



Thank you to the Acton Chinese-American Civic Society, who donated 15,000 masks to healthcare workers and front line workers during the COVID-19 crisis. Neighbors are helping neighbors. Together we can!

Director's Message



Greetings!

It feels like the world has turned upside down. Despite the hardships, stress and uncertainty, I see many local sparks of hope. I feel fortunate to be able to work virtually with a great staff and super volunteers to help connect these dots into a robust community support network.

Your generous donations to our COVID-19 Impact Fund have moved me deeply. We are finalizing a transparent and equitable process with the town social workers and other community partners to allocate emergency grants for the hardest hit residents and critical agencies.

- I've been told that never before has the public and private sector in this community worked so closely together.

- ABRSD is providing free bag lunches not just for students, but for the entire community.
- Food pantries nimbly changed their business operations overnight to operate more like drive-thrus.
- Our local Neighbor Brigade, an online community volunteer network, is registering lots of volunteer residents to be matched with local providers to deliver groceries, meals and medicine to seniors and quarantined residents.
- The Acton Police Department offered our Public Safety Facility as a safe drop-off point for Personal Protection Equipment, including hand sanitizer and other supplies.
- Faith communities are addressing other critical needs, such as combating loneliness. Some created a buddy system to help serve the broader community. That is outward thinking at its best.

A-B United Way's COVID-19 Action Plan is focused on connecting residents with resources so that no one is left behind.

There are so many ways each of us can contribute: thank a healthcare professional or first responder, call a lonely neighbor, volunteer, or donate supplies or money.

Alternately, if the crisis has impacted you and you need help, you are not alone! We are here to support you.

Stay safe, stay connected.

Griet Dehandschutter

P.S. Kim Walsh, local business owner of Q Cleaner and Tailor in Acton, gifted me with the United Way mask. Thank you to all home mask-makers!



COVID-19 Impact Fund

Double your impact

thanks to \$75,000 in matching funds

Thank you for your enormous generosity! While the Fund has grown tremendously in two weeks, estimated needs in our community are still significantly higher. Please consider [donating today!](#) Your donation will be doubled thanks to five generous matching pledges so far from community members, totaling \$75,000. The Fund primarily supports emergency grants for Acton and Boxborough residents that are severely impacted by COVID-19 and need help paying past-due rent, mortgages, food and critical house repairs. The fund will also provide mini-grants to support critical local agencies, such as food pantries.

Read more about our [COVID-19 initiatives in the Acton Beacon.](#)

Rally Behind Our Local Businesses

Local businesses are the backbone of our community. Now is our chance to rally behind them. Find out if they offer take-out, delivery or shipping, or even contactless curbside pickup.

But if you can't shop locally, you can still support local business owners or their furloughed or laid-off employees in need. **Shop via [smile.amazon.com](#).** The Amazon Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price of eligible products to "United Way of Acton-Boxborough, Inc." if you make us your charity of choice. All funds raised through AmazonSmile during COVID-19 will go to local business owners' families or former employees who qualify for our emergency grants.



Free Food Resources

During the COVID-19 crisis, a record



number of residents are out of work, including many who have never before needed help.

Please spread the word that free food for residents is available so people can focus on paying rent

and other critical expenses!

There are [multiple local free food resources](#) including prepared meals, groceries and fresh produce. The high school offers daily bag lunches for all community members, even if you don't have students in school. And the school, as well as our food pantries and community suppers, now operate more like a drive-through so you do not need to enter any buildings. Delivery to your home is also available as needed. All of these services are set up to maintain social distancing and discretion, and are open to all Acton and Boxborough residents.

You can also apply online for COVID-19 expanded government benefits such as SNAP and WIC. If your income has dropped dramatically, it is best to apply now as processing takes time.

If you need financial or social services support, contact your [Acton](#) or [Boxborough](#) town social worker.

Need Emergency Funds For Rent And Urgent Bills?

COVID-19 Impact Fund
Donate
Now more than ever,
local dollars for
local impact

United Way
Acton-Boxborough
United Way

Stay Informed
Check 18 local
COVID-19 resources

Call Mass 2-1-1
Llamar 2-1-1
БЫ30ВА 2-1-1
Chamar 2-1-1
☎ 2-1-1

We are coordinating with Acton and Boxborough town officials, local agencies and community groups to help build a strong support network.

If you need immediate financial support or social services help, check out our [COVID-19 Community Resources](#).

You might qualify for an A-B United Way COVID-19 emergency grant for

residents. Eligibility riteria will be posted soon on the abuw.org website.

Tune in to #ABUWOnTheBrightSide



Neil Gordon, CEO of the Discovery Museum, has agreed to partner with A-B United Way during COVID-19. Neil will have conversations with community members who are doing really exciting things even during this tough time.

Zoom in every Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 5:30 pm on A-B United Way's FaceBook and Instagram. Thank you, Neil, for sharing a bright perspective! A special shout-out to our new ABRHS student production team: Prisha Dayal, Elizabeth Li, Elizabeth Sun and Dominic Papalia!

Check out our first episode: [Neil Gordon's interview with Prisha Dayal, junior at ABRHS.](#)

JOIN THE FIGHT

United Way fights for the health, education and financial stability of every person in every community. We have one life. To live better, we must LIVE UNITED®.