmaking began more than a year ago. Sometimes, not giving everyone the same thing makes the biggest impact.”

Tomaquag Museum, in Exeter, is another organization to receive a grant. The state’s only Indigenous museum recently reopened, having been closed March through July. During that time, it was forced to cancel more than 40 programs and events that would have brought a steady flow of schools, youth, adults and families – and revenue – through its doors.

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“For COVID to happen when it did was simply devastating – the fact that this grant is unrestricted was an enormous piece to our reopening plan and expanding our virtual options,” said Lorén Spears, the museum’s Executive Director. “These funds allowed us to accommodate new strategies and technologies that we just could not plan for and, frankly, didn’t know we’d ever need. United Way’s funding gave us flexibility, which is so critical, especially now. Kutaptush. Thank you.”

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*United Way of Rhode Island is changing lives and strengthening our communities by investing in proven programs that work over the short-term, and are scalable over the long-term. For more information, visit [www.LIVEUNITEDri.org](http://www.LIVEUNITEDri.org).*