



## Update on Wave Five of the Massachusetts COVID-19 Relief Fund

June 30, 2020

To our donors,

We hope this finds you well.

The Massachusetts COVID-19 Relief Fund has just approved a fifth wave of grants totaling \$5.1 million. Thirteen community foundations received this funding to support 155 nonprofits providing humanitarian relief throughout the Commonwealth. Overall, \$22.9 million has been granted through the MA COVID-19 Relief Fund.

Having completed multiple waves of funding, we are pleased to report that most of our nonprofit grantees have delivered at or above expectations, qualifying many to receive follow-on grants to continue their important work. In Wave 5, the Advisory Committee approved grants to provide meals to children throughout the summer further enabling summer programs to serve as many children as possible. Our community foundation partners continue to stretch their geographical and relational boundaries identifying quality nonprofits serving local vulnerable populations. The reliance on “local” foundations as a driving principle of this Fund has proven effective: hyper-local, trusted nonprofits serving discrete communities of people, are willing and able to flex their work to provide basic needs to those who would not otherwise be able to access food and housing assistance.

The remaining constant is *need*. Having raised over \$30mm, the Fund is able to support two more waves of funding, concluding grantmaking at the end of July. Thank you again for making this humanitarian relief effort possible for such a sustained period of time.

This week’s update will highlight three of our community foundation partners.

### Impact Spotlight: Wave 5

#### Community Foundation of Western MA:

The Community Foundation of Western MA spans the 1,900 square miles of Hampden, Hampshire, and Franklin Counties, which are the three counties that border the Connecticut River in Western MA. In total, these three counties are home to 702K people, of which 112K live in poverty. The Community Foundation of Western MA’s catchment area includes both the high-need Gateway cities of Springfield, Holyoke, and Chicopee, as well as very rural communities. We are thankful to the Community Foundation of Western MA and the local foundation partners who quickly lent staff members to the community foundation to help them manage the dramatic increase in workload.

The Community Foundation of Western MA’s COVID-19 relief efforts are focused on providing immediate support to those in the Pioneer Valley most vulnerable to the economic and health-related issues caused by the coronavirus pandemic. With funds from MA COVID-19 Relief Fund, the Community Foundation of Western MA has supported nonprofit organizations in the region with 93 grants, including:



**Enlace De Familias / Holyoke Family Network** primarily serves Holyoke’s large population of immigrant and Latino families, including the largest per capita Puerto Rican community in the continental United States, as well as low-income families living in the city’s downtown area, [99% of whom receive public assistance](#). With funds from the MA COVID-19 Relief Fund, Enlace De Familias has been able to distribute food and personal hygiene kits through various school and community-based meal sites in Holyoke, while supporting recently displaced low-income vulnerable Latino families.

**Community Health Center for Franklin County** provides healthcare to low-income, vulnerable community members in some of the Commonwealth’s most rural communities. Grant funds are being used to set up and operate drive-through COVID-19 testing sites in the geographically isolated, low-income community of Orange, MA, where residents would have otherwise had to drive 40 to 100 miles to get tested. Additionally, grant funding is supporting the increased costs associated with COVID-19 testing and health services at the Center’s Greenfield location.

Learn more about the work of the Community Foundation for Western MA [here](#).

### **Community Foundation of Southeastern MA:**

The Community Foundation of Southeastern MA’s catchment area includes 41 cities and towns in the southeastern part of Massachusetts, with its funding historically focused on the Southcoast communities of Greater New Bedford, Greater Fall River, and Southern Plymouth County. Through its partnership with the MA COVID-19 Relief Fund, the Community Foundation of Southeastern MA has dramatically expanded its funding footprint across its catchment area including the high-need cities of Taunton, Bridgewater, Attleboro, and Plymouth. In total, the Community Foundation of Southeastern MA is serving a population of 860K individuals through the Fund, of which 84K live in poverty.

The Community Foundation of Southeastern MA’s COVID-19 relief efforts are focused on food insecurity and support for the most vulnerable populations in the southeastern region of the state, including immigrants, elders, homeless, and other at-risk families and individuals. With funds from MA COVID-19 Relief Fund, Community Foundation of Southeastern MA has provided 110 grants to nonprofit organizations in the region, including:

**The Women’s Center** provides comprehensive services to survivors and victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and child trauma. Many of The Women's Center's clients are immigrants with limited English proficiency, experiencing financial hardship atop of abuse during the COVID-19 crisis. With grant funding from the MA COVID-19 Relief Fund, The Women's Center's staff (85% of whom are bilingual and/or bicultural) are able to provide basic necessities, including food and rent assistance to their highly vulnerable clients.

**M.O.L.I.F.E., Inc.** supports individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and operates a food pantry, allowing those in M.O.L.I.F.E. programs to feel part of and give back to their community. Grant funding from the MA COVID-19 Relief Fund is being used to provide essential and support services to individuals with developmental disabilities, and to purchase increased volumes of food for the pantry to meet rising needs amongst homeless and low-



income community members. More than 1,500 families have received food as a direct result of the MA COVID-19 Relief Fund.

Learn more about the work of the Community Foundation of Southeastern MA [here](#).

### Foundation for MetroWest:

The Foundation for MetroWest encompasses 33 towns in Massachusetts' MetroWest region, an area loosely bound by Routes 128 and 495 on the east and west, Route 2 on the north, and Route 109 in the south. This includes higher-need communities of Framingham, Waltham, Marlborough and Milford. In total, the cities and towns served by the Foundation for MetroWest are home to 679K people, of which 37K live in poverty.

The COVID-19 relief efforts of the Foundation for MetroWest are focused on emergency response efforts to provide immediate food assistance and other basic necessities to the most vulnerable populations being impacted by the pandemic in the MetroWest region. The Fund has allowed the Foundation to expand efforts in their catchment area to impoverished communities. The Foundation for MetroWest has made 59 grants to MetroWest area nonprofits with financial support from the MA COVID-19 Relief Fund, including:

**South Middlesex Opportunity Council (SMOC)** supports low-income and disadvantaged individuals in the MetroWest area through housing and other essential services. Clients of SMOC have experienced increased unemployment and diminished income during the COVID-19 crisis. With funding from the MA COVID-19 Relief Fund, SMOC has been able to supply basic needs for individuals and families in 600+ units of low-income housing and shelters, and provide rental assistance to 40 families with high risk of homelessness due to COVID-19 related job loss or reduction.

**The Children's Room - Center for Grieving Children and Teenagers, Inc.** provides grieving families with a safe place to connect and address feelings of isolation and anxiety, including support groups, family programming, and activities for children. As clients deal with loss and heightened anxiety due to COVID-19, The Children's Room has experienced an increase in clients with complex mental health needs. Funding from the MA COVID-19 Relief Fund is being used to support critical bereavement support services for MetroWest youth and families as a result of COVID-19. Additionally, The Children's Room has received increased interest from local organizations and schools for training on how to deal with grieving youth and families.

Learn more about the work of the Foundation for MetroWest [here](#).

To view a current list of nonprofit organizations supported by the grantees of the Massachusetts COVID-19 Relief Fund click [here](#).



We hope these updates provide insight into the efforts to ensure donations are well purposed. It is an honor to help those who are suffering and a pleasure to work alongside such committed foundation and nonprofit partners.

With Gratitude,

**Lauren Baker**, First Lady of Massachusetts, Advisory Committee

**Joanna Jacobson**, One8 Foundation Trustee & President, Advisory Committee

**Jonathan Raymond**, Executive Director, MA COVID-19 Relief Fund