

NEWS RELEASE

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\$8.2 Million Invested to Aid Area's Most Vulnerable as Greater Houston COVID-19 Recovery Fund Distributes Second Round of Grants to Nonprofits

HOUSTON, TX (May 28, 2020) – As the community continues to struggle through the second month of the Houston area's sudden, pandemic-driven economic crisis, the Greater Houston COVID-19 Recovery Fund is investing \$8.2 million in a new round of support distributed through 65 nonprofit partners to meet urgent needs. Grants were provided to organizations serving Greater Houston's most vulnerable families and individuals in need of access to food, emergency financial assistance for basic needs and housing, as well as services to prevent homelessness due to evictions and foreclosures. Funds were also invested to support financial and housing counseling, legal assistance, and services for the homeless to help fill public funding gaps.

The amount invested and number of agencies included make this the largest round of grants to date from the Greater Houston COVID-19 Recovery Fund. With limited resources compared to the enormity of community needs, investment decisions were made using data to identify populations that were disproportionately impacted by the pandemic based on the number of COVID-19 cases, unemployment insurance claims and pre-existing poverty conditions. Given the urgency to distribute assistance, recovery funds were invested with trusted nonprofit partners and grassroots charitable organizations who have proven systems and experience serving the most vulnerable in our community in times of disaster. The full grantee list can be found on the [Greater Houston COVID-19 Recovery Fund](#) website.

"Our approach to the grant-making process continues to be data driven, which allows us to identify the most pressing needs as the pandemic evolves," said Stephen Maislin, president and CEO of Greater Houston Community Foundation. "We can make the greatest impact with the funds entrusted to us by identifying and supporting the significant number of families in the Greater Houston region that are disproportionately impacted and in critical need."

To date, the Greater Houston COVID-19 Recovery Fund has provided grants totaling \$10.5 million to nonprofit partners in Harris, Fort Bend, Montgomery and Waller counties. Recovery fund investments are overseen by a volunteer task force of community leaders drawn from the boards of directors of United Way of Greater Houston and the Greater Houston Community Foundation.

"The economic effect of COVID-19 has imperiled our region's most vulnerable neighbors, especially those who are unable to access public benefits," said Anna M. Babin, senior advisor, United Way of Greater Houston. "Because of this unprecedented need, funding requests from agencies who submitted proposals for these grants were more than double the available funds. It's clear that no one fund or organization can answer needs of this magnitude –it takes public and private sectors working together and it is ongoing. We applaud the great work everyone is doing across our community and those who have generously donated funds and time to support it."

When the fund was launched in late March 2020, leading local foundations, corporations and individuals responded with contributions of cash and pledged gifts, totaling \$15.4 million to date. Because the need is so great, fund organizers are appealing to everyone who can donate to join the effort, with more details

available at www.GreaterHoustonRecovery.org. Fund partners have committed that 100 percent of donations will be spent on community needs.

Those who need assistance are encouraged to call the 211 Texas/United Way HELPLINE, the community's key 24/7 information source during times of disaster. United Way's 211 provides callers with the most updated information on assistance with utilities, housing or rental assistance, crisis counseling, access to senior services, information on food pantries in the community and more. Assistance through 211 can also be accessed through the following methods in the event of long wait times due to periods of heavy call volume:

- Visit 211texas.org to search resources online or chat online with a specialist
- Email help@unitedwayhouston.org for assistance

To donate to the Greater Houston COVID-19 Recovery Fund, visit www.GreaterHoustonRecovery.org or text **"WEHELP" to 41444**.

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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.

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.