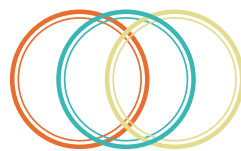




CASE STUDY

LEFT BEHIND
WORKERS FUND



IMPACT
CHARITABLE

LEFT BEHIND WORKERS FUND

The Left Behind Workers Fund is a collaboration between community-based organizations, philanthropists and the public sector that was incubated by Impact Charitable. The Fund helps workers without documentation access cash grants and rental assistance as quickly as possible in times of need. Launched in 2020 in response to the COVID-driven recession, the Fund has already supported more than 27,000 children in 40 Colorado counties with the essential aid they need to stay afloat during periods of temporary unemployment.



AN URGENT NEED FOR COLORADANS

Approximately 5% of Colorado's workforce is working without documentation, and the majority of these workers are concentrated in the leisure and hospitality industry. As our restaurants and resorts closed and/or operated at reduced capacity, due to COVID, workers without documentation lost their livelihoods at an unprecedented rate. In 2020, the unemployment rate for undocumented workers reached over 29% in the United States, the highest of any demographic group.

Undocumented workers are essential to the United States and Colorado economies. Roughly half of all undocumented workers are paystub employees (as opposed to contractors), and estimates show that they have contributed more than \$188M to the Colorado unemployment insurance fund over the last 10 years. These workers help our tourism industry flourish, they provide essential frontline support and they deliver in-home care to seniors and children. They work hard to support their families and contribute to society, and in their time of greatest need, they are being left out of federally supported aid and insurance programs.



THE FUND'S IMPACT AT A GLANCE

1

- \$15.1M Direct Aid
- Supporting households with more than 27,000 children in 40 Colorado counties.

2

- \$7.9M Rental Aid
- Supporting 2,400 households with more than 4,700 children across Colorado.

3

- Following our successful launch in 2020, at the Fund's peak, we delivered over one million dollars in aid per week to the LBWF population.



"With the grant, I was able to buy the medications I needed, and I paid some bills. I do not know what I would have done if I did not receive this money. Thank you so much for helping me." - Recipient in Pueblo



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“If I hadn’t received this check, I would be in debt because my now husband has also lost his job. I am the sole income provider for our family of eight. I have five children and my youngest is 5 years old. With this check, I was able to pay for food, utilities, and internet for my children’s education.”

- Recipient in Alamosa



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“If I did not receive the grant we would have been more behind on bills, we would not have had food, and just life would have been terrible. With the grant we paid bills and advanced some money to the landlord and was able to provide food for my family.”

- Recipient in Westminster



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“If I had not received the funds, my family and I would have struggled to cover food needs and more. Receiving the funds has cooperated with my family well-being as well as my emotional one. “

- Recipient in Aurora



FROM IDEA TO IMPACT

In early March 2020, Mark Newhouse, Board Member of Impact Charitable and Social Venture Partners initiated a discussion on direct cash grants as a form of philanthropy with Ed Brisco, Founder and, then, the Executive Director of Impact Charitable, and Katrina Van Gasse, Fulbright Scholar and previously a Vice President at Silicon Valley Bank. On March 16, Ed sent an email which said, "So, should we set this up sooner rather than later?...My wife and I were just talking about undocumented workers in hospitality. They are getting laid off and will have no access to governmental aid. " That email launched the Left Behind Workers Fund.



MARCH
2020

SURPASSING FUNDRAISING EXPECTATIONS

To execute such an ambitious grant program we needed to secure resources to quickly staff and build systems. Social Venture Partners promptly stepped up to offer expertise in applicant screenings, payments and technical infrastructure. We sourced partners with deep connections to the immigrant community, including Village Exchange Center and Colorado Immigrant Rights Coalition.

We also needed money. On March 26th, we presented a pilot funding request to the Social Venture Partners Impact Investment Group for \$100,000-\$200,000. Within 48 hours we surpassed our minimum target, and we exceeded the top end within a week.

APRIL
2020

PILOTING THE PROGRAM

On April 7th, we rolled out our pilot program, and by April 24th it was complete, having distributed 200 \$1,000 grants to eligible workers.

We then set a goal to scale the program to \$10 million. We began making larger funding asks of foundations and by June 1st we launched our new grant system in partnership with over 40 statewide community-based organizations. And then we began to scale.

SUMMER
2020

OFFERING SPEED, ACCESSIBILITY & FLEXIBILITY

To deliver our grants quickly and accessibly, we built a custom digital platform which reviews applications and issues payments. Applicants can easily complete the application and upload any necessary documents using their mobile devices.

From application submission, it takes only 7-10 days to issue payments to qualified applicants, and we offer a variety of payment options to ensure we can serve banked and unbanked individuals. The application platform is intuitive and easy-to-use, but we also provide instructions and support in multiple languages.

SUMMER
2020

GETTING THE CITY & STATE ON BOARD

As workers started receiving their cash grants, we launched subsequent pilot programs with the city of Denver and the state of Colorado. These were the first public sector dollars in Colorado to be allocated exclusively for the support of workers without documentation.

To date, we have advocated successfully for more than \$15 million public sector dollars to support the needs of workers without documentation via seven different bills or orders from the State of Colorado and four other municipalities.

ONGOING

ENDING UI INEQUITIES FOR UNDOCUMENTED EMPLOYEES

The COVID-fueled economic crisis has revealed a gaping hole in our unemployment system, one that will not disappear when COVID does. Left Behind Workers Fund has partnered with leading advocacy and expertise groups in Colorado—including the Colorado Peoples Alliance, the Colorado Fiscal Institute, and the Colorado Center for Law and Policy—to propose legislation that will address unemployment insurance inequities. We are currently drafting a bill and already have State Senators eager to sponsor the bill in the 2021 Colorado Legislative Session. The bill will ensure that every Colorado employee, regardless of immigration status, will receive the financial support they need when they find themselves without a job and in hard financial times, during COVID and beyond.



INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE?

If you're interested in learning more about the Left Behind Workers Fund or what it's like to launch a similar program with Impact Charitable, please contact us today. We eagerly welcome collaboration with funders, policymakers, community-based organizations and members of the philanthropic community.



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