

# NEWS RELEASE

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



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## United Way of Greater Houston and Greater Houston Community Foundation Launch Greater Houston COVID-19 Recovery Fund

*Houston Endowment makes lead gift of \$1 million; additional gifts pledged from  
JPMorgan Chase, Houston Texans Foundation and Wells Fargo Foundation*

**HOUSTON** (March 25, 2020) – Recognizing the dire economic hardships created by the COVID-19 pandemic for many of our community’s most vulnerable families and individuals, United Way of Greater Houston and the Greater Houston Community Foundation have joined forces to establish the Greater Houston COVID-19 Recovery Fund to help those in critical need. All monies raised will be used to help with immediate basic needs.

“Nearly half of the households in our Greater Houston area struggle daily to make ends meet and the sudden loss of work, wages and child care can be a devastating financial hardship,” said Anna M. Babin, president and CEO of United Way of Greater Houston. “Our primary goal is to make sure the most vulnerable in our community affected by COVID-19 have access to food, health care, shelter and other basic necessities to sustain them in this crisis.”

The Houston Endowment is making a lead gift of \$1 million to the fund and pledged an additional challenge gift of \$1 million, which will match \$1 for every \$4 raised. Additional leading Houston organizations who have pledged gifts to the fund include: JPMorgan Chase & Co - \$100,000; Houston Texans Foundation - \$100,000 and Wells Fargo Foundation - \$150,000.

The Greater Houston COVID-19 Fund will focus on funding of support services that stabilize basic needs by providing access to food, health care, shelter, utility assistance, transportation and other unmet basic needs that have arisen as a result of the pandemic in the short-term and will respond to developing needs over time as resources are available.

Both United Way of Greater Houston, with a century-long history of leading high-profile community efforts across the city, and Greater Houston Community Foundation, which most recently administered and led the Hurricane Harvey Relief Fund, Super Bowl LI Touchdown Houston Fund and Bush-Clinton Katrina Fund, have in-depth experience in establishing and administering funds to support disaster recovery in our community. The organizations have worked together and with many of the leading nonprofit organizations and giving corporations in the city and region. The distribution of funds will be overseen by both organizations and will serve the four-county Greater Houston area comprised of Harris, Fort Bend, Montgomery and Waller Counties.

The Greater Houston COVID-19 Recovery Fund has been endorsed by Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo and Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner. The fund is co-chaired by Jamey Rootes, board chair, United Way of Greater Houston and president of the Houston Texans, and by Tony Chase, board member, Greater Houston Community Foundation and chairman and CEO of ChaseSource, LP.

“We have been here for our community through many challenges in recent memory, including this unprecedented crisis. The far-reaching effects from this issue will impact our country and our community in ways we have never experienced in our lifetime. We are humbled by the opportunity to co-lead this recovery effort with our friends and partners at United Way of Greater Houston. It will take all of us in the nonprofit, for-profit, and philanthropic community to unite with purpose, conviction and incredible compassion,” said Stephen Maislin, president and CEO of Greater Houston Community Foundation. “Houston will rise as we work together to come to the aid and support of those impacted in our great and giving city.”

Fund leaders emphasize that, given the large number of industries and businesses affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, there will be widespread economic effects --- and none more profound than among those families who were struggling to afford the basics before COVID-19 arrived. The Greater Houston COVID-19 Recovery Fund will focus on helping those families and individuals based on potential criteria such as unemployment, loss of income, senior or veteran status, and others as the fund adapts to address community needs. The funds will be invested in services provided by trusted nonprofit partners who have proven experience and systems in place to serve the community in times of disaster.

Those who need assistance are encouraged to call 211 Texas/United Way HELPLINE, which is the community’s key 24/7 information source during times of disaster. United Way’s 211 is the one call for those impacted who don’t know where to call, providing the most updated information on assistance with utilities, housing or rental assistance, crisis counseling, access to senior services and information on food pantries in the community.

For more details and to donate to the Greater Houston COVID-19 Recovery Fund, visit [www.GreaterHoustonRecovery.org](http://www.GreaterHoustonRecovery.org)

#### **About United Way of Greater Houston**

For nearly 100 years, United Way of Greater Houston has brought together diverse partners and approaches to address the complex challenges holding people back. We are a driving force for good that connects our neighbors with opportunities to thrive. We help our neighbors achieve financial stability. We provide services that support the physical and behavioral health of families and youth along with educational services that expand their skills and horizons. We provide a safety net that catches the most vulnerable. We manage every donation with care to make the greatest impact across the four-county region of Fort Bend, Harris, Montgomery and Waller counties. We connect neighbors with help 24/7 through our 211 Texas/United Way HELPLINE. For more information, please visit, [www.unitedwayhouston.org](http://www.unitedwayhouston.org).

#### **About Greater Houston Community Foundation**

Greater Houston Community Foundation, one of Houston’s largest grant makers and leaders in philanthropic impact, has served the greater Houston community for 25 years. The organization supports high profile community and donor initiatives with the most comprehensive philanthropic resources, expertise, and innovative platforms. Greater Houston Community Foundation is widely considered to be the go-to partner for high-profile philanthropic partnerships in the Greater Houston area, including major disaster relief initiatives, such as the Hurricane Harvey Relief Fund as well as Bush-Clinton Katrina Fund. Greater Houston Community Foundation leads collaborations that support the wellbeing and vitality of Houston, including Understanding Houston, in partnership with Rice Kinder Institute. The Foundation provides individuals, families, corporations, foundations, and advisors with the ability to expand their philanthropic impact. For more information, please visit, [www.ghcf.org](http://www.ghcf.org).

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