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**Human Service Provider Call**

**5/14/2020**

**Zoom Meeting**

Danielle welcomed all attendees. This call is to help streamline communication and support and encourage collaboration to make the most of resources during this COVID 19 pandemic. It also provides the opportunity for updates on local needs from the nonprofit sector. United Way streams accurate local information to 211 so residents calling in have the most up-to-date information. Please refer to United Way website for previous notes and resources-<https://dbqunitedway.org/covid-19-nonprofit-support>

This call has created great opportunities to build partnerships and for our system to work together to coordinate and broaden our impact. There has been a great deal of collaboration with the city, nonprofits, philanthropists, legislators, and more. THANK YOU!

**United Way Update:**

Danielle Peterson provided an update on the work that United Way of Dubuque Area Tri-States has been doing the past week. They have worked with the Dubuque Area Labor Harvest to purchase protein for their food giveaways. Also, they might have some cleaning products for the Marshallese population that can be given to Crescent Community Health Center.

The big announcement is the upcoming FEMA application. There is $76,000 in grant dollars available for food-related needs in Dubuque County. United Way has done a press release, interviews, and social media posts regarding the application. **Requests are due by May 25, 2020, at 5:00 PM.** Find out more information here: <https://dbqunitedway.org/fema-application-phase-37>

United Way did qualify and receive the payroll protection loan. Their office is still practicing social distancing and not allowing the public to come into their office. Their employees are working from home but they are going to look into safely transitioning back into working at the office.

Over the Edge has been postponed until September 4, 2020, at the Hotel Julien Dubuque. Danielle will be emailing the Edgers to notify them of the change. More information about Over the Edge can be found at [www.dbqunitedway.org/over-the-edge](http://www.dbqunitedway.org/over-the-edge)

They have hired a new Director of Community Impact. Paula Peider Leicht will be joining the team on June 3rd.

Matthew Phelps asked if the FEMA application funding included money for building food capacity such as freezers, refrigerators, etc. Danielle will check and get back to him with an answer.

**Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque Updates:**

Jenna was not able to make the call, but Danielle was able to provide an update. Yesterday, the long-range planning committee met again to look at grant applications coming through the disaster relief funding that was implemented through Community Organizations Active in Disaster (COAD). The application can be found at <https://www.dbqfoundation.org/covid-19-recovery-grants-available>

As of 5/14/2020, just over $634,000 has been granted to the community. Yesterday, Hillcrest Family Services was approved for $15,625.

**Catholic Charities Update:**

Stacy Sherman reported that Catholic Charities has been helping with direct assistance for rent payments for people that have fallen behind on rent. They started at the beginning of April and so far, they have helped over 60 households in the seven-county area that the Community Foundation covers. Over $26,000 in rent assistance has gone out in the past 40 days. There is some funding available for anyone that needs help who has fallen behind on rent.

**City of Dubuque Updates:**

Jerelyn O’Connor reported that the City of Dubuque has issued a request for proposal for an agency isolation shelter. **Applications are due Monday, May 18 at 12:00 p.m.** <https://www.cityofdubuque.org/bids.aspx?bidID=1233>. She did note that there are significant insurance requirements.

The City of Dubuque is also developing a program for emergency rental assistance that will go to the Community Development Commission next Wednesday for approval. Currently, there is $20,000 budgeted for up to three months of rental assistance, but there is a possibility that some of the funds will be reallocated.

Finally, they have Neighborhood Grants that are for neighborhood organizations or non-profits that want to do neighborhood improvement or public service projects that serve primarily lower and moderate-income persons. **The application is due by Friday, May 15 at midnight.** <https://www.cityofdubuque.org/258/Neighborhood-Development>

Ryan Feller, from the Housing Department with the City of Dubuque, added by saying that there are really strict restrictions for the City’s rental assistance program. There will be several criteria that participants will have to meet to qualify. As soon as it goes to commission it will be available online.

