

# UNITED WAY OF GREATER PORTLAND VOLUNTEER NEWSLETTER: MARCH 2021

## ONGOING VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES & WAYS TO ENGAGE



### READER TRAINING

Looking for a fun way to support schools and education programs without leaving your home? This year, as with many events, we are going virtual with our

annual **Read Across America** event. In lieu of a one-on-one reading opportunity, we are calling on volunteers to share their passion for reading with children in our community by recording themselves reading one of their favorite books to be shared with students. We will be hosting a volunteer reader training on **Tuesday, March 2, 12:00 – 1:00 p.m.** Literacy has the power to change lives and you can use this power to help every child in Greater Portland have a brighter future.

FMI: [http://volunteer.unitedwaygp.org/need/detail/?need\\_id=568090](http://volunteer.unitedwaygp.org/need/detail/?need_id=568090).



### BRICK & BEAM SOCIETY & CMP/AVANGRID PARTNERSHIP WITH THE LOCKER PROJECT

During March break, while school is out, many families struggle with food insecurity. On behalf of Avangrid's generous funding, the Brick & Beam Society is partnering with Locker Project to provide bags of food and books for Head Start and elementary school students to take home during their spring break. Join the effort by volunteering to help pack the food bags at the Locker Project facilities on **Wednesday, March 10, 1:30 -2:45 p.m.** (two slots) or 3-4:15 p.m. (one slot or more if individuals are from the same household). COVID-19 safety precautions are in place for in-person volunteering. FMI: Contact [snicoson@unitedwaygp.org](mailto:snicoson@unitedwaygp.org).

### VOLUNTEER FOR HOSPICE OF S. MAINE

Hospice of Southern Maine is seeking volunteers to join their team, bringing comfort to individuals and families at end of life. Trainings are held online via Zoom. FMI: Kathy Leddy, (207) 303-5037 or [kleddy@hospiceofsouthernmaine.org](mailto:kleddy@hospiceofsouthernmaine.org). For training dates: [http://volunteer.unitedwaygp.org/event/detail/?event\\_id=71626](http://volunteer.unitedwaygp.org/event/detail/?event_id=71626).



### PROJECT HEAT - THAT'S A WRAP

Thanks to everyone who donated to last month's virtual Project Heat Telethon. The total from the telethon and other donations came to a whopping **\$466,359**, which will serve more than 2,000 households through the Keep ME Warm Fund! Thanks to the many people that volunteered to staff the phones and the hundreds of people that took time to call in and donate. What an incredible outpouring of support from our community! Read more [HERE](#).

### UNITED WAY RACIAL EQUITY FUND RECIPIENTS ANNOUNCED!

UWGP has announced funding recipients of its newly established **Racial Equity Fund**, totaling \$239,173 in overall investments in eight important community programs. Read more about the Fund and recipients [HERE](#).



## CA\$H GREATER PORTLAND AND VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

### WHAT IS CA\$H GREATER PORTLAND?

**CA\$H Greater Portland** (Creating Assets, Savings and Hope), an initiative of United Way of Greater Portland, is a partnership with the Greater Portland CA\$H Coalition comprised of community leaders and industry experts who work together to help individuals and families to achieve long-term financial stability. In addition to offering free tax preparation for qualified filers during tax season, CA\$H Greater Portland offers year-round outreach and education to individuals and families about ways they can make the most of their money. Partners include AARP Tax-Aide, Avesta Housing, Bath Savings, Coastal Enterprises, Inc. (CEI), cPort Credit Union, Gorham Savings Bank, John T. Gorman Foundation, the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), KeyBank, Maine Women's Fund, New Ventures Maine, Norway Savings Bank, Portland Housing Authority, ProsperityME, and The Opportunity Alliance.

### CONNECT PEOPLE TO FINANCIAL RESOURCES AS AN OPPORTUNITY GUIDE

Do you like helping connect people with resources? Are you good with customer service and data entry? Maybe you're looking for a safe way to help your neighbors save money and increase their financial stability? Join us by becoming an Opportunity Guide for CA\$H (Creating Assets, Savings and Hope) Greater Portland, an initiative of United Way of Greater Portland in partnership with the Greater Portland CA\$H Coalition. During the tax season (late January through mid-April), Opportunity Guide volunteers review client documents and call or video chat with clients to discuss financial goals and challenges and possible resources that could help. This is a great opportunity for people with basic computer skills who are comfortable having one-on-one conversations. Free online training is provided. We will provide a way for you to contact clients safely from your home/workplace on your own schedule and check in with you and provide support as you go. FMI: [cash@unitedwaygp.org](mailto:cash@unitedwaygp.org).

