

Monadnock United Way

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Covid-19 Recovery Series - Community Voices Executive Summary 5-4-2021

Community leaders from across the Monadnock region gathered for Community Voices, the Monadnock Covid-19 Recovery Series, in the summer of 2020 and spring of 2021. The Community Voices series created a forum representing all sectors to learn about the impact of Covid-19 and engage in an opportunity to reimagine and rebuild a stronger, equitable and even more vibrant region for everyone. Conversations on June 4, 2020, July 15, 2020, March 17, 2021, and March 30, 2021, provided opportunities for exchanging information and sharing perspectives. The series resulted in proposed actions to address four key priorities: affordable housing, broadband, children & families, and policy advocacy. By working together across sectors, the Monadnock region will emerge stronger and more vibrant from Covid-19.

Covid-19 Recovery Series: Objectives

- Learn about emerging trends as local and regional nonprofits, businesses, and public sector agencies begin mid- to long-term recovery efforts.
- Share expertise and ideas about Covid-19 recovery as philanthropists and as active partners in other sectors.
- Identify ways that community members might be responsive to emerging trends regarding Covid-19 recovery.

June 4th Community Voices: Community Leaders



Covid-19 has a “silver lining” – new ways of doing business that improve access to opportunity, such as (a) developing entrepreneurs and small businesses that can fill

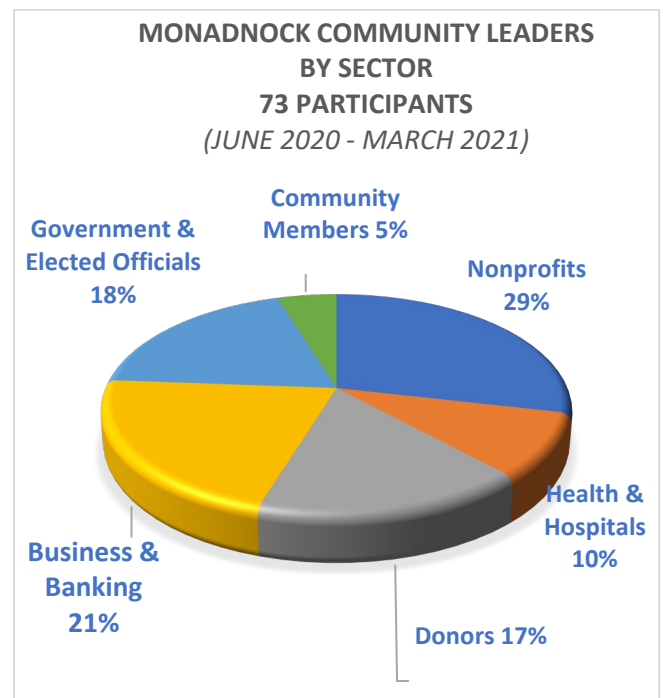
gaps in the global supply chain by manufacturing or producing locally and regionally sourced products (e.g., meat, vegetables), and (b) offering tele-health, tele-medicine, and tele-counseling that might reach more communities.

July 15th Community Voices: Donors

Families, healthy and not-so-healthy, are under stress. Normal stress relievers, such as camps, schools, and day care programs, are not available. Any supports for families are critical.



Who Participated?



March 17th Community Voices: Leaders & Donors

- Monadnock United Way Impact Committee Briefs
 - Child Care Crisis in New Hampshire
 - “Cliff Effect” on NH’s Families and Employers
 - COVID-19 Data on Social/Emotional Impact on Children
 - Homelessness in NH
- Informational Resources on Equity Initiatives

Guiding Principles for Covid-19 Recovery

- 1) Respond to people with the greatest needs and support them through Covid-19 recovery.
- 2) Identify the most critical infrastructure and system needs that can be improved through Covid-19 recovery.
- 3) Identify ideas that are realistic, doable, and able to be addressed by gaining early traction to achieve success as a starting point, and then build from there to get to broader issues as the work unfolds.



Top 4 Priorities & Action Steps



#1: Affordable Housing

Outreach to landlords in each town can help refer them to their local Community Action Partnership (CAP) - SCS or SNHS - to partner on getting reimbursed for back rent due and to introduce tenants to the CAP for case management on other needs – fuel, electricity, weatherization, WIC, etc. Reach out to banks in a similar fashion.

- Steering Committee being formed with SWRPC, MUW and the Chamber



#2: Broadband

Due in large part to its rural nature and correspondingly lower development densities, the Monadnock Region has long been challenged with attracting attention from internet service providers to make investments in the infrastructure needed to offer higher speed broadband. How can we assist communities that have been less involved to-date to become more proactive in addressing broadband connectivity needs?

- Workgroup is being formed
- Potential projects: digital literacy, access to devices, outreach to towns

- 4) These recommendations need to prioritize small, immediate actions while recognizing that in many instances taking these small steps will lead to longer-term solutions.
- 5) Collaborate among and across different sectors to take meaningful action; the silos need to come down.
- 6) We want to avoid duplication of effort with existing and ongoing efforts by recognizing and identifying related work in the region, making sure that partners working on similar issues are involved and engaged.



“Everything is happening with more intensity, more pressure, and the fear of getting a deadly disease. The intensity is evidenced by concerning data about mental health within families. Suicides and attempted suicides among 14- to 24-year-olds have increased. Not enough mental health supports are available. There’s been a huge wave of suicides. The family impact of Covid-19 must be addressed.”



#3: Children & Families

Children and families are vulnerable, and they need access to in-person programs for “re-entry” after Covid-19. Parents/caregivers and children need access to normative programs that help them address the impacts of the pandemic on development, social and emotional skills, schedules/routines, and resilience. Partners who work with families already provide a range of supports.

- Workgroup is being formed



#4: Policy Advocacy

Carry out a policy advocacy strategy that focuses on (a) child care, (b) affordable housing, and/or (c) living wage. Reach out to existing advocacy orgs in NH, such as New Futures, as well as existing Local Task Forces.

- Provide consistent policy advocacy with partners such as New Futures.
- Explore American Rescue Plan funding.