**Homelessness Outreach Update:**

Amanda Hohmann, from ECIA, reported that Coordinated Entry should be hearing more information from the Iowa Finance Authority on more funding for homeless prevention and rapid rehousing. Once they get that information, they will let everyone know and encourage people to call the hotline to access those funds.

Also, she added the Teresa Shelter is not taking on any new individuals at this time. The Dubuque Rescue Mission is cutting back on their census and taking people here and there while not wanting to overcrowd. They are still doing everything they can with their meals and if someone is really in need they find a way to help them out.

**Unemployment Claims Update:**

Ron Axtell reported that things are pretty much the same. He encouraged everyone to refer individuals with questions to the their website at <https://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/>.

He emphasized that people should call 1-866-239-0843 or email Region1.Web@iwd.iowa.gov for any questions. Unfortunately, the staff is not able to answer the local office number because they are all on the statewide number. Do **not** call the local office.

He added that when this started, our community was at 3% unemployment. Right now, based on calculations, we have jumped up to 15-20% unemployment. Ron wants to commend their Iowa Workforce Development Partners for their hard work to process claims and answer issues and questions. Also, now as businesses start to reopen and workers are going to get called back, it’s important to remember that these layoffs were temporary. Employers were coded as “Likely to Return”. It is really important they employers go back to work when they are called back or they could get into an overpayment situation.

Susan Whitty asked Ron what to do if people are uncomfortable going back to work due to health conditions, family members at home, etc.? Where should she direct people to get answers to those questions? Are there exemptions?

Ron answered by encouraging Susan to call 1-866-239-0843. He said it is a gray area.

Jordan, from NICC, asked if people who are entitled to unemployment benefits were getting access to their benefits relatively quickly. Ron answered by saying that he thinks in Iowa they are, but he has read about other states where they are having bigger issues.

**Stonehill Updates:**

Amy Schauer reported that there are not many updates and things are continuing as the new normal. She wanted to remind everyone that visitors are still not able to return and there have been no changes to visitor restrictions. Those restrictions are not decided by Stonehill. Since they are governed by CMS, those are the guidelines they are following.

They also have added a weekly update for families to our website. It can be found here: <https://www.stonehilldbq.com/coronavirus/family-update/>

**Almost Home Updates:**

Gwen Kirchhof reported that they are preparing for when they open. She added that because they are a more communal organization, they are working on putting plexiglass between the beds. They have been meeting regularly and they think they’ll have everything under control and they can safely house people.

Also, they have to take into account that they are not just a shelter. They have people coming into the Open Closet along with the men coming into the shelter. And, when the congregation opens back up they will have to think how to proceed. She is worried about how they are going to get volunteers since they have typically relied on students who are doing their fieldwork.

**Dubuque Community YMCA/YWCA Updates:**

Danielle Shea reported that their domestic violence shelter just opened up their new room today so there is one space currently available. As of June 1, one or two people will be moving into long term housing and at that point, they will have more space available. They anticipate that room to be filled within the next couple of days. They are currently getting a call at least every day, or every other day, for people that need help.

**COVID-19 Testing Updates:**

Susan Whitty asked: Where are we at for broader testing? Especially for people that are in shelters or communal living. Are we able to start testing those individuals?

Ed Raber, who has been working with the Board of Health, answered Susan’s questions. He stated that the Board of Health did some testing last week in partnership with the state of Iowa. They have been able to partner with the state of Iowa to have them supply us with test kits that they sent to long term care facilities. This week, they will send test kits to assisted living facilities and a couple of other similar partners. A part of the discussion is how to test people in homeless shelters. He is not sure if they’ve been able to reach out to those places. Right now, a medical director is needed to administer the tests so that is a challenge they are facing.

**Greater Dubuque Development Corp Update:**

 Anna Roling reported that they released the “Safe at Work” guide and sent it across all of their channels. Since that was launched, they have seen 500 hits on the website. You can access the guide here <https://www.greaterdubuque.org/covid19/safe-at-work>. She said that they have enough resources on their COVID-19 page to help people who are stuck.

