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**PASADENA COMMUNITY FOUNDATION'S YES, VIRGINIA GRANTS MAKE
THE 2020 HOLIDAY SEASON BRIGHTER FOR 11 LOCAL NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS**

PASADENA, CA – December 21, 2020 – Despite a year of incredible hardship, Pasadena Community Foundation (PCF) announces that for the 26th consecutive year, it was once again able to bring the magic of Christmas to 11 Pasadena-area charitable organizations, thanks to grants from its Yes, Virginia Fund.

In 1897, Frank Church, editor of *The New York Sun*, responded to eight-year-old Virginia O'Hanlon, who wrote to the newspaper to ask, "Is there a Santa Claus?" More than a century later, it remains the most reprinted editorial ever to run in any newspaper in the United States. In 1994, the story inspired PCF supporters to establish the Yes, Virginia Fund to provide annual grants to local nonprofit agencies so that Pasadena-area children in need could receive toys, books, gifts, and special experiences for the holidays.

In 2019, after 25 years of dedicated fundraising and community support, the Yes, Virginia Fund reached its endowment goal of \$500k, ensuring that it will continue to support holiday grants to local nonprofit agencies every year for decades to come.

2020 is ending with even more uncertainty and hardship for clients of social service agencies. Many are employed in the service sector, which has been disproportionately impacted by Safer at Home closures. The threat that the rent eviction moratorium will soon be lifted has created anxiety for those desperate to stay in their homes. With more members at home, families struggle to stretch food until the end of the month. Honoring Virginia's storied hope and maintaining the magic of Santa continued to be an important goal for staff members at charitable organizations. PCF's Yes, Virginia grants helped make that happen at 11 local sites.

Smiles, laughter, generosity, gratitude, and adaptability were all on display at these local agencies this month, with new, socially distanced experiences and extra giveaways to help make ends meet. At Door of Hope, staff created a drive-through Christmas Carnival complete with game booths and a selfie station. Executive Director Megan Katerjian reports that this year, thanks to the Yes, Virginia grant and additional community funds, the agency added an important level of direct assistance to families, providing \$200 grocery cards to each of the 101 families that attended, plus \$50 Target cards for each child – all 225 of them. "There were gasps of surprise and relief from parents and squeals from the kids. For our staff, to be able to help struggling parents who are yearning to make holidays special for their kids is priceless."

At Elizabeth House, Santa arrived in a Cadillac convertible and supervised the delivery of festive bags filled with toys and books to 50 families arriving by car, funded in part by the Yes, Virginia grant. Alumni and current clients also received \$100 grocery cards, and each child received a \$25 Target card. For Debora Unruh, the day meant finally seeing families in person, even from a distance, and she treasured that experience: “When they drove up and we could see them up close and see the kids – there were lots of on both sides of the car windows! I told my staff and volunteers ‘I want us to be the cheering section – waving, clapping, shouting – because these are courageous people who have been through a lot this year. We can’t hug them, but we can show them our love with our voices and spirit.’”

PCF is grateful for the Pasadena community’s long-time support of this invaluable, heart-warming grant program. Donations are still welcome and will help the Yes, Virginia Endowment grow and provide holiday magic for years to come. Find more information at <https://pasadenacf.org/funds/yes-virginia-fund>.

List of 2020 Grantees

- Boys & Girls Club of Pasadena
- Community Health Alliance of Pasadena
- Door of Hope
- Elizabeth House
- Families Forward Learning Center
- Flintridge Center
- Impact House
- Pasadena Altadena Community Endowment Fund (PACEF) – The LINKS
- Pasadena Altadena Coalition of Transformative Leaders (PACTL)
- Professional Child Development Associates
- Treasure Little Children Foundation

About the Pasadena Community Foundation

Founded in 1953, Pasadena Community Foundation (PCF) is a tax-exempt public charity created by and for the people of Pasadena. Managing more than \$120 million in charitable assets, PCF works with individuals, families, and organizations to establish philanthropic funds, create and build endowment funds, and distribute charitable gifts to nonprofit organizations.

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