



LEAVE YOUR MARK...

WESTERN COLORADO COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Charitable Funds for Community Good

Help Your Neighbors!

VIRTUAL Canned Food Drive



Many of our friends and neighbors are finding themselves out of work due to the COVID-19 crisis. Local food pantries are seeing a huge increase in the demand for food, while at the same time having to reorganize their operations to drive-through and mobile delivery in order to follow social distancing requirements. Volunteer food pantry workers are not able to volunteer these days because they themselves are vulnerable. Our food pantries tell us that what they really need is funding, rather than donated food.

CASH NOT CANS!

GIVE TODAY AT WC-CF.ORG

Or mail a check payable to Western Colorado Community Foundation to PO Box 4334, Grand Junction, CO 81502 with "Virtual Canned Food Drive" in memo line.

Donations will be distributed in grants to food pantries across Western Colorado to purchase needed food items—non-perishable and packaged foods, dairy, fresh produce, and meat.

100% of your donation will be distributed to hunger relief organizations.

- ◆ \$10 buys 50 packages of ramen noodles
- ◆ \$25 buys 25 cans of soup or beans
- ◆ \$50 buys 16 gallons of milk
- ◆ \$100 buys 17 cases of macaroni & cheese
- ◆ \$1,200 buys enough food to fill 300 Kids Aid emergency weekend food bags for children



Many of our friends and neighbors are experiencing a sudden reduction in income due to reduced hours or loss of a job. Food pantries across our region are seeing a huge increase in demand for food items. This is happening at the same time as the pantries need to reorganize their business operations to adhere to social distancing mandates: drive through food box pick up and mobile pantries.

In addition, pantries rely on volunteers, many of whom are retirees, to stock shelves and



Our Community Foundation's Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic

The Western Colorado Community Foundation understands the immediate and developing needs in our communities due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the lingering impacts it will have, long after the health crisis is over.

We want our neighbors and community members to know that we are responding to immediate basic needs (food, shelter, safety) across our seven-county region. We want our nonprofit partners to know that we are directing current funding to meet emergency needs. We are also sharing information about what other funding sources are available across the state. And we want our donors and friends to know that we are here to keep you informed about community needs and

help clients. These volunteers are unable to serve these days, given they themselves are vulnerable to the virus.

On top of everything else in this "Perfect Storm," regular supply distribution channels are being disrupted. A large portion of food items for pantries come through grocery rescue efforts; the availability of this supply is way down. Food pantries also rely on volunteer groups like scouts and churches to organize canned food drives. These are not happening right now.

Our food pantries tell us what they need is cash to buy food items from a variety of sources.

We have launched a **VIRTUAL Canned Food Drive** to collect cash not cans for our food pantries! Any size donation is appreciated and 100% of donations will be distributed directly to food pantries every two weeks. \$10 buys 50 packages of ramen noodles. \$25 buys 25 cans of soup. \$50 buys 16 gallons of milk. \$100 buys 17 cases of macaroni and cheese.

For more information on our VIRTUAL Canned Food Drive or to donate, click [here](#).



Cars line up for drive-through

how you can help right now. Together, we will help our communities navigate this crisis and minimize the long-term impact.

In addition to traditional grantmaking, our Community Foundation is initiating several new projects like a Virtual Canned Food Drive and an education campaign to "pay it forward" with stimulus checks (described elsewhere in this e-newsletter). We are also working with local business leaders to develop a hunger relief program that helps our restaurants stay open and in business (stay tuned for more information).

The staff team is working remotely but tirelessly to implement our various COVID-19 response programs. We invite you to help by donating, volunteering, sharing resources, or simply keeping yourself and your family home and safe during this time.

Stay safe. Stay healthy. And stay calm... we are all in this together.



The photo says it all - social distancing philanthropy is part of the New Normal. Kristin Lynch receives check from Mayor Rick Taggart and the City of Grand Junction for emergency needs.

#GJStrong Fund
City of Grand Junction
Funds Basic Needs

food box pick up at Community Food Bank.

Hunger needs surge Over \$300,000 from donor-advised and unrestricted funds distributed in early April

Our Community Foundation has distributed a first round of general operating grants to support food pantries across our region, including Community Food Bank and Clifton Christian Church Food and Clothing in Mesa County, Lift Up (Garfield County), Surface Creek Community Services, Sharing Ministries and Ouray Food Pantry.

These general support grants help organizations like the Community Food Bank in Grand Junction reorganize business operations and provide drive-through food box pick up service, mobile pantries and, coming soon, home delivery of food boxes to populations that are the most vulnerable.

