

Welfare Foundation's Ongoing Response to the Coronavirus Pandemic

(Update from July 21, 2020)

The Coronavirus (COVID-19) is presenting our region and the world with an unprecedented situation. The Welfare Foundation is dedicated to improving the quality of life in Delaware and Southeastern Chester County and we are working proactively to address the growing concerns that this pandemic crisis presents, especially for the most vulnerable among us.

As we continue to learn about the collective actions nonprofit organizations in this geographic areas are taking to combat the spread of the virus and the ripple effect impacts it is having in the community despite the uncertainty of how it will impact your organization, we can't help but be inspired. At the same time, we know there will be many needs and challenges ahead and we want to assure you that we stand ready to support you during this time and have already started to take action.

To date, we have:

- **Made Contributions to Delaware's COVID-19 Strategic Response Fund** – On Wednesday, March 18, 2020, Delaware's philanthropic and nonprofit leaders launched a coordinated response to the crisis. One of the elements of this response is the creation of the Delaware COVID-19 Strategic Response Fund, administered by the [Delaware Community Foundation](#) (DCF) and [Philanthropy Delaware](#) (PD), to target evolving needs of the state's most impacted communities. As a result of our contribution, we have actively participated in this grant evaluation process. So far, we have contributed a total of \$250,000, and will also consider additional contributions as needs develop. Information on how nonprofit organizations in Delaware can apply is available on the DCF website and through Philanthropy Delaware.
- **Addressing Systemic Changes Made Prevalent by COVID-19** – As an off-shoot from the Strategic Response Fund, a Vision Council was created (of which Welfare Foundation is a part of) to find ways to invest in innovative solutions across a variety of topic areas that address the emerging and evolving needs arising from or exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Vision Grants will support bold solutions, innovative ways of delivering services and programs, address specific social problems, include key partners, and drive broader social or systems changes. In addition to sitting on the Council, Welfare Foundation has contributed \$50,000 to funding the vetted Vision Grants and will also be evaluating projects that emerge from the process for potential future funding.
- **Targeted Dollars for a Small Number of Previous Grantees Who Have an Established COVID-19 Response in the Community** – Outside of our normal grant processes, we have made contributions to [The Food Bank of Delaware](#) (\$150,000) and [United Way of Southern Chester County](#) (\$40,000) for their COVID relief efforts. By short-cutting our standard grant process and immediately putting critically needed dollars into the hands of those organizations supporting our most vulnerable populations, our hope is to ensure immediate life-sustaining needs are addressed without any delay.
- **Bringing PPP relief to Delaware Nonprofits** – As part of a larger effort of community funders, Welfare Foundation made a \$50,000 grant to the National Development Council (NDC) for a project to help fill a gap with Small Business Association (SBA)-backed Payroll Protection Program (PPP) Loans for Delaware nonprofits. The investment brought \$10M of lending capacity to nonprofits in Delaware after half of the allocated SBA-backed funding for PPP had already been exhausted in just over one week. DE nonprofits could have been left with no access to these funds if they didn't already have a relationship with an existing SBA originating bank. The NDC was able to fund as soon as the SBA generated a registration number for the loan and get DE nonprofits through the backlog of applications piling up.

- **Continued Foundation Operations** – Effective Wednesday, March 18th, and for the foreseeable future, we have shifted our operations to all-remote work. We have suspended all site visits and face-to-face meetings for the foreseeable future. In the meantime, we are still scheduling calls and meetings over Zoom. Our offices in the Community Services Building are closed to visitors, but you can find our [contact information](#) on our website and we promise to respond to you as soon as we are able.
- **Created Flexibility for Recent Grantees (2019 and prior)** – Normal progress reporting requirements for recent grantees will be more flexible until further notice. If you are having trouble completing your reporting through the online portal for any reason related to COVID-19, please let us know and we will work with you. The nature of this crisis may also shift how some recent grantees may wish to allocate the funds they were granted in a previous cycle. To date, we have responded to and worked with a handful of prior grantees who requested to redirect their previous grants. We will continue to consider these requests on a case-by-case basis. If you are recent grantee, you should have received an email with details the week of March 23rd. If you did not, please reach out to Kristin with your questions.
- **Addressed Considerations for Current Applicants** – For those organizations who have expressed an interest in applying for a grant, please note that we will be moving forward with all grant cycles as scheduled. However, in the spirit of full transparency, we want you to know that the coronavirus crisis has impacted our contributions in ways that have effectively created a “higher bar” for traditional capital grant requests. As such, if your project is not of an urgent nature and your application can wait until a future cycle, it is probably in the best interest of all parties for you to delay or withdraw your application. Additionally, any organizations that intends to apply should be including how COVID-19 has affected operations, programs, staff, etc. into your application.

We are proud to be part of a coordinated community response to this unprecedented pandemic. At the same time, we know that our role pales in comparison to the personal and emotional efforts and sacrifices that so many exemplary nonprofit organizations are making. We thank you for the strength, care, and leadership you've already demonstrated and will continue to show in the weeks and months ahead. We recognize these are uncertain times and the full impact of this crisis may not be known for some time. Please know though that we are here for you and are 100% committed to getting through this together.

In partnership,
Chris Grundner & Kristin Sommers