



THE COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION
FOR NORTHEAST FLORIDA

Giving Back. Giving Forward.

More than 115 local nonprofits get help to compensate for COVID-19 safety costs

Nearly \$1.2 million granted from the Respond/Adapt/Recover Fund

JACKSONVILLE, Florida – January 12, 2021 Christmas came early to 117 local nonprofit organizations who received a total of nearly \$1.2 million to help offset the costs they incurred trying to re-open and continue serving clients during the COVID-19 pandemic. The grants, which ranged from \$500 to \$50,000, helped cover agencies' purchases of personal protective equipment, Plexiglas and similar materials, COVID-19 training and health testing of staff, and necessary items for social distancing and sanitation. Program transition support costs—such as those necessary to deliver services online—were also eligible for reimbursement.

Funding for the grants came from The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida's Respond/Adapt/Recover Fund. This special fund, established this fall, was made possible with a significant gift from the Lucy Gooding Charitable Foundation Trust, additional gifts from individual donors and The Community Foundation's discretionary funds.

"These nonprofit organizations, many with limited budgets before the pandemic, suddenly were faced with overwhelming, unplanned costs that were essential to continuing to serve their clients," said Kathleen Shaw, vice president of programs at The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida, who led the vetting of nearly 150 applications. "We saw them make the anguishing decisions to ensure a safe environment for staff and clients, and we know these grants will help ease some of the financial burden that the pandemic created."

The 117 agencies who received the grants operate across a wide spectrum of focus areas, and throughout The Community Foundation's six county (Baker, Clay, Duval, Nassau, Putnam and St. Johns) service area. Nearly a third of the recipient agencies have annual budgets of less than \$200,000.

For instance, agencies providing mental health services, which became even more crucial to our community during the pandemic, received grants to reimburse them for costs associated with making in person mental health services possible (Plexiglas, HEPA air filtration, deep cleaning) as well as other costs incurred to deliver some services virtually. Clay Behavioral Health, Epic Community Services, Gateway Community Services and Stronger than Stigma are just a few of the mental health agency recipients.

"As an essential behavioral healthcare provider, it was critical that we continue to offer our counseling and treatment services to our clients with substance use and mental health disorders," according to a spokesperson from Epic Community Services in St. Augustine. "Yet we also had to consider the safety of everyone and mitigate the potential spread of the virus."

Safety net agencies like Barnabas in Nassau County were on the front lines for so many residents whose jobs vanished during the pandemic. Barnabas received a grant to help with the cost to transition to a cloud-based IT system, the purchase of critical PPE supplies and the purchase of air sanitizing systems.

“When the pandemic began, we pledged to help as many people for as long as we could,” said Barnabas president and CEO Wanda Lanier. “Infrastructure support of our organization with this unique and critical funding is making that happen.”

Agencies serving the differently-abled, like The Arc, Pine Castle, Hope Haven, Downs Syndrome Association, BASCA and others, often have clients with compromised health issues and who need increased safety precautions. Individual contact is also extremely important to many of their clients. More than \$110,000 was made available from the Fund to help these organizations recover some of those critical expenditures.

“The safety and well-being of our program participants and members of our staff drives every decision we make,” said Jim Whittaker, president and CEO of The Arc Jacksonville. “Because of this generous support of our work, we are in a position to continue our services safely for individuals with intellectual and developmental differences and maintain our staff.”

Another part of the nonprofit sector devastated by the pandemic were arts and cultural nonprofits, whose live performances and in person events were halted and their traditional business models were undermined. The Respond/Adapt/Recover Fund made grants to 19 arts organizations in our area, for a total of more than \$225,000.

The Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens was one of those arts organizations that received a Respond/Adapt/Recover grant to help broaden accessibility during the pandemic.

“Access to the arts has the power to provide people with positive and restorative ways to express themselves through conversation, creativity and collaboration,” said Kerrie Slattery, chief advancement officer. “Through our work, we will continue to serve as a safe place that promotes our community’s health, happiness and well-being.

A full list of the agencies that received grants from the Respond/Adapt/Recover fund can be found [here](#).

About The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida

The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida (www.jaxcf.org), Florida’s oldest and largest community foundation, works to stimulate philanthropy to build a better community. The Foundation helps donors invest their philanthropic gifts wisely, helps nonprofits serve the region effectively, and helps people come together to make the community a better place. Created in 1964, the Foundation has assets of \$483 million and has made approximately \$550 million in grants since inception.

###

Contact: Susan Datz Edelman
VP, Strategic Communications
904-356-4483 | sedelman@jaxcf.org