



United Way of the Laurel Highlands

Serving Cambria & Somerset Counties

PRESS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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1889 Foundation, United Way of the Laurel Highlands, Community Foundation for the Alleghenies, and Lee Initiatives explain grant process for COVID-19 response

JOHNSTOWN – The four local nonprofit funding organizations partnering on a swift response to the COVID-19 crisis have announced a process for local nonprofit organizations to apply for emergency funding.

The partners in the initiative, which was announced on March 18, are 1889 Foundation, Community Foundation for the Alleghenies (CFA), Lee Initiatives and United Way of the Laurel Highlands (UWLH), and are referred to as the Collaborative Funders Group.

“Our organizations have partnered on many different initiatives, but none more important than this effort. As a group we are committed to remaining flexible and unified as we work together to confront this unprecedented situation,” said Susan Mann, president of 1889 Foundation.

“Every day, we see more and more people in our community coming together to support one another,” CFA President Mike Kane said. “It’s one of our community’s strengths, and our efforts as foundations that serve this community are no different. We believe it’s important to step up and work together to streamline the funding process and deploy resources where they are needed most, as quickly as possible.”

UWLH will manage all funding requests that relate to health and human services in Cambria and Somerset counties, and a newly-formed committee, the Cambria & Somerset Counties Health & Human Service Advisory Response Team, will help evaluate and prioritize them.

In addition to representatives from each of the partners in the Collaborative Funders Group, the Cambria & Somerset Counties Health & Human Service Advisory Response Team includes representatives from

the Somerset County Single County Authority, Cambria County's Behavioral Health Department, the 1889 Jefferson Center for Population Health, and Tableland.

The process for Cambria and Somerset County health and human services organizations in need of emergency funding due to the coronavirus is as follows:

1. The agency in need sends an email to admin@uwlaurel.org with the subject line "Emergency Funding Request." The email should include a description of need, the amount requested, and a breakdown of how the funding will be used.
2. UWLH will receive requests, compile information, and disseminate to the Cambria & Somerset Counties Health & Human Service Advisory Committee.
3. Weekly teleconferences will be conducted with the committee to coordinate with the Collaborative Funders Group for funding availability and distribution.

Karen Struble Myers, President & Chief Executive Officer of the United Way, relayed that "the grantmaking process has been streamlined to avoid any additional burden on nonprofit agencies across the region. As funders, we are continuously communicating to remain nimble and aligned in our decision-making to deploy financial resources where they are most needed."

Community Foundation for the Alleghenies will manage all other nonprofit requests for emergency funding as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Similar to the process being utilized by the United Way, organizations in need of emergency funding due to the coronavirus is as follows:

1. The nonprofit should send an email to aberzonski@cfalleghenies.org with the subject line "Emergency Funding Request." The email should include a description of need, the amount requested, and a breakdown of how the funding will be used.
2. CFA will receive requests, compile information, and disseminate to the COVID-19 Rapid Response Fund Advisory Committee.
3. Weekly teleconferences will be conducted with the committee to coordinate with the Collaborative Funders Group for funding availability and distribution.

"Lee Initiatives Health & Wellness Endowment was established to help fill the needs of the people in Cambria and Somerset Counties. Working together as a team, we feel we have the best opportunity to make a difference in overcoming the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic", said Don Gardill, CEO. "It will take all of us working together to defeat the COVID-19 pandemic and we are committed to that task."

The United Way of the Laurel Highlands (UWLH) is an independent, volunteer-driven, community leading organization, responsible for creating, expanding, and accelerating positive social change. The UWLH focuses on addressing critical key areas of need within the communities of both Cambria and Somerset Counties. As an organization, UWLH is committed to improving the education, health, and well-being of children, families, and other vulnerable area residents.

1889 Foundation's mission is to support innovative programs and initiatives that improve and transform the overall health and wellness of our region. Through collaborations and partnerships, with a focus on population health, the Foundation is dedicated to making meaningful change in the areas that are negatively impacting the health and well-being of our local communities. For additional information about 1889 Foundation, please visit www.1889foundation.org.

Benefiting our region every day, forever. Community Foundation for the Alleghenies is a public, nonprofit foundation that manages funds to strengthen communities in Bedford, Cambria, Indiana, and Somerset counties. CFA empowers individuals to become philanthropists, donors to make meaningful change, and caring citizens to design a legacy. For information about creating a fund or contributing to one of the 740+ funds the Foundation manages, visit www.cfalleghenies.org.

Founded in 2005, the Lee Initiatives Health and Wellness Endowment (LIHWE) was established as the “Legacy of Lee Hospital” to improve the health and well-being of the residents of the area served by the former Lee Hospital in western Pennsylvania. By collaborating with people, organizations, and resources, Lee Initiatives works to fulfill its mission: “Caring for our future, honoring our past.”