### PICK UP MEDICAL SUPPLY DONATIONS

Partners for World Health needs volunteers to help with pick-ups using their box truck and van. This volunteer opportunity does involve **heavy lifting, loading and unloading the truck** (not just driving). Volunteers are paired together or with a staff member for pick-ups, typically from health care facilities. Not interested in driving? We are also looking for volunteers to be the "co-pilot" to help with loading and unloading! FMI: [http://volunteer.unitedwaygp.org/need/detail/?need\\_id=534751](http://volunteer.unitedwaygp.org/need/detail/?need_id=534751).

### SORT AND ORGANIZE MEDICAL SUPPLIES

Partners for World Health is looking for volunteers to sort and prepare donated medical supplies for distribution to under-served populations and those in need. No medical background needed! The tasks vary day to day from opening boxes of items to sorting and putting together kits of similar items (personal care kits, surgical kits, respiratory kits, etc.). No medical background is needed. Volunteering is available in person by appointment. Volunteers must first attend an orientation. FMI: [http://volunteer.unitedwaygp.org/need/detail/?need\\_id=522203](http://volunteer.unitedwaygp.org/need/detail/?need_id=522203).



## ONGOING VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

### SEW NEEDED ITEMS OUT OF BLUE WRAP STERILIZATION MATERIAL

Partners for World Health is looking for volunteers to sew bags, masks, and gowns made from blue wrap sterilization material. Blue Wrap is a 99 percent polypropylene material used to wrap surgical instruments when they are placed in sterilization machines in hospital settings. FMI:

[http://volunteer.unitedwaygp.org/need/detail/?need\\_id=519883](http://volunteer.unitedwaygp.org/need/detail/?need_id=519883)

### SUPPORT A RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE

Engage with donors to promote blood donation and set the stage for a long-term commitment to regular blood donations. Volunteers will provide excellent and enthusiastic customer service and ensure each blood donor is sincerely thanked for their donation.

Responsibilities include greeting donors, explaining the donation process and assisting with initial intake and hand-offs. Volunteers will also ensure only donors passing temperature screen are permitted and set up and maintain cleanliness in reception and hospitality areas, and donor areas/beds as requested. Volunteers must be able to commit to a minimum of one 5-hour shifts per month. Blood Drives are generally held on weekdays, Monday-Friday(s) with the occasional Saturday/Sunday(s) between the hours of 8:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.

FMI:

[http://volunteer.unitedwaygp.org/need/detail/?need\\_id=385260](http://volunteer.unitedwaygp.org/need/detail/?need_id=385260)

### REMOTE SCHOOL LEARNING SESSIONS WITH AVESTA HOUSING

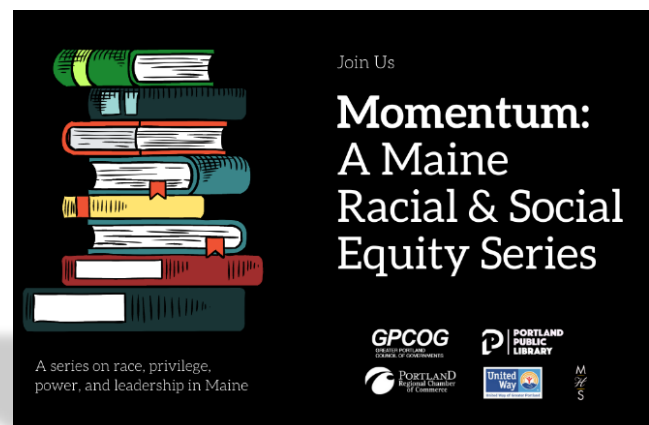
Volunteer with Avesta Housing every Friday for a 2-hour tutoring session (10:30 a.m.-2:00 p.m.) with Grade K-9 students at the organization's Hyacinth Place in Westbrook. This program is made possible by a grant from Brick & Beam Society, a Giving Circle of United Way of Greater Portland. The remote learning program has a stipend of \$20/hour and will be held at 2 Walker Street, Hyacinth Place, Westbrook in the community room. Required PPE and safety precautions, including social distancing and taking temperatures before entrance, are in place. Avesta Housing is limiting the number of students and adults in the community room to ensure they can meet the safety guidelines.