Our grant funding can also be used to purchase limited food items and shore up staffing in organizations where volunteer labor has been limited because of the volunteers' own vulnerabilities to the virus.

Organizations Responding to COVID-19 Crisis

On April 6, the City of Grand Junction passed an emergency ordinance appropriating \$500,000 of General Reserve funds for basic needs of residents impacted economically by the COVID-19 crisis. Our Community Foundation was asked to help develop guidelines and serve as the administrative partner for the new #GJStrong Fund. The application process opened the next day, and then closed Friday, April 10th. Twenty-eight organizations applied. Applications were reviewed and grant awards were determined over several days; grant checks will be distributed by April 20th.

As so many charitable foundations are doing right now, we implemented a "rapid response" grants process - simple and short applications to make applying easy for nonprofits buried in the trenches, with a quick review and subsequent distribution of funds.

Our Executive Director Anne Wenzel noted, "This is a new and exciting partnership for us. The City of Grand Junction is in the business of taking care of its citizens in many different ways. We are in the grants business. Working together allows us to get some special emergency funding to nonprofits on the front lines of community needs right now."

For a list of grant awards, click [here](#).

Read the Daily Sentinel story [here](#).



Reflections
from the President



Community Food Bank drive-through operations now in place.



"Relief Check"
Philanthropy
Long-time Donors
Launch Special
Campaign

Soon, many households will receive a check from the IRS to lessen the impact of COVID-19 on our lives. Some families are financially secure, and home is a safe place. That's not the reality for others.

Long-time donor advisors Charlie Quimby and Susan Cushman are encouraging people who can to consider donating their stimulus checks to address urgent community needs of food, shelter and safety.

Charlie's mother, Jane Quimby, was a founder of the Western Colorado Community Foundation back in 1997 and

COVID-19 is here, the surge of the health crisis looming in western Colorado - lagging a bit in time and, hopefully, severity compared to the epicenter of the pandemic in New York City or even in Denver. And, perhaps more impactful for most of us, the corresponding economic crisis - rapid in its onset, dramatic and severe for so many who have lost their jobs and their income virtually overnight.

We are all in this together. Every one of us is impacted by this pandemic; we have our own stories of disrupted work and home life. And we probably have friends and loved ones who have been exposed to the virus.

My husband and I are set up at home in separate "his" and "her" offices with computers, printers and zoom cameras, busy with jobs that we enjoy and allow us to engage in a productive way right now. Our daughter lives one hour south of New York City and, while safe, has had her graduate school life turned upside down - needing to scramble to on-line classes (for both her own classes and for the four classes she works as a Teaching Assistant) and also having to pack and move quickly from her dorm when the Army Corps of Engineers needed the building for an emergency Quarantine Center. Our son works in software development and spends a lot of his work and social time on his computer, but misses going into an office and the wonderful gourmet lunches served in the company cafeteria.

Not much of a seamstress, I tried to fashion a mask out of a bandana (which we seem to have plenty of) and pony tail holders (it helps that BOTH my son and daughter wear pony tails). That didn't work. I want to thank dear people KW and PL for making me and other family members masks with a sewing machine and patterns and real elastic.

My husband and I got engaged on Easter

one of our first legacy donors.

Notes Charlie, "For more than a decade, we have volunteered in lower-income communities - Susan as an OB/GYN physician and me at places like the Catholic Outreach Day Center. When we learned that, as retirees, we would receive the same check as folks who are struggling, we came up with a simple way to pay that money forward."

Their campaign, called **West Slope CARES**, invites people to give their relief funds to charities of their choice or to address multiple needs through a single gift to our Community Foundation.

Susan says, "Food and shelter are obvious needs right now. We also wanted to highlight the increased potential for domestic abuse, mental health problems and the risk of self-harm, especially substance abuse and suicide."

Learn more about the West Slope CARES initiative [here](#).

Read more in the Daily Sentinel [here](#).



The Western Colorado Community Foundation is confirmed in compliance with National Standards for U.S. Community Foundations by the Council on Foundations.

Sunday 30 years ago, at the church where we met in Philadelphia; this Easter we were able to attend their services via livestream. What a weird and wonderful way to celebrate Easter this year!

We are all in this together. We are all affected. And we all can do our part to help right now. We are very familiar with the stay-at-home, social distancing and mask-wearing mandates. Our Community Foundation has found itself in an unexpected and dramatic role as a philanthropic hub - developing our own program response to the crisis with grants and new initiatives and doing what we do best: **connecting people who care to causes that matter.**

We ARE INDEED all in this together. Thank you, western Colorado, for your generosity and openness to new ways to be a community that this difficult pandemic is fostering.

-- Anne Wenzel

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