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COMMUNITY FUND FOR WELLESLEY
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Merchants and Health Care Workers to Benefit from \$17,000 in Fourth Round Grants from Wellesley COVID-19 Relief Fund

May 20, 2020 (Wellesley, MA) – The Wellesley COVID-19 Relief Fund is announcing its fourth round of grant funding to local non-profits and Town departments. Today \$17,000 was awarded to programs that will support the local merchant community with a safe and healthy reopening and protect healthcare staff.

A successful two-week [donation match challenge](#), supported by the community and two anonymous donors, ended on May 18 and resulted in an additional \$25,000 in available emergency funding. The most recent round of awards by the Relief Fund brings the total amount of money granted to nearly \$50,000 in just one month.

The Wellesley COVID-19 Relief Fund is a partnership between The Community Fund for Wellesley, an endowed fund of the Foundation for MetroWest, a tax exempt 501(c)3 organization, and the Wellesley Board of Selectmen, that addresses unmet needs in our community resulting from the Coronavirus crisis. Grant proposals are reviewed by the members of the COVID-19 Relief Fund Committee which is comprised of community members, elected officials and staff from the Town of Wellesley, and are awarded to local non-profits and Town departments on a rapid and rolling basis.

- **Protecting the safety and comfort of health care staff:** [Elizabeth Seton Residence Skilled Nursing and Rehabilitation](#) is receiving a grant to fund the purchase of specific protective clothing for nursing staff. The clothing includes caps to cover hair and prevent possible COVID-19 contamination, as staff are usually not required to wear them and do not own them, and headbands with buttons – often called “headbands for heroes” – that help prevent skin breakdown behind ears from constant mask wearing by healthcare providers.
- **Supporting volunteers sewing caps, masks and cloth face coverings:** The [Wellesley Fire Department](#) is receiving a grant to purchase additional sewing supplies to support the ongoing work of volunteers who are making caps, headbands, masks and cloth face coverings for healthcare workers, organizations and residents in need.
- **Assisting Wellesley merchants with a safe and healthy reopening:** A grant administered by the [Wellesley Health Department](#) will fund hard-to-find supplies like sanitizing dispensers, hand sanitizer, disposable masks, and gloves for more than 250 businesses throughout Wellesley. This program is a collaboration between the Health Department and local merchant associations to help Wellesley get back to business while protecting workers and customers. In some cases, public sanitizing stations will be located outdoors in business districts with individual stores providing upkeep and maintenance.

As officials look toward the rebuilding and recovery phases for Wellesley, this protective gear will be essential to the health of the community. For Demian Wendrow, owner of London Harness-Tumi and president of the Wellesley Square Merchants Association, the supplies are critical to reopening for so many small businesses in the community. “The Wellesley Merchants are so grateful for this generous grant from the Wellesley Covid-19 Relief Fund. It’s important to us that we keep our employees, customers and community safe and feeling as comfortable as possible during these uncertain times, and this grant demonstrates to all of us that we are on the same team with the Town of Wellesley - now and into the future,” he said.

Up-to-date information on the COVID-19 Relief Fund and photos of the grant recipients and programs are regularly shared on the [Town of Wellesley website](#) and on the Community Fund for Wellesley’s Facebook page [@CFFWellesley](#).

Show Your Support

To donate to the Wellesley COVID-19 Relief Fund or learn more, please visit: www.CFFW-COVID.org

Donations are accepted electronically using the link above or by sending checks made out to the [Foundation for MetroWest](#); please specify in the memo line ‘Wellesley COVID-19 Relief Fund’ and mail to:

Community Fund for Wellesley
c/o Foundation for MetroWest
3 Eliot Street
Natick, MA 01760

About the Community Fund for Wellesley

The mission of the Community Fund for Wellesley is to promote the common good and to benefit all residents of our Town. The Fund serves as a permanent source of funding to foster innovation and collaboration in support of community needs and opportunities. The Community Fund for Wellesley was established in 2008 in celebration of Wellesley’s 125th birthday. A dedicated group of Town residents had a vision to create a fund that would exist to benefit members of the Wellesley community for generations to come. In the past 11 years, the Fund has made grants of over \$400,000 to more than 30 local non-profits and Town of Wellesley departments.

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