

# METROBETHESDA ROTARY COVID-19 EMERGENCY RESPONSE

*By Susan Greif, MetroBethesda Rotary Club*

MetroBethesda Rotary has organized over \$53,000 in grants to provide emergency funding for several humanitarian projects in Montgomery County, Maryland. Rotary partners include the Rotary Club of Alicante Puerto, Spain, the Rotary Foundation of Washington D.C., Rotary District 7620, Rotary International's World Fund, and many individual donors. The projects will focus on disease prevention and treatment, as well as maternal and child health.

The metroBethesda Rotary approach is three-pronged: The funds will be dedicated to the Bethesda/Chevy Chase Rescue Squad, Mobile Medical Care and So What Else to purchase critical medical equipment, personal protective equipment (PPE) and food. According to Club President Daniel Fischer, "The projects will provide access to essential services and products for trained health workers and families in need."

The BCC Rescue Squad provides state of the art emergency medical, fire and rescue services. They will receive specialized decontamination equipment and personal protective gear for first responders in five squads. Electrostatic spraying systems, chemical proportioners and UV surface sterilizers - to sanitize ambulances, equipment and facilities - are included in the grant, in addition to hazmat suits.

Mobile Medical Care provides basic health services to low income families, approximately 80% of whom are immigrants and uninsured. Patients are seen at clinics by doctors, nurses and trained staff who address on-going medical needs, as well as screen and treat Covid-19 symptoms - thereby reducing emergency room visits. Mobile Medical Care will receive PPE and vital signs monitors.

So What Else is providing food and essential supplies at 45 sites throughout the area. SoWE would normally be focused on providing out of school

activities for underserved youth. During the Covid-19 crisis, SoWE has already helped provide over 148,000 meals and distribute over 3,000 books, games and toys to struggling families.

Action on all three projects begin immediately in strict adherence to the minimal contact and social distancing policies now in effect. Over the next three months over 2,000 individuals are expected to benefit.

