

\$3.3 million in COVID grants distributed by Humboldt Area Foundations and Wild Rivers Community Foundation

July 29, 2021



Generous funders of Humboldt Area Foundation and Wild Rivers Community Foundation have given more than \$3.3 million as of July 2020, most of which has been shared with nonprofits in four counties assisting the most vulnerable people hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic.

At the same time, the overwhelming support and impact of the funds, and the cooperation among community partners, has inspired HAF and WRCF to create a new, shared vision focused on an inclusive and prosperous future for Curry, Del Norte, Humboldt and Trinity counties.

“When the foundation created the COVID-19 Regional Response Fund in March 2020, our immediate goal was to ensure the health and safety of everyone in our region. It was a community effort and we are grateful for the tremendous financial support from our many donors and funders,” said Gina Zottola, HAF’s vice president of Advancement & Philanthropic Innovation.

“During the work, several themes around wellbeing, racial equity and the economy came into sharper focus,” Zottola said. “We also learned two things: Our amazing local nonprofits are in the best position to address these issues, but often needed help with funding and capacity. For our foundation to truly support those nonprofits we needed to create a cohesive, long-term strategy.”

That new, strategic vision is a road map that will guide how the foundations invest and collaborate across the region. The vision focuses on specific decades-long goals of racial equity, thriving youth and families, healthy ecosystems and environment, and just economy and economic development. Learn more about the strategic vision online at hafoundation.org/strategy.

\$3 Million-plus in COVID-19 Community Response Grants

Since pandemic lockdowns began in March, 2020, HAF and WRCF awarded more than 230 Covid-19 response grants ranging from \$1,000 to \$20,000 to nonprofits within a 10,000-square-mile service area. The grants supported critical needs including food insecurity, technology access, health care access, racial equity and housing needs.

The first grants to go out in April, 2020, totaling nearly \$200,000, went to 18 organization across all four counties. Recipients included United Indian Health Services, Del Norte Mission Possible, Gold Beach Senior Center, the Eureka Rescue Mission, and Trinity Community Food Outreach. The most recent grants, awarded in May and June, 2021, went to the Curry Homeless Coalition, McKinleyville Family Resource Center, and the Hoopa Valley Tribe’s K’ima:w Medical Center.

“Of course, the pandemic is not over and many of our friends, families and neighbors continue to be impacted,” Zottola said. “Much of the work of the Community Response Team continues to this day, meeting weekly to evaluate and award grants.”

Zottola added that the fund was made possible by the generosity of donors throughout the region. To date, more than 255 individual donors and funders have contributed the foundation’s response efforts.

HAF and WRCF recently issued a new COVID-19 Regional Response Fund Report that includes story of how the fund and the response team were established, and how the rapid-response grants helped save lives and the livelihoods of hundreds of people impacted by the pandemic. Read the report at hafoundation.org/covidreport. Learn more about supporting the fund here.