**Title**: COVID-19 WCU Suspension of Direct Community Engagement

Community Partners,

On Tuesday, March 10th, West Chester University (WCU) made the decision to halt face to face classes and shift to alternate modes of delivery for the remainder of the semester. Additionally, the University has taken proactive measures to limit social contact by closing residence halls and on-campus housing facilities. While there have been no reported cases of COVID-19 at WCU, these decisions were made in an abundance of caution – and in close consultation with health officials – as cases of the virus increased throughout the United States.

Given the totality of available guidance at the federal, state, and local levels – WCU has also suspended experiential learning experiences such as clinicals, internships, practica, and student teaching. The Office of Service-Learning and Volunteer Programs (OSLVP) interprets this directive to include *direct* and *university-sponsored* community engagement activities (e.g., face-to-face tutoring, mentoring, volunteering, etc.). Therefore, until further notice, OSLVP is unable to support efforts to recruit, maintain, and/or mobilize WCU volunteers for direct service needs.

We recognize that, for many community-based organizations and agencies, a contraction of volunteers during a public health emergency may exacerbate challenges. As your university partner, we welcome the opportunity to explore alternative means for addressing some of the unique and specific challenges facing your organization at this time. To that end, we invite you to join us for a Zoom session next week to explore such opportunities, as well as to identify any *indirect* services or supports that WCU students, faculty, and staff may be able to provide your organization over the next several weeks (e.g.. fundraising; public information campaigns; translation services). These Zoom sessions will take place on:

* Thursday, March 25th at 12:00 P.M. – 1:00 P.M., and
* Friday, March 26th at 11:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.

If you are interested in participating in one of these sessions, please let me know at your earliest convenience and I will provide you with the Zoom link/number. Otherwise, please don’t hesitate to contact me directly at sjacobson2@wcupa.edu with any ideas, thoughts, or concerns.

We so appreciate the engagement opportunities that you provide our students, and very much look forward to working more directly as soon as we are able!

All the best,

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