



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Local community organizations join together to launch Community Response Fund**

**Wednesday, May 20, 2020** – A group of local organizations announced today the creation of the Powell River Community Response Fund (CRF) — a special fund to rapidly deploy essential relief to organizations providing frontline services to those disproportionately impacted by COVID-19.

The partnership is led by three community organizations: United Way Powell River and District, Powell River Community Foundation, and First Credit Union with support from the Regional Social Planner (representing the City of Powell River, qathet Regional District, and Tla'amin Nation). This group will evolve as the fund grows and expands its focus.

Initial contributions to this fund have been made possible through a combination of local and federal government support. First Credit Union has contributed to the Community Response Fund on behalf of their members, while PR & District United Way and PR Community Foundation are intermediaries for the Federal Emergency Community Support Fund (ECSF) and will be leveraging the partnership to disburse funding into the community.

“Together, the Canadian Red Cross, Community Foundations of Canada and United Way Centraide Canada are collaborating with the Government of Canada to flow ECSF support to those who need it most right now,” says Charlene Reinisch, Chair of United Way PR & District. “By working together we can ensure that our community can support our most vulnerable.”

The Powell River Community Response Fund currently sits at just over \$180,000. Partners in the Fund are calling on organizations and individuals to give now at: [prcommunityfoundation.com/community-response-fund](http://prcommunityfoundation.com/community-response-fund) or by mailing a cheque to: Powell River Community Foundation, PO Box 335, Powell River, BC, V8A 5C2.

“This growing coalition of philanthropy, the private sector, government, and individuals represents the very best of all sectors in our community,” said Ross Cooper, President of PR Community Foundation. “Powell River is a generous, collaborative community that has a history of facing challenges head-on — and that’s what we’re doing now.”

The Fund will support local community service charities and not-for-profits that provide frontline services to vulnerable populations affected by COVID-19. Services may include (but are not limited to): food security; financial wellness; health and hygiene; home care or personal support services; information and navigation; legal supports; mental health and wellness; shelter; safety; social inclusion and learning, and transportation.

“People want to support one another during tough times, and we encourage them to participate in this unique initiative,” said Linda Bowyer, CEO of First Credit Union. “The Community Response Fund is an opportunity to work collaboratively to strengthen our community’s long-term resiliency.”

Funding will be offered as flexible operating grants. Applications for funding are available on the Powell River Community Foundation website at [www.prcommunityfoundation.com/community-response-fund](http://www.prcommunityfoundation.com/community-response-fund).

“There has been tremendous work done in the past few months, bringing some of the best qualities in all of us,” said Kai Okazaki, Regional Social Planner. “We hope that the Community Response Fund can help continue the great work by bringing together a partnership of local organizations for people in our region.”

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