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COVID-19 Response Fund Adds School-Age Child Care to Funding Priorities

York, PA — The education of our youngest community members has changed significantly during the COVID-19 pandemic and has posed challenges for educators and families. Childcare centers have also faced challenges in providing expanded care for school-aged children who are participating in virtual learning. Recognizing these challenges and the financial strain that comes along with implementing new programming to serve these children and their families, the York County COVID-19 Response Fund has expanded its priorities to include school-aged child care.

The fund has awarded \$50,000 to four York County nonprofits serving children who are now learning virtually. To date, the fund, launched jointly by the York County Community Foundation (YCCF) and United Way of York County, has raised over \$1,074,000 and awarded a total of \$667,238 in grants.

The most recent grants were awarded to:

- YMCA of York and York County for YMCA EduCare. EduCare is an enhancement to the YMCA's childcare programs to empower youths to keep learning even when forced to do so out of the classroom.
- YWCA York for YWCA York's School Aged Child Care Virtual Support Hub. YWCA York created space for York City School District children who are learning virtually. Three spaces will be used to support a virtual learning environment for York City children ages 5-13.
- York Jewish Community Center for School Aged Childcare Program. This program will provide before and after school care for members/non-members of the JCC. Support will be provided for students learning virtually and in hybrid academic models, as well.

- Hanover Area YMCA for School Aged COVID Care. Assistance will be provided for families who are trying to balance their own work with the needs of their children by providing educational, social, and recreational opportunities for children in a licensed, safe and caring environment.

“The programs supported with grants from the COVID-19 Response Fund have been carefully selected,” said Lise Levin, Vice President for Community Investment for YCCF. “Each program supports a school district currently engaged in hybrid or virtual learning, serves 20 or more students, and has received top scores in the Keystone STARS quality rating program at the state level. Using this criteria, we hope to provide the best care and education for our young people.”

“By supporting access to child care options that can provide extra support to students learning virtually, these grants allow families to return to work,” explained Natalie Williams, Vice President of Community Impact at United Way of York County. “Parents who would otherwise not be able to maintain their jobs can continue to support their families, and feel confident that their children are in a safe environment and are continuing to learn during the pandemic. This is critical for maintaining household stability.”

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 struggling with diminished revenue.

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.