FMI: Marguerite Walz,

[mwalz@avestahousing.org](mailto:mwalz@avestahousing.org)

### MOMENTUM: A MAINE RACIAL & SOCIAL EQUITY SERIES

Join us to continue the conversation of advancing racial equity. Free to Chamber + Non-members. FMI visit <https://bit.ly/3pdRCxa>.



Join Us

## Momentum: A Maine Racial & Social Equity Series

A series on race, privilege, power, and leadership in Maine

GPCOG  
Greater Portland  
Council of Governments

PORTLAND  
Regional Chamber  
of Commerce

PORTLAND  
PUBLIC  
LIBRARY

United  
Way

M  
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S



## ONGOING VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

### VIDEO MAKING

Inspire a student by sharing insight on where you work, what you do, a hobby you enjoy, a craft you are making, or STEM activity you like. Videos can be short (3-5 minutes) and done with your phone. We will provide you with tips for video and possible topics if you need an idea. FMI: [volunteer@unitedwaygp.org](mailto:volunteer@unitedwaygp.org).

### CARD MAKING (VIRTUAL OR PHYSICAL)

Help brighten someone's day and write a card. You can send words of encouragement, share a quote, a poem, or a joke. Let them know that they are loved. Cards will be distributed through United Way's partners to people experiencing isolation, and children and families that need some encouragement. Visit [www.unitedwaygp.org/notes](http://www.unitedwaygp.org/notes) to make a card or two today!

### MASK MAKING

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has called on all Americans to wear masks to prevent COVID-19 from further spreading. In Maine, people in a public setting are required to wear a face covering, which is [proven](#) to significantly reduce the spread of COVID-19. These requirements have resulted in an increased need for masks in our community. We invite community members to make and donate homemade masks. Email [volunteer@unitedwaygp.org](mailto:volunteer@unitedwaygp.org) for sewing and donating instructions.

### COLLECTIONS FOR STUDENTS

Deering High School is looking for donations of NEW or never worn polar fleece jackets/coats (adult size S-2xl), hats/mittens, and warm socks in adult sizes, as well as hangers. FMI: Tina Mikkelsen, [mikket@portlandschools.org](mailto:mikket@portlandschools.org).

### FLORENCE HOUSE SOUP KITCHEN

Florence House is Preble Street's emergency women's shelter and long-term housing facility for women in Portland. Florence House's soup kitchen serves between 40 and 60 women 3 meals a day, 7 days a week. Volunteers help prepare, serve, and clean up for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Requirements: Must be 21 years of age or older; must commit to consistent shifts for at least three months; must consent to a State of Maine background check. FMI: [http://volunteer.unitedwaygp.org/need/detail/?need\\_id=361727](http://volunteer.unitedwaygp.org/need/detail/?need_id=361727).

### PREBLE STREET FOOD PANTRY

With more and more of our neighbors out of work, Preble Street is providing emergency food assistance every day. Each day from 1-4 p.m. volunteers will create pre-made food boxes for clients and assist staff with distribution. FMI: <https://bit.ly/3iKFRMe>.

### PREBLE STREET TEEN CENTER

Preble Street's Teen Center, located at 343 Cumberland Avenue in Portland, is a drop-in day shelter for people in need under the age of 21. Inside the Teen Center, the Soup Kitchen serves warm, nutritious meals 3 times each day, 7 days a week, for up to 35 youth. Volunteers help to prep, serve, and clean up from each meal. Volunteers help with breakfast (7-10 a.m.), lunch (10:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.), and dinner (5-7:30 p.m.). Volunteers must be 21 years of age or older, commit to consistent shifts for at least three months, and consent to a State of Maine background check. FMI: [http://volunteer.unitedwaygp.org/need/detail/?need\\_id=361719](http://volunteer.unitedwaygp.org/need/detail/?need_id=361719).



