



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Thursday, July 16, 2020

CONTACT: Steph Halpin, shalpin@cityhall.nyc.gov, [\(646\) 784-4158](tel:6467844158)

DE BLASIO ADMINISTRATION'S NYC CIVIC IMPACT FUNDING AWARDEES PROVIDE HIGH NEED COMMUNITIES COVID-19 RELIEF

Cohort of 20 community-based organizations awarded with NYC Civic Impact Funding grow volunteer efforts to deliver 75,564 meals and groceries to New Yorkers in areas impacted by COVID-19.

NEW YORK— In response to the COVID-19 crisis, NYC Service designed the NYC Civic Impact Funding capacity building model to award nonprofit and community-based organizations up to \$10,000 for volunteer engagement efforts that deliver essential services to residents. NYC Service launched the opportunity for the first time in early May to fund nonprofit service providers through the end of June with a focus on organizations in high-need neighborhoods.

"Community-based organizations and individual volunteers are unsung heroes in the City's COVID-19 recovery efforts," said **First Lady Chirlane McCray**. "Civic impact funding allowed them to provide a basic comfort to New Yorkers, one meal at a time, in the hardest-hit communities, which have suffered tremendous loss during this crisis."

"Community-based organizations and volunteers are playing an essential role in keeping communities strong through the COVID-19 crisis," said **Anusha Venkataraman, NYC Chief Service Officer**. "NYC Service is honored to award Civic Impact Funding to grow each organization's capacity to engage community members as volunteers and reach more New Yorkers in need."

After receiving more than 500 applications, 20 funding recipients supporting NYC-based volunteer and civic engagement efforts in response to COVID-19 were selected. Funding recipients applied for up to \$10,000 covering expenses such as permanent or temporary employees directly supporting or leading volunteer engagement efforts to deliver critical services, volunteer travel costs, volunteer personal protective equipment, volunteer background checks, and other volunteer management needs.

In partnership with the Food Czar team and Volunteer Coordination Task Force led by NYC Service, community-based organizations providing emergency food services, such as food pantries and kitchens, were identified as priority candidates since these

providers have faced an unprecedented volume of New Yorkers in need, as well as other challenges in adapting food access services, and rely heavily on volunteers to prepare and deliver food to those in need.

“New York City’s nonprofits are critical partners in getting food to New Yorkers in need, and their efforts will only be more crucial as this crisis continues. I’m glad the City was able to offer this support to groups doing important work in their neighborhoods,” said **Kathryn Garcia, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Sanitation and the City’s COVID-19 ‘Food Czar.’**

Preliminary metrics reported by the 20 NYC Civic Impact Funding Awardees have demonstrated the ability for community-based organizations to expand capacity through volunteer engagement and meet the growing needs in areas affected by COVID-19. Three weeks into the funding period, the recipients have collectively engaged 777 volunteers that have delivered 75,564 meals or boxes of groceries to 19,096 households or individuals.

Community-based organizations across the city have been critical in expanding food access to New Yorkers in need. The Bangladeshi American Community Development & Youth Services Corps located in Southeast Queens focuses on hard to reach populations including older adults, those affected by job loss, and New Yorkers with cultural accommodation needs. The organization generally operates with a total of 16 full time and temporary staff, and used the funding to support volunteer engagement, staff expenses, volunteer PPE, and travel costs.

“The NYC Civic Impact Fund helped us mobilize five volunteers to support BACDYS ongoing weekly Halal Food Distribution program funded through New York Community Trust and additional support from Brooklyn Community Foundation. The ten week long weekly program focused on the most vulnerable Muslim households, which lost income due to COVID-19, and were in dire need for culturally appropriate food support as most of the food support the community in the area is not Halal. The support of five volunteers helped us greatly to improve the quality of service,” said **Rajju Malla Dhakal, Executive Director of Bangladeshi American Community Development and Youth Services.**

Organizations like Children of Promise quickly added food distribution to their mentoring programming to holistically serve children of incarcerated parents during the COVID-19 crisis. A volunteer mentor coordinator was identified as a critical expense to support continuation of mentoring services to youth, as well as funding to engage volunteers in providing families food relief via grab and go services and volunteer meal delivery. These services are primarily available in Brooklyn and parts of the Bronx.

“The NYC Civic Impact Fund has provided tremendous support to Children of Promise, NYC's COVID-19 Volunteer Engagement Initiatives and provided the organization with critical support to integrate volunteers into the emergency response work the agency has provided during the COVID-19 crisis. Through the support of the NYC Civic Impact Fund, volunteers have helped to provide children and families impacted by parental incarceration, as well as the broader Bedford Stuyvesant Community, with over 3,000 hot meals, 500 pre-packed bags of fresh groceries and dry goods, 400 mentoring sessions and 75 home-delivered care packages. Volunteers are a vital and critical component of CPNYC's work and grants like the NYC Civic Impact Fund provide support at this most critical time,” said Sharon Content, **Founder & President, Children of Promise, NYC.**

Immigrant Social Services serves immigrants and other under-resourced persons living in New York City's Lower East Side and Chinatown, the majority of whom have limited English proficiency. The funding enabled Immigrant Social Services to expand volunteer efforts to deliver more than 2,000 bags of groceries to 400 residents from monolingual Chinese or Spanish speaking households.

“As a provider of programs for low-income seniors ages 70-100+ at Chung Pak LDC supported by City Council Member Margaret Chin, ISS had the opportunity to provide volunteer support for an emergency food response project initiated by UA3 that was located on-site at Chung Pak during the COVID lockdown. The NYC Civic Impact Award enabled us to improve the robustness of our organization's volunteer program, while putting into practice our approach to community work with volunteers that provided them with a dynamic understanding of immigrant neighborhoods in the city. It was heartening to see volunteers from across the city, as well as those with roots in Chinatown/Lower East Side,” said **Beatrice Chen, Executive Director, Immigrant Social Services (ISS)**, “who will be helping to respond to the increasing need for masks to protect our vulnerable populations.”

[View all NYC Civic Impact Funding Awardees online.](#)

NYC Service has also developed capacity building tools for organizations active during the COVID-19 crisis with Volunteer Coordination Task Force partners NYC Emergency Management and New York Cares, offering no-cost [volunteer management trainings for managing volunteers in a crisis](#). These resources, along with technical assistance from both NYC Service and the Food Czar team, were available to all NYC Civic Impact funding recipients.

“Community-based organizations have been the heartbeat of our COVID-19 response and a lifeline to many communities. Just recently, I spent time with volunteers at the Bed-Stuy Campaign Against Hunger warehouse, helping to pack food to be delivered to a pantry in one of our vulnerable neighborhoods,” said **NYC Emergency Management**

Commissioner Deanne Criswell. “ Whether Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), NYC Service, or New York Cares, volunteers are a vital resource, and their commitment and dedication exemplify the true spirit of New Yorkers and express the resiliency of our communities to band together to help others who need it the most.”

About NYC Service

NYC Service is a division of the Mayor’s Office that builds partnerships to deepen and expand civic engagement through volunteer and service programs, creating sustainable change for our city's greatest needs. We unite New Yorkers in service to advance lifelong civic engagement for a more equitable and inclusive city. To learn more about NYC Service and connect to volunteer opportunities, visit nyc.gov/service.

###