

MAY 2020 VOLUNTEER NEWSLETTER: COVID-19 FOCUS



United Way
of Greater Portland

This month's newsletter focuses on ongoing opportunities and highlights COVID-19 related opportunities and resources. We encourage you to check our [website](#) for updated volunteer opportunities and connections. At all times, and particularly now, thank you for living United by being on the front lines, practicing physical distancing, lending a (gloved) hand, and staying home.

HIGHLIGHTS:

> VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

> RESOURCES

> MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

PROTECT YOUR HEALTH

Practice physical distancing and take preventive measures: Wash your hands often for 20 seconds. Cover coughs and sneezes. Stay home if you are sick.

Symptoms of COVID-19 include: Fever, shortness of breath, and lower respiratory distress. Call ahead to a health care professional if you develop a fever and symptoms of respiratory illness. Health care providers will make the initial determination on whether COVID-19 testing is advisable. As appropriate, health providers will take samples and submit them to Maine CDC.

USE YOUR SKILLS TO HELP OUR COMMUNITY

Many traditional volunteer opportunities are just not possible during this time of COVID-19. If you're looking for an opportunity to help, consider offering your skills to help a nonprofit.

Are you able to help with job search skills? Signing up for unemployment? Mock interviews?

Are you good at marketing/ writing? Offer to collect volunteer success stories and favorite volunteer memories to be shared later in marketing materials. Offer to help with the organization's newsletter or blog posts or share social media content. Can you offer to help share messages about an organization?

Do you have experience with training? Offer to review/update an organization's training program and/or help them with offering an online version. Can you help train staff/volunteers on the use of different technology tools? Do you have a knack for on-demand videos or pre-recorded webcasts and could offer a remote Lunch and Learn or help train staff?

Do you have experience with planning? Could you offer to help an organization with post-COVID volunteer plans, business continuity planning, or recovery planning?

If you have questions or skills to offer, email:
volunteer@unitedwaygp.org.

For COVID-19-specific opportunities visit:
http://volunteer.unitedwaygp.org/need/?s=1&need_init_id=3175.



UWGP VIRTUAL COFFEE & CONVERSATION

Wednesday, May 20
8 a.m. - 8:30 a.m.

You're invited to a virtual coffee and conversation with **Liz Cotter Schlax, President & CEO** about United Way of Greater Portland's efforts to address the local impact of the COVID-19 pandemic while planning for the future.

RSVP @
rsvp@unitedwaygp.org.

MAY UWGP VOLUNTEER NEWSLETTER (CONT.)

ONGOING VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

SOUTHERN MAINE AGENCY ON AGING - PHONE PAL VOLUNTEER

[Southern Maine Agency on Aging](#) (SMAA) Meals On Wheels Phone Pal Volunteer will provide home bound elders & individuals with disabilities with companionship by regularly calling on the phone in an effort to decrease feelings of social isolation and loneliness. Volunteers must have the ability to develop a sense of trust and rapport; sensitivity toward older adults and persons with disabilities and/or dementia; ability to demonstrate active listening skills; access to reliable phone service. Phone calls will occur 1-3 days a week – schedule dependent on volunteer and recipient. Volunteers are asked to commit to at least one year and must have a clean driver record and successfully pass a criminal background check. Phone Pal volunteers can begin right away after training. Volunteers can sign up directly by contacting SMAA Volunteer Services at volunteer@smaaa.org or 207-396-6525.

VOLUNTEER SCREENER AT RETIREMENT COMMUNITY

Greater Portland retirement community with assisted living is seeking a volunteer screener for essential staff members upon entering facility. Volunteers will perform temperature checks and ask staff/ visitors a series of screening questions. FMI visit http://volunteer.unitedwaygp.org/need/detail/?need_id=514620.

RED CROSS - BLOOD DONOR SCREENER

[Red Cross](#) has implemented an additional Blood Donor Screener position in the interest of safety during the COVID-19 outbreak. Specifically, the screener will greet donors, model excellent customer service behaviors and ensure people entering blood drives have a healthy temperature. FMI visit http://volunteer.unitedwaygp.org/need/detail/?need_id=511083.

MASKS FOR MAINE

If you like to sew, please consider making and donating masks. Several websites offer good instructions, including the New York Times. Visit https://www.maineready.org/need/detail/?need_id=513122 for details.



RED CROSS - BLOOD AMBASSADOR

Volunteer as a Blood Donor Ambassador with [Red Cross](#) at permanent donation centers in Portland, Auburn & Bangor or various local drives. During this time of COVID-19, blood collection must continue to meet the constant demand and is officially designated an essential service for those donating and those supporting the process. Safety is our #1 priority. Volunteers will be provided a mask and gloves. As a Blood Donor Ambassador, volunteers play a critical role in the blood donation process. Volunteers will be assuring donors they have made a good decision to come, may be helping them understand why their temperatures were taken at the door, checking donors into their appointment, and/or keeping a watchful eye on them at the recovery table. FMI visit http://volunteer.unitedwaygp.org/need/detail/?need_id=385260.