## COMMUNITY RESOURCES

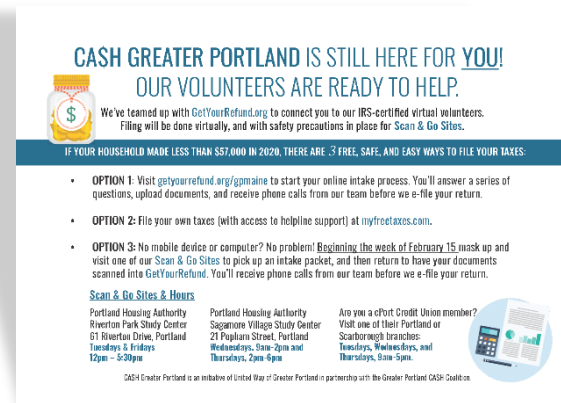
### AMISTAD PORTLAND PEER LINE

If you see a person on the street who needs help and it is not an emergency (in which case call 911 or Portland Police Dispatch at 207-874-8575), Amistad's new **APPLE Line** may be a good solution. The **Amistad Portland Peer Line (APPLE)** will connect you to one of Amistad's Peer Outreach Workers, who are trained to support people experiencing homelessness, mental illness, and addiction. The line (207-550-7920) is open Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 10 p.m.

### HOW TO HELP IN MAINE

How to Help in Maine is an organization run by students for students. Their mission is to raise awareness of all the places to which students of any age can donate their time, stuff, and money. They believe in acting with urgency in order to solve some of our state's most pressing issues. To sign up as a part of the site, organizations can either email them at [howtohelpinmaine@gmail.com](mailto:howtohelpinmaine@gmail.com) or visit the "Add Your Charity" page of their website (<https://www.howtohelpinmaine.org/add-your-charity>). They want to emphasize that volunteering can be both rewarding and fun and they believe that students in Maine can be the force to create positive change in our communities. FMI: <https://www.howtohelpinmaine.org/>.

### CLICK HERE FOR FREE, FLEXIBLE, AND SAFE TAX PREP SERVICE THRU CASH



**CASH GREATER PORTLAND IS STILL HERE FOR YOU!**  
**OUR VOLUNTEERS ARE READY TO HELP.**

We've teamed up with [GetYourRefund.org](https://www.getyourrefund.org) to connect you to our IRS-certified virtual volunteers. Filing will be done virtually, and with safety precautions in place for Scan & Go Sites.

**IF YOUR HOUSEHOLD MADE LESS THAN \$57,000 IN 2020, THERE ARE 3 FREE, SAFE, AND EASY WAYS TO FILE YOUR TAXES:**

- OPTION 1:** Visit [getyourrefund.org/gpmaine](https://www.getyourrefund.org/gpmaine) to start your online intake process. You'll answer a series of questions, upload documents, and receive phone calls from our team before we e-file your return.
- OPTION 2:** File your own taxes (with access to helpline support) at [myfreetaxes.com](https://myfreetaxes.com).
- OPTION 3:** No mobile device or computer? No problem! Beginning the week of February 15, mask up and visit one of our Scan & Go Sites to pick up an intake packet, and then return to have your documents scanned into GetYourRefund. You'll receive phone calls from our team before we e-file your return.

**Scan & Go Sites & Hours**

Portland Housing Authority Riverton Park Study Center 61 Riverton Drive, Portland Tuesdays & Fridays 12pm - 5:30pm	Portland Housing Authority Sagamore Villages Study Center 21 Popkain Street, Portland Wednesdays, 9am-2pm and Thursdays, 2pm-6pm	Are you a ePort Credit Union member? Visit one of their Portland or Scarborough branches: Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, 9am-5pm.
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CASH Greater Portland is an initiative of United Way of Greater Portland in partnership with the Greater Portland CASH Coalition.

### MSSPA'S FEED AND CARE BANK PROGRAM

There are many reasons Maine horse owners need support from the Maine State Society for the Protection of Animals' (MSSPA) Feed and Care Bank: loss of job, an unexpected health issue, even a particularly bad hay season. Making ends meet can be a real challenge at the best of times, especially with hungry equines looking for their next bale of hay. The Feed and Care Bank, an ongoing program of the MSSPA, offers temporary financial assistance for Maine horse owners in need, allowing horses to remain in loving, healthy homes and avoid other intervention. By providing hay, feed, farrier, or veterinary services, MSSPA supports Maine horses with a safety net in these uncertain times – and always. Maine horse owners in need can apply online at [msspa.org/hay](https://msspa.org/hay) or by phone. FMI: [info@msspa.org](mailto:info@msspa.org) or call 207-892-3040.

