



## **Silicon Valley Council of Nonprofits**

*SVCN magnifies the voice of the local nonprofit community and supports the capacity of nonprofits so they can better help people and advance thriving, equitable communities.*

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Statement of SVCN CEO Kyra Kazantzis Concerning Nonprofit Support During the Coronavirus Crisis**

**San José, CA** – With now almost three dozen known coronavirus cases and the first death of a community member in Santa Clara County, our community is very much coming to terms with the new reality of the local effects of this global pandemic. Over the last few days, nonprofit leaders have made hard but necessary decisions to restrict travel, cancel events, allow or even encourage staff to work remotely, and make and start to implement plans about how to serve our community in a very different immediate future.

For human services nonprofits, the path forward on how to best serve vulnerable community members isn't clear. How do volunteer-staffed organizations continue their critical work when fearful volunteers don't show up? How do we scale up food delivery to get food to quarantined workers? How will low-income families pay the rent when household earners are sick or quarantined? How will we help those who rely on in-person contact, like home-bound seniors? How do nonprofit community clinics find masks for healthcare workers if hoarding is creating shortages? How can arts, cultural, education, and other convening organizations thrive or even survive if gatherings are prohibited? And of course, how do we ensure that our workplace policies and practices protect our colleagues and their families from getting sick?

At this point we have more questions than answers. One thing I'm clear on is that nonprofits should be able to attend to the critical work of fulfilling their organizational missions and serving the community—at this point of crisis—without worrying about the loss of philanthropic, corporate, governmental, and individual support. With thin to no margins, it's rough to absorb the impacts of this public health crisis, so nonprofits need your support now more than ever.

That is why Silicon Valley Council of Nonprofits calls on the donor community to continue—and increase—your support at this time. Corporate sponsors, we need you to maintain your sponsorship even if that gala was cancelled. Perhaps you'll even consider increasing your sponsorship to compensate for evaporating revenue from lost ticket sales. We applaud announcements by some foundations that they will be creating funds to support response work and the needs of vulnerable community members. We also need foundations to extend deadlines on grants or allow emergency response to count towards grant deliverables. The same goes for government funders; government partners should shift to reimbursement approaches that minimize large financial hits to nonprofits.

And to our fellow community members who often support nonprofits, did you buy a ticket to a luncheon, awards ceremony, or conference that has been cancelled? Instead of requesting a refund, consider making that ticket purchase a donation to the organization. It's 100% tax deductible since you didn't get a meal!

As for the unanswered questions, nonprofits are already sharing information, pulling together, making the hard decisions, and planning. Even in this uncertain time, we've already seen herculean efforts from nonprofit quarters. For example, thanks to rapid response advocacy from nonprofit and community leaders, the Mayor and City Council of San José are discussing an eviction moratorium during the crisis.

Here's what SVCN is currently doing in response to the virus:

- SVCN is actively coordinating with the Santa Clara County Office of the Executive to be a conduit to ensure that nonprofits get critical information from the County.
- **On Friday March 13 at 10:00 am—together with our San Mateo County partner Thrive Alliance—SVCN will be hosting a virtual two-county nonprofit response briefing about the nonprofit response to coronavirus.**
- In the next few days, we will be launching, again with Thrive, a nonprofit email list for rapid resource and information sharing.
- We've been activated for emergency response with CADRE (Collaborating Agencies' Disaster Relief Effort), and will be coordinating with that network; how that looks has yet to be determined but we have offered to assist with communications.
- SVCN also postponed its own Activate Your Impact policy summit to May 21.
- We've encouraged SVCN staff to telecommute as appropriate and adopted the County's guidance on workplace protocols, including hand-washing education and disinfecting our office.
- And we're launching a webinar program so we can continue to bring important learning opportunities to the nonprofit community.

SVCN is actively soliciting feedback from our more than 200 member organizations about this response and how we should be supporting nonprofits and the communities we serve.

### **About SVCN**

Silicon Valley Council of Nonprofits helps nonprofits grow their capacity to build thriving and equitable communities, through advocacy, community empowerment, partnership, learning, and leadership development. SVCN's learning program focuses on organizational effectiveness and capacity-building within nonprofits, while its cohort facilitation approach for collective impact forges collaboration across diverse entities to tackle community challenges together. SVCN leads groups of nonprofits to advocate at city, county, and state level on behalf of those nonprofits and the communities they serve.

Learn more on our website at [www.svcn.org](http://www.svcn.org)