Community foundations provide collaborative responses and local leadership in midst of COVID-19

Lauren Azevedo¹ | Andrew Bell¹ | Pamela Medina²

¹Penn State Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, USA
²California State University San Bernardino, San Bernardino, California, USA

Abstract
Community foundations are uniquely positioned within their localities to provide immediate needs and realize their communities’ strengths, resources, and challenges, affording them opportunities to be highly effective in responding to crises. Many community foundations act not only as grant-makers and social investors, but also as community mobilizers, experts, facilitators, and leaders, who work on identifying areas of greatest need to catalyze meaningful social change. As the COVID-19 pandemic has quickly spread across the United States, many community foundations are spearheading immediate relief efforts locally and mobilizing millions of dollars throughout the U.S. This article highlights the initial response efforts of specific community foundations to the COVID-19 outbreak, including operations, shifts in funding priorities, and fund allocation oversight. Moving forward, it will be increasingly critical for community foundations and all philanthropists to strategically prioritize funding initiatives, voice local concerns to policymakers, and advocate for both state and federal policies related to nonprofit support.

KEYWORDS
community foundations, COVID-19
INTRODUCTION

COVID-19 has impacted communities in extraordinary ways, from the immediate toll on public health and overburdened local health care systems to a decimated economy. Communities of color and low-income populations throughout the U.S. (who lack access to safe sheltering and basic needs, and who are more likely to be working in labor-intensive jobs or unemployed entirely) are most at risk of exposure to the virus and financial hardship (Gooden, 2020). Governments cannot adequately respond to this crisis without the support of the private and nonprofit sectors, particularly in aiding the most vulnerable populations. The elderly, people living in nursing or long-term facilities, those with increased health risk factors (lung disease or asthma, heart disease, immunocompromised, obesity, liver disease), underrepresented groups, including Black and Latinx, those in poverty, and the homeless are among those most disproportionately impacted by the pandemic (Artiga, Orgera, Pham, & Corallo, 2020; CDC, 2020; Gooden, 2020; Medina & Azevedo, 2021). Extreme events such as natural disasters, terrorist acts, humanitarian crises, biological hazards, and even pandemics, require collaborative responses and relief efforts (Comfort & Kapucu, 2006; Kapucu, 2005; Simo & Bies, 2007). These collaborative efforts can be seen not only as effective immediate responses, but also as a strategic response to environmental or funding uncertainty (Gazley, 2010).

Community foundations and other nonprofits are well-positioned to support local government response to COVID-19 through their established partnerships and relationships with various community groups, particularly through programs already in place that serve vulnerable populations. These 501(c)(3) grantmaking public charities offer services for donors, nonprofits, and their service area at large, leveraging a unique position of broad credibility and trust within their communities (Carman, 2001). Community foundations have seen tremendous growth over the past 25 years, both in the United States and around the world (Community Foundation Atlas, 2014; Harrow, Jung, & Phillips, 2016); yet they are understudied in current nonprofit management and leadership scholarship. Community foundations have emerged as a major philanthropic force in the US, with 16 of the largest 100 foundations being community foundations (Sacks, 2014). Thus, their role in leveraging resources during a pandemic is particularly worthy of study for communities working to respond to great social needs quickly and collaboratively.

Community foundations seek to be an important pillar of the community, stewarding resources, supporting donors, advocating for local philanthropic needs, and bringing groups together (Mazany & Perry, 2014). In addition to promoting philanthropy and serving as intermediary funding organizations, they do many other activities beyond grantmaking that develop their communities. Jung, Harrow, and Phillips (2013) suggests that the meaning of “community” for foundations can range widely for foundations to include not only specific geographic localities but also developing and instilling a sense of belonging and bringing people together. Further, the leadership responsibilities that they are entrusted with embolden them to organize decision makers, such as government officials, nonprofit leaders, and representatives of business communities to coordinate programs with greater impact (Sacks, 2014).

Community foundations can also increase accountability mechanisms and operational standards of other nonprofits. As fiscal stewards, community foundations are publicly accountable to both their donors and their communities, ensuring there is development within the community in areas of greatest need and resources are delivered equitably. They work with both discretionary and non-discretionary funds, or donor-advised funds, but have a key role in stewarding donor resources to key areas of community need. This dynamic accountability role may have
implications for equity and decision-making at the board level, which are worthy of exploration in community foundation scholarship.

