



# Upper Valley Strong Community Relief Fund

## Impact Report April 1, 2020- July 31, 2020

The Upper Valley Haven



Funded pavilion tent to enable outdoor food pantry services as needs increased.

Willing Hands



Funded delivery of 13,000 lbs more food to the region's food shelves in April and May

The Cover Store



Funding for additional staff and supplies to meet increased demand for repair for older adults

## Acknowledgements

Upper Valley Strong would like to thank the many funding partners who have donated to the Community Relief Fund. Without your generosity, many of the Upper Valley community partners, whose work supports some of our most vulnerable populations, would be unable overcome the challenges of COVID-19 and thus unable to provide their services. We thank Dartmouth-Hitchcock Population Health, Dartmouth-Hitchcock Philanthropy, the Endowment for Health, New Hampshire Charitable Foundation, and the many local donors of the Upper Valley.

In addition, Upper Valley Strong would like to acknowledge the work of our fiscal agent, The Upper Valley Haven for their dedication to the region. This organization came forward in a time of need to help support the local community in preparing for and recovering from the challenges caused by COVID-19. We are grateful for their continued partnership.

As we continue in the mission of Upper Valley Strong, to help communities rebuild after natural disaster. these partners allow our region to continue to be...



## By The Numbers



**24**

**Number of non-profit  
requests granted**

Over \$149,000.00 has been granted to non-profits in the Upper Valley to support families and individuals experiencing difficulties during the pandemic through the Relief Fund



**89**

**Cell Phones and Cards**

Were purchased to support 41 households and 85 individuals obtain cell phones or calling cards with support from Community Relief Fund



**304**

**Individuals**

The Community Relief Fund utilized a donation from Granite United Ways to establish a direct-client relief fund for COVID-19 related needs that served over 300 clients and more than 140 households



**75**

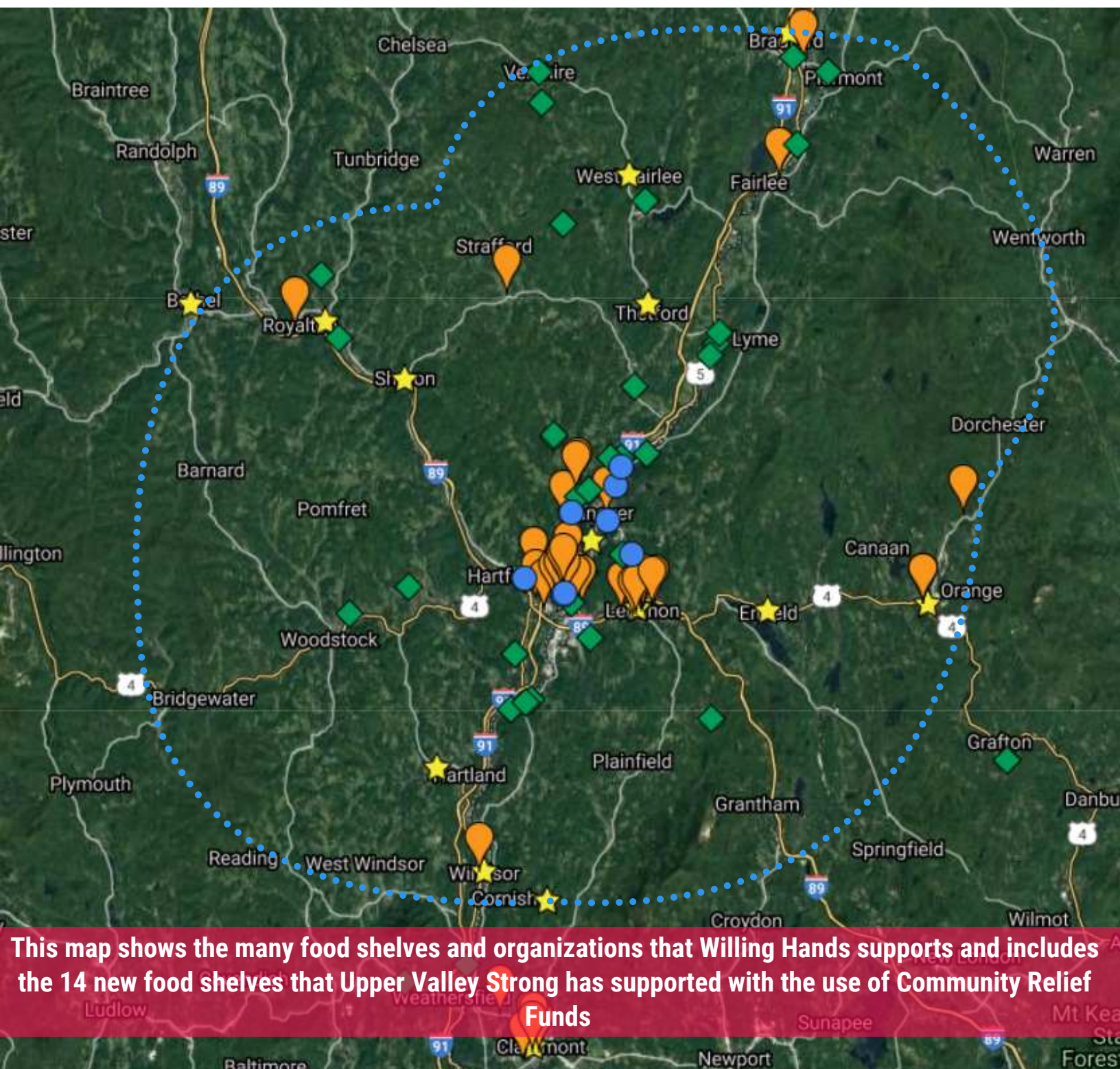
**Towns**

Served within the Upper Valley Strong catchment area



# Upper Valley Strong uses funds to bring more Food to Families and Individuals in need by Supporting Willing Hands Enterprises

