

United Way of the Desert Among the List of 13 California United Ways Announcing an Investment Totaling \$10 Million in Ongoing COVID-19 Programs and Local Nonprofits' Funds

United Ways in California Raise \$25 Million to Assist Californians in COVID-19 Recovery and Relief Programs and Encourage Continued Generosity in Donations

Palm Desert, CA (May 5, 2020) — California United Ways, a network of 30 local and 1 statewide organization, have received a \$15 million anonymous gift in addition to \$10 million in fundraising efforts across the state. These new funds will be used by United Way of the Desert to provide relief to the most vulnerable residents, as well as by United Ways of Inland Valley and Inland Empire to do the same in their regions. Additionally, support is provided for crisis information, and safety-net resources in all 58 counties.

“We have already begun innovating our strategy and best practices for reaching our vulnerable populations in these unprecedented times and this funding is a tremendous boost to provide critical, timely relief in our community, yet more funds are needed” says Kristal Granados, President and CEO of United Way of the Desert.

Instead of one-size-fits-all relief, local United Ways will work in partnership with the communities they serve to determine how to best use these resources. Some will provide cash assistance for rent and utilities to needy families within days of receiving their application for assistance. Others will replace vital services which have been cut back or eliminated due to the crisis e.g., funding food relief for the unsheltered homeless population. To learn more about how this donation is being maximized please see this [article](#). Yet, even with a multi-million dollar anonymous gift in hand, local United Ways simply do not have sufficient resources, because the level of need is unprecedented.

For Californians in need of COVID-19 information or assistance: Please text keyword **COVID** to **211211** or visit 211ca.org.

United Ways of California's statewide fund and a directory of local funds can be found here: www.unitedwaysca.org/coviduw. Those wishing to give may also text COVIDUW to 41444.

“The need is already so great in our region during this time,” says Lisa Wright, President and CEO, United Way of the Inland Valleys. “We have an active and ongoing presence helping our most vulnerable populations and will continue seeking philanthropic solutions to continue to serve our community,” she added.

“It’s like an earthquake has hit the entire state, so we cannot rely on aid coming from unaffected areas or traditional tactics for emergency response. Every community has been impacted. California’s most vulnerable residents are bearing the brunt. California United Ways can make a difference in the lives of as many individuals or parents, who have gone from low wage work to unemployment, or who are unable to access safety-net or other programs due to their immigration status, as we have the resources to assist,” said Peter Manzo, President and CEO of United Ways of California.

From the onset of the COVID-19 global pandemic, California United Ways, in partnership with the state’s network of 211 call centers, have provided public information from federal, state, and local agencies. 211 has historically helped Californians meet their basic needs from enrolling in healthcare coverage to finding shelter beds. When school districts began to close, shelter-in-place became universal, and unemployment rates began to skyrocket, California United Ways bolstered 211 call center capacity, and provided all Californians additional avenues for accessing crisis resources [online](#), or by texting COVID19 to 211 211.

About United Ways of California:

United Ways of California improves the health, education and financial stability of low-income workers and families by enhancing and coordinating the advocacy and community impact work of 31 member United Ways throughout California. For more information about United Ways of California, visit [unitedwaysca.org](https://www.unitedwaysca.org). To find a local United Way near you visit <https://www.unitedwaysca.org/find-united-way>. For a complete list of United Ways in California please visit: <https://www.unitedway.org/local/united-states/california>.

About United Way of the Desert:

United Way of the Desert is an independent 501(c) 3 organization that has been serving local residents for over 70 years. Our mission is to break the cycle of poverty in the Coachella Valley through mobilizing the caring power of community. Our Community Impact Fund – a focus on the areas of education, financial stability and health programs - allows us to provide over 150,000 instances of annual support to local residents who need us. Collaborative work with local programs, business partners, and community leaders is what differentiates the United Way of the Desert. We cater to critical needs, while simultaneously building positive and long-lasting community change. *For more information:* (760) 323-2731 or visit [UnitedWayoftheDesert.org](https://www.unitedwayofthedesert.org). United Way of the Desert is located at: 73710 Fred Waring Dr., Suite 104, Palm Desert, CA 92260. Follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#) - @UWDesert

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