

CAUSES THAT MATTER



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Delivering Dignity

Cokeville Senior Center

COVID-19 Response & Recovery Fund

“I wasn’t sleeping at night,” says Laura. “I was worried if funding was going to come through and how we were going to feed our seniors.”

Over the last few months, Laura Pope, Site Manager of the Cokeville Senior Center has faced the scary reality that seniors in her community may not have access to food or groceries. With soaring food prices and more supplies needed now than ever before, the work of the Cokeville Senior Center doubled.

In a town of about 500, around 60 seniors needed meals because of the pandemic. This number doubled from their usual mealtimes where they used to gather at the senior center.

“Seniors were scared to leave their house, and they needed food,” says Laura.

Not only did Laura and her staff start delivering meals for seniors, they also started doing their grocery shopping.

“The meal we delivered to them may be their one meal a day. It also means they don’t have to worry about going shopping,” says Laura.

Staff at the senior center had to deal with rising food costs, unexpected fuel



Seniors continued to receive much-needed meals because of your generosity.

costs for delivery, gloves, and food containers, which are hard to find. Other things they never expected came at a cost.

“A thermometer is over \$30, and we needed one of those,” Laura said. “Every penny makes a difference when we want to feed our community, especially our seniors.”

Connecting in Cokeville

When delivering meals or groceries, Laura noticed some of the seniors seemed lonely too. The seniors found themselves more isolated because of the

pandemic, and not able to visit with their family or friends.

“During the quarantine I started

“Tell the donors at WYCF, without our grant, we wouldn’t have enough food, fuel, or containers to get food to people. At our heaviest time, that grant helped get us through three months. WYCF is the reason people are able to do it.”
— Laura Pope

STATS & FACTS

Grant amount:

\$4,698

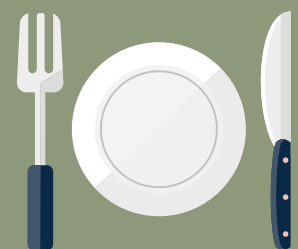
60+

seniors served monthly since the pandemic

Over

800

meals delivered in July



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A Partnership for Good

COVID-19 Response & Recover Grantmaking

Ellbogen Initiatives Fund at the Wyoming Community Foundation

When COVID-19 hit, Mary Garland knew she wanted to help. The Ellbogen Foundation had created an Initiatives Fund at the Wyoming Community Foundation a few years back, and she and her board now felt an increased need to put it to work again for Wyoming. Mary decided her fund could be most useful by partnering with WYCF in grantmaking. She relied on the COVID-19 application process to learn about needs and served on the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Committee. Through the process over 100 grants were made to support nonprofits working to address critical issues. Of those, 42 were funded by the Ellbogen Initiatives Fund.

The process made Mary realize nonprofit needs were greater than ever before.

“If people don’t have food, shelter and a safe environment in which to live, nothing else matters. In my work for the Ellbogen Foundation, I want to make sure our nonprofits can keep giving families critical support with all the difficulties ahead.”

The nonprofit sector has shifted how it’s doing its work. From



fundraising events being cancelled to shelters running over capacity, everything has changed.

What also came to light, was the impact COVID had on Wyoming’s elder population.

“The Ellbogen Fund at WYCF granted to several applications which were senior related,” explained Mary.

“COVID response brought new awareness to needs for elder care. Seniors are a higher-risk population, they tend to have limitations with technology and became more isolated.”

Because of the generosity of donors like the Ellbogen Foundation and so many of you, grants were

made to nonprofits to address these needs, and many more, very quickly. Organizations received funds within two weeks of applying.

“Grant makers had to change their typical processes on a dime,” says Mary. “We needed to respond quickly and thoughtfully to help nonprofits.”

For the Wyoming Community Foundation, grantmaking during this time allowed us to see the increased needs, but it also allowed us to be incredibly grateful for how Wyoming came together to help one another.

Because of your support of WYCF during the good and bad times, the nonprofit community will make it through and continue to do the important work our communities rely on. Thank you!

- All counties have received funds or PPE supplies through WYCF COVID relief efforts.
- Three organizations that provide services statewide have also received funds.

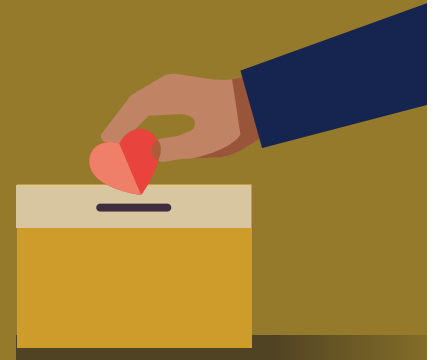
STATS & FACTS

80+ donors gave to the COVID-19 Response & Recovery Fund.

106 Total number of grants made to nonprofits through the WYCF COVID Response and Recovery Fund and the Ellbogen Initiatives Fund at WYCF.

Since April, grants totaling **\$449,773** have been made through the COVID-19 Response and Recovery application process.

