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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Helping Individuals and Families Survive the Pandemic

Nearly \$2 Million in San Mateo County Strong Fund Grants to

Local Nonprofit Service Agencies

REDWOOD CITY, Calif. – The San Mateo County Strong Fund today announced a total of nearly \$2 million has been awarded to local nonprofit agencies that provide vital safety-net services to tens of thousands of residents hit financially by the COVID-19 pandemic.

“This support enables us to continue to provide life-changing services to some of the most vulnerable members of our community,” said Bruce Ives, CEO of [LifeMoves](#), which operates shelters and provides emergency food and other services to individuals and families.

“With this investment, LifeMoves is providing nutritious meals, hiring professional cleaning services, distributing personal protective equipment, and purchasing cleaning supplies to ensure the health and safety of our clients,” Ives said.

The San Mateo County Strong Fund ([SMC Strong](#)) today said 52 local nonprofit agencies received a total of \$903,000 in Phase II emergency funding, adding to the \$1 million in emergency Phase I grants approved in April.

The San Mateo County Board of Supervisors [in March](#) created SMC Strong with \$3 million in seed money -- \$1 million apiece designated for nonprofit groups, small businesses, and individual and family assistance.

Since then, SMC Strong, administered by the Silicon Valley Community Foundation (SVCF) and additional partners, has received approximately \$8 million in private and corporate donations -- \$7.3 million of which has been awarded to date. This includes \$3.4 million in grants distributed in partnership with the San Mateo Credit Union Community Fund to help small businesses with payroll and other expenses related to COVID-19.

“COVID-19 has put so many people out of work and susceptible to this virus, particularly in our most vulnerable communities,” said Warren Slocum, president of the Board of Supervisors. “It’s heartening to see how many individuals and companies have stepped up to donate to a fund that provides immediate help to people in our community.”

In developing a plan to assist nonprofits, the County and SVCF partnered with [Thrive](#), The Alliance of Nonprofits for San Mateo County, to survey nonprofit organizations in the County to assess how COVID-19 has impacted their operations.

“We found that an overwhelming number of our nonprofit partners – 87 percent out of 135 surveyed – faced cash flow issues and two-thirds canceled fund-raising events,” said Deputy County Manager Peggy Jensen. “The need for expanded assistance to nonprofits was clear.”

In applying for Phase II awards, nonprofits demonstrated how funds would address:

- Supplies related to health and hygiene (e.g., masks, gowns, gloves and other protective equipment)
- Technology upgrades or supplies to aid virtual communication
- Other operational expenses related to the shift in direct service plans or the provision of emergency services

Recipients include agencies that assist survivors of domestic violence ([CORA](#) (Community Overcoming Relationship Abuse), support literacy ([Daly City Public Library Associates](#)), help older adults ([Senior Coastsiders](#)) and provide mental health support ([California Clubhouse](#)), among others (full list on [SMC Strong website](#)).

“San Mateo County is like no other. Its capacity to mobilize resources into tangible community benefits is spectacular,” said Kate Comfort Harr, executive director of [HIP Housing](#). “Keeping people housed at this time is critical, and every penny of our San Mateo County Strong award will be used to keep our doors open so that we can continue to keep people housed.”

[SMC Strong in April](#) awarded the County’s eight [Core Service Agencies](#), which under contract with the County provide emergency food, shelter and other services to individuals and families, a total of \$575,000 in emergency funds. An additional seven grants totaling \$425,000 were awarded at that time to agencies that operate shelters.

“The help has allowed us to ensure the shelter (we operate) is a safe place for all of our residents and staff during a challenging, and for many frightening time,” said Melissa Platte, executive director of the [Mental Health Association](#) of San Mateo County.

“Thank you San Mateo County Strong! Your funding enabled us to pay hazardous duty pay to our shelter employees,” said Dina Bartelo of East Palo Alto-based [Project WeHope](#), which provides shelter and other services.

Visit the [SMC Strong website](#) to learn more about the fund and ways to donate.

“In times like these,” Ives, from LifeMoves said, “we are reminded that we are stronger together.”

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