



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Citizens Bank \$15,000 Challenge Grant Helps Support the Corvallis Public Schools Foundation COVID-19 Relief Fund

CORVALLIS, Ore – At the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, Citizens Bank announced a \$15,000 challenge grant to the Corvallis Public Schools Foundation (CPSF) to aid emergency fundraising efforts. According to CPSF, nearly 1,900 students in the Corvallis School District are enrolled in the free lunch program with 500 additional students qualifying for the reduced-lunch program and many students also lack access to adequate technology for remote schooling.

Thanks to the support from our community and the power of matching funds, CPSF quickly surpassed the initial \$30,000 fundraising goal and set a new target of \$50,000. They then surpassed \$50,000 and increased the goal to \$100,000. By summer, CPSF had raised \$115,000 for their COVID-19 Relief Fund.

"Citizens Bank helped our organization build momentum and take action in a pivotal moment," said Liv Gifford, CPSF Executive Director. "Because of their challenge grant, we mobilized an emergency fundraising effort that exceeded our greatest expectations and made an enormous difference in the community."

Donations paid for food (grocery gift cards, shelf-stable items, and local produce), hygiene items, laundry cards, school supplies, internet access, and emergency financial assistance for families on the verge of losing their housing. Funds also supported a CPSF program called Care and Connect, which paid a team of educators to spend the summer months contacting students who had become disconnected from school in the spring.

"In response to the challenges posed by the pandemic, Citizens Bank wanted to find a way to support our communities," said Gordon Zimmerman, Citizens Bank President and CEO. "We're proud to work with CPSF and partner with the generous Corvallis community to help the children impacted by COVID-19 school closures."

Since schools were shuttered in March 2020, all supplies have been delivered directly to students' doorsteps, typically within 24 hours of a referral or request. The school district's ability to provide wrap-around support for families, thanks to private donations through the Corvallis Public Schools Foundation, has built trust and helped students access an education in these challenging times.

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