"During this challenging time for our community Willing Hands has been able to dramatically increase the amount of fresh healthy food we distribute to our non-profit partners throughout the Greater Upper Valley Region of Vermont and New Hampshire thanks to the financial support, advice, and coordination provided by Upper Valley Strong. Specifically, Upper Valley Strong support allowed Willing Hands to purchase food for our deliveries, increase our staffing, lease additional trucks, and cover related costs associated with distributing 50% more food year to date than in 2019. This support has been instrumental in our organization supporting 14 new food shelves and increasing our weekly deliveries to our 62 existing recipient organizations." - Gabe Zoerheide, *Willing Hands*



**This map shows the many food shelves and organizations that Willing Hands supports and includes the 14 new food shelves that Upper Valley Strong has supported with the use of Community Relief Funds**

..... Upper Valley Strong Service Area

# Organizations That Have Been Provided Funding Support



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## Family Supports and Childcare

- Early Care and Education Association
- LISTEN Community Services
- West Central Behavioral Health
- Upper Valley Haven



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## Food Access

- LISTEN Community Services
- The Upper Valley Haven
- Willing Hands
- Springfield Family Center



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## Maintaining Older Adult Health

- Woodstock Council on Aging- Thompson Center
- Bugbee Senior Center
- Grafton County Senior Citizens Council
- Upper Valley Community Nursing Project



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## Other Social Drivers of Health

- COVER Home Repair
- Good Neighbor Health Clinic

# LISTEN Community Services

“Access to phone service has become more crucial than ever as more businesses and services become remote, yet few agencies in the Upper Valley offer financial assistance for phones. People who cannot afford a mobile phone plan are finding themselves unable to access critical supports such as social service agencies, telehealth, unemployment, etc. Service organizations .... have identified some individuals and families who cannot afford a phone plan or a mobile phone. Though this population is relatively small, they are especially vulnerable because they cannot access the many supportive services throughout the Upper Valley.

Typically, to purchase a prepaid phone or a phone card, customers need to visit a store in-person. It has been difficult in the past for organizations to assist with purchasing these items. In order to promote social distancing and reduce trips for vulnerable individuals to large retail stores and other places, and so that organizations can distribute these items to clients more quickly, we pre-purchased phones and phone cards and offered them at no cost to low-income community members facing barriers to services. Thanks to the funding we received in May 2020, as of time of writing, we have been able to assist 28 households (62 unique individuals) and distributed 16 StraightTalk phones, 36 StraightTalk cards, and 3 Walmart cards. Reception to this service has been very positive, and LISTEN has typically been able to get phones and phone cards to partner organizations within 1-2 business days. The majority of these households (64%) have identified access to telehealth as their primary reason for needing this resource; other reasons include accessing social services, legal services, unemployment benefits, job searches, remote schooling, and childcare.”



# Willing Hands

Willing Hands Enterprises serves as a major re-distributor of perishable healthy food including; fresh fruits and vegetables, milk, eggs, butter, cheese, and meat. to over 65 non-profit food organizations in our region, ranging from large food programs at Upper Valley Haven and LISTEN Community Services to smaller food shelves in Fairlee, Enfield, Orford, Windsor, and other rural towns that provide easier access to rural residents.

Most of the community food support organizations we serve have seen requests for food assistance double since March. To meet this need Willing Hands has had to hire additional drivers, leased additional vehicles, made capital improvements; and adapted our infection prevention practices. We are not a fee for service organization, so we needed new revenue in order to meet these needs. UV Strong provided immediate gap funding that has helped us pay drivers, lease new refrigerated trucks, and increase the food we distribute. With encouragement and support from UV Strong, Willing Hands successfully applied for USDA's Farmers to Families Food Box program, which brought \$148K in new funding for food supports to our region. We are using these funds to purchase farm products from VT and NH farms that we box and provide at community distribution sites regionally. With this support, we have been able to dramatically increase both the quantity and variety of food we can distribute to local food support programs to help them meet the food needs of those they serve. Year to date we have increased our food deliveries by about 50% compared to 2019, over 120,000 pounds.





# Red Logan Dental Clinic

The UV Strong grant of \$4,400 for the purchase of surgical air scrubbers for two of the Red Logan dental treatment rooms was received mid-summer. This equipment will allow dental externs from Tufts (who are scheduled to arrive at the end of August and rotate through the RL Clinic for the next six months) to treat patients with improved safety. By augmenting the PPE, worn by Red Logan providers, the air scrubbers who improve air quality for patients who are un-masked while in the dental chair.

Also of note, we mentioned that this grant was a challenge grant in an op-ed piece published in the Valley News and have received \$6,454 in matching gifts to date. These funds will allow us to purchase three additional air scrubbers, if necessary, and following an evaluation of the effectiveness of the equipment.