



CAUSE CONNECTION

Connecting people who care to causes that matter

Focusing in on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

This country is reeling from two horrible diseases: a worldwide viral pandemic that is ravaging our community, and a national disorder of racism that tears at the very fabric of our souls. Systemic racism continues to contribute to the growing inequities in our communities. We are suffering in our hearts for Black lives lost, for Black lives disregarded, and for Black lives without opportunity.

LVCF stands united with those calling for racial justice and access to the same freedoms for all people, and we recognize that change begins within. We have taken these past few weeks to pause, to listen, to reflect, and to begin taking action.

First, LVCF's Board of Governors has committed to continuing the organization's diversity, equity, and inclusion journey, including the adoption of a set of guiding principles. Second, we have re-affirmed our support of nonprofits that are on their own diversity, equity, and inclusion journeys by continuing to include DEI in our nonprofit effectiveness grant platform. Third, we formalized our support of the United Way's Fund for Racial Justice & Equity to partner with our community to continue efforts to seek solutions to systemic racism. We have been exploring our role in community conversations on race, and we have begun hosting important entry points to this discussion.

Most importantly, as a funder and a steward of philanthropy, we recognize that we are in a position of power and privilege. We must do more heavy lifting to shift dynamics and achieve change. We have begun to ask ourselves: What barriers might be within our processes that need to be broken down to better partner with more diverse organizations, more leaders of color, and our communities of color? How do we formally apply an equity lens to all that we do? How do we use our voice as a community leader to amplify those who need to be heard? These are hard questions to answer, but we commit to having the critical conversations and reflections that are needed to make change within and throughout.

When partnering with organizations, we value those with a culture of learning and continuous improvement. We hold ourselves to this same standard as we seek wisdom from others, while taking responsibility for educating ourselves and our stakeholders. We will continue to share developments with you as we take action as a learning organization, growing and evolving during these challenging times.

We must stand together, plan for our shared future, and strive to improve the quality of life for all.

In solidarity | Lehigh Valley Community Foundation Staff

RACIAL JUSTICE AND EQUITY

With financial support from PPL Foundation, and in partnership with LVCF, United Way of the Greater Lehigh Valley (UWGLV) has established the Fund for Racial Justice and Equity to rapidly direct financial support to anti-racism initiatives in Lehigh, Northampton and Carbon counties.

"The Fund will invest in community-led solutions that generate reconciliation, cultural competence, humility and courageous conversations," said **Marci Lesko**, Executive Vice President, UWGLV.

Through the Fund, UWGLV will expand on its Diversity, Equity and Inclusion work with additional funding to support:

- Direct funding
- Capacity-building
- Community engagement/leadership
- Advocacy
- Story-telling & culture preservation

LVCF will participate in a coalition that will lead decision-making over the allocation of this fund and priorities for the work ahead.

"We are pleased to work in partnership to address racial justice and equity in our community," said **Erika Riddle Petrozelli**, Vice President for Philanthropy, LVCF. "This pivotal moment provides an opportunity for our organizations to more closely align our equity-centered priorities, focus the impact of the COVID-19 Response Fund, and direct community investments to create a powerful shift in momentum for real change."

[Learn more....](#)

COVID-19 Response Fund Grants Support Update

LVCF's COVID-19 Response Fund provides an opportunity for individuals to support a regional response effort and also to support other emerging issues in an informed way. The LVCF Fund first supported a regional, coordinated effort to rapidly deploy resources to community-based, front-line nonprofit organizations in the Lehigh Valley.



In addition to contributing to the regional fund, LVCF's Fund has and will continue to make grants outside of the regional effort's scope, both are important factors to our region's recovery.

Round One Grants

The regional partnership of funders distributed over \$320,000 to 43 nonprofits providing food, shelter, healthcare, income supports, and other essentials to our neighbors who live paycheck to paycheck, who are elderly, who have disabilities, or who are youth, among other vulnerable or marginalized populations in our community. LVCF contributed \$50,000 to this round. The organizations included a mix of those who focus on one service and those who offer multiple services. More than half of the funding went to "small" organizations who cannot always access other supports (e.g. federal stimulus), including grass-roots organizations who are the trusted providers and messengers in deeply impacted neighborhoods. See the list of grantees at <https://tinyurl.com/LVCFC19>.

Round Two Grants

During May, the regional partnership of funders distributed \$120,000 to 18 Lehigh Valley nonprofits. While food and housing access and income supports remained a top priority, special consideration was given to organizations that focus on mental health or substance use, as well as organizations led by people of color. LVCF contributed \$30,000 to this round. In this round, grant amounts ranged from \$2,500 to \$15,000, with almost \$50,000 in total directed to organizations providing healthcare services such as mental health. See the list at <https://tinyurl.com/LVCFC19>.

Round Three Grants

Funding for phase 3 will be distributed in July with a focus on advancing racial justice with a specific emphasis on supporting organizations that are led by Black individuals or Persons of Color.

Round Four Grants

The ongoing fourth and final phase of funding will engage communities in a co-design process of reimagining the Greater Lehigh Valley nonprofit sector to better reflect a new, post-COVID reality. So far, LVCF has directed \$90,000 to this innovative approach and is co-leading the effort with the United Way.

We are so grateful for your generosity, which touches so many lives. We're here to answer your questions and to discuss how your support can make a difference in helping address COVID-19. Contact Erika Riddle Petrozelli at erika@lvcfoundation.org.

LVCF Thanks the following for their Support of the COVID-19 Response Fund

- Anonymous Donors
- Arbor Insurance Group Foundation Fund
- Walter & Alma Bastian Fund
- Eric B. & Denise M. Blew Fund
- Elizabeth Brown
- Michael Brown
- Sandra Bodnyk
- Burkholder's Heating and Air Conditioning, Inc.
- Cheryl H. Corsa
- Danny Finocchio
- Fleming Foundation (Matching Gifts)
- Beall Fowler
- Bob & Susan Gadomski
- Aaron Gittelman
- Margaretha C. Haeussler
- Matthew Hawk
- Kraft Hillman Family Fund
- Ray & Donna Holton
- Adrienne Kinny
- Carol Koenig
- Cynthia A. Lambert Durham & Fred S. Durham III
- Jennifer Mann
- Nicholas Nanovic
- Northampton County Bar Association
- Olexa Family Foundation Fund
- Pamela Palmer
- Tom & Jo Anne Riddle Fund for a Greater LV
- Saucon Insurance Company Foundation Fund
- Anna May Synder
- Stershic Family Fund
- Torry Family Fund
- John & Chrissie Wagner Fund
- Karen Wessner
- Yeoman Family Fund

Virtual Visit Nonprofit Tours



You are invited to join us on a virtual visit and tour with **Meals on Wheels of the Greater Lehigh Valley** on **Wednesday, July 22, from 4 to 5 p.m.**

CEO Vicki Coyle will explain how the leading Lehigh Valley provider of healthy, medically-tailored meals serves nearly 2,000 seniors and people with disabilities who depend on Meals on Wheels every day to deliver meals directly to their homes and senior centers.



JOIN US | Contact Linda Schmoyer to RSVP: linda@lvcfoundation.org