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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Community Foundation Hosts First-Ever Virtual Gala

Annual fundraiser supports critical needs in the Northern Virginia region

October 7, 2020 (Oakton, VA) – **On Friday, October 2, 2020, at 7 pm EST**, the Community Foundation for Northern Virginia hosted its first *virtual* Raise the Region Gala. Business, philanthropic, and community leaders joined us from their own homes across the region and the nation to take part in this live-streamed event.

Hosted by NBC4's Leon Harris, the 2020 Raise the Region gala is an annual mission-critical fundraiser that enables the Community Foundation to respond to need, seed innovation, and lead and convene the community. The theme for this year's event was ***Building a Community that Works for Everyone.***

"In an age of division and mistrust that corrodes the ties that bind, we make a different choice. We define the 'tribe' to include every single living soul in Northern Virginia who needs help, justice, opportunity, respect, inspiration, and simple human kindness," said Eileen Ellsworth, President and CEO of the Community Foundation for Northern Virginia. "We are deeply and truly grateful for your steadfast readiness and open willingness to *always* be a part of it all."

The evening included a video presentation highlighting Community Foundation's work in the region, including the Community Foundation's COVID-19 Response Fund for Northern Virginia, which to date has awarded \$2.1 million to 110 nonprofit organizations on the front lines supporting those disproportionately impacted by the pandemic, without taking any fees on this work and dedicating all pandemic response efforts to the needs of the greater community.

"The impact of the fund in this region was to provide immediate targeted assistance. We were able to pivot, change our procedures, change our application process, and cut checks at never before seen levels of speed and response," said Susan Nolan, Board Member, Community Foundation for Northern Virginia. "We shortened our application process. The review process, normally would take a month, perhaps two months. We were doing it in four-and-half days."

“Pre-COVID we were serving between 250 and 300 families per week. During the height of the crisis those numbers went up to more than 800 per week,” said Jennifer Montgomery, Executive Director at Loudoun Hunger Relief. “The grant from the Community Foundation for Northern Virginia came early in this crisis and that grant really gave us the confidence to know that we could continue serving the way that we needed to, particularly seeing the drastic increase in the numbers families.”

During the gala, participants were able to take part in an online silent auction. The money raised will support the Community Foundation’s ability to respond to need and seed innovation throughout Northern Virginia, building a community that works for everyone.

If you missed our 2020 Raise the Region virtual event, or any portion of it, the event is now available for viewing at www.cfnova.org/RaiseTheRegion.

Support for the Community Foundation’s 2020 Raise the Region Event was provided by **Signature Sponsor** Claude Moore Charitable Foundation; **Challenge Sponsor** Nolan Family Charitable Fund; **Matching Gift Sponsor** K. Paul Singh; **Community Leadership Sponsor** John and Nina Toups Charitable Fund; **Auction Sponsor** Dewberry; **Military Personnel & Their Families Sponsor** Anonymous Donor; and **Community Wealth Building Sponsors** BB&T Wealth, Eileen Ellsworth and Bob Weil, and Harry Klaff. For a complete list of this year’s sponsors please visit our website [here](#).

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About Community Foundation for Northern Virginia

The Community Foundation for Northern Virginia grows philanthropy to respond to critical need, seed innovation and lead and convene the community. Comprised of donor advised funds, permanent funds, giving circles, and other charitable endowments, the Community Foundation connects donors to community and promotes a more equitable and inclusive prosperity that marries our economic strength with the full breadth of our diverse community. In 2020 the Community Foundation awarded more than \$13 million in grants and scholarships and reported \$70.5 million in managed philanthropic assets. For more information please visit us at www.cfnova.org, follow up on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [Instagram](#).