



COVID-19 PREVENTION & RESPONSE FUND

Brandywine Valley Active Aging

Location: Coatesville, Chester County
Org Focus: Wellness for adults 60+
Grant Funding: Education for COVID-19 vaccine
Website: bvactiveaging.org

Due to the pandemic, aging populations needed community now more than ever. When in-person activities went away we were able to stay open because of our mindset change. Birthday bashes moved to outdoor celebrations with lawn chairs, entertainment, and fresh air. Exercise classes, concerts and the center favorite, bingo, were held virtually. Indoor dining shifted to a drive through that over 150 people attended daily. These things kept us going and brought people together in a time of isolation.

This great sense of community built trust between Brandywine Valley Active Aging and the senior population. When the vaccine came out, we knew it was our responsibility to spread health awareness. Given the relationship we had established, we had the opportunity to inspire trust and encourage seniors to make health decisions based on science. They trust us, so they trust our recommendations. Access to technology was difficult, and we were surprised by how much distrust there was in the government and health authorities. Most people relied on their families and the news to get updates on the health crisis. This led to a large amount of misinformation and fear.

We adopted the tagline “Educate, encourage, engage, vaccinate” to guide our work. From billboards to calling systems to direct conversations in our drive through, education was our biggest impact. Once people agreed to be vaccinated, we worked with them directly to set up appointments and ensure they were able to receive both doses at a pharmacy near them.

The elderly population needed more than education. They sought community, trust and understanding. By building a community of people, we were able to keep people safe while keeping them active and engaged at the same time. Moving forward, we are glad to continue building a center for aging people that is more than bingo. We are a community of people who love to laugh, exercise, share a meal and celebrate life even amidst a continuing health crisis.

This project was funded by the COVID-19 Prevention & Response Fund, a community-led effort to invest in neighborhood-based solutions to urgent needs. More than \$1.2 million has been distributed to 133 nonprofits, small businesses & individuals. Learn more at philanthropynetwork.org.

About the COVID-19 Prevention & Response Fund

Launched in April 2021, the COVID-19 Prevention & Response Fund is a community-led effort to invest in neighborhood-based solutions to urgent needs related to COVID-19. The Fund seeks to increase rates of vaccinations in communities that are disproportionately affected by COVID-19 and to address the challenges exacerbated as a result of the pandemic.

The Fund uses a participatory, trust-based philanthropy approach to lower barriers to entry for groups that are often excluded from traditional grant opportunities. To ensure the funding process was inclusive and accessible to smaller organizations and informal groups, Community Investment Advisors made recommendations on how to establish the Fund's priorities, eligibility, grant process, and funding allocations. This group comprises people living and working in the community, representing Chester, Delaware, Montgomery and Philadelphia counties. Beyond grant dollars, the City of Philadelphia's Philly Counts office cultivates a community of practice for grantees, providing ongoing information, training, and logistical support.

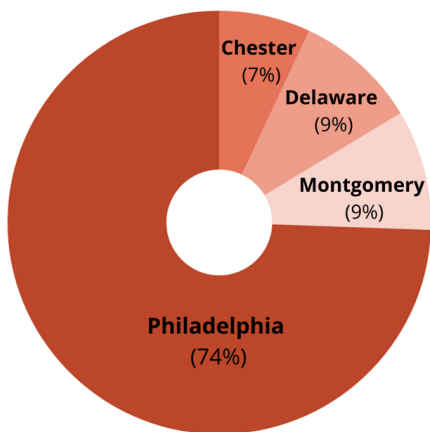
Oversight and management for the COVID-19 Prevention & Response Fund is coordinated by Philanthropy Network Greater Philadelphia.

Across three rounds, the Fund has distributed **\$1,204,535** in funding to **133** organizations in the greater Philadelphia area.

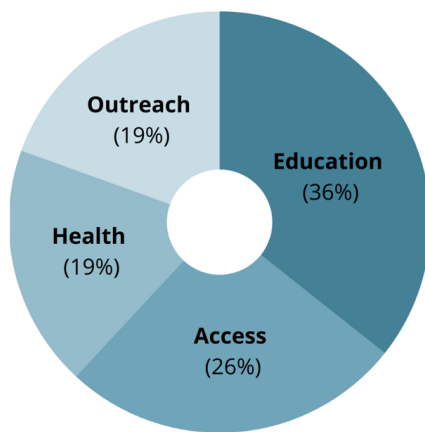
76% to organizations with a leader of color

\$550K to organizations with >90% BIPOC staff

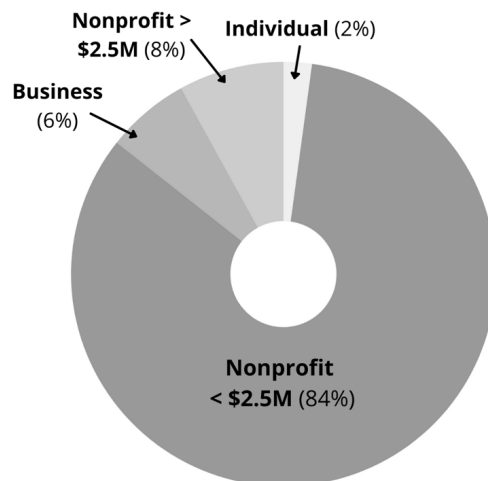
\$560K to organizations with >90% community-based staff



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