Dubuque County did release funds for small businesses so they got an uptick in applications and inquiries.

Danielle reminded everyone that there is a group that meets regularly that focuses specifically on food needs. Also, there is a group that is discussing how to do case management. If you’d like more information about the Case Management group, email peter@dbqfoundation.org

**Summer Activities Update:**

 Kaitlin Schmidt, from St. Mark’s Youth Enrichment, reported that their Grade Level Summer Reading Group met on 5/13. They are continuing with their plans to start on June 29, knowing that certain things will look different. They have a team in place to look at accessing physical items, such as thermometers, masks, etc. A lot of partners are waiting to see what the school district’s plans will entail, specifically with the Return to Learn plan. Therefore, it is up in the air what the community will be doing as a whole.

 Dawn Cogan, also from St. Mark’s Youth Enrichment, added that another need will be additional space to be able to break their classrooms down into smaller sizes, which then will result in the need for more staffing.

 Dawn also asked if the COVID funding will shift more towards recovery and reopening, now that our community is starting to open up. Will there be funding to help with those expenses?

 Danielle responded by encouraging Dawn to still submit an application for funding. She said there has been discussion on how to shift to funding recovery efforts. Stacy Sherman also added that they are trying to assess what the need is going to be in the next 30-60 days.

**211 Update:**

 Danielle Peterson reported that in 2019 from January - May 12, we had 955 calls in Dubuque, Delaware and Jackson counties. About 68% of those were for scheduling VITA appointments. In 2020, during the same time frame, we had 1472 calls. 48% of those were health care related calls asking about symptoms, exposure, testing, etc. 35% of those calls were related to employment and income. 8% was about housing and shelter, 4% was about food, and 3% of the calls were related to utilities.

**Volunteer Needs:**

 Danielle Peterson reminded the group that if they have volunteer needs, to be sure to include them on our Get Connected volunteer portal at <https://dbqunitedway.org/volunteer>.

 Over 4500 people are registered on this website who are wanting to volunteer. Be sure to include if it is a virtual or in-person volunteer opportunity.

**Rental Assistance Question:**

 Dawn Cogan asked if there are more requests for need then there are funds, especially in regards to homelessness and rent assistance. She wants to direct the families she works with in the right direction.

 Danielle responded by saying that the concern is that people aren’t being proactive right now and will be in need when their rent becomes due or the moratorium is lifted. Amanda added that it is quieter right now so they are assuming that people are letting their rent and utilities go until the moratorium is lifted and they will be shut off. Once eviction notices start coming, she anticipates that people will call looking for resources. They are putting information out there and encouraging their clients to talk to some of these resources. But at this point it’s not an urgent need to them so they are struggling to get people to utilize the resources right now.

 Gwen also chimed in and said that in keeping touch with a lot of the men that Almost Home housed, they are just waiting until they get eviction notices. They are trying to encourage them to seek help but they live day by day.

**Misc:**

Dubuque Area Labor Harvest is still utilizing the homeless hotline for grocery delivery on Saturdays. The number is

Stacy Sherman said there has been more funding approved through General Relief/Resources Unite. She encourages any families that are behind on rent to apply for General Relief.

Heather Harney from HACAP reminded everyone that people can apply for Energy Assistance Programs through the end of May. More info here: <https://www.hacap.org/what-we-do/energy-conservation/apply-liheap/>. If people have questions they can call Operation New View at 563-556-5130.

Abbey Degenhardt shared that the CARES act for child care providers came out and they are working hard to get providers to apply. People can find out more information at [www.iowaccrr.org](http://www.iowaccrr.org)

Angela Petsche said that Crescent Community Health Center is continuing its testing in the parking lot. Their staff assisted with the site testing last week and will continue to help as the community needs. Their dental services are still urgent and emergency only. They are doing telehealth for medical and behavioral health services along with doing some curbside lab services. They are starting to ramp up staff coming back to work.

The Riverview Center’s telehealth for therapy, counseling, and advocacy is up and running throughout their 16 counties.