

For Immediate Release

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St. Joseph Community Partnership Fund Releases Millions to Vulnerable Populations in Continued COVID-19 Response

Three Initiatives Address Multiple Phases of Pandemic Relief, Recovery and Resilience

(IRVINE, CA, February 1, 2021) --- The negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is well-known and undebatable. Aside from the direct impact on the health of those who have contracted the virus, communities have been faced with other facets of this debilitating public health emergency, through loss of employment, food security, housing, quality education, and more. Those most vulnerable in our communities have been hit hardest. In continued response to these needs, from December 2020 through February 2021, the St. Joseph Community Partnership Fund (SJCPF) released over \$3 million dollars to communities throughout the seven Providence St. Joseph Health regions.

In December 2020, SJCPF distributed \$1.9 M in grants to reduce food and housing insecurity and support coordination of care for vulnerable populations. In its ninth year, SJCPF's Emergency Food and Shelter Initiative (EFSI) deployed \$900,000 to 46 nonprofit community partners in California engaged in providing emergency food, shelter and care coordination services through the. Through a second grant-making effort, SJCPF released \$1 M to thirty-six organizations in the seven PSJH regions to reduce food insecurity in those communities.

"At this time where hundreds of thousands of community members in all of our regions are facing the many challenges of COVID-19, while also facing abject hunger, SJCPF's food security support is more critical than ever", stated SJPF CEO, Gabriela Robles.

According to statistics from Feeding America, food insecurity has increased dramatically across the country due to unemployment and other COVID-19 related factors, and "18 of the 25 counties projected to have the highest 2020 food insecurity rates are majority Black." According to 211OC, in Orange County, California, where SJCPF is headquartered, food insecurity increased by 239% from March 2019 to August 2019 compared to the same period in 2020.

In February 2021, SJCPF will make grant awards of \$75,000 to 12 collaboratives in PSJH regions. In addition, SJCPF will provide technical assistance coaching to support their capacity and long-term sustainability. These grants are in support of building the capacity of existing collaboratives that strive to improve equity and justice. This is in alignment with the SJCPF disaster response strategy to improve health for the most vulnerable through support that addresses the three phases of disaster response – relief, recovery, and resilience.

SJCPF Director of Programs and Partnerships, Jason Lacsamana, stated that "by supporting existing collaboratives already at work in advancing the resilience and justice within vulnerable communities, including communities of color, undocumented immigrants and refugees, older adults, homeless, and others, we are positioning them to meet present as well as future needs of those communities."

There is ample scholarly and practitioner support from the fields of public health, psychology, environmental studies/ecology and more, for building community resilience to address structural racism

and inequities, and improve health outcomes for the most vulnerable. We know that supporting community resilience through building the capacity of cross-sector collaboration can also make individuals and communities better equipped to respond to and recover from disasters and trying circumstances. CRRI was developed with much of this knowledge in mind.

The community partners and collaboratives funded by EFSI, food insecurity grants, and CRRI are all critical to improving the health and well-being of the most vulnerable residents in the PSJH regions, and meeting their short, medium and long-term needs, which have been exacerbated during this time of COVID-19.

About St. Joseph Community Partnership Fund

St. Joseph Community Partnership Fund makes strategic investments in the health and well-being of communities served by of the Providence-St. Joseph Health System. 2021 marks SJCPF's 35th year of working to reduce health disparities and promote equity by investing in systems level impacts on community health issues, and strengthening partnerships and collaboration. Our investments fall into the following four categories: housing and homelessness, education, disaster preparedness, and capacity building of the nonprofit sector. Learn more at <http://stjosephcpf.org/>.

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If you would like more information about this topic, please contact Jason Lacsamana at Jason.lacsamana@stjoe.org.

Resources

https://www.feedingamerica.org/sites/default/files/2020-10/Brief_Local%20Impact_10.2020_0.pdf
https://www.211oc.org/images/2020/211OC_6_Month_Covid_Reportv4.pdf

On Community Resilience

Prevention Institute
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation