

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** CKA BOARD  
**FROM:** CKA National Relief Fund Advisory Task Force  
**DATE:** May 26, 2020  
**SUBJECT:** Recommendations re Selection of Recipients and Distribution of CKA's National Relief Funds

This memorandum summarizes the recommendations of the CKA National Relief Fund Advisory Task Force (Task Force) regarding the criteria used to determine the list of recipients and the distribution of the National Relief Fund (Relief Funds).

### **Background:**

The CKA Board (Board) mobilized a pool of donors to raise Relief Funds to support Korean American nonprofit organizations on the frontlines helping the most vulnerable to the economic downturn caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. CKA is projected to raise \$125,000. The Board decided to support three priority areas of need, recognizing that different regions may have different needs. The goal is for CKA to mobilize the Relief Funds quickly and distribute them to reputable Korean American nonprofits working in the priority areas of need.

The priority areas of need identified by the Board are:

1. Service for low-income senior/elderly Korean American population;
2. Mental health/family counseling service for the KA community;
3. Economic support for undocumented families impacted by the economic downturn

To ensure transparency and fairness in developing the recommendations of the recipient organizations and the distribution of the Relief Fund, the Board delegated this responsibility to a small task force whose members do not include members of the CKA board or staff. The following members comprise the Task Force: Henry Byun, from Southern California, Daniel Cho, from New York, Charles Jung, from San Francisco, June Lee, from Atlanta, GA, and Sun Choi, from the Washington, DC metro area, serving as the Chair of the Task Force and pro bono GC of CKA. Executive Director Abraham Kim and Director of Operations & Programming Ruth Song attended the Task Force meetings to support the Task Force administratively and logistically. The Task Force met via videoconference three times, on May 15, 22, and 29, to set procedures and make recommendations, with a goal of distributing funds by May 31, 2020.

## Recommendations:

The Task Force makes the following recommendations:

1. Amount of awards: 5 organizations x \$25,000 = \$125,000
2. Selected organizations:
  - **Atlanta:** Atlanta Korean American Association <https://www.atlaka.org/>
  - **Greater Washington, D.C. Area:** Korean Community Service Center of Greater Washington <http://www.kescgw.org/about/contact-us/>
  - **Greater New York:** Korean Community Services of Metropolitan New York (KCS) <https://www.kcsny.org/>
  - **Los Angeles Area:** Korean American Family Services (KFAM) <https://kfamla.org/en/home/>
  - **San Francisco Bay Area:** Korean American Community Services of Silicon Valley (<https://www.kacssv.org/>).

## Criteria:

The Task Force focused on the following questions to develop its recommendations: (1) identifying the 4-5 regions across the US to assist; (2) determining the amount to distribute to each region; (3) identifying the local partners to engage; and (4) identifying the metrics to hold grantees accountable and to demonstrate to donors the impact of their giving.

To identify the local partners to engage, the Task Force considered the following criteria for selection, in no particular order:

- a. Korean American population;<sup>1</sup>
- b. Transparency and GuideStar ratings;<sup>2</sup>
- c. Experience of the local community with the potential grantee organization;<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The ten states with the largest estimated Korean American populations were California (452,000; 1.2%), New York (141,000, 0.7%), New Jersey (94,000, 1.1%), Virginia (71,000, 0.9%), Texas (68,000, 0.3%), Washington (62,400, 0.9%), Illinois (61,500, 0.5%), Georgia (52,500, 0.5%), Maryland (49,000, 0.8%), Pennsylvania (41,000, 0.3%), and Colorado (31,000, 0.4%). Hawaii was the state with the highest concentration of Korean Americans, at 1.8%, or 23,200 people. [Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Korean\\_Americans](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Korean_Americans)]

<sup>2</sup> GuideStar is the world's largest source of information on nonprofit organizations. <https://www.guidestar.org>.

<sup>3</sup> Task Force members conducted research and/or interviews with those familiar with the recipient organization such as EDs, KA Community Leaders, and those who have first hand knowledge of the organization's work.

For example, 2 of the Task Force members independently recommended KCS.

In another example, for the San Francisco Bay Area, a Task Force member surveyed the several organizations and interviewed the Executive Directors of the Korean American Community Foundation

d. Accountability and Reporting;<sup>4</sup> and

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of San Francisco (KACF-SF) and the Korean American Community Services of Silicon Valley (<https://www.kacsv.org/>). KACF-SF's Executive Director recommended KACS because (1) Santa Clara County has the largest number of Korean seniors in the Bay Area; (2) the organization provides service in the three priority areas; and (3) KACS's executive director has demonstrated "how much further she's able to go with a smaller amount of funding" and "is meticulous about bookkeeping." KACS is the largest community-based non-profit organization serving Korean Americans in the South Bay, and the only agency to serve the community in Santa Clara County. It has a 41 year history. KACS programs serve the elderly, low-income families and individuals, recent immigrants and youth, and it operates programs in all three of our priority areas: seniors, mental health, and the undocumented.

Based on this recommendation, the Task Force member interviewed KACS's Executive Director Eunice Chun (without revealing the potential donor) to discuss how KACS would use the funds.

(1) Seniors: KACS has a large senior program, including a senior nutrition program, grocery delivery, and other senior services. It provides over 400 meals each week, with 120 meals delivered to seniors who cannot pick up the meals. Current funding will last through September, and KACS would value the ability to provide more meals through the end of the year and into 2021.

