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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

COVID-19 Relief Fund Grants Serve Up More Meals for Food Insecure Families

July 23, 2020 (Wellesley, MA) – Food insecurity in Wellesley continues to be a concern as more families face job layoffs or care for children and ill or elderly relatives for prolonged periods of time. An additional \$1,000 from the Wellesley COVID-19 Relief Fund was awarded to the Wellesley Health Department to extend the Town’s hot meals program for one more week.

Through a partnership with local restaurants, this program has funded the purchase and distribution of up to 40 hot meals once a week that are delivered to vulnerable families identified by the Health Department. Many recipients have expressed their appreciation for this invaluable service and the donations to the COVID-19 Relief Fund that have supported this program.

“My child and I are incredibly grateful. It brings tears to my eyes and hope to my heart to see how invested our community is in making sure we are provided for,” one recipient wrote in a thank you note. “I know this too will pass. In the meantime the lessons about faith, perseverance, and resilience will sow seeds in my child’s life that will generate fruit for years to come.”

The Wellesley COVID-19 Relief Fund was established just three months ago in partnership with 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. To date, approximately \$100,000 in donations has been raised and distributed back to the community.

Grant money has supported a wide range of programs and initiatives that address unmet needs resulting from the ongoing Coronavirus crisis including:

- The weekly hot meals program;
- The purchase and distribution of KN95 masks to our seniors and medically vulnerable;
- A back to business program for merchants that provided PPE supplies and hand sanitizing stations for safe shopping;
- Communication and technology purchases to help seniors at the Elizabeth Seton Residence more easily connect with relatives and caregivers while in quarantine;
- Operations and Green Shirts staffing for Wellesley’s Mobile Movie Nights, and much more.

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](#).

As unmet needs persist in Wellesley, continued funding and support for these programs is critical. To donate to the Wellesley COVID-19 Relief Fund or learn more, please visit: www.CFFW-COVID.org

Green Shirt Meal Delivery and More

Meals for vulnerable residents are delivered by members of Wellesley's Green Shirts youth employment corps. The Green Shirts were funded through a Wellesley COVID-19 Relief Fund grant in June in an effort to provide summer employment for local youths.

"This program is helping make up for the many part-time jobs in Wellesley like lifeguards, park rangers, camp counselors and more that were lost due to COVID-19 closures and cancellations. Through the Green Shirts program, more than 40 teens and college students are actively working in the community and remotely each week in various roles that are permitted under the current Coronavirus restrictions," said Maura Renzella, Wellesley Youth Commission Director.

Residents can find the Green Shirts corps – wearing Town of Wellesley green shirts – assisting with clean up on our trails, delivering meals and groceries to homebound citizens, helping with logistics and operations for the upcoming Mobile Movie Nights, and much more.

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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