



Town of Palm Beach United Way  
44 Coconut Row, M201  
Palm Beach, FL 33480  
561-655-1919

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## Town of Palm Beach United Way COVID-19 Emergency Fund raises more than \$900,000; new matching gifts received from Palm Beach couples

For Immediate Release – April 15, 2020

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The Town of Palm Beach United Way is honored to announce new matching gift opportunities for its COVID-19 Emergency Fund from Palm Beachers **Julie and Mike Connors** and **Michele and Howard Kessler**. Each couple is matching donor contributions dollar-for-dollar up to \$50,000.

“Thousands of Palm Beach County residents are unemployed, without paychecks, and forced to wait in line for hours to receive food from area food banks,” said Michele and Howard Kessler. “We want to do all we can to support our neighbors in need, and through this matching gift, encourage others to do the same.”

The COVID-19 Emergency Fun has raised more than \$900,000 to provide support to nonprofit agencies in Palm Beach County providing vital social services such as food, childcare, counseling, basic needs and financial assistance during this public health crisis. The fund was boosted by previous matching gifts from **Christina Dennis**, the **J. Ira and Nicki Harris Family Foundation**, **Danielle Moore**, **John and Jana Scarpa**, **Sally and Bill Soter**, the **A. Alfred Taubman Foundation**, **Bill and Norma Tiefel** and **Susan and Bob Wright**.

“We all must work together to overcome this historic pandemic,” said Julie and Mike Connors. “Our community needs our support now more than ever before and we hope others will continue to give generously to benefit the many individuals and families who are struggling to get by right now.”

### Fund distributions

The Town of Palm Beach United Way has received funding requests from 11 agencies totaling more than \$520,000. Funds have already been dispersed to the following organizations:

- Boys & Girls Clubs of Palm Beach County – To provide fresh and nutritious food to club children and their families
- Caridad Center – To purchase laptop computers and software to allow staff members to work from home during the crisis
- Center for Child Counseling – To provide telehealth services such as trauma counseling, caregiver education and consultation, and access to basic needs
- Clinics Can Help – To purchase diapers, wipe packs and masks for residents in need
- Families First of Palm Beach County – To provide telehealth services for caregivers, pregnant women, students and families
- The Lord’s Place – To pay occupancy and personnel costs of the agency’s social enterprises, Joshua Catering and Joshua Thrift Stores, which employ numerous staff (many of whom are former homeless clients) and generate revenue to fund essential services
- YMCA of the Palm Beaches – To provide affordable childcare for essential workers, including first responders, medical personnel and government employees

**ONE COMMUNITY. ONE GOAL.**

Previously, the COVID-19 Emergency Fund was used to purchase non-perishable food for CROS Ministries, Feeding South Florida, Palm Beach County Food Bank and The Glades Initiative. The fund was also used to purchase medical gloves and masks for the Caridad Clinic and diapers for The Cotton Bottom Diaper Bank.

“I’m sure I speak for all of our partner nonprofit agencies and their clients when I say we are overwhelmed with gratitude and filled with hope by the outpouring of support we’ve received thus far,” said **Mary Freitas**, Chairman of the Board of Trustees.

To donate to the Coronavirus Emergency Fund visit [www.palmbeachunitedway.org/coronavirus-emergency-fund](http://www.palmbeachunitedway.org/coronavirus-emergency-fund) or call 561-655-1919. Checks can be made payable to Town of Palm Beach United Way with “COVID-19 Fund” in the memo and mailed to 44 Coconut Row, Suite M201, Palm Beach, FL 33480.

Donations are tax deductible and 100% will go directly to local organizations delivering services to disadvantaged and under-resourced communities most impacted by the COVID-19 outbreak.

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## CLASS OF 2020

Kathy Bleznak  
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David Duffy  
Gail Engelberg  
Brian Hurley  
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Michele Kessler  
Paulette Koch  
David Mack  
Cara Coniglio McClure  
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Bill Meyer  
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Lesly Smith



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