



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thunder Bay COVID-19 Community Relief Fund Supports New Frontline Projects to Help the Community's Most Vulnerable

April 20, 2020, Thunder Bay, ON – The Thunder Bay COVID-19 Community Relief Fund continues to provide funding to local organizations and agencies who are working tirelessly, to address urgent community needs during the pandemic. Today, United Way of Thunder Bay and the Thunder Bay Community Foundation announced an additional \$56,700 is being allocated to help eight frontline projects. The agencies and organizations receiving support include:

Boys and Girls Club of Thunder Bay- \$10,000: *Brown Bag Lunch Program (Vale & Limbrick)*- The Boys and Girls Club of Thunder Bay have been providing food services for the past 17 years to the children in Vale and Limbrick neighbourhoods. The organization will continue to provide nutritional programming to replace the healthy snack, cooking and supper programs that currently can't operate due to the pandemic.

Elizabeth Fry Society of Northwestern Ontario- \$3, 750: *Emergency Response Program*- With the pandemic creating a shortage of readily accessible resources in the community, the agency is focusing on those women who are being released or at risk of criminalization by providing resources such as emergency food vouchers, emergency transportation, and access to hygiene kits.

Elevate- \$ 14,000: *Operation "Not Forgotten"*- Resources for people living with HIV/Hep C or on Hormone Replacement Therapy to prevent the spread of COVID 19 and ensure these populations stay in care and receive treatment and support during the pandemic.

The Children's Aid Society of the District of Thunder Bay- \$3,000: *Re-Stock the Food Cupboard*- Access to food specifically for youth who live independently from their biological families.

Lakehead Social Planning Council-\$10,000: *Connecting At-Risk Seniors and Shut-ins to Food Delivery Program*- Based on 211's tracking of unmet needs, it was reported that many at-risk seniors and shut-ins living in Thunder Bay were in critical need of emergency food hamper delivery. This data was shared with the Regional Food Distribution Association (RFDA).



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Regional Food Distribution Association- \$6,050: PPE Equipment- This grant enables the RFDA to purchase personal protective equipment such as masks to essential workers who are working to make sure that everyone is able to access food.

Thunder Bay and Area Victim Services-\$5,400: Crisis Support Fund- The organization continues to work the front lines. Alongside police officers and other first responders, they offer both emergency and ongoing support to victims of crime and tragic circumstance through emotional and practical means.

Thunder Bay and District Humane Society- \$4,500: COVID-19 Pet Food Delivery Program: The pandemic has pet owners confined to their homes and many facing financial uncertainty. The Thunder Bay and District Humane Society is offering complimentary pet food delivery across the city of Thunder Bay.

Says Danielle Rider, Executive Director of Thunder Bay and Area Victim Services, “Over the past month, our call volume has increased as individuals have found themselves in more precarious situations given the restrictions of community programming and the added financial stress. We know that chronic stress limits an individual’s ability to adequately cope and Thunder Bay and Area Victim Services is already seeing the evidence of this through an increase in domestic violence and human trafficking calls over the past eight weeks. This funding will help our organization support and reach more victims.”

The Thunder Bay COVID-19 Community Relief Fund provides one place for philanthropists, community leaders, corporations and individuals to contribute, to help ensure that community members affected by the pandemic stay safe, healthy and have access to basic needs such as food, clothing, hygiene products, shelter and crisis counseling. The collaborative fund has now provided \$163,006.50 to 14 local agencies and organizations.

Says Albert Brulé, Chief Executive Officer of United Way of Thunder Bay; “COVID-19 continues to threaten the infrastructure that supports the most vulnerable population in our city. We will need these organizations and service providers to be there for our community when we arrive at the other side of this health crisis. It’s important to start thinking about how we will recover and rebuild when the time comes to slowly start to move on with our lives.”

This is the second round of Thunder Bay COVID-19 Community Relief Fund recipients. A joint committee continues to evaluate applications with a commitment to ensure there is a rapid response to emerging needs as funding is contributed. Local agencies can apply for funding through the Thunder Bay Community Foundation’s online grant platform. Individuals and corporations are encouraged to donate to the Thunder Bay COVID-19



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Community Response Fund online at www.uwaytbay.ca or www.tbcf.org, alternatively by mail to either organization.

Says Alexandra Calderon, Executive Director of the Thunder Bay Community Foundation, “Local organizations continue to struggle to meet people’s needs as the pandemic continues and forces more layoffs. If you have the ability to give, we must continue to do so, to help these crucial organizations remain operational now and into the future.”

United Way Thunder Bay and the Thunder Bay Community Foundation are grateful for the community’s ongoing support to the Thunder Bay COVID-19 Community Relief Fund. Thank you to Bruno’s Contracting for its recent contribution of \$10,000.

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