VIRTUAL VOLUNTEERING WITH JUNIOR ACHIEVEMENT

JA is looking for virtual volunteers who are interested in creating brief videos about their career paths and advice for Maine students in Grades 6-12. JA helps volunteers create the video and provides an outline to facilitate the content. FMI visit http://volunteer.unitedwaygp.org/need/detail/?need_id=514698.

GREATER PORTLAND COVID-19 COMMUNITY RELIEF FUND UPDATE

United Way of Greater Portland announced it has awarded \$259,073 in the second round of grants from the Greater Portland COVID-19 Community Relief Fund to 25 local nonprofits, schools, and faith-based groups on the frontlines working with individuals and families disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 and the economic consequences of this outbreak.

To read the full release [CLICK HERE](#).

To donate to the Greater Portland COVID-19 Community Relief Fund [CLICK HERE](#) or visit unitedwaygp.org.

MAY UWGP VOLUNTEER NEWSLETTER (CONT.)

ONGOING VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

MENTOR A NEW MAINER ASYLUM SEEKER

Welcoming the Stranger is actively looking for volunteers willing to enter into a mentoring “friendship” with an asylum-seeking new Mainer or new Mainer family. What does mentoring look like? That largely depends on the families or individuals involved. Currently, with COVID-19 and social distancing measures being implemented, mentors will need to get creative. Tools such as Face Time, Zoom, texting, WhatsApp, and Google Translate are useful for offering support while maintaining safe distance. Mentors have access to a large network of groups and other individuals (including interpreters) who offer support and guidance concerning specific needs. FMI visit http://volunteer.unitedwaygp.org/need/detail/?need_id=387447.

COOKING FOR COMMUNITY

Cooking for Community has come together to help provide food for those without enough food, and continued employment for those struggling in the food industry. They raise money to pay local restaurants to cook easy-to-reheat, packaged meals, using primarily locally sourced ingredients, for distribution to people in need of nourishment. Through this positive reinforcement feedback loop, restaurants can pay their employees, local seafood growers, fishers, and farmers can sell their goods, and people and families in need will know where and when they can depend on a free meal. FMI visit <https://www.cookingforcommunity.org/get-involved>.

WALK FOR A DOG

Don't just take your dog for a walk...Take your **Walk for a Dog!** Support our friends at Animal Refuge League of Greater Portland (or a shelter of your choice.) Every Walk for a Dog counts, whether it's a walk around the block or a three-mile hike. FMI visit <https://www.wooftrax.com>.

TRASHY WALK

Next time you're out for your daily walk, bring a garbage bag with you. Whether you're in your neighborhood, on the beach or on a trail, you can help by making the community a cleaner place...and if you're really good, you can help a dog AND pick up some trash!



PORTLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS FOOD FUND

The Portland Public Schools (PPS) Food Fund is a collaboration by the Foundation for PPS and Food Fuels Learning (FFL) to help ensure food security for students and is made possible through generous donations by the community. FMI visit <https://foundationforpps.kindful.com/?campaign=1046737>.

SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS

Home is not always a safe place for everyone. As we navigate the current pandemic and adhere to stay at home orders, domestic violence awareness and support is more important now than ever. If you or someone you know needs support, please reach out to these and other state and national resources:

- 24/7 Statewide Crisis Line 888-568-1112
- <https://www.sarssm.org>
- <https://www.throughthesedoors.org>
- <https://ptla.org>
- www.RAINN.org

THE YELLOW TULIP PROJECT: VIRTUAL HOPE DAY



The Yellow Tulip Project is hosting a virtual Hope Day Celebration at 5:00 p.m. on May 31, the last day of Mental Health Awareness Month. The Yellow Tulip Project is a youth driven non-profit with a mission to smash the stigma surrounding mental illness and build a community of people who realize that hope happens when youth and community leaders work together. Youth involved in this hope that someday mental illness will be as normal to talk about as any physical illness and they are fiercely dedicated to making this goal a reality. For more information go to <https://bit.ly/35nhdec>, email press@theyellowtulipproject.org, or call (207) 415-8729.

LOOKING FOR MORE IDEAS FOR VIRTUAL VOLUNTEERING?

Check out Points of Light's latest listing at <https://www.pointsoflight.org/virtual-volunteering-opportunities/>.

MAY UWGP VOLUNTEER NEWSLETTER (CONT.)

RESOURCES

211 MAINE

Get answers to questions about COVID-19 at any time. This service is available by dialing 211 (or 1-866-811-5695), texting your ZIP code to 898-211, or emailing info@211maine.org.

MAINE CDC

For Maine's response to COVID-19 and updated testing results, visit the Maine CDC website at <https://bit.ly/2Uq3dew>.

FLATTENING THE CURVE

Why is flattening the curve so important to stop the spread of COVID-19? This article from The Washington Post provides some great insight: <https://wapo.st/33DLPae>.

