

Nanaimo Foundation and Tom Harris Community Foundation Launch Community Response Fund

Fund will support urgent community needs due to the COVID-19 pandemic

March 26, 2020, Nanaimo, BC – Two local foundations announced today the creation of the Nanaimo Community Response Fund. This special fund will quickly disburse funds to local charities that are addressing urgent community needs due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Donors of the Nanaimo Foundation and the Tom Harris Community Foundation have contributed a total of \$150,000 to launch the Community Response Fund and provide relief to the critical needs of our community during this unprecedented time.

“The unifying and enduring spirit of Nanaimoites is a cornerstone of our community,” says Tony Harris. “Presently the coronavirus has created profound uncertainty leaving countless people in our community needing a hand up. People know we are in this together and thus we must come together to ensure we get through this together.”

The funding priorities of the Community Response Fund will evolve as the needs in our community change. Community priorities will be identified and funding will be released on a rolling basis throughout the pandemic and recovery phase of the crisis.

“It is critical to help those in our community disproportionately affected by the coronavirus pandemic. The flexibility of this special fund will allow us to continue to respond quickly as needs evolve throughout this crisis,” says Laurie Bienert, executive director of the Nanaimo Foundation. “We are so grateful to our donors and the Tom Harris Community Foundation for coming together and making a difference for our vulnerable neighbours.”

The first phase of funding will provide grants to charities within the boundaries of School District 68 that work to address the following priority areas:

- Food security among our vulnerable community members
- Assisting our vulnerable seniors with the challenges they are facing from isolation
- Housing needs of low-income families caused by COVID-19 related closures

The Fund will be directed by a group of Community Advisors whose collective expertise and community knowledge will ensure the Community Relief Fund is most effectively addressing the greatest needs in our community.

Every dollar added to this Fund makes a difference to our most vulnerable community members.

Give at www.nanaimofoundation.com/communityresponsefund

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About Nanaimo Foundation

Since 1982, the Nanaimo Foundation has been stewarding the gifts of energy, ideas, time, and money to make meaningful and lasting impacts in our community. We inspire giving, support our local charitable sector, and build permanent endowments to address the current and future needs of our community. We help donors simplify and enhance their charitable giving, build their own legacies, and carry on their charitable wishes in perpetuity. The Nanaimo Foundation is connected to our community, and amplifies the impact of donations of all sizes through collaboration and strategic granting.

About Tom Harris Community Foundation

In 2017, the Harris family established the Tom Harris Community Foundation as a tribute to Tom. Wide community support drives this Foundation in Tom's honour, enabling it to give the way Tom inspired us to. This legacy for Tom continues his tradition of giving back, amplifies Tom's spirit of giving, and encourages people to think of themselves as philanthropists.

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