



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thunder Bay COVID-19 Community Relief Fund Reaches \$300K

May 5, 2020, Thunder Bay, ON – The Thunder Bay COVID-19 Community Relief Fund has raised \$312,771 from community and corporate support since its launch on March 18th. This past weekend, the Stay at Home Gala raised \$28,202 locally, assisting the collaborative fund being lead by United Way of Thunder Bay and the Thunder Bay Community Foundation, to provide support to a total of 17 local organizations and agencies to date.

Today, \$55,257.90 has been approved to help the following agencies and organizations, who are working tirelessly to address urgent community needs during the pandemic:

NorWest Community Health Centres- \$5,000: *Emergency COVID Response Program*- The program supports NorWest Community Health Centres team to reach individuals in need, so they do not have to leave their homes. The emergency boxes include essential food items and supplies including medication, baby diapers, formula and blankets. Staff are also providing clinical assessments onsite if required.

Alzheimer Society of Thunder Bay- \$1,914.50: *Caregiver Care Kits*- Caregivers are currently under a tremendous level of stress as they face isolation and reduced community support. This program provides caregivers with kits to encourage relaxation, exercise, and healthy stress management during this crisis.

Catholic Family Development Centre- \$3,600: *Men's Engagement Program*- The project focuses on addressing domestic violence before a charge is laid. Men are requesting assistance to be better husbands and fathers. The program provides individual counselling to address anger management issues and domestic violence.

Barriers to Employment and Training - \$10,373.40: *Emergency Cell Phone Project*- The Barriers to Employment Group, which is a coalition of employment and training organizations, will provide 50 cell phones (data plans) to vulnerable people in the community. This helps provide access to much needed services such as food security, medical, counselling, financial, emergency services and family connection.

Funding is also being provided to extend previously supported projects for the Roots to Harvest Emergency Good Food Box for Seniors and the Northwestern Ontario Women's Centre's Regional First Nation Emergency Good Food Box.



Says Michelle Kolobutin, Coordinator of Harm Reduction & Managed Alcohol of NorWest Community Health Centres; "The Community Relief funding supports our outreach team to reach people in their residences, and often at the street level. We are trying to support individuals who are not able to get out or are at increased risk and have to limit their outings. In our model of outreach, people don't come to us - we go to them. The Emergency Boxes include various food items and supplies, diapers and baby items, children's activity bags as well as clinical visits, along with the delivery of clinical resources such as puffers and medications, checking in on a new baby and mom, or delivering harm reduction resources. Our visits are very personalized and make a difference in helping our clients during this difficult time. We truly feel we are helping to limit the spread of COVID-19 and keep people safe in their homes."

With the support provided from the Thunder Bay COVID-19 Community Relief Fund, NorWest Community Health Centres expects to provide food and resources to 260 people and deliver almost 100 Children's Activity and Snack packages.

The Thunder Bay COVID-19 Community Relief Fund has also recently received a very generous donation from Newmont Canada's Musselwhite Mine of \$30,000 dollars. Says Albert Brulé, Chief Executive Officer of United Way of Thunder Bay; "Over the past several weeks, we have been humbled by the outreach we've received from so many businesses, companies and retailers wanting to help. Despite the economic turmoil and the many ways that businesses have been impacted, a number of business leaders have reached out to ask what we are doing in response to the pandemic and how they can help. We want to express our deepest gratitude for the continued support during this time and thank those who have contributed or undertaken special fundraisers in support of the COVID-19 Community Relief Fund. We truly appreciate your acts of Local Love."

Says Alexandra Calderon, Executive Director of the Thunder Bay Community Foundation, "Nonprofit organizations continue to be the backbone of our community, and the demand for their programs is increasing beyond the scale they are prepared for. We know they are playing an absolutely vital role in addressing and mitigating the impact the virus has in Thunder Bay; we also know that when the community comes together, amazing things happen. We thank each and every one of you for your support thus far."

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 counselling. This is the third round of Thunder Bay COVID-19 Community Relief Fund recipients. Local agencies can continue to 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 Community Response Fund online at www.uwaytbay.ca or www.tbcf.org, alternatively by mail to either organization.



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