

March 23, 2020

**For Immediate Release**

**Salina Area United Way Prepares for COVID-19 with an Emergency Relief Fund**

*Salina, KS* (March 23, 2020) – As the Coronavirus (COVID-19) continues to spread across the country and Kansas, Salina Area United Way has been strategically working on our response. We are determined to provide continued high-quality support and service to our community during this unique circumstance. This crisis is affecting everyone, especially those areas involving our core pillars of health, education, and financial stability.

The Salina Area United Way at the beginning of this month opened the Make A Difference granting cycle for the 2020 fiscal year in which \$75,000 would be granted to local non-profit agencies. It was strongly felt by Salina Area United Way staff and the Board of Directors that we need to put a portion of these funds to use immediately, with less constraints. With that being said, the Salina Area United Way staff and Board of Directors have worked to develop the following:

The Salina Area United Way has formed the **SAUW COVID-19 Emergency Relief Fund** which Salina Area United Way is contributing the first **\$12,500**. Additionally, Bennington State Bank has committed to donating **\$12,500**. On top of SAUW and Bennington State Bank's initial contributions, SAUW would invite individuals and companies to contribute to the Fund with SAUW matching the next \$12,500 for a maximum contribution of \$25,000. We urge you to consider giving as you can in order to combat this need in our community. You can give by three easy ways:

Online at [www.unitedwaysalina.org/sauw-covid-19](http://www.unitedwaysalina.org/sauw-covid-19)

Text "TOGETHERUNITED" at 41444

Mail a check to Salina Area United Way, 210 E Walnut #100, Salina, KS 67401. Please include "Relief Fund" in the memo.

"The Salina Area United Way exists to serve our community during moments like this. It is during a crisis that Salina shows its strength in solidarity by supporting those in our community who are struggling," said Claire Mullen, Executive Director of Salina Area United Way. "Together, UNITED, we will uncover the unmet needs at this difficult time and fund efficient, effective solutions."

"Even in unprecedented times such as this, The Bennington State Bank remains sound and secure, as we have for the past 130 years. Our dedicated and professional banking team is here to help you in any way that we can. We cannot overstate that our primary goal is protecting the safety and welfare of our customers, employees and communities as we take measures necessary to provide superior banking service while working to address public health and safety concerns. Online banking and the BSB Mobile App are excellent ways to conveniently and confidentially access your money from the comfort of your home! We believe that times like this are a way to help everyone in our

community come together and stand strong,” said Burke Matthews, Bennington State Bank President.

100% of what is raised will be directly invested back into our community’s most pressing needs. Salina Area United Way will not be charging or receiving administration costs and will work alongside our most valued community nonprofits in an effort to have the most immediate impact.

“Now more than ever it is important to do what we can to help each other. While COVID-19 is at the forefront of everyone’s mind from a health standpoint, people will continue to have other healthcare needs that must be addressed. There will still be doctor’s appointments, whether in person or via telemedicine. There will be prescriptions that are vital to managing chronic illness. There will be profound effects on people’s mental health and well-being as a result of necessary social distancing and restrictions on group interaction. Supporting organizations that can help individuals stay healthy in all ways, not just avoiding COVID-19, is of critical importance.” Rob Frelove, MD Salina Regional Health Center.

“This could be of help to our many parents dealing with school closing and the need to provide additional resources for their children,” said George Troutfetter, retired USD 305 assistant principal, long-time Salina Area United Way volunteer.

For more information about Salina Area United Way, visit [www.unitedwaysalina.org](http://www.unitedwaysalina.org). Or, contact Salina Area United Way at 785-827-1312.

Together, UNITED, we will be working hard to overcome this time of uncertainty and providing the support that our community needs.

TOGETHER  
UNITED

