

Bridging The Gap

Club community pays it forward with the HKCRF

Earlier this year, we reported on the formation of the Hong Kong Community Recovery Fund (HKCRF), an initiative within Hong Kong's American community to provide urgent support to families affected by the COVID-19 crisis.

Over the summer, the HKCRF worked hard to vet local charities to make sure the funds we raise go where they are most needed. We focused on groups working in the health field and education & training field as both are areas where Hong Kong residents have been heavily impacted due to the COVID-19 crisis.

Understanding the Issues

To accomplish our goal of "Bridging The Gap", the HKCRF partnered with the Hong Kong Council of Social Service (HKCSS), an umbrella organization for over 400 local charities, which is uniquely placed to understand the needs of the community. From an initial list of more than 50 well-run and deserving organizations provided by the HKCSS, we selected twelve groups for our initial tranche of funding.

These groups represent some of Hong Kong's most innovative and effective charities, working with Hong Kongers from all walks of life: helping families of children with special needs, counseling victims of sexual assault and domestic violence, finding job opportunities for disabled adults—even providing music instruction for disadvantaged children otherwise unable to realize their dreams.



PathFinders, an HKCRF Beneficiary, saw an 80% increase in hotline calls during COVID-19, and their case managers have seen their workload increase by around 40%.

During this process we became acutely aware of the serious issues facing Hong Kong's families and the groups that serve them. The economic impact of COVID-19 and ensuing stay-at-home restrictions have caused problems ranging from rising conflicts within families, to increasing levels of anxiety and mental health issues, to a lack of specialized care for children with special needs. Meanwhile, many of the charities we spoke with have seen their fundraising curtailed and are desperately short of funds. Many more face a surge in people depending on their services, even as they run short on resources and manpower.

Donating Where It's Needed

The funds raised by the HKCRF will go directly to address these needs—and that's where we have counted on members of the American Club community for support. Since July, many members of the community have donated to the fund—starting with the Hong Kong government's \$10,000 relief checks. We feel that there are many who need this money more than we do. We would like to thank our community for its support on this endeavor.

Giving back to the community and looking out for others is a true American virtue. It's been inspiring to see so many Club members so willing to help the neediest among us. We urge everyone to get involved, and to renew our community's commitment to this great city we call home.



Staff of HKCRF beneficiary J-Life Foundation work six hours each weekday passing out needed supplies.

Written by Tim Morrison and Leontine Chuang, Board Member and CEO, respectively, of the American Club Foundation, and Members of the HKCRF Steering Committee.

For a full list of our beneficiary organizations, please go to: www.hkcrf.org