



Partners For Good

Our nonprofit community serves an important role in partnership with the [Nevada County government](#) to deliver direct services to community members. This relationship grew substantially in the recovery after the Great Recession when the County embarked on a strategy to contract with community-based organizations to deliver direct services, particularly in the areas of social services and behavioral health. These organizations were nimble, enjoyed closer relationships to those they served, were innovative and could leverage County contracts with other revenue sources such as grants and donations to bolster their missions.

Since that time, the County has relied on dozens of locally and regionally operated nonprofits to deliver services valued at over \$20 million annually. These organizations provide hundreds of local jobs and deliver the safety net services that thousands of residents rely upon. This funding supports organizations like Connecting Point to provide the 211 information line and job skill programs; The Nevada County Food Bank, Interfaith Food Ministry, Sierra Harvest, local farmers markets and more assist low income resident access to healthy food, and countless organizations protect and guide the most vulnerable youth of our community to become productive and successful adults. In recent years, as the Board of Supervisors brought greater focus on addressing homelessness, affordable housing and mitigating the risks of wildfires these relationships have grown and strengthened beyond the original safety-net and health service areas to build new housing, develop a network of homeless service providers and expanded programs to prepare for, prevent and respond to wildfire emergencies.

The COVID-19 pandemic has challenged our community in new ways we never imagined. The County assumed the responsibility of delivering meals, obtaining hotel rooms to assist with isolation and quarantine, setting up testing centers and vaccine clinics, but they couldn't do it alone. The nonprofit community stepped up to partner in these monumental efforts. Their efforts to reach and serve our most vulnerable residents in the most uncertain times was unparalleled and critical. They saved lives, reduced suffering, and provided comfort to those greatest in need.

Kimberly Parker, long-time Executive Director at the [Sierra Nevada Memorial Hospital Foundation](#) put it perfectly, "The breadth of nonprofit services in Nevada County is unusual for a rural community, as is the manner in which they collaborate among themselves and with local government and business."

That collaboration roared into action when the [Nevada County Relief Fund](#) was seed funded in April 2020 with \$100,000 challenge grant allocated by the Nevada County Board of Supervisors. In partnership with the [Sierra Nevada Memorial Hospital Foundation](#), [Tahoe Truckee Community Foundation](#), [Sierra Business Council](#), the [Center for Nonprofit Leadership](#) and the [Economic Resource Council](#) the fund began to provide relief to our citizens. Since then, nearly \$1.3 Million has been raised to help over 100 small businesses and nonprofits countywide with nearly half the money coming from individual donations.

The next two articles in this series will highlight how the COVID-19 pandemic impacted our nonprofit community. How they answered the call to serve and how they sacrificed and reinvented their programs in order to protect our whole community.

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