

DISCOVER REAL BARABOO

Dear Community Member:

It is difficult in these sad, strange and often scary times to make sense of anything. There are so many questions for which no one really has answers, but a common theme has emerged, and that seems to be that we are all in this together.

The four Sauk County Chambers of Commerce listed below have come together to make difference if we can, but we need help. All of our communities look very different than they did just a few weeks ago, and none of us ever thought that we would see our businesses, churches and schools closed, our doors locked to the public and our streets nearly empty. These were all necessary steps, but like you, we all are anxious for the day when the recovery begins, and we know that it is going to take a long time, and it is going to be difficult for many.

As an answer to some of the need that we know exists, our four Chambers in partnership with the Sauk County Economic Development Committee have established a **Small Business Relief Fund**. The purpose of the fund is to provide grants that range from \$500 - \$1,000 to small business owners with less than five-employees, and who have experienced losses due to COVID-19. Distribution of the funds could begin as early as mid-April and will continue until all funds are expended. Our hope is that this may help some businesses get through this difficult time and retain their employees. We want and need our diverse business communities to not just survive, but to thrive when this is over.

How can you help? If you have the resources available to assist businesses in need, this fund may be a way for you to help. We have all seen amazing acts of kindness in the last few weeks, and we know that people want to help, but they don't always know how to help. We hope that by establishing this fund we are providing an opportunity for people to safely give back to their own community. You can be assured that your donated dollars will remain in your community, helping the very businesses that serve your friends, family and community at large. When you donate, you will mail your check to your local chamber of commerce. Your chamber director will ensure that all dollars collected locally will stay local. Each chamber of commerce was awarded \$20,000 in match dollars from the Sauk County's Economic Development Committee, and each chamber will be responsible for accounting for all of the dollars donated and disbursed in their community. All of us believe that additional dollars will be contributed through either public or private funds once people can contribute to a local effort.

We know that there are some state and federal resources that some of our local businesses may be eligible for and we encourage businesses to apply for them, but we also know that some of them won't qualify. More importantly, the businesses who are struggling are often owned by the same people who give donations to Little League, community events and more. When people ask for their help, they give. They have not asked us to do this for them, but it is the right thing to do, and now it is their turn to receive. We believe in the generosity of the people in Sauk County, and we know that strong businesses make strong communities.

Details about how to give to your local Chamber are included with this joint message. From all of us at the Sauk County Chambers of Commerce as well as the Sauk County Economic Development Committee, we encourage you to continue to follow all of the current protections and protocols. It is making a difference! Above all, we wish you and your family continued good health throughout the difficult time. Please know that we all care about Sauk County, and we are working together in service to our businesses and communities. We hope you will join us.

[DONATE NOW!](#)

Thank you!

Darren Hornby
Executive Director

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