### LOOKING FOR SOME HELP WITH YOUR JOB SEARCH?

If you missed our Resumes and LinkedIn Webinar, you can watch the recording [here](#).  
If you missed our Networking & Interviewing Webinar, you can find the recording [here](#).



## COMMUNITY RESOURCES

### 211 MAINE

When a crisis hits, having somewhere to turn is invaluable. For thousands of people in Maine, that place is [211 Maine](#), a collaborative effort of the United Ways of Maine, the State of Maine Department of Health and Human Services, and The Opportunity Alliance as the Contact Center partner. Last year, 211 Maine answered over 97,000 calls from individuals looking for answers. During the pandemic, the number of calls increased by 141%. In 2020, the top call categories were COVID-19, rent payment assistance, heating and utility assistance, and mental health services. In honor of 211 Month, [help us spread the word](#). 211 is free, confidential, and available 24/7/365 for anyone looking for answers. Just call 2-1-1, text your zip code to 898-211, or visit [211maine.org](#). Tell a friend or family member about 211 – you never know when someone might need it.

### MAINE CDC

For Maine's response to COVID-19 and updated testing statistics, visit the [Maine CDC website](#).

### 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: <http://payitforwardmaine.com/>.

### CUMBERLAND COUNTY FOOD SECURITY

CCFSC has been updating their COVID-19 [webpage here](#) with resources and information. Their site also has links to different school districts' information on school meals.

### SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS RESOURCES

As we navigate the pandemic and adhere to stay at home orders, domestic violence awareness and support are more important than ever. If you or someone you know needs support, call the Maine 24/7 Statewide Crisis Line at **888-568-1112**.

### 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: [www.maineready.org](http://www.maineready.org)

### 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: [www.mainerstogether.com](http://www.mainerstogether.com)

### LINK TO BASIC COVID-19 INFORMATION IN MULTIPLE LANGUAGES

To view information on COVID-19 in multiple languages, visit: <https://www.ccmaine.org/share-facts-about-covid-19>.



## RESOURCES, EVENTS, AND ACTIVITIES

### INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY PANEL DISCUSSION – MARCH 8

International Women's Day (March 8) is a global day celebrating the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women. The day also marks a call to action for accelerating gender parity. Significant activity occurs worldwide as groups come together to celebrate women's achievements or rally for women's equality. As part of celebrating International Women's Day, Partners for World Health has organized a panel discussion about global issues with a focus on Empowered Women helping Empower Women in our World. Join them on March 8, 5:30-7:30 p.m. FMI: [http://volunteer.unitedwaygp.org/event/detail/?event\\_id=70415](http://volunteer.unitedwaygp.org/event/detail/?event_id=70415).

### HAVE YOU BEEN PUTTING OFF WRITING A WILL?

Learn how you can create one for free, in as little as 20 minutes, through a partnership with United Way by visiting <http://freewill.com/unitedway>.

### USE YOUR VOICE!

Looking for a way to use your voice to strengthen your community? You can make an impact in a variety of ways, including advocating to your legislators for crucial policies. FMI about our advocacy work and to receive Action Alerts about important policies, visit <https://www.unitedwaygp.org/category/advocacy/>.

### MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID TRAINING



On March 16, United Way of Greater Portland is partnering with NAMI Maine (National Alliance on Mental Illness) to pilot a 6-hour, evidence-based, Mental Health First Aid training. This a virtual training with limited openings. Volunteers will learn: to identify risk factors and warning signs, when a person may need individual support, steps to help someone in crisis, and available support options. FMI: Maggie Gamble, [mgamble@unitedwaygp.org](mailto:mgamble@unitedwaygp.org).

### AMERICAN RED CROSS INFORMATION SESSIONS – MARCH 2 & 3

The American Red Cross is offering virtual information sessions for you to learn about urgent volunteer opportunities this season. These sessions are intended for existing Red Cross volunteers AND the general public who are interested in learning about the many ways to volunteer with the Red Cross. Opportunities include national and local disaster responders, blood drive volunteers, and office and administrative support, among others. There are multiple information sessions the first week of every month. (March 2, 5:00-6:00 p.m. and March 3, 12:00-1:00 p.m.; Tuesday, April 6, 5:00 p.m. and Wednesday, April 7, Noon) FMI: [http://volunteer.unitedwaygp.org/agency/detail/?agency\\_id=56612](http://volunteer.unitedwaygp.org/agency/detail/?agency_id=56612).