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EDITOR'S PICK

Several groups raising COVID-19 crisis funds

By ALEJANDRO CANO Reporter Redlands Community News
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Feeding America Riverside/SanBernardino is collecting monetary donations to support families in need through the distribution of emergency food kits, water, and fresh produce for their food-insecure neighbors through the Inland Empire.

Redlands Community News photo by James Folmer

In response to the current events and to alleviate the economic impacts many families are experiencing due to coronavirus, several foundations and non-profit organizations have set up fundraisers throughout the Inland Empire region.

Time for Change foundation, which has a mission to empower disenfranchised low income individuals and families, has created the COVID-19 Crisis Fund to directly support homeless women and children impacted by lost wages, school closures and loss of child care.

“With the imminent loss of our annual fundraiser, which on average raises \$100,000 and in response to the unprecedented crisis of the COVID-19 virus, we are seeking to raise \$150,000 and are asking for your support towards this goal,” said Executive Director Vanessa Perez. “The reality is we work in a region plagued with high poverty, disinvestment of sizable philanthropic giving creates a stressful and worrisome environment.”

Perez cited a study by the San Bernardino County Capacity Building Consortium that states 67 percent of nonprofits in the region have revenues under \$25,000, which further exacerbates the need for increased support in this critical time.

In addition, a report from The James Irvine Foundation states that foundation funding is relatively scarce as San Bernardino only receives \$3 per capita in philanthropic dollars compared to \$139 in Los Angeles, said Perez.

According to Perez, it costs on average \$175 per child per week for child care. Compound this with the overwhelming fear of being evicted from the house and not having means to survive, she said.

Time for Change holds an annual fundraising event during March. As of Tuesday, March 17, the 2020 event has not been canceled. However, the risk of cancellation is high.

Meanwhile, the Inland Empire Community Foundation urges residents to donate to the IE COVID-19 Resilience Fund, which seeks to collect financial donations to assist nonprofits and vulnerable populations impacted by COVID-19.

According to the foundation, contributions will be used initially to address the short-term and rapidly changing needs of those affected by this public health crisis. Once funds have been raised, grants will be made to organizations in Riverside and San Bernardino counties based on an ongoing needs assessment through IECF and its partners. Some areas of concern include food security, childcare, our homeless population, and independent workers without a safety net, said President and CEO Michelle Decker.

With similar goals, Feeding America Riverside/San Bernardino is collecting monetary donations to support families in need through the distribution of emergency food kits, water, and fresh produce for their food-insecure neighbors through the Inland Empire.

“As many of our neighbors struggle with school closures, employment interruptions, and more, many people, for the first time, are struggling with food insecurity. In addition, many who have resources have resorted to stockpiling, which reduces the supply that would be available to those who are at-risk, in need, or with limited resources. We anticipate the demand for our services to increase and as a result, are requesting members of our community to donate in support of our food bank,” said Stephanie Otero, CEO at Feeding America.

Where to donate

Time for Change: timeforchange.org/contribute/donate.

IE COVID-19 Resilience Fund: iegives.org.

Feeding America Riverside/SanBernardino: FeedingIE.org/donate

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