2 | COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS IN CRISIS

Community foundations focus resources during times of crisis and can do so through an understanding of the most pressing needs within their localities. Interrelated issues of community leadership, crisis response, and social justice are not new to the pre-COVID-19 U.S. For instance, in response to the 1989 San Francisco Loma Prieta earthquake, a 6.9 magnitude earthquake that killed 67 people and caused over $5 billion in damages (Mileti & O’Brien, 1992), the San Francisco Foundation mobilized resources and expertise to devise recovery efforts for getting nonprofits quickly back up and operational (Sacks, 2014). The New York Community Trust partnered with the United Way of New York City to create the September 11th Fund on the same day as the attack on the World Trade Center (Candid, 2020a, 2020b). Similarly, the Denver Foundation acted as some of the front-line responders mobilizing volunteers to help direct volunteers and displaced families, as well as providing community funds in the aftermath of the 2013 Colorado floods affecting 17 counties in Denver and beyond (Miller, 2014). After the 2016 Orlando Pulse Nightclub shooting, the Central Florida Foundation set up the Better Together Fund to support victims, families, and survivors of the tragedy. Part of the fund was awarded to the One Orlando Alliance, which aims to unite and support LGBTQ+ nonprofits to work toward common goals (Central Florida Foundation, 2020). These responses show the capacity of large community foundations for quick and compassionate disaster relief.

There is currently no academic research surrounding how community foundations are impacting community development in times of crises, or how they are paving way for social change within communities through disaster mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery. This research note demonstrates several instances of community foundations responding to community needs during a pandemic and provides preliminary research with practical implications for moving forward. Further, we argue the need for theoretical and empirical work surrounding social capital and the role of foundations in crisis networks.

3 | COMMUNITY FOUNDATION COVID-19 COMMUNITY RESPONSE

Community foundations have led efforts to respond to communities in need in many different areas of the U.S. As of April 24, 2020, over 557 COVID-19 relief funds have been created in the wake of the virus, hosted by U.S. based foundations that serve their communities (Candid, 2020a). The Seattle Foundation headed the first community response with several partners to establish the COVID-19 Response Fund, after the first significant outbreak in the US (Community Foundation Public Awareness Initiative, 2020). The first round of grants from this fund prioritizes communities that are most impacted by the crisis, including low-income residents, residents with health risks, residents with limited English proficiency, communities of color, individuals with disabilities, homeless individuals, undocumented workers, and people who are at risk of violence (Community Foundation Public Awareness Initiative, 2020). Other examples of such funds include the Chicago Community COVID-19 Response Fund, created by The Chicago Community Trust in collaboration with the City of Chicago, and the United Way
of Metro Chicago, with a similar goal to disperse funds to neighbors and communities significantly impacted by the outbreak. These funds aim to increase access to food and supplies, help struggling families to pay rent, mortgage, and utilities, and provide direct financial assistance for nonprofits to secure supplies, safety, and other operational assistance (Chicago COVID-19 Response Fund, 2020). Likewise, the Greater Cleveland COVID-19 Rapid Response Fund was created by a coalition of philanthropic, corporate, and civic partners and led by the Cleveland Foundation. Its goal is to efficiently deploy resources to nonprofits in Cuyahoga, Lake, and Geauga counties (Cleveland Foundation, 2020). The organizations funded through this partnership provide community safety nets and have experience working with vulnerable groups and include charities such as the Greater Cleveland Food Bank, MedWish International, Northeast Ohio Coalition for the Homeless, and Senior Transportation Connection.

Several state task forces for the pandemic have been created by governors to rally resources for immediate relief and response. The Nevada COVID-19 Task Force is a public-private partnership between Governor Sisolak and the Nevada Health Response Center and brings together business leaders and community members appointed by the Governor (Nevada Community Foundation, 2020. Gian Brosco, President and CEO of the Nevada Community Foundation is working with the task force to support their mission and the response fund, with the foundation serving as the fund’s fiscal agent. Foundations’ relief funds have been widely promoted through partnerships with government officials. For instance, Arkansas’s Governor Asa Hutchinson has partnered with the Arkansas Community Foundation to ask citizens to make donations to their pandemic response fund. Governor Hutchinson has seen the value in partnering with foundations, given how they are situated within their communities and how they are trusted to guide other nonprofits (KTVE, 2020).

