



Memorandum

To: Humboldt County Board of Supervisors

From: Bryna Lipper, CEO, Humboldt Area Foundation & Wild Rivers Community Foundation

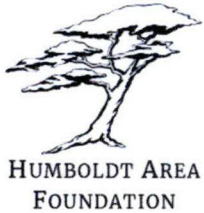
Date: August 6, 2021

Subject: Suggestions for use of State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds

Dear Board of Supervisors,

Congratulations on your award of over \$26 million to Humboldt County for State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds from the American Rescue Plan to assist our communities with the negative economic impacts of the COVID-19 public health emergency. We are excited to hear that just under \$8 million will be allocated to a small business and nonprofits grants program. To date, due to the generosity of our local donors and partner funders, Humboldt Area Foundation and Wild Rivers Community Foundation (HAF/WRCF) have been able to distribute over \$3.1 million in grants from our COVID-19 Disaster Relief Fund focused on those most vulnerable in our communities.

Through our outreach and relationships, the largest requests to our foundation for funding have been for Food Security and Housing Vulnerabilities, followed by Addressing Native American/Racial Health & Economic Disparities, Connectivity & Technology Access, Children & Adult Education, Supporting First Responders & Essential Workers, and Provision of Health/Mental Health & Hygiene.

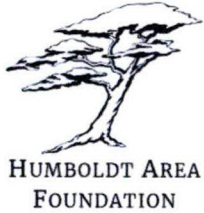


As you are aware, every resident of our county has been negatively impacted by the pandemic, and our Latinx and Native American community members have been hardest hit. Latinx residents make up 12% of the county's population but have accounted for 23% of the COVID-19 cases. Similarly, Native American residents make up 6% of the population but have accounted for 12% of the cases.

HAF/WRCF has a vision of a thriving, just, healthy and equitable region, and we focus our work on four goals to help us meet this vision: Racial Equity, Just Economy, Healthy Ecosystems and Environments, and Thriving Youth and Families. We approach our work with values of being in active promotion of racial equity, focusing on underserved communities, being adaptable and responsive, focusing on partnerships and collaboration, and bringing our region's cultures and communities together in a spirit of learning, empathy and connection. It is with this focus and these values that we offer suggestions on how to prioritize \$8 million (or a portion of) to grants supporting nonprofit organizations and civic society institutions that, in turn, support our region's wellbeing.

The ARPA fund guidelines allow for addressing those populations disproportionately impacted, and identify a broader range of services and programs that are considered to be in response to the public health emergency, including:

- Addressing health disparities and social determinants of health;
- Building stronger neighborhoods and communities, including housing/houselessness;
- Addressing educational disparities exacerbated by COVID-19 including early learning services, increasing resources for high poverty school districts, tutoring/after school programs, and support for students emotional, social, and mental health



- Promoting healthy childhood environments, including child care, home visiting programs for children with young families, and enhanced services for child welfare-involved families and foster youth.
- Improving services, connectivity, and care in support of isolated and at-risk communities such as seniors, people with disabilities, and individuals experiencing domestic violence.

We believe funding in these areas should prioritize Latinx and Native American populations who have been disproportionately impacted by Covid.

Additional suggested priorities include:

- Supporting businesses and nonprofits along with their social and economic support infrastructures that have suffered financial hardship due to the pandemic, with a focus on businesses and nonprofits that are owned or primarily serve BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and People of Color) communities.
- Continuing the ongoing needed COVID-19 response, mitigation and prevention efforts, with a focus on nonprofits, agencies, and schools that serve BIPOC and low-income/underserved communities.
- Support essential workers including public safety, public health, health care and human services employees with resources such as back pay and premium wages.
- Developing programs to commission our important local arts communities, and ameliorate income loss experienced by individual artists and events.
- Invest in the resilience of our region's ecosystems, which are under climate distress and are significantly the backbone of our region's health, economy, and future.

As a community foundation who has served this county for almost 50 years, we look forward to continuing to collaborate with you during these challenging times, and partnering toward a thriving, just, healthy and equitable region.