



Rotary Club of Ann Arbor North

(Tax ID # 38-3079422)

P.O. Box 131022, Ann Arbor, MI 48113, USA

www.rotary.org, www.rcaan.org

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NEWS RELEASE

Rotary Clubs Organize Globally to Provide Pandemic Relief for Detroit **Tuesday 12/15 online event kicks off grants of action to provide Covid-19 relief and support**

An innovative collaboration of participating Rotary Clubs from across five countries spearheads a grant project to help thousands of persons in Metro Detroit affected by health risks, job losses, and food insecurity due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

The Rotary Club of Ann Arbor North is leading a partnership of fifteen Rotary Clubs and Rotary Districts, including six clubs from India, nine clubs in SE Michigan, three Rotary District Foundations of Canadian, Indian, Tanzanian and Ugandan clubs, and Palav, a global non-profit medical volunteer group, all organized to provide relief to those affected by COVID-19 in SE Michigan. The “**Pandemic Relief for Detroit Project**” is driven by a \$73,000 project grant spanning multiple Rotary Districts half-way around the world with the support of this just-announced Rotary International Foundation co-sponsored Global Grant.

The project’s sole objective is to support the nearly two dozen healthcare and non-profit institutions that alleviate human suffering in the Metro Detroit areas affected by the pandemic. As a two-prong effort, the Rotary Clubs’ project grant will supply various critical Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) items to stop the spread of COVID-19 infection. These materials will service local hospitals, medical clinics, and nursing homes working with the aged and underserved populations. The project grant’s second facet is cash assistance to nine food banks serving the hardest-hit areas in Detroit and neighboring communities in Ypsilanti, Pontiac, Novi and Ann Arbor.

The first and largest donation of \$15,000 will be made by Rotarians to Gleaners Community Food Bank at a special online event on Tuesday, December 15, and will be matched by Kroger as a part of their Double Your Donation Day activities. With these funds, Gleaners can supply 90,000 meals to feed Detroit’s most vulnerable families this winter. The Detroit and Ypsilanti Meals on Wheels, Cass Community Social Services, Hope Warming Homeless Center, Homeless Veterans Centers and Food Gatherers are also receiving significant donations.

(The live “Pandemic Relief for Detroit” online event will be accessible (500 attendee limit) at 10:00 a.m. at <https://zoom.us/j/95639094961?pwd=cjRvN0Z4N3pVWNUUVZLTGdkV0VoZz09>; Meeting ID: 956 3909 4961 Passcode: 597838. The event features remarks from Jennifer Jones, Rotary International President Nominee (2022-23). Jones is a member of the Rotary Club of Windsor-Roseland, Ontario (Canada). Rotary International was founded in 1905 in Chicago and has over 1.2 million members in 32,000 Rotary clubs operating in nearly 200 countries and territories. Rotary’s motto is *Service Above Self*.

With Rotary International’s announcement of a pandemic relief award program, the three Rotary Clubs of Ann Arbor North, Ann Arbor and Detroit quickly mobilized by soliciting additional fund commitments and charity recommendations from area Rotary Clubs, including Lakes Area, Novi, Troy, and Ann Arbor West, and also applied to various Rotary District Foundations in order to submit a joint grant application with Pune Metro (India) as the international sponsor club. The Rotary International Foundation matched all contributions. The Pune Metro Rotary club had previously partnered in 2017-18 with the Ann Arbor, Detroit, and Novi clubs to



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sponsor Palav to provide neonatal care medical equipment and training for a rural hospital near Pune. Pune Metro similarly engaged clubs in Pune and Bangalore on this cause of assisting pandemic relief efforts in Detroit. Pune is a major automotive engineering and manufacturing hub, often referred to as the “Detroit of India.”

The “Pandemic Relief for Detroit Project” grant proposal highlighted the seriousness of the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak in Metro Detroit. Amidst the worsening crisis, area Rotarians reached out to the 16 local health care institutions and foodbanks to assess their most critical needs of front-line and relief workers helping underserved populations affected, directly or indirectly, by the pandemic.

Project Committee Chair Eric Tindall explained, “The Rotary International Foundation announced a Pandemic-focused grant solicitation last spring. Rotary leaders from the Rotary Club of Pune-Metro (India) contacted Ann Arbor and Detroit Rotarians to co-develop the project, after learning of the widespread suffering in City of Detroit.” Together, these clubs then leveraged funds from five other Indian Rotary clubs in Pune and Bangalore.

Ashish Sarkar, a Past President of the Ann Arbor Rotary Club, added, “Traditionally, American and Canadian Rotary clubs spend lots of funds leveraging Rotary’s Global Grant awards and undertake site tours to sponsor humanitarian projects in other developing countries. What makes this “Reverse” Global Grant project unique is that the focus of the humanitarian assistance effort is in the heart of the United States! We are grateful for the sponsorship by these international and SE Michigan clubs and District Foundations, and to Palav whose many Detroit area volunteers will join us Rotarians in completing the delivery of PPE to area institutions.”

The Rotary project will supply PPE to Veterans Hospital in Detroit, Henry Ford Hospital, Detroit Mercy Dental Clinic, Brilliant Detroit Community Outreach Services, Say Detroit Community Outreach Services, UMRC Porter Hill and Presbyterian Nursing Homes with nearly 10,000 specialty facemasks and face shields, 75,000 surgical, nitrile and latex gloves, 250 gowns, dozens of sanitization stations and thermometers and disinfectant wipes.

Manish Mehta, Director of International Service at Rotary Club of Ann Arbor North, said, “With this latest spike in COVID-19 cases, the shortage of PPE has reached critical levels across Detroit. We are pleased to use two locally based suppliers of PPE who have offered competitive prices and assured us priority consideration out of their shared concern for our fellow Americans affected in Southeast Michigan.”

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