COVID-19 relief funds, community mobilization, and leadership are not the only ways foundations are creating vital programs and providing lifelines during this time. Community foundations are also delivering important information to their nonprofit communities in innovative ways, matching volunteers for COVID-19 relief, and providing technical assistance to local nonprofits to navigate through the pandemic. As an example, the San Francisco Foundation has hosted webinars highlighting the unique needs of their community, particularly specifying the needs of those most impacted by the virus (San Francisco Foundation, 2020). Many foundations, like the Birmingham Community Foundation, are offering regular virtual updates with critical information on community and relief. The Birmingham Community Foundation provides not only updates and information on their COVID-19 Response Fund in the greater Birmingham area, but also coordinates video updates and community calls (and recordings), as well as up to date information on where to go for basic needs (Community Foundation of Greater Birmingham, 2020). The YOLO Community Foundation is offering interactive webinars to receive technical support surrounding critical topics on the impacts of COVID-19 (Yolo Community Foundation, 2020).

4 | LEADERSHIP IN POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

Federal policy advocacy has been at the forefront of some community foundations’ response to the COVID-19 pandemic. A $2 trillion CARES Act stimulus—the federal government’s first economic intervention on behalf of struggling Americans—has brought relief to several businesses and families throughout the country. The importance of advocacy coalitions in supporting
nonprofits has been paramount in creating innovative solutions and practices for vulnerable communities (McMullin & Raggo, 2020; Raeymaeckers & Van Puyvelde, 2021; Young et al., 2020). Yet, after extensive lobbying and advocacy efforts by a broad coalition of philanthropic organizations, Congress included provisions that proved critical for nonprofits as well. The National Council of Nonprofits (including hundreds of community foundations) lent their voice to a direct appeal to House and Senate leadership, demanding that the stimulus include substantial assistance for the third sector (Council of Nonprofits, 2020). Their emphasis on federal policy development yielded some favorable loan parameters for many 501(c)(3)s, as well as an above-the-line deduction for all taxpayers donating during the crisis. For many nonprofits (those with 500 or fewer employees), loans are forgivable if payroll continues unfettered, creating a de facto general operating support grant (Nonprofit Quarterly, 2020).

The $1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) included additional support for nonprofits with more than 500 employees in the paycheck protection program (PPP). Advocacy leadership exhibited by the philanthropic collaboration provided many charities with an opportunity to continue their work as employers, providers, and information hubs in communities that are desperate for COVID-19 relief. Unfortunately, many of these efforts were not easily achieved or sufficient for addressing urgent community needs. While advocacy efforts to mobilize networks; convene (virtually) in Washington, D.C.; and engage in conversation with congressional representatives have been felt by some nonprofits, there is still a heavy burden for continual advocacy. Some nonprofits struggled with the PPP application process while others never received the loans for which they applied. This left many nonprofits in limbo, unsure of their application status or if they would receive any relief. In addition, some nonprofits have not received targeted support or been provided guidance on support and further have had to compete with local businesses for funding, leaving plenty of room for subsequent advocacy efforts to target the CARES Act and ARPA's flaws.

Community foundations have signaled that they are committed to adaptation, cooperation, and leniency from an operational standpoint. The Council on Foundations, in partnership with the Ford Foundation, spearheaded a call to action for responsive philanthropy during the pandemic. Signatories of the call pledge to loosen grant-making restrictions; ease reporting and auditing requirements; forgive deadline postponements; and embrace transparent communication with grantees and philanthropic partners alike (Council on Foundations, 2020). Relief and representation of vulnerable populations is a pervasive theme throughout the pledge, highlighting the need to advocate for “an equitable and just emergency response for all”, “address the health and economic impact on those most affected”, and to “commit to listening...especially to those communities least heard, lifting up their voices and experiences.” (Council on Foundations, 2020). Hundreds of community foundations within the Council have signed this pledge, and the commitment of others is strongly encouraged.