(2) Mental health: KACS performs regular senior wellness check-up calls with hundreds of seniors. Beyond the wellness check-up calls, they need resources to expand the delivery of services to address mental health. Eunice proposed program ideas including connecting seniors with mental health counselors, finding Korean interpreters to aid with counseling, or developing written materials

(3) Undocumented: KACS was selected as one of the agencies to provide COVID-19 era financing for undocumented people. They have \$35,000 in funding to deliver in \$1,000 gift cards for those not able to receive federal or state funds in Santa Clara county. With other funds, it could expand the program and possibly reach beyond the count.

When asked what the highest need was, the Executive Director replied that the meal program has the greatest cash need, but the mental health program might have the greatest need overall. To choose one, she suggested supporting higher quality mental health services over the meal program. KACS's ED expressed openness to hearing our priorities and ideas.

<sup>4</sup> The Task Force focused in their search those organizations that are grantmakers or those that provide direct services, who have track records, and have historically helped the three target areas for assistance: (1) low-income senior/elderly Korean American population, (2) mental health/family counseling service for the KA community and/or (3) economic support for undocumented families impacted by the economic downturn.

For example, one Task Force member was able to confirm that one of organizations recommended already has a COVID-19 Task Force established that is helping the exact population the CKA Board is trying to reach: seniors, children, low-income families, and undocumented Koreans. It has raised \$30,000 as of the Task Force member's reporting on May 21, 2020. CKA's donation would almost double its efforts. Since the entire program is volunteer supported, there is no overhead and 100% of CKA's donations would be used to assist the Covid-19 Task Force to provide: (1) door to door delivery of essential items for seniors living alone; (2) door to door delivery of essential items delivered to single moms, single dads, students, undocumented Koreans, (3) \$300 to families who have lost jobs but do not qualify for unemployment benefits, (4) drive through distribution to supply hand sanitizers, paper towels, toilet papers, and other food items, and (5) distribute rice, ramen, keem, and other staples every Thursday via drive through at its Center.

- e. Mission and guiding principles of the organizations.

The Task Force was informed that the projected Relief Funds would total \$125,000. The members expressed their belief that the amounts award be of sufficient size to make a difference and be consistent with other similar grant sizes. The Task Force observed that grants are commonly in the range of \$20,000 to \$30,000. This was based on the following:

- a. Information from the organization itself through announcements;
- b. Speaking directly with the organizations, without letting them know about a possible donation from CKA;
- c. The Task Force members' general knowledge of nonprofit donations received; and
- d. The Task Force member's specific personal knowledge of nonprofit donations received from the member's involvement in the nonprofit sector.

Based on these considerations, the Task Force recommends that five organizations receive awards in the amount of \$25,000 each.

### **ACCOUNTABILITY AND IMPACT**

After the Board's review and approval of the list of recipients and amounts, CKA would inform the grantee organization by sending the award letter below.

While there are no restrictions placed on how the grantee organizations can utilize the Relief Fund, CKA would request that the grantee organization confirm that it can meet the needs of the priority areas of need as stated in the award letter. CKA would also ask the grantee organizations to demonstrate the impact of the funds by providing CKA with a summary report or complete a questionnaire from CKA within three months of receiving the Relief Fund. Finally, CKA would ask the grantee organization to commit to participating in a short webinar/video discussion hosted by CKA staff to explain how the Relief Fund addressed a critical need in its community.

The main goal of the webinar/video discussion is to provide a platform to highlight the work of CKA and the recipient organizations. By sharing this news, the hope is that it serves as an example of giving and to encourage the community to continue supporting those efforts to help those in need. The platform also demonstrates that Korean Americans in particular are stepping up to serve those in need. Specifically, the follow up interview will be designed to explain and elicit the impact that the CKA National Relief Fund had on those who need it the most.

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## INTRODUCTORY EMAIL TO RECIPIENT ORGANIZATIONS

Dear Executive Director [or Board Chair] [NAME]:

Congratulations, [ORGANIZATION NAME] has been selected as a recipient of a one-time COVID-19 relief grant from the Council of Korean Americans (CKA). As you may already be aware, CKA is a national nonprofit organization whose mission is to advance the national voice and influence of the Korean American community through collaboration and leadership development.

During this difficult and unprecedented time, CKA Board Chair Paul Kim and select CKA members wanted to provide some direct aid to Korean American nonprofit organizations on the frontlines helping the most vulnerable Korean Americans. With the assistance of the CKA National Relief Fund Task Force comprised of CKA members and the support of the CKA Board of Directors, your organization was selected to receive **\$25,000** for its ongoing commitment in the following priority areas:

- Service for low-income senior/elderly Korean American population;
- Mental health / family counseling service for the Korean American community; and/or
- Economic support for undocumented families impacted by the economic downturn.

At this time, we ask that you confirm your organization would be able to meet the needs of the above priority areas and be able to demonstrate the impact of the funds by way of a summary report to or completion of a questionnaire from CKA within 3 months of receiving the funds. We also ask that you commit to a webinar/video discussion hosted by CKA staff explaining how these funds address a critical need in your community.

Please reply to this notice by **[DATE]** verifying your understanding of the terms, as well as your ability to meet the intent of the funding in good faith. Upon receipt, we will provide next steps in receiving the funds and documenting its use. We hope this opportunity plays an important part of your ongoing mission critical efforts in serving the most vulnerable.

[SIGNATURE -

Paul Kim, Chair, Council of Korean Americans

Abraham Kim, Executive Director

[Email Cc to regional CKA member on the task force, or in subsequent email with funds distribution details]