Community Foundation Establishes COVID-19 Response Fund with $1 Million Lead Gift from MassMutual

Springfield—The Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts (CFWM) today announced the COVID-19 Response Fund for the Pioneer Valley has been established with a lead gift of $1 million from MassMutual.

Along with MassMutual’s gift, CFWM is contributing $500,000 to the Response Fund. Big Y, BankESB, Greenfield Cooperative Bank/Northampton Cooperative Bank and PeoplesBank have also committed to contributing to the fund. Other area businesses and philanthropic organizations are being encouraged to contribute to the fund, as is the general public.

Those interested in making a gift to the fund should visit http://communityfoundation.org/coronavirus-donations/, or contact the Community Foundation at donorservices@communityfoundation.org.

Hosted by the Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts, the COVID-19 Response Fund will provide flexible resources to Pioneer Valley nonprofit organizations serving populations most impacted by the crisis, such as the elderly, those without stable housing, families needing food and those with particular health vulnerabilities.

Funds initially will be given to existing community-based organizations who currently serve vulnerable populations and who are best able to identify those requiring crisis services.

According to Katie Allan Zobel, President and CEO, “The impact of the coronavirus pandemic is placing an extraordinary burden on families and individuals in the Pioneer Valley. Business, philanthropy and community organizations are coming together to establish this response fund to support those who are in need. It’s another example of our region’s extraordinary generosity and community commitment.

“Speaking for the Community Foundation, our other partners and the community as a whole, I want to express my deep appreciation to our strong community partner, MassMutual, and their leadership who moved swiftly with this gift to help at this time of crisis,” Zobel said.

“During this time of uncertainty and disruption in our daily lives, we hope that this important, cross-collaborative initiative will help provide community members and organizations with the
resources and support they need,” said Roger Crandall, MassMutual Chairman, President and CEO. “We encourage others to join us in donating to the COVID-19 Response Fund to keep our communities safe and assist those who have been impacted. While we are facing extraordinary events, we are confident in the resiliency of our region and the compassion of our people to meet the rapidly evolving needs in our community.”

Mayor Domenic J. Sarno states, “I am not surprised that our business and philanthropic community, led by our hometown MassMutual, reached out to me to say, ‘how can we help?’ Once again, MassMutual steps up to the plate as they did during our tornado recovery days in a big way to deliver to our residents. I want to personally thank my friend Roger Crandall and the team at MassMutual for recognizing the hardships that our community is facing right now and making decisive moves to assist us. Springfield is a strong city, tested and true. We will get through this latest difficult challenge stronger than ever.”

Congressman Richard E. Neal said, “MassMutual has its roots in the Greater Springfield community, not just because it is where their employees work, but because it is where they live and grow their families. Their generous donation to the Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts will ensure that all families across western Massachusetts have access to what they need during this trying time. Whether it be access to care for seniors, or ensuring food security for those out of work, the Community Foundation and their non-profit partners will be able to step up and provide for our neighbors in a big way. I am appreciative to MassMutual and the Community Foundation for this tremendously important partnership.”

Zobel said the fund will be flexible in responding to current needs and as unforeseen needs arise in our community.

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**About the Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts**

Founded in 1990, the Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts administers a charitable endowment consisting of 609 separately identified funds ($173 million) serving the three counties bordering the Connecticut River in Western Massachusetts (Hampden, Hampshire, and Franklin counties). For more information about the reach and impact of the Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts, visit [http://communityfoundation.org](http://communityfoundation.org).