

June 4, 2020

Dear Partner,

The last several months have been full of change and self-reflection. Everyone has been impacted by the unprecedented COVID-19 global health pandemic requiring significant adjustment to plans and adapting to a new way of life. However, communities of color particularly African Americans and Hispanics/Latino/a/x are simultaneously carrying the longstanding burden of injustice and inequity because of racism and violence as we recently witnessed in Minneapolis with George Floyd and here in Milwaukee with Joel Acevedo.

As leaders, we join others in denouncing the injustice of the senseless lethal act of violence against George Floyd. Such gross acts of violence demonstrate the structural and systemic racial injustices and inequities that persist in our nation. The trauma it causes is deeply harmful to society.

The partnership between the Greater Milwaukee Foundation, Medical College of Wisconsin and Royal Capital Group commits to be a part of challenging and changing the narrative and reality of injustice and inequity for communities of color.

We are making a generational commitment to the redevelopment of the Gimbel Schuster's building located on North Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive and North Vel R. Phillips Avenue and the surrounding neighborhoods. The commitment is focused on improving social determinants of health and inspiring similar types of investment in the area and other communities. Since March, we have been working with many partners to address the immediate needs related to COVID-19 coronavirus. Several campaigns and projects have launched that are combining resources more effectively to provide essential services and basic needs to individuals, families and organizations.

This includes but is not limited to:

- A collective community response that has to date resulted in \$6.6 million from the Greater Milwaukee Foundation focusing on the disproportionate impact COVID-19 coronavirus is having on communities of color. The full list of grants made to date is available at: <https://www.greatermilwaukeefoundation.org/community-leadership/responding-together/mkeresponds/grants/>
- Several grants funded by the Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin Endowment and led by Medical College of Wisconsin experts and community agencies in partnership include:
  - Preventing the Spread of COVID-19 in Elderly African Americans in Milwaukee (\$508,388)
  - STOP COVID-19: Co-designing Culturally Relevant Risk-Reduction Communication for Vulnerable Communities in Milwaukee (\$500,000)
  - The full list of grants made to date is available at: <https://ahwendowment.org/blog/2020/AHW-Announces-COVID19-Grants.htm>

- Community engagement for the partnership remains active with residents and is holding virtual office hours now. A virtual community visioning session is being planned for later in the month. Additionally, the team is establishing a Community Advisory Council.
- Recently, we joined other Milwaukee leaders in launching a campaign and movement centered on lifting a message of hope and resilience – affirming to communities of color that *You Matter/ Cuidate*. This powerful statement, while initially presented in-light-of the devastating effects COVID-19 coronavirus is having on African Americans and Hispanics/Latino/a/x, is a source of advocacy for the end of systematic and structural racism that negatively impacts Milwaukee.

We are excited to see how our placed based partnership will provide a vibrant, new resource that supports the health and growth of the community, and becomes a destination where Halyard Park, Harambee and Brewers Hill neighbors among others can interact, learn and share. We anticipate starting construction late summer and will work with the community to safely host job fairs and other engagement opportunities. We will share more details when available.

Stay in touch with us at <https://gmfmcwpartnership.org/>. Thank you for your continued support and partnership.

Collectively, we are moving forward with a vision for an equitable, healthy, and thriving Milwaukee.

Please be safe and healthy.

In partnership,



Kevin Newell, Co-Chair  
Royal Capital Group



Ken Robertson, Co-Chair  
Greater Milwaukee Foundation



Gregory M. Wesley, Co-Chair  
Medical College of Wisconsin

cc: Ellen M. Gilligan, President and CEO, Greater Milwaukee Foundation  
Dr. John R. Raymond, Sr. President and CEO, Medical College of Wisconsin