5 | MEASURING IMPACT AND PRELIMINARY DATA

With these initial efforts in mind, a comprehensive population of U.S. community foundations were surveyed as a part of a larger study on community foundation diversity and funding equity. Responses were received from 246 out of 1,014 U.S. community foundations (response rate of 24.3%) during March and April 2020. The survey asked 38 questions, though only 8 of the questions asked questions regarding COVID-19 response (see Appendix A). The following
provides a snapshot of how foundations are operating, including their current strategic priorities, community outreach efforts, and funding preferences:

- Most (65.0%) are conducting business as usual (either in their offices or remotely); Only 6.1% reported currently stopping operations to prevent the spread of COVID-19.
- 56.1% are actively working on new solicitations to help fund individuals, families, and groups impacted by COVID-19.
- 55.7% are actively working to establishing new funding priorities to help members of the community impacted by COVID-19.
- 50.0% have taken an active leadership in community response efforts (such as distributing food, assisting elderly, working with community experts and local government to identify need, etc.).
- The vast majority (80.1%) are providing more grants than usual to cover operational expenses during this time.
- About half of the surveyed foundations (49.4%) reported already seeking out expert guidance through community members on strategy and funding priorities for during or after the COVID-19 pandemic, and 25.6% are planning to.
- Most respondents (85.0%) reported that they have contacted or planned to contact grant recipients to discuss the implications of COVID-19 for program/service delivery funded by the organization.
- When asked about pre-existing emergency management plans that assist specifically with pandemics, like COVID-19, 66.2% did not have any strategies currently, although they do now or are working on one.

## 6 IMPLICATIONS FOR THEORY, PRACTICE, AND FURTHER RESEARCH

Although the COVID-19 pandemic is rapidly evolving in respect to its myriad impacts on our communities, we can provide some early observations of how many community foundations are leading relief and recovery efforts. Most foundations surveyed in this research feel that they are very well attuned to their community's needs and have extensive networks in place to respond quickly during crises. Foundations examined in this analysis are also adapting quickly, providing funds for operational expenses at unprecedented levels. Moving forward, foundations are reaching out to grant recipients to discuss how COVID-19 is impacting programming and providing technical assistance where it is needed. Local leaders who may be working with foundations may seek out new opportunities for funding operational expenses to tap into these new funding avenues.

Pandemic-induced attrition will only exacerbate the needs of American families and businesses. Community foundations, then, will need to exert considerable pressure to secure the resources they need to stay afloat. If community foundations’ input in the development of the CARES Act and ARPA is any indication, it may be fair to expect that they will have the potential for an advocacy presence as subsequent stimulus packages are discussed. The demonstrated success of some nonprofit organizations, including The National Council of Nonprofits in securing aid and benefits for 501(c)(3)s sets a strong precedent for further intervention in Congressional negotiations.

Community foundations’ capacity to coordinate with local, state, and federal pandemic relief efforts may very well hinge on their ability to secure the kind of support they received
from the CARES Act and ARPA. In turn, community foundations have signaled that they are willing to take on a role of leadership in their communities through pandemic response coordination and grantmaking support. The Council on Foundations’ pledge has evidenced this commitment, although it remains to be seen how substantive it proves in practice. Nonetheless, there is potentially a symbiotic relationship between government and community foundations in the development and implementation of federal stimulus policies. Further examination of this relationship would bear practical insight for both COVID-specific and subsequent emergency response efforts. Such an examination would also serve as an addition to extant public-nonprofit partnership research.

Both the data-inspired and anecdotal evidence through individual foundation examples unearthed in this study shed light on salient questions posed in the extant community foundation literature. While Sacks (2014) questioned the role of local-centric philanthropy in an increasingly globalized understanding of community, the foundations studied here exhibited a strong affiliation with their traditional service areas. More work is needed to better understand how community foundations can equitably handle their role in the implementation of federal policy and how they can balance these roles while maintaining accountability to their various stakeholders. Preliminary work suggested here leads us to believe that the public and private sector have invested heavily in geographically dispersed aid recipients, (e.g., WHO’s COVID-19 Solidarity Response Fund) and thus community foundations have maintained their niche in funding localized relief efforts carrying out federal policy. They also serve as an organizer to ensure efforts are not duplicated and organizations can combine relevant services with partner agencies.

