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COVID-19 Response Fund Awards Grant to Open Code Blue Emergency Homeless Shelter

Additional grants continue to support food and rental assistance

York, PA — As winter weather quickly approaches, and COVID-19 cases increase, the York County COVID-19 Response Fund has recently awarded \$143,300 to nonprofits helping our neighbors.

To date, the fund, launched jointly by the York County Community Foundation (YCCF) and United Way of York County, has raised over \$1,049,550 and awarded a total of \$617,238 in grants.

The most recent grants were awarded to:

- New Hope Ministries to continue providing emergency rental assistance funds
- York Benevolent Association to help people facing food insecurity
- York County Food Bank to prepare for winter food distribution
- Children's Aid Society for York County Coalition on Homelessness (YCCH) Code Blue Emergency Shelter

The York County COVID-19 Response Fund has supported more than 478 families to help keep them in their homes during the pandemic through rental assistance, and will continue to provide aid for eviction prevention. The Code Blue Emergency Shelter grant will support additional community need based on reduced capacity at homeless shelters.

YCCH has identified that all existing emergency shelter spaces are currently operating at 50%-70% capacity, in order to protect guests and staff from COVID-19 and respect social distancing recommendations. This leaves our community with 195 missing overnight shelter beds for the coming winter months. The 'cold weather only' shelter, often referred to as Code Blue, provides anyone who is homeless with a place to get inside, out of the winter weather elements, and be safe when certain weather conditions are met. This shelter will supplement existing year round shelter beds and provide overflow space our community uses during a typical winter, which are operating at the decreased capacity as a result of COVID-19 distancing restrictions. This new space will require its own staffing, supplies, sanitation and intake processes, and has plans to be open by December 1.

“The York County COVID-19 Response Fund is proud to be the first money accessible for the Code Blue Emergency Shelter,” said Lise Levin, Vice President for Community Investment for YCCF. “We have the flexibility to support the operational needs necessary to get these emergency shelters up and running quickly to meet immediate needs.”

“The Code Blue shelters not only provide a safe place for individuals experiencing homelessness, but also provide access to a supportive framework that connects people with services and resources to help them move toward stability,” shared Natalie Williams, Vice President of Community Impact at United Way of York County.

The health and human services helpline 211 is also a powerful resource to be shared with individuals who may need additional resources for childcare, food, housing and other needs in this challenging time. Anyone can dial 211 or text your zip code to #898-211 to talk with a resource specialist for free.

The COVID-19 Response Fund was seeded by a \$100,000 lead gift from YCCF's Fund for York County, the foundation's most flexible fund designed to address the county's greatest needs. Additional major contributions have come from the W. Dale Brougher Foundation, Arthur J. & Lee R. Glatfelter Foundation, Powder Mill Foundation, J William Warehime Foundation, Kinsley Foundation, Memorial Health Fund, Women's Giving Circle, Harley-Davidson Foundation, the Donley Foundation, PECO, Wells Fargo, the Wolf Inaugural Fund and Carol D. Wagman. Recognizing that community needs are growing and changing, this Fund will welcome additional contributions. 100% of the proceeds will go directly towards grants to nonprofit organizations.

There are many ways to support our community in this time of need. In addition to considering a gift to the York County COVID-19 Response Fund, residents are encouraged to continue to support the charities they care about who are supporting our neighbors and families.

Although many nonprofit organizations have paused their volunteer opportunities due to recommendations on social distancing, you can still help support urgent community needs created by the COVID-19 pandemic. If you are healthy and able, please visit United Way's COVID-19 Resource page at <https://www.unitedway-york.org/covid-19>, which is updated regularly with volunteer opportunities as we receive them. Know of a volunteer opportunity that should be

added? Reach out to Volunteer Engagement Coordinator Bryce Kruger at krugerb@unitedway-york.org.

For more information about the fund, please visit <https://yccf.org/covid-19responsefund/>.

To contribute to the York County COVID-19 Response Fund please visit www.yccf.org or www.unitedway-york.org.

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About York County Community Foundation

York County Community Foundation creates a vibrant York County by engaging donors, providing community leadership, and investing in high-impact initiatives while building endowment for future generations. York County Community Foundation holds more than 575 endowed funds and assists donors and nonprofits in reaching their charitable goals. The Community Foundation granted \$6.7 million in 2019 throughout York County and beyond, and stewards approximately \$165 million in assets.

About United Way of York County

For over 99 years, United Way of York County has worked in the York County community to improve people's lives. It began as The York Welfare Federation, an organization that raised funds on behalf of 17 member agencies. Today, as the United Way of York County, the mission of raising community funds remains the same, but the strategies have broadened in order to meet the growing and changing needs of people living in York County.

United Way has adapted over the years and now collaborates with other public and private organizations to engage the community in addressing the complex issues facing York County. By developing initiatives that get at the root causes of these issues, United Way and its partners find solutions and fund programs that improve the lives of one in four people in York County. Through gifts to the Community Fund, United Way is able to invest those dollars into 66 programs supported by 35 Partner Agencies. These programs address human services needs across three Focus Areas: Education, Health, and Financial Stability. This enables United Way to tackle the immediate and continuing needs of York County families and individuals and to create real, lasting change that matters to you and our community.