



Helping Families In Difficult Times

Spring 2020 Newsletter

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Operation HELP COVID-19 Update

Fast Facts...

- New, first-time visits to the Resource Center in 2020 are running 10% ahead of last year.
- Emergency financial assistance grants are up nearly 30% over last year.
- Assistance grants have ranged from \$96.06 for utilities to \$500 for rent or car repair.

Operation HELP provides residents of St. Croix County with financial assistance, a place for personal support, and connections to community resources to alleviate short-term economic crises.



Partial Funding By United Way
We are a 501(c)(3) Non Profit Organization

The COVID-19 outbreak and steps being taken to combat spread of the virus are having significant financial impacts on many workers in our St. Croix County communities. Because our mission is to provide emergency financial assistance, supplies, and support for people experiencing financial hardship, Operation HELP is committed to continue providing assistance during the COVID-19 crisis.

To balance the safety of our volunteers and clients with the need to provide help, we are taking several measures based on guidance from public health officials. Anyone needing financial assistance is being directed to apply online through our website rather than visiting the office in person. Persons needing diapers, vouchers and other supplies are asked to call ahead so items can be prepared for quick pick-up and minimal personal contact. Public access to office is restricted and social distancing is being maintained for those who must visit the office in person.

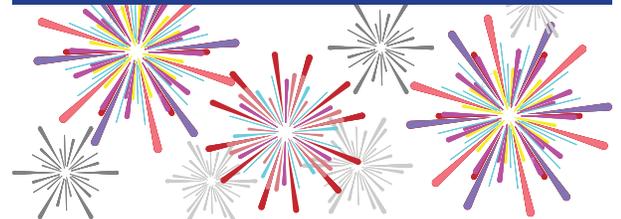
Operation HELP’s board has modified emergency assistance guidelines to be more flexible in responding to emerging needs of those affected by the layoffs, shutdowns and furloughs triggered by the COVID-19 crisis. Since March 15th, Operation HELP has seen online requests for financial assistance increase by a factor of four. Total number of assistance grants paid in the two weeks since March 15th has increased by more than 40

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Your Financial Support is More Important Than Ever...

Public health response to COVID-19 has required many businesses to close their doors – and this has led to many people losing hours or losing jobs. While these shutdowns may be temporary they are causing real economic hardship for those least able to manage weeks and months with no or reduced pay. Our mission at Operation HELP is to support these families during this financial emergency. But we cannot do that without the generosity of our community. We are still in the early stages of the shutdowns and already Operation HELP has seen a four-fold increase in the requests for assistance. We expect to see continued high levels of requests – more than we have ever seen and more than we have currently budgeted. We need your financial support in order to meet these increased requests – allowing families to stay in their homes. For information about donating, visit our website.

Operation HELP is Celebrating 30 Years of Service



This year marks the 30th anniversary of the incorporation of Operation HELP. It’s a milestone marking countless hours of board and volunteer work, visionary leadership, and untold good accomplished for our community. Watch for future information about activities planned to mark the occasion!

Thank You For Your Support

Thank you Edina Realty Hudson for your recent contribution and continuing support. Other recent business, church and club supporters include Angel's Pet World, Beth Immanuel Sabbath Fellowship, Bethel Lutheran Church, Compeer Financial, Family of Christ Church, First American Bank, First National Community Bank, Hill City Community Church, Hudson Hot Air Affair, Hudson Lions Club, Hudson Rotary and Daybreak Rotary clubs, Marnie Matz/ Marnie Marie Photography, Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church, Trinity Lutheran Church, Westfields Hospital & Clinic, and Wild River Yacht Club. Our work would not be possible with you!



ST. CROIX VALLEY
giveBIG
— APRIL 28 —

Mark Your Calendars for giveBIG • April 28th

Mark your calendars for the St. Croix Valley's day of giving. Operation HELP is participating this year and we're especially interested in introducing ourselves to new supporters. **Thanks to the generosity of one of our donors, any new gifts made during giveBIG and through December 15, 2020 will be matched on a dollar-for-dollar basis to double the value of these gifts.** Please help us spread the work to family and friends. Contributions can be made through the giveBIG website or directly at: OperationHelpStCroix.org/donate/

Message From a Client

"Hello. I am writing a long over-due thank you. I can't tell you how much I appreciated the help of your organization. You helped me with my rent, and Christmas presents for my children during a tough time. I am almost feeling guilty about it with the current situation, and all of the hardship everywhere now. Yet my kids wouldn't have had much of a Christmas, and my landlord would've continued to harass me. I am very grateful. It was all very humbling. Thank you again for everything."

*Very sincerely,
A. W.*

Covid-19 Continued from page 1.

percent over the previous two-week period. The total dollar amount of assistance grants paid during the past two weeks is more than 250 percent of the previous two-week period. Even with anticipated federal stimulus relief on the way, we estimate that the increased need will continue at increased levels well into May and beyond.

If you know someone who's experiencing financial hardship because of the COVID-19 outbreak, please let them know about Operation HELP.