In addition, Carman (2001) called for further research that illuminates community foundations’ grantmaking behaviors in terms of time horizon preference, the strings attached to funding, and the prioritization of targeted community issues. The preliminary data gathered in this study suggests that community foundations are more than comfortable investing in the short term, as evidenced by the overwhelming number of respondents that are increasing the number of grants awarded for covering operational expenses. A majority of respondents are also establishing new funding priorities, suggesting that community foundation grantmaking is both targeted and responsive. Although specific funding contingencies were not discussed with respondents, most indicated that existing parameters were being reevaluated in cooperation with grant recipients.

While there is no literature predicting how community foundations might respond to a crisis of this magnitude, it is clear that COVID-19 has presented an opportunity to evaluate the theoretical suppositions that are advanced in the extant literature. The findings presented here, however, do manage to lend some empirical observation to this burgeoning field of discussion, and in a wholly unique context. The foundations that participated in this study, in sharing their approaches to addressing a global pandemic, directly speak to Sacks’ (2014) ultimate question: what does globalization in the twenty-first century mean for community philanthropy? By attempting to answer that question, these findings may serve as the opening statement in what should be a robust discussion.

There are some limitations to this preliminary work. We acknowledge that the foundations explored in this paper do not represent all foundations, and thus may lack generalizability across foundations. There may be a response bias of foundations who are actively involved in COVID-19 community responses. We also sought out examples that acknowledge the virtuous practices of the organizations highlighted; more work is needed to examine how other foundations are working through the pandemic and how those that are offering relief funds are doing so effectively, efficiently, and equitably.
These preliminary findings lead us to call for more research on better understanding the role of community foundations in community development and more specifically in crises and community resiliency. Are decisions made in crisis, which require expediency, still community informed? We see a need to examine data-informed decision-making for foundations and other community-based organizations, given the amount of public information available. Further, how crises impact strategic decision making and funding priorities requires future study, including how donors respond to these shifting priorities during crises. Although community foundations have been under researched, they clearly serve as excellent policy laboratories for examining community development and collective action, as well as providing collaborative capacity and network responses in community disasters. We call for more empirical research that considers their evolving role in community response and leadership, including advocacy.

7 | CONCLUSION

As the devastation of COVID-19 and its impacts on different communities becomes more widely known, community foundations must continue to leverage their collaborative capacity to voice the needs of the most impacted communities. In addition, they must strategically prioritize funding initiatives and provide financial and technical support to the organizations and programs that are funding impacted communities. It remains critical that foundations be informed with updates from credible sources like the World Health Organization and Center for Disease Control and Prevention, as well as data-informed guidelines from state and local governments to provide clear information and guidance to stakeholders. They must also keep open communication with governing boards, staff, volunteers, donors, and their service area population. It is vital they are transparent in decision-making, particularly in how organizations and individuals that receive services or support will be impacted.

The Council on Foundation’s philanthropic reform pledge, while noble in its own right, demands substantive follow-through on the part of community foundations. This is particularly important for securing the welfare of vulnerable groups, who are finding themselves disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. If executed in earnest, the pledge can serve as a launch pad for providing responsive community relief to those who need it most. In doing so, community foundations can equip themselves with the experience, insight, and data that furnish vital inputs for policymakers at both the state and federal levels. Perhaps most importantly, the pledge calls for philanthropic reform that transcends COVID-19 or any one disaster:

The Council on Foundation’s states: “Learn from these emergency practices and share what they teach us about effective partnership and philanthropic support, so we may consider adjusting our practices more fundamentally in the future, in more stable times, based on all we learn” (2020, pledge item no. 8). In this respect, community foundations are well on their way to realizing the fundamental changes that a world recovering from COVID-19 will inspire.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST
The authors have declared that there is no conflict of interest in this project.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT
Research data are not shared.
REFERENCES

Artiga, S., Orgera, K., Pham, O., & Corallo, B. (2020). Growing data underscore that communities of color are being harder hit by COVID-19. The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation. Retrieved from https://www.kff.org/coronavirus-policy-watch/growing-data-underscore-communities-color-harder-hit-covid-19/

Candid. (2020a, April 29). Funds for coronavirus relief. Candid. Retrieved from https://candid.org/explore-issues/coronavirus/funds

Candid. (2020b, April 24). September 11th fund. Philanthropy News Digest (PND). Retrieved from http://philanthropynewsdigest.org/npo-spotlight/september-11th-fund

Carman, J. G. (2001). Community foundations: A growing resource for community development. Nonprofit Management and Leadership, 12(1), 7–24.

