



**HEALTHCARE**  
**FOUNDATION**  
NORTHERN SONOMA COUNTY

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**HEALTHCARE FOUNDATION NORTHERN SONOMA COUNTY EXTENDS  
COMMUNITY COVID-19 RELIEF WITH ADDITIONAL \$100,000 IN GRANTS TO  
LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS**

**Emergency funds for health access, mental health and food security  
grants being issued now by HCF, bringing total to \$245,000**

**Healdsburg, California** - The **Healthcare Foundation of Northern Sonoma County** (HCF) today announced \$100,000 in unrestricted emergency grants to stabilize critical health and human service providers working with the most underserved community members during the COVID-19 pandemic. The target populations for these funds include those most impacted by the pandemic, including the Latinx community and low-income or unhoused individuals and families.

HCF Executive Director Kim Bender made the announcement today on FaceBook Live, recording available here: [https://fb.watch/4gDMMa\\_9fw/](https://fb.watch/4gDMMa_9fw/)

The 2021 grants extend and amplify 2020 emergency COVID-19 funding of HCF has distributed through its [Emergency Healthcare Fund](#) since the pandemic began, bringing the total to \$245,000.

This week, HCF will distribute 10 grants in all, ranging in amounts from \$5,000 to \$15,000.

The awards are considered general operating grants, which means recipients can use funds for their most urgent needs without restrictions.

HCF Executive Director Kim Bender said the grants represent a renewed commitment to equity at a time when organizations serving our most vulnerable community members of the Northern Sonoma community need serious help. Bender reported that since the pandemic began, all of the grantee organizations have seen a spike in demand for their services and a drop in volunteers, resulting in a tremendous burden on staff and other resources.

“The Emergency Fund is a partnership between the Healthcare Foundation, our generous donors and Healthcare Heroes, and the nonprofits on the ground,” she said. “We raise funds so nonprofits can focus on serving people in our community who are struggling and on the margins. Right now, that means reaching out and vaccinating eligible populations, growing and distributing nutritious food, and providing much needed mental health services. It’s been a long year since we launched the Emergency Fund in March of 2020. Until the majority of our region is vaccinated, and all our businesses and schools have re-opened, it’s all hands on deck.”

As in the past, this year’s grant recipients comprise nonprofits that serve low-income populations in the region and provide essential safety-net services aligning with the Healthcare Foundation’s Emergency Fund priorities of access to healthcare, mental health and food security. Many provide all three vital services. The organizations are:

- **La Familia Sana**, a new grassroots organization whose mission is to provide health and wellness through education, direct support, and advocacy to underserved Latinx and Indigenous communities, particularly in northern Sonoma County. This group has been doing on-the-ground education to farmworkers about COVID prevention, vaccine safety, and how and where to get the vaccine.
- **Latino Service Providers** serves as a bridge to resources in the Latinx community of Sonoma County by mobilizing a mutual aid network during disasters to provide food, basic necessities, and financial assistance to those most in need. Since COVID-19, demand has increased dramatically.
- **Alliance Medical Center** is a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) with clinics in both Healdsburg and Windsor. Since mid-February, they have helped vaccinate close to 5,000 eligible North County residents including agricultural workers and eligible seniors. As tiers allow, Alliance has added educators and restaurant workers, vaccinating a total of 400 to 500 people per day when vaccine supply is available.
- **Alexander Valley Healthcare (AVH)**, another FQHC based in Cloverdale. AVH has vaccinated approximately 5,000 eligible residents (including a large percentage of local farmworkers) at its weekly drive-through clinics since early February.
- **Corazón Healdsburg**, which seeks to strengthen the Northern Sonoma County community by bridging racial, cultural, and economic divides, and has been working in cooperation with Alliance Medical Centers to perform vaccine

outreach, education and registration to over 9,000 people since mid-February. The group's efforts have resulted in 3,000 vaccine appointments, and Corazón continues to focus on vaccine equity.

- **Reach for Home**, a Healdsburg-based nonprofit with the goal of ending homelessness in Sonoma County, provides street outreach and medicine, rapid rehousing, permanent supportive housing, COVID and vaccine outreach and education.
- **YWCA Sonoma County** is dedicated to eliminating racism, empowering women and promoting peace. The local organization's overarching goal is to end domestic violence (DV) in Sonoma County, which unfortunately rose sharply during shelter-in-place. The YWCA provides Sonoma County's only confidential safe house and therapeutic pre-school, DV-specialized mental health and advocacy services.
- **Farm to Pantry**, whose mission is to end food waste and hunger by gleaning excess produce, has continued to deliver many tons of fresh produce every week to those in the community facing food insecurity, in spite of pandemic-related drop in volunteers and increased staff costs.
- **Farm to Fight Hunger**, an organization that grows vegetables and produces pasture-raised eggs for donation to those in need of food in Sonoma County, serves predominantly Latinx and low-income community members.
- **Food for Thought**, which aims to foster health and healing with food and compassion, launched a program to serve low-income Sonoma County residents who have been diagnosed with COVID-19.

HCF opened the responsive grant application process, the first of its kind for HCF, in December of 2020; 23 organizations applied with requests totaling \$305,000 for the available \$100,000, indicating the immense need for COVID-related emergency support.

As HCF evaluated the applications, grants were restricted to organizations that serve northern Sonoma County (Windsor, Healdsburg, Geyserville and Cloverdale), including those that are based in adjacent areas but serve people in the North County region.

A seven-person review panel composed of HCF Board members and members from the surrounding community narrowed the list of applicants, then performed personalized due diligence with each of the finalists. After serious deliberation, the panel made recommendations to the full HCF Board to support 10 organizations. The Board voted to release the \$100,000 in available funds immediately.

Reach for Home ED Margaret Sluyk said, "Early in the pandemic, our efforts were focused on direct food delivery to unsheltered people to reduce their risk of COVID exposure. Now it's providing support for utilities and rent to keep people from becoming homeless, as well as vaccine education. General operating support from the Healthcare Foundation allows us to make these quick pivots to benefit those who need it most."

According to Bender, the HCF intends to address health inequities in the short-term with the Emergency Healthcare Fund. HCF's strategic planning process is developing

longer-term interventions and solutions that will inform grantmaking priorities for the rest of 2021 and beyond.

“Our Board, which is now 27% Latinx, is committed to health equity,” Bender said. “We are listening to diverse community voices. We trust the leaders of these grassroots organizations who are doing the work on the ground to have the best solutions to help us get through this public health crisis. By providing general operating support with no restrictions, these hard-working nonprofits can focus on their mission, and help us get back to a fully functioning society.”

For more information about HCF’s Emergency Healthcare Fund or recipients themselves, please visit the Healthcare Foundation’s website, [Healthcarefoundation.net](http://Healthcarefoundation.net).

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### **About Healthcare Foundation Northern Sonoma County**

The Healthcare Foundation Northern Sonoma County connects people and resources to promote health and wellness in vulnerable populations, with a vision of eliminating health inequities in our region. The Healthcare Foundation focuses on access to healthcare, mental health and early childhood development. Founded in 2001, the Healthcare Foundation has invested more than \$26 million to build a healthier region for all who live, work, and play here.