



Alaska Partnership for COVID-19 Response



For immediate release

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Contact: Jason Grenn, United Way, 907-301-3046

jgrenn@ak.org

Alaskans join to create \$1 million fund in support of COVID-19 recovery

Anchorage, AK – Individual Alaskans, corporations and other organizations have stepped up to support recovery from the COVID-19 crisis, committing more than \$1.4 million so far.

Contributions to the AK Can Do fund go directly to those most in need during the pandemic. The money provides fast relief and targets gaps not immediately addressed by government aid or other help. More than 630 individual donations totaling over \$350,000 have been made.

The growing list of supporters is headlined by ConocoPhillips Alaska, which today announced a \$200,000 donation to the AK Can Do fund. Of that, \$100,000 comes as a challenge grant to encourage others to give.

“As we all work through this difficult time, it’s important that we help each other,” said ConocoPhillips Alaska President Joe Marushack. “We’re donating \$200,000 to quickly assist our fellow Alaskans who are struggling financially. Together with The Alaska Community Foundation and United Way of Anchorage, we believe it is imperative to bring Alaskans together to offer support to residents affected across the state.”

Other leading Alaska organizations supporting the fund include: Wells Fargo, with a \$125,000 commitment; Sealaska, \$100,000; Premera Blue Cross Blue Shield of Alaska, \$50,000, Alaska Airlines Foundation, \$30,000; Saltchuk, \$25,000; Doyon Ltd., \$12,500; Key Bank Foundation, \$11,500; and Northrim Bank, \$10,000. Rasmuson Foundation is investing \$360,000 into AK Can Do.

AK Can Do, a partnership between United Way of Anchorage and The Alaska Community Foundation, was created specifically to address needs arising from COVID-19. It provides immediate statewide support in two ways: by helping nonprofits with critical and long-term needs so they can keep serving Alaskans whose lives have been devastated by the pandemic; and by helping families and individuals as they struggle with basics such as paying rent and utilities. With a careful reopening of the economy, support may be needed for months.

The impact from AK Can Do has been monumental and immediate. Of the money already in hand, more than 80 percent has gone out the door. Over 250 Alaska families — 800 individuals — received help to remain stably housed despite losing a job as businesses closed. A single mom with three kids worked three jobs waiting tables and tending bar when the order came to hunker down. She was left with three pink slips instead of paychecks. For her family, support from the fund came at just the right moment, and

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she is just one example. Twenty-five frontline nonprofit organizations received more than \$215,000 in direct funding this week to support the critical needs in Alaska communities. With reports of domestic violence rising in some areas, shelters around the state are receiving grants for alternative spaces so they can practice social distancing. Multiple childcare agencies are receiving support to help centers reopen safely in a world turned upside down by coronavirus. Organizations that provide mental health counseling and treatment for substance misuse are finding new ways to connect with vulnerable individuals.

“We are grateful for the amazing network of nonprofit organizations across Alaska who serve the most vulnerable in our state,” said Dave Karp, senior vice president & managing director in Alaska for Saltchuk, a shipping and transportation company. “Today, more than ever, those organizations are rising to the challenge and meeting our community where they are needed most. This crisis has touched us all, and we are committed to not only keeping the supply chain running smoothly, but to supporting our community however we can.”

The need is staggering. In the recent AK Can Do rapid response grant application process, requests for help came from 308 nonprofits and totaled over \$4.7 million dollars, only a fraction of which could be funded. “We’ve never seen this level of upheaval, uncertainty and need,” said Diane Kaplan, president and CEO of Rasmuson Foundation. “We often feel at a loss during times of disaster. This fund lets everyone do something. We encourage all Alaskans to give what they can to support their neighbors, friends and coworkers.”

Donations can be made online at AKCanDo.org. Families and individuals seeking assistance should call 2-1-1 or 1-800-478-2221. Nonprofits can visit: <https://alaskacf.org/>

About The Alaska Community Foundation

Established in 1995, The Alaska Community Foundation (ACF) is a statewide platform for philanthropy that connects people who care with causes that matter. Managing more than \$100 million in assets and over 550 funds for the benefit of Alaskans, ACF and their Affiliates grant \$5 million to \$7 million each year to charitable projects and nonprofit organizations across the state. ACF’s mission is to inspire the spirit of giving and connect people, organizations, and causes to strengthen Alaska’s communities now and forever. For more information, visit <https://alaskacf.org/> or call 907-334-6700.

About United Way of Anchorage

United Way of Anchorage is a community of donors, advocates, volunteers, and partners who fight for the health, education and financial stability of every person in our community. LIVE UNITED.
<https://www.liveunitedanc.org/>