

June 10, 2020

Dear Mayor Carter and Mayor Frey,

As a nonprofit provider serving both Minneapolis and St. Paul, we wanted to reach out to let you know how the events of the past few weeks have impacted our organization. The murder of George Floyd and the protests that have followed have served to intensify the light shining on the long-standing racism and systemic injustice in Minnesota. We realize that these are uncertain times for all of us. But they are especially daunting for the people we serve.

Unfortunately, our properties and programs did sustain some damage from the early days of the unrest. The main office for Goodwill-Easter Seals Minnesota is located in the Midway area of St. Paul just off of University and Fairview Avenues. While that location did not experience any vandalism, our University Ave Goodwill Store (across from Target) did experience significant damage.

- The backroom was set on fire and the first floor was flooded from the sprinklers and fire department water.
- The entire first floor was looted (product damaged and stolen, fixture and building damage) along with dozens of windows and doors smashed.
- We are still working with facility vendors and the insurance company but we are already nearing \$700,000 in damages.
- We were slated to re-open the store on June 1 following a two-month closure due to COVID-19 restrictions but now the store will be closed an additional 6 to 8 weeks. The revenue loss for the additional closure will be around \$400,000.
- In total for the St. Paul location, we are facing a loss of \$700,000 in capital expenses and \$400,000 in operational expenses.

In Minneapolis, The FATHER Project has operated on Lake Street across from the Third Precinct for the last ten years. The program serves neighborhood men who are non-custodial dads by delivering integrated financial counseling, parenting classes, employment placement, legal and expungement advice and child support management.

- Our office space in the Coliseum Building on Lake Street was badly damaged by fire, smoke and water.
- There is an urgent and immediate need for resources: space, staffing and programming to keep Father Project services available; the men in our community need services now!
- \$300,000 in financial resources is needed immediately so we can continue to be an embedded presence on Lake Street and help lead the healing and systems change that our community needs.
- Capital losses total near \$50,000 in furnishings, computers, phones and network system.
- Our hope is to find a temporary location from which to operate and to fortify our staffing (many of whom are neighborhood residents). With \$300,000 in financial resources, we can be an immediate and embedded presence to help lead the healing and systems change that our community needs.

GOODWILL®

EASTER
SEALS

With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the organizational challenges have been significant for Goodwill-Easter Seals and other larger nonprofits who have not qualified for any federal assistance due to size restrictions (500+ employees). While our financial situation is currently uncertain, Goodwill-Easter Seals is committed to rebuilding our store on University Avenue and to continuing to provide much-needed family services on Lake Street during this important time in the Twin Cities. Please know that we are here to partner with you, and our communities, to create positive change.

Sincerely,



Michael Wirth-Davis, D.P.A.
President and CEO

cc: DEED Commissioner Steve Grove
Hennepin County Commissioners
Ramsey County Commissioner
Hennepin Legislative Delegation
Ramsey Legislative Delegation
Saint Paul City Council Members
Minneapolis City Council Members
St. Paul Legislative Delegation
Minneapolis Legislative Delegation