Center for Disease Control (CDC). (2020, February 11). Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Retrieved from https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-at-higher-risk.html

Central Florida Foundation. (2020, April 29). Central Florida foundation issues first grant to support healing for pulse survivors. Retrieved from https://cffound.org/

Chicago Community COVID-19 Response Fund (2020, April 27). Chicago community COVID-19 response fund. Retrieved from https://www.chicagoCOVID19responsefund.org

Cleveland Foundation. (2020, April 29). Greater Cleveland COVID-19 Rapid Response Fund. Retrieved from https://www.clevelandfoundation.org/news/covid-19/response-fund/

Comfort, L. K., & Kapucu, N. (2006). Inter-organizational coordination in extreme events: The world trade center attacks, September 11, 2001. Natural Hazards, 39(2), 309–327.

Community Foundation Atlas. (2014). Snapshot of the movement. Retrieved from http://communityfoundationatlas.org/facts/#snapshots

Community Foundation of Greater Birmingham (2020, April 29). Covid-19 Response Funds. Community Foundation of Greater Birmingham. Retrieved from https://www.cfbbham.org/covid-19-response-funds/

Community Foundations Public Awareness Initiative. (2020, April 29). Community foundations nationwide launch coronavirus relief efforts. Retrieved from https://www.commfoundations.com/blog/2020/3/11/community-foundations-nationwide-launch-efforts-to-help-communities-affected-by-the-coronavirus

Council on Foundations. (2020, March 19). A call to action: Philanthropy’s commitment during Covid-19. Retrieved from https://www.cof.org/news/call-action-philanthropys-commitment-during-covid-19

Gazley, B. (2010). Linking collaborative capacity to performance measurement in government—Nonprofit partnerships. Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly, 39(4), 653–673.

Gooden, S. (2020, April 29). Acceptable losses? COVID-19: Social equity and the African American community [webinar]. ASPA/VCU COVID-19 Webinar Series. Retrieved from https://www.aspanet.org/ASPADocs/Webinars/COVID-Equity.pdf

Harrow, J., Jung, T., & Phillips, S. D. (2016). Community foundations: Agility in the duality of foundation and community. In The Routledge Companion to Philanthropy (pp. 308–321). London, UK: Routledge.

Jung, T., Harrow, J., & Phillips, S. D. (2013). Developing a better understanding of community foundations in the UK’s localisms. Policy & Politics, 41(3), 409–427.

Kapucu, N. (2005). Interorganizational coordination in dynamic context: Networks in emergency response management. Connect, 26(2), 33–48.

KTVE. (2020, April 6). Governor announces Arkansas community foundation COVID-19 relief fund assists in pandemic relief. Retrieved from https://www.myarklamiss.com/news/arkansas-news/governor-announces-arkansas-community-foundation-covid-19-relief-fund-assists-in-pandemic-relief/

Mazany, T., & Perry, D. C. (2014). The second century: Community foundations as foundations of community. In Here for good: Community foundations and the challenges of the 21st century (pp. 17–40). London, UK: Routledge.

McMullin, C., & Raggo, P. (2020). Leadership and governance in times of crisis: A balancing act for nonprofit boards. Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly, 49(6), 1182–1190.
Medina, P. S., & Azevedo, L. (2021). Latinx COVID-19 outcomes: Expanding the role of representative bureaucracy. *Administrative Theory & Praxis* (Taylor & Francis Ltd), (Epub ahead of print), 1–15. https://doi.org/10.1080/10841806.2021.1910411

Mileti, D. S., & O’Brien, P. W. (1992). Warnings during disaster: Normalizing communicated risk. *Social Problems*, 39(1), 40–57. https://doi.org/10.1525/sp.1992.39.1.03x0062

Miller, D. (2014). Denver Community Foundations [Keynote address]. *Presentation at the 2014 ARNOVA 2014 Conference*. Denver, CO, United States.

