

NEWS RELEASE

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COVID-19 Response Fund awards \$1.2 million in first round of grants to local nonprofits

Providence, RI (March 27, 2020) – Less than two weeks after the Rhode Island Foundation and United Way of Rhode Island jointly established the COVID-19 Response Fund, the organizations today announced a first round of crisis response grants to local nonprofit organizations.

Twenty-seven organizations serving Rhode Islanders who are coping with the current health crisis will share a total of \$1.2 million. Additional grants from the fund will continue to be awarded on a rolling basis. Qualifying nonprofit organizations may apply at rifoundation.org/covid19grants.

Among the organizations receiving grants are Adoption Rhode Island, the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Community Center, Meals on Wheels of Rhode Island, the Rhode Island Free Clinic, Sojourner House, WARM Center, Lucy's Hearth and the Pawtucket Soup Kitchen. *(The full list of awardees and a brief description of what each grant will support is posted [here](#).)*

“Throughout the entire state, nonprofit organizations are stepping up to assist neighbors in need during this unprecedented and uncertain time. It’s truly heartening to see the response,” said Neil D. Steinberg, president and CEO of the Foundation. “We’re committed to getting this funding to where it is needed the most. Thanks to our generous donors, these grants will provide a safety net to support many Rhode Islanders. We also welcome more donations to the fund, so that we are able to continue to meet community need.”

Many of the grants awarded today will help local nonprofits provide basic needs to Rhode Islanders affected by the crisis. For example, funds will support food and personal care products, and assistance meeting household expenses. Additionally, funding was awarded to health centers, community centers and shelters as they face unprecedented challenges to maintain operations and deliver services to those most in need.

“We are hearing from the nonprofit community every day about the disruption to services caused by this pandemic. Being able to quickly support them, and Rhode Islanders with their most basic needs has the ability to not only provide comfort, but to save lives,” said United Way of Rhode Island President and CEO Cortney Nicolato. “As this health crisis will continue for some time, I am grateful for every donor who has stepped up so far, for the donations to come, and to every nonprofit employee who continues to show up, every day, to take care of our families and neighbors.”

Grantees will use the funding to provide direct service, as well as to quickly increase their capacity to deliver needed services, such as telehealth, remotely.

Together, the Foundation and United Way established the COVID-19 Response Fund on March 17 and have combined to raise more than \$5.2 million in contributions.

Gifts to the fund, in any amount, can be made with the Foundation at rifoundation.org/covid19response or to United Way at uwri.org. Donations will be accepted as long as the need continues.

The Rhode Island Foundation is the largest and most comprehensive funder of nonprofit organizations in Rhode Island. Working with generous and visionary donors, the Foundation raised \$47 million and awarded a record \$56 million in grants to organizations addressing the state's most pressing issues and needs of diverse communities in 2019. Through leadership, fundraising and grant-making activities, often in partnership with individuals and organizations, the Foundation is helping Rhode Island reach its true potential. For more information, visit rifoundation.org.

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.

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