CUMBERLAND COUNTY FOOD SECURITY

CCFSC has been updating their COVID-19 web page at <https://www.ccfoodsecurity.org/covid-19-coronavirus-information.html> with resources and information. Their site also has links to different school district's information on school meals. Some additional resources include:

- [Wayside's Community Resource Page](#) (this includes updated food pantry hours and locations)
- [Resources for New Mainers](#)
- [Good Shepherd Food Banks](#) updated pantry partners
- [Good Shepherd Food Banks](#) Food Map

PPS FOOD FUND

The PPS Food Fund is a collaboration by the Foundation for Portland Public Schools (PPS) and Food Fuels Learning (FFL) to help ensure food security for PPS students. It is made possible through generous donations by the community. FMI visit <https://foundationforpps.kindful.com/?campaign=1046737>.

SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) Program - In response to COVID-19, our Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) Program was activated. FMI visit <https://disasterloan.sba.gov/ela/Documents/SBA-Disaster-Assistance-Loans-Businesses-Nonprofits.pdf>.

FRONTLINE WARMLINE

A new volunteer phone support service, the FrontLine WarmLine, was launched to help Maine health care workers and first responders manage the stress of serving on the front lines of the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. The FrontLine Warmline serves health care professionals, such as physicians, nurses and counselors, as well as emergency medical services personnel, law enforcement, and others who are directly responding to the pandemic in Maine. The line is staffed by volunteer professionals activated through Maine Responds, including licensed psychiatrists, psychologists, therapists, social workers, and nurse practitioners, who can help callers to deal with anxiety, irritability stress, poor sleep, grief or worry and, if needed, connect them with additional supports. The FrontLine WarmLine is available to clinicians and first responders from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. 7 days a week by calling 207-221-8196 or 866-367-4440. Text capability will be added soon. FMI visit <https://www.maineresponds.org/>.

MAINE READY

Maine Ready provides state, county, and other emergency response and management organizations a virtual way to coordinate offers of help with on-the-ground needs for assistance. FMI visit www.maineready.org.

OPEN MAINE COVID-19 RESOURCES

This provides a list of statewide resources that include employment, medical assistance, multilingual assistance, and more. FMI visit [Open Maine COVID-19 Resources](#).

MAINERS TOGETHER

This resource network, started by Maine People's Alliance, supports community-based efforts to respond to the community distress caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and protect our most vulnerable friends and neighbors. They started a fund for community assistance and you can find ways to donate, volunteer, and seek help on their website. FMI visit www.mainerstogether.com.

MAY UWGP VOLUNTEER NEWSLETTER (CONT.)

RESOURCES

FREEPORT COMMUNITY SERVICES

Freeport area residents who are struggling during this time can utilize FCS' resources, including essential services like meal delivery, school food assistance, emergency assistance, and more.

FMI visit <http://www.fcsmaine.org/covid-19-update/>.

PAY IT FORWARD MAINE

Operated by the Portland Regional Chamber of Commerce, this collaborative community initiative and website contains an ever-growing library of ideas, tools, and resources for Mainers to support businesses, organizations, and each other during the pandemic. FMI visit <http://payitforwardmaine.com/>.

SWEETSER HOTLINES & SERVICES

Sweetser, a local social services organization, runs several hotlines for support:

- PromiseLine - 1-800-434-3000 - When someone in your life has substance use issues or mental health needs.
- Maine Crisis Line - 1-888-568-1112 - Whether you need immediate assistance, or resources for a loved one, the Maine Crisis Hotline is here to listen 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The service is free, confidential and can help you connect with a trained professional in your area.
- Intentional Warm Line - 1-866-771-9276 - The Intentional Warm Line is available toll-free from anywhere in Maine, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It is a mental health peer-to-peer phone support line for adults, aged 18 and older, offering mutual conversations with a trained peer specialist who has life experience with mental health recovery. The focus is to encourage and foster recovery, moving toward wellness and reconnecting with community.
- myStrength - a free and confidential online tool, the "health club" for your mind. myStrength's digital behavioral health solutions empower individuals with engaging, clinically-proven resources. You can register at <https://mystrength.com>.



MAY IS MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

May is Mental Health Awareness Month. The COVID-19 pandemic has presented many unique challenges for our community and our mental health. Many people are experiencing heightened levels of depression, anxiety, and stress. Additionally, many individuals with persistent mental illness or a substance use disorder are trying to access care while maintaining physical distance from their usual sources of support.

While maintaining physical distancing is important, there are ways to receive care or maintain social connectedness while staying apart. Knowing how to access care, and with awareness of mental health risks, we can work towards coping with this challenging situation and reduce potential impacts on our mental health. Knowing how to cope with stress will make you, the people you care about, and your community stronger.

FMI and resources <https://www.unitedwaygp.org/2020/04/10/covid-19-wellness-resources/>.

ALZHEIMER'S ASSOCIATION HELPLINE

This helpline connects callers to information and support whenever they need it. It is staffed around-the-clock, 365 days a year by specialists and master's-level clinicians who understand the disease and its impact. The hotline offers confidential care consultation provided by master's level clinicians who can help with decision-making support, crisis assistance, referrals, and education on issues families face every day. FMI call 800.272.3900 or visit alz.org/maine.

ONE UNITED COMMUNITY

Thank you so much for all you continue to do to support our community. If we continue to all work together, we will come through on the other side, stronger and more resilient.