



The Band-Aid Story

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New Brunswick, New Jersey, 1920. Newlywed Josephine Dickson loved married life. She did not love housekeeping. While trying to get dinner on the table every night, she'd inevitably cut or burn her hand or fingers in the process. (I can *totally* relate, Josephine!) Back then, bandaging with cotton gauze and adhesive was a two-handed job. The accident-prone Josephine was consistently short one. After several weeks of kitchen mishaps, her husband, Earle, had an idea. He placed squares of cotton gauze at intervals along an adhesive strip and covered them with crinoline. Now, Josephine could easily cut the length she needed from the strip with one hand, wrap it over her latest wound, and still have a supply of bandages for the next day's cooking disaster. It was a clever solution to an immediate problem. And, when Earle took the idea to his bosses at Johnson and Johnson, this clever idea evolved into the indispensable adhesive wonder we all know today: the band-aid.

The Inventors Hall of Fame is filled with people who have found creative solutions to problems, big and small. The pandemic has been a big one for all of us. To respond to the crisis, we created the Strategic Emergency Response Fund (SERF). We'd never done this before. We didn't know how much we could raise. And, we didn't know how long the crisis would last or how it would impact the community. We did know that, whatever happened, our community would need flexible resources to get through it.

The Strategic Emergency Response Fund was, *in part*, our band-aid for the emergency at hand. And, like a band-aid, the fund has been very useful. It has helped and will continue to help nonprofits provide immediate relief to thousands of residents in need across Cape Cod.

However, we've all heard of the band-aid approach: a quick, temporary approach to a problem that does not address or resolve the underlying cause of the problem. Our analogy doesn't address the real source of the problem: Josephine. While we could cover that accident-prone housewife with adhesive strips from head-to-toe for the rest of her life, wouldn't it be smarter to develop her cooking skills so she could live a band-aid free life?

Our core mission has always been to fuel long-term solutions to community challenges. Part of the Strategic Emergency Response Fund has always been earmarked for the reimagining and rebuilding phase. Our gears are now shifting. During our next rounds of grantmaking, we will fund capacity-building initiatives that help local nonprofit organizations reach the next level of operational, programmatic, financial, or organizational maturity. Some need equipment or technology. Others need help from outside consultants or staff support. All need help getting to that next level to survive and thrive.

We don't do this alone. Our work centers on building a community of support. Shared knowledge leads to shared purpose. Shared purpose drives social change. Our ongoing initiatives work together to build a community of support within the Foundation, throughout the nonprofit sector, and across the region and state. Recent updates include:

- **Continued Conversations at the State Level.** State agencies continue to involve community foundations in conversations about deploying CARES Act and other relief funding flowing through Massachusetts. In the last 8 months, we've applied for and received over \$650,000 in funding from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development. We have awarded \$450,000 of that funding so far, and we will announce the second round of grants later this month. While this relationship started to provide direct assistance for vulnerable populations impacted by the pandemic, it has expanded regional knowledge and opened up opportunities for long-term, proactive partnerships that will strengthen individual communities throughout the state.
- **The Cape & Islands Regional Network on Homelessness** recently elected Dara Gannon, our Director of Programs and Donors Services, to its Policy Board. This effort is spearheaded by the Barnstable County Department of Human Services, and we are honored to have a seat at the table. It presents another opportunity to learn more about community challenges, promising initiatives, and opportunities for engagement from local experts. In turn, whatever we learn also informs our community of supporters, creating another ripple of shared knowledge and purpose.
- **Virtual Community Forums.** So far, local experts have shared the challenges of food security and access, and housing and homelessness with us and members of the community. The next virtual forum on June 17 will focus on mental and behavioral health. In these sessions, we've learned how nonprofits have handled emergency relief, how they are moving forward strategically, and what kind of community support they need. We've also been reminded of the connectivity between food and housing challenges, which will connect to mental and behavioral health challenges in our next discussion. Please take a few moments to [watch the videos](#) of these sessions and [register for the next](#).
- **Community Partnerships.** We just completed the initial review process for our 1-Year Targeted Nonprofit Capacity Building Grants Program. We received 45 requests totaling over \$900,000. While we cannot fund all of the worthy proposals ourselves, our goal isn't strictly to create a "yes" pile and deliver a "no" to the other nonprofit applicants. We're also looking for ways to leverage and match resources with outside partners or other funders within the Foundation to support more of the requests and expand impact throughout the region.
- **Nonprofit Cohorts.** The recipients of the Foundation's 1-Year Targeted Nonprofit Capacity Building Grants will also become part of a cohort learning model, another way to strategically share knowledge and resources, build relationships, and encourage collaboration. By forming cohorts, we can provide nonprofit leaders more in-depth, hands-on technical assistance and educational opportunities in areas of overlap.

In addition, the Foundation will also support the next Core Certificate Program conducted by the [Institute for Nonprofit Practice](#) on Cape Cod and the Islands. When the next class graduates in June, more than 100 local nonprofit leaders will have graduated from this comprehensive leadership development program to date. The emerging cohorts have created strong networks across the region and initiated many partnerships and collaborations. A local funder collaborative, another community of support, has made this opportunity possible.

RIPPING OF THE BAND-AIDS

We will never be band-aid free. We simply don't know what the future holds. But what we invest our heart, minds, and resources into now will not only shape our community today, but also impact us tomorrow. The pandemic has been challenging. But it has prompted community-wide dialogues. It's also opened people's eyes wide. We need to re-examine how we're approaching problems. We need to rip off the band-aids, think strategically, and act proactively. And, we need to do it together.

OPPORTUNITIES TO ENGAGE

Here are seven ways to take a seat at the table.

- [Watch the Previous Virtual Forums](#). Find an opportunity to engage.
- [Sign Up for the Next Forum](#). Knowledge is power.
- [Become a Community Partner](#). We can't do this alone. Your donation supports our work.
- [Donate to the Strategic Emergency Response Fund](#). We are about \$140,000 away from meeting our goal in our "Respond, Rebuild & Reimagine" Community Challenge.
- [Create a Charitable Fund](#).
- [Contribute to An Existing Fund](#).
- Connect with a Local Nonprofit. Support works that matters to you.