



## United Ways in Northeast Tennessee and Southwest Virginia

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## Seven United Ways Launch Regional Taskforce and COVID-19 Relief Fund

**Text 41444 to NETNSWVARelief**

**NETNSWVARelief.org**

**(Northeast TN and Southwest VA)** March 24, 2020 - Seven United Way organizations announced today the launch of a regional taskforce of local United Ways coming together to support efforts of the COVID-19 global pandemic with the launch of the Northeast Tennessee Southwest Virginia Relief Fund.

The regional taskforce includes United Way of Bristol TN/VA, United Way of Elizabethton/Carter County, United Way of Greater Kingsport, United Way of Greene County, United Way of Hawkins County, United Way of Southwest Virginia, and United Way of Washington County, TN.

Together, the United Ways announced a goal of \$1.9 million and collectively contributed \$87,000 from emergency contingency funds from the combined organizations. Lisa Cofer, Executive Director of United Way of Bristol TN/VA said, "Our board has acted quickly, along with

the other regional boards, to supply these emergency funds to our community partners who are on the front lines of this global crisis.”

Collectively, the United Ways are striving to raise 19% of the \$1.9 million COVID-19 Relief Fund in the first 19 days. “Time is of the essence in helping meet the immediate needs due to the impacts of the pandemic,” said President and CEO of United Way of Washington County, TN, Kristan Spear.

An online electronic fundraising campaign allows people to donate to the relief efforts for the pandemic. Givers can text NETNSWVARELIEF to 41444. Givers can also make donations at [www.NETNSWVARELIEF.org](http://www.NETNSWVARELIEF.org), or by mailing their gift to United Way, Regional COVID-19 Response Fund, P.O. Box 644, Abingdon, VA 24212. If a check is being mailed, please be sure to write in the memo section if the donation is designated to the regional effort.

Both immediate and long-term, the relief efforts will focus response efforts on vulnerable populations, including children, families, and the ALICE population. ALICE, an acronym coined by United Way that stands for Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed, represents men, women, and families who work hard and earn more than the official Federal Poverty Level, but less than the basic cost of living. Danelle Glasscock, President and CEO of United Way of Greater Kingsport said, “We are committed to helping our communities with long-term recovery efforts in the days to come following this global crisis.”

Along with the regional taskforce, a regional advisory council comprised of donors to the fund, business and nonprofit organizations, and health and human service agencies will combine efforts to develop the response strategy of the deployment of these resources. United Ways of Northeast Tennessee and Southwest Virginia will form strategic public-private partnerships with community organizations to meet the needs of individuals affected.

Travis Staton, President and CEO of United Way of Southwest Virginia stated, “As an organization dedicated to fighting for the health, education and financial stability of every person in our region, we recognize the impact this virus is making on our communities, but we also recognize the toll it will take on the financial and economic well-being of every person in Northeast Tennessee and Southwest Virginia.”

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