

For Immediate Release
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Community Coalition Shifts from Emergency Needs to Recovery

Grand Haven, Mich. – The community coalition created to respond to the COVID-19 crisis is shifting their priorities from the emergency human needs in Ottawa County to the longer-term efforts of stabilization and recovery.

“From day one, we realized that we could best serve Ottawa County by working together to assess and respond to the emergent needs of our community in response to the initial free fall caused by the COVID-19 pandemic,” said Mike Goorhouse, President/CEO of the Community Foundation of the Holland/Zeeland Area (CFHZ). “We support many of the same organizations, so it made sense to combine our resources to support the organizations and individuals most acutely impacted during the first 6-8 weeks.”

“Since announcing our collaboration on March 14, we’ve awarded over 100 grants totaling \$872,679 from the Emergency Human Needs Fund to organizations in Ottawa County that have committed to keeping people fed, housed, and healthy,” said Hadley Streng, President of the Grand Haven Area Community Foundation (GHACF). “The grants have focused on food, health, housing and shelter, and vulnerable populations like seniors and immigrants. Even though we’re

transitioning to recovery funds held at our separate organizations, we will continue to communicate about the needs of our community and collaborate when appropriate.”

Effective on May 18, the collective Emergency Human Needs Fund will close. All future donations will go to the individual community recovery funds held at the GHACF, CFHZ, and Greater Ottawa County United Way. Details about the new funds will be announced in the coming weeks by their respective organizations. Donations to these individual funds are strongly encouraged, as the need in our community has risen exponentially since the outbreak of COVID-19. The new funds are:

- GHACF: Community Relief and Recovery Fund
- CFHZ: COVID-19 Community Stabilization Fund
- United Way: Community Recovery Campaign

The coalition has been able to accomplish all it has in a short period of time thanks to the community pulling together and giving during this extraordinary time of need.

“We want to extend a heartfelt thank you to the countless individuals and organizations who gave during this time of extreme uncertainty,” said Patrick Moran, President of Ottawa and Allegan County United Way. “670 donors gave a total of \$872,679 in the past two months, and 362 people volunteered through the United Way during the crisis period.”

Moving forward, both community foundations are exploring a more streamlined grant application process for their new community recovery funds, and plan to award grants more frequently than their traditional competitive grants.

“As we shift into this second phase of relief and recovery, we recognize that the challenge for many organizations is just beginning,” said Streng. “Our mission has always been to address the challenges facing West Michigan, and this is no different.”

The community coalition website, www.careottawacounty.com, and the Facebook page will continue to provide information about the need for volunteers, donations of both goods and funds, and other updates.

ABOUT THE GHACE

The Grand Haven Area Community Foundation is a public, charitable organization serving the Northwest Ottawa County community since 1971. GHACF is regularly recognized as a top 100 Community Foundation in the nation and is the 8th largest community foundation in the State of Michigan. It encourages philanthropy by individuals, families, corporations, and organizations, and serves as a steward of their charitable funds and legacies. In addition to awarding grants, the Foundation offers technical support to nonprofits, convenes community leaders on issues of importance, and advocates for the nonprofit sector. For more information visit ghacf.org.

ABOUT THE CFHZ

The Community Foundation of the Holland/Zeeland Area seeks to ensure that our community thrives today, tomorrow, and forever by building our Community's Endowment to support high impact charitable projects, helping donors achieve their charitable goals, and leading and partnering in community-level initiatives. Learn more at cfhz.org.

ABOUT GOCUW

Greater Ottawa County United Way's vision is that everyone achieve their full human potential. To fulfill that potential United Way uses data and analysis to create impact solutions that build stronger communities, and provides individuals and businesses the opportunity to participate in that work.

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