National Council of Nonprofits. (2020, April 8). Nonprofit track reforms to the cares act. Retrieved from https://www.councilofnonprofits.org/trends-policy-issues/nonprofit-track-reforms-the-cares-act

Nevada Community Foundation. (2020, March 30). The COVID-19 emergency response fund assists with the state of Nevada’s response, relief and recovery efforts. Retrieved from https://www.nevadacf.org/nevada-community-foundation-establishes-covid-19-emergency-response-fund/

Non Profit News | Nonprofit Quarterly. (2020, March 26) How nonprofits can utilize the new Federal Laws Dealing with COVID-19. Retrieved from https://nonprofitquarterly.org/how-nonprofits-can-utilize-the-new-federal-laws-dealing-with-covid-19/

Raeymaeckers, P., & Van Puyvelde, S. (2021). Nonprofit advocacy coalitions in times of COVID-19: Brokerage, crowdfunding, and advocacy roles. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 0899764021991675, 089976402199167.

Sacks, E. (2014). *The growing importance of community foundations*.

San Francisco Foundation. (2020, April 28). Webinar: COVID-19 frontline news from nonprofits—Their urgent needs. The San Francisco Foundation. Retrieved from https://sff.org/webinar-covid-19-frontline-news-from-nonprofits-their-urgent-needs/

Simo, G., & Bies, A. L. (2007). The role of nonprofits in disaster response: An expanded model of cross-sector collaboration. *Public Administration Review*, 67, 125–142.

Yolo Community Foundation. (2020, April 29). Technical assistance. Yolo Community Foundation. Retrieved from https://www.yolocf.org/technical-assistance/

Young, E., Deitrick, L., Tinkler, T., Meschen, C., Strawser, C., Funderburk, T., & Abruzzo, T. (2020). Unprecedented disruption: COVID-19 impact on San Diego nonprofits.

**AUTHOR BIOGRAPHIES**

**Lauren Azevedo** is an assistant professor in Penn State’s School of Public Affairs. She conducts research on nonprofits, leadership, equity, and capacity building.

**Andrew Bell** is a recent MPA graduate of Penn State Harrisburg.

**Pamela S. Medina** (PhD University of Central Florida) is assistant professor of Public Administration at CSUSB. Her most recent work has appeared in *Administrative Theory and Praxis*, the *Journal of Public Affairs Education*, the *International Journal of Policy Studies*, and the *Journal of Health and Human Services Administration*.

**How to cite this article:** Azevedo, L., Bell, A., & Medina, P. (2022). Community foundations provide collaborative responses and local leadership in midst of COVID-19. *Nonprofit Management and Leadership*, 32(3), 475–485. https://doi.org/10.1002/nml.21490
APPENDIX A: SURVEY QUESTIONS

Is your foundation a community foundation?
   What community foundation are you a part of?
   What has your community foundation’s response been to COVID-19? Please select all that apply.

- We have currently stopped operations and closed our doors to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19.
- We are conducting business as usual (either at work or working remote).
- We are actively working on new solicitations to help fund individuals, families, and groups impacted by COVID-19.
- We are actively working to establish new funding priorities for our community to assist individuals, families, and groups impacted by COVID-19.
- We have taken an active leadership role in our community through response efforts (distributing food, assisting elderly, working with community experts, and local government to identify need, etc.)

Did your organization have a pre-existing emergency management plan that assists specifically with pandemics, like COVID-19?

- Yes, we had an internal strategy in place.
- Yes, we had an external strategy (communication, PR, outreach, etc.) in place.
- Yes, we had an internal and external strategy in place.
- We did not have any strategies currently (although we do now or are working on one).

To what extent do you anticipate a shift in your foundation's funding priorities in your upcoming grant cycle due to COVID-19? (Not at all to a great extent).

   Given the impact so far of COVID-19, will you provide more grants than usual to help cover operational expenses? Yes or No.
   Have you contacted, or do you plan to contact, grant recipients to discuss implications of COVID-19 for program/service delivery that your organization funds? Yes or No.
   Has your community foundation sought out expert guidance on strategy and funding priorities for during or after the COVID-19 pandemic?

- Yes, we already have.
- No, not yet but we plan to.
- No, our strategic priorities are set.