In addition **\$236,300** was granted to nonprofits from Donor Advised Funds.



More than Meets the Eye

Unaccompanied Students Initiative

Ellbogen Initiatives Fund at WYCF

It's easy to judge a person or situation when you are on the outside looking in. We may not want to admit it, but we've all done it.

For Tamara Moore, Executive Director of the Unaccompanied Students Initiative (USI), she wants people to know there is more to the homeless youth they serve than what you see.

"In a roundabout way, people often wonder or ask, how did these youth end up here? What's wrong with them or their parents?" says Tamara. "It's not their fault that they found themselves in this situation. Their parents or guardians could be deceased, incarcerated, or moved and abandoned."

USI has staff and volunteers who work to provide safe and stable housing for high school students ages 16 and up in Laramie and Natrona County. These youth find themselves in unsafe or temporary living situations, and the Unaccompanied Students Initiative provides them a home, warm bed, and security they are looking for.

The outside picture is that USI is just a facility or a program. "We are not just a facility," says Tamara. "We provide a real home, life skills, mentorship and assistance toward completing their

educational goals and becoming a productive member of society."

Some students come to live at USI and are worried they are behind. "I'm too old to finish," "Can I even do this?" Tamara hears a lot. There are GED and other degree programs available for the youth at USI. "They are shocked at what they can accomplish."

The Unaccompanied Students Initiative focuses on making sure students they work with graduate from high school. When the pandemic hit, staff found many of their needs increased.

Overtime in Tough Times

"Our staff was working overtime and we needed more supplies and technology for the youth," says Tamara. Because of the quarantine, all of the learning shifted online. "It's important for the success of the student's education they had their own space and computers to learn on."

Staff also needed more supplies on hand which was hard to find. "We needed thermometers, masks, cleaning supplies, and food...the youth being home more often created this be in the kitchen all the time eating everything idea," she laughed.

Thanks to the support of the Ellbogen Initiatives Fund, USI was able to make sure these important needs were met. Now these students, who are already experiencing hardships, have the tools they need to succeed.

Tamara knows youth they work with just want to be heard. "They don't want to be a poster child for people experiencing homelessness; they want stability."

"Our youth are so excited to get back to school in the Fall," says Tamara.




The Unaccompanied Students Initiative provides youth a home. They go from living in unsafe or temporary situations to a room of their own.

STATS & FACTS

Grant Amount: **\$5,000**

USI provides housing for youth in **Cheyenne** and **Casper**

1 Twin home **1** Residential home

1 Campus building home between  Cheyenne and Casper

Average age of students at USI: **19**

21 High School graduates through USI 

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noticing loneliness,” says Laura. “I would try to set up Facetime calls for them so they could see their families.” Laura shares, “Loneliness can be detrimental to our health and we really need to keep any eye on our seniors and take care of them,” says Laura.

Taking care of seniors in Cokeville is more than just bringing them meals.

For Laura, it’s about honoring the people they are.

“Our seniors have lived dignified lives and taken care of us. This is their time to have all the dignity, care, and concern focused on them,” says Laura. “They have done that their whole life for us and now it’s time to honor and thank them.”

Making sure there is food on the table for seniors in Cokeville is one way Laura hopes their community can give

back to seniors for all they’ve done.

Because of thoughtful donors like you, seniors in Cokeville can continue to receive meals. A grant from the COVID-19 Response & Recovery Fund made it possible for the senior center to operate during tough times.

“I still don’t even know if we are living up to their legacy,” says Laura. “But we are going to try, they are at the top of our list.”

COVID-19 Response and Recovery Grantmaking: Your Generosity at Work

Fill in the blank. “What I’d give just to _____.”

A year ago, your answer may have been to take a trip to the beach or spend a week of peace and quiet by yourself. Today though, your answer is likely a bit different. A relaxing night out at a restaurant or a meet-up with friends in a coffee shop – maybe even spending time with your grandkids is the thing you most long for.

It’s safe to say there are quite a few things most of us took for granted at the beginning of 2020, and for many of us, it’s the little things we miss.

For others, there are greater concerns. Over the last few months many people have asked themselves, “How will we afford rent or groceries? Who will take care of my kids as I return to work?”

Luckily, there were also others who asked, “How can I help?”

Generous people like you recognized that times were tough, and you acted quickly. Over 80 donors stepped up to help take care of people in Wyoming. Because of you, the COVID-19 Response & Recovery Fund was created at the Wyoming Community Foundation. Grants from the fund helped nonprofits who worked with the most vulnerable populations offset the impacts of the virus in their communities.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

October 1-17

Wyoming Women’s Antelope Hunt
Online Auction
wyomingwomensantelopehunt.org

October 16

Open Minds, Open Spaces: A virtual event about the power of afterschool
Register at wyafterschoolalliance.org

October 21

Lights On Afterschool Virtual Town Hall: Learn about the importance of afterschool programs for America’s children, families and communities.
Register at wyafterschoolalliance.org



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THANK YOU! Look inside to see the difference you’ve made.