



April 15, 2020

Dear donors, fund advisors, grantees, partners, vendors and friends,

Over the past week the Covid-19 pandemic has claimed five lives in Bermuda; it's been a deeply sad time and there are no words to adequately communicate our sorrow to those families who have been affected. To lose a loved one at any time is heart-breaking, but to lose someone at a time like this when we have to remain so far apart has got to be devastating.

Since we last wrote to you, the community has been urged by the Premier to "dig deep" and he has made it clear we all have a part to play in diminishing the spread of this virus. That has meant staying at home, often away from family and friends, at a time of year when we would traditionally be out and about embracing our beloved springtime traditions.

It's not what we chose, but we have demonstrated resilience as a community, finding ways to work, educate, play and exercise remotely - to a degree we could not have imagined.

We have indeed dug deep, because we have had to: let's face it, on this tiny island in the middle of the ocean, we're all we've got when it comes to a crisis of this magnitude.

This is why we need to make sure we take care of our vulnerable people, those for whom resilience is more challenging. To this end, the BCF is proud to be a key collaborator in the [Third Sector Coordinated Community Response Effort](#) (CCRE) and I'd like to update you on what you have helped us to achieve so far.

The CCRE was initiated to ensure that available resources could be matched to the growing and widespread needs in the community. The primary vehicle is the Third Sector, comprised of Bermuda's remarkable nonprofits. Long before Covid-19 entered everyday vocabulary one of the BCF's key messages has been that Bermuda's nonprofits deliver critical services to our community and as an integral part of our social fabric they need to be supported.

Now we know it for sure.

The vulnerable – the chronically unwell, the elderly, the unemployed, the homeless – need our help more than they ever have. Access to that help has needed to be seamless. Addressing this has included mapping the availability, accessibility and timing of delivery of meals and groceries for families, notably the newly unemployed. There were gaps which, working as a coordinated group, CCRE could arrange to fill. [Organisations like Salvation Army and the Coalition for the Protection of Children](#) have seen significant escalations in requests for their services; they have needed our backing too. Here are a couple of other ways your support has been able to help:

- Transport for those needing to be taken to the hospital for Covid-19 testing: thank you St John's Ambulance for providing that transport, including the deep cleaning necessary between trips. The drivers are volunteers, but it all costs money to run.
- The Emotional Wellbeing Hotline 543-1111 came online on April 10 and had received over 30 calls within two days of opening, from people expressing anxiety, and needing comfort and advice on how to support a loved one. The CCRE was instrumental in establishing this service as community mental health needs became evident.
- Victims of domestic violence had nowhere to go during lockdown; now we have five designated safe havens, which are already 60% full.

In short, [your contributions](#) have been deployed to deliver a range of essential services.

In less than a month, more than half a million dollars has been donated to [Bermuda's Emergency Fund](#). Thank you to all who have [given](#) and we encourage those of you who would still like to help to "dig deep". At all times of the day and night we are bombarded with reasonable and fair requests for help. Many people in our community are in dire need. We are doing our best not to let them down.

Thank you for all your support - and keep the generosity coming, Bermuda!

Warm regards,

*Myra Virgil*

**Don't forget... we need you to do three things:**

- 1) **Give online.** If you wish to make a donation to a charitable fund or as a fiscal sponsor through the Friends of BCF 501c3, please use an electronic transfer of any type – local or international wire or [credit card](#), over a cheque. Cheques need to be deposited, are expensive to cash and take a longer time to process. [GiveBermuda.org](#) remains the best resource to process online charitable giving if the nonprofit you wish to support **does not** have their own online facility or if you are an [American Taxpayer](#). To contribute to the [Emergency Fund](#) click [here](#). American Taxpayers click [here](#). Send transaction queries to [admin@bcf.bm](mailto:admin@bcf.bm).
- 2) **Keep giving.** Yes, we need to attend to the immediate crisis, but we also need to continue to support the larger nonprofit infrastructure and programmes. Your contributions ensure that people stay in position, steadily, to help now and in the future.
- 3) **Keep reading.** We will be communicating important information about how you can contribute in meaningful ways – to all types of organisations, meeting all types of needs, and over time.