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COMMUNITY FUND FOR WELLESLEY
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Three Key Programs Receive \$13,500 from Wellesley COVID-19 Relief Fund

July 6, 2020 (Wellesley, MA) – The most recent round of grants from the Wellesley COVID-19 Relief Fund will support programs to address food insecurity, promote youth employment, and continue to help local merchants safely get back to business. The \$13,500 in awards were announced by the Wellesley COVID-19 Relief Fund last week, bringing the total amount of funding for local programs to nearly \$88,500 in just over nine weeks.

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. It was established in April 2020 to address unmet needs in our community resulting from the ongoing Coronavirus crisis.

- **Helping families facing food insecurity:** The Wellesley Food Pantry is receiving a grant that will provide grocery gift cards to 60 Wellesley Public Schools families who need food assistance this summer. Most rely on schools or community programs to help feed children breakfast and lunch, however with school out and no summer classes or camp programs available, these families are at risk. The gift cards will supplement food items received from the Food Pantry and other assistance resources.
- **Creating summer jobs for local youths:** Cancelled camps, swim and sports programs and other activities mean that local teens who rely on these summer jobs are now out of work. Money from a grant to the Wellesley Youth Commission will be used to start the “Wellesley Green Shirts” youth employment program, identifying part-time work opportunities throughout Town for teens and paying their salaries. Possible jobs will be developed jointly by the Youth Commission and Recreation Commission and include running arts & crafts drop-in classes, refilling hand-sanitizer stations in shopping districts, assisting with grocery deliveries for senior citizens, and more. The funding will cover 80 hours of work/week for as many teens as possible and run for 6 ½ weeks. Hiring priority will be given to teens who already applied and were accepted for Town jobs that were cancelled.
- **Keeping merchants safe and supplied as they continue to get back to business:** Public hand sanitizer stations that were distributed throughout Wellesley’s shopping districts earlier this month are helping merchants with a safe reopening. These critical supplies were purchased by the Health Department with an earlier COVID-19 Fund grant. The stations have been so well-used, the Wellesley Health Department is receiving a second grant to purchase additional refill bags of Purell for the 40 dispensers. As these supplies are difficult to obtain, the Health Department plans to place the refill order as soon as possible.

For merchants, these much-needed resources bring a sense of relief as they welcome back customers this summer. "Through the Health Department grant we received Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) for more than 250 merchants and 40 hand sanitizer stations to be placed throughout the Town. Since opening back up, we've heard positive comments from residents expressing appreciation for the effort we've made to make this community safe to shop and dine. We're proud to be part of a community that helps and supports their merchants," said Demian Wendrow, owner of London Harness/Tumi and president of the Wellesley Square Merchants Association.

Added Wellesley Books manager Peter Sherman, "I'm glad to see the stations used by passers-by. They promote easy access to hand sanitizer and keep customers mindful of the current safety protocols."

Support is Critical for Grant Funding to Continue

The ripples of impact from the Coronavirus continue to rise to the surface in our community. While many needs have been addressed, more have become apparent. Public health officials remain very concerned that cases will spike again and communities must be prepared. Throughout the summer, the Wellesley COVID-19 Relief Fund hopes to keep awarding grant money. More donations are needed to make this possible.

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

Up-to-date information